ENCYCLOPEDIA OF

SOCIAL MEDIA AND POLITICS

KERRIC HARVEY editor

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF

Social Media and Politics

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Social Media and Politics

Volume 1

Kerric Harvey
George Washington University
EDITOR

SAGE reference

Los Angeles | London | New Delhi
Singapore | Washington DC

Los Angeles | London | New Delhi
Singapore | Washington DC

FOR INFORMATION:

SAGE Publications, Inc.
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320
E-mail: order@sagepub.com

SAGE Publications India Pvt. Ltd.
B 1/I 1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area
Mathura Road, New Delhi 110 044
India

SAGE Publications Ltd.
1 Oliver's Yard
55 City Road
London EC1Y 1SP
United Kingdom

SAGE Publications Asia-Pacific Pte. Ltd.
3 Church Street
#10-04 Samsung Hub
Singapore 049483

Senior Editor: Jim Brace-Thompson
Cover Designer: Bryan Fishman
Reference Systems Manager: Leticia Gutierrez
Reference Systems Coordinators: Laura Notton
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Proofreaders: Rebecca Kuzins, Mary Le Rouge
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A catalog record of this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN 978-1-4522-4471-6 (cloth)

14 15 16 17 18 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Social Media Regulation, Public Policy, and Actual Practice

Adbusters Media Foundation
Advertising and Marketing
Advocacy Groups, Political Branding of
Age
Amplification
Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life
Apple v. Does
Berkman Center
Blogger Rights and Responsibilities
Bookmarking
CAN-SPAM Act 2003
Carnivore
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Social Media Guidelines
Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act
Deep Packet Inspection
Department of Homeland Security Media
Monitoring Initiative
Digital Cultures Research Center
Dooced
ECHELON
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Estrada, Joseph
E-Voter Institute

Facial Recognition Technology
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FinFisher
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Functionality
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Institute for Public Diplomacy and
Global Communication
Keystroke Logging
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Media and Communication Policy
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and Privacy Protection
Nongovernmental Organizations
Office of Government Information Services
Open Source Governance
Oxford Internet Institute
Pentagon Digital Engagement Team
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Public Intellectual
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Search and Scrape Capability
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Social Good Summit
Social Media and Freedom of Information Act
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U.S. Pentagon Social Media in Strategic
Communications Program
Video Privacy Protection Act
WhoIs

Social Media Types, Innovation, and Technology

Aggregation
American Enterprise Institute
Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life
Anonoblog
Association of Internet Researchers
Big Data
Blog Syndication
Blogs
Center for Communication and
Civic Engagement
Center for Information Technology and Society
Center for Social Media
Chat Rooms
Cloud Computing
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Content Communities
Crowdsourcing
Data Mining
Digital Revolution
Embedding
Engagement Advertising
Engagement Features
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Geotagging
Ghost Blogging
Google AdWords/AdSense in Campaign Strategy
Hashtag
Information Aggregation
Innovation and Technology
Instant Messengers, IRC and ICQ
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Interactive Documentary
Internet Forums
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John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award
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Mobile Apps
Mobile/Smartphone Messaging
Moblogging
Open Data
Peer to Peer
Personalization
Picasa
Platform
Podcasts
Predictive Analytics
Pretty Good Privacy
RSS Feeds
Skype
Social Bookmarking
Social Computing and Social
Information Processing
Social Media Research Foundation
Social Media Sharing, P2P, Bit Torrent
Social Worlds
Splogs
Streaming Media
Tor
Traffic Analysis
User-Generated Content

Virtual Environment Technology, Immersive
Vlogging
Web Metrics
Web 2.0
World Wide Web, History of the

About the Editor

A tenured associate professor and the Associate Director of the Center for Innovative Media in the School of Media and Public Affairs at George Washington University, Dr. Kerric Harvey is also a working playwright and multimedia producer who explores intercultural conflict in a wide variety of periods and places, including real-world, online, and social media landscapes. She also writes about the media arts and cultural archetypes in the public imagination, the anthropological effects of new media technologies, digital storytelling, and the relationship between new media narratives and political identity.

In 1995 she was appointed as one of 33 participants who constituted a National Science Foundation task force charged by the Clinton White House with setting a 21st-century national research agenda for Internet issues from the anthropological perspective. Her research and policy development work during the formative stages of the Internet era continued with a two-year stint on the Smithsonian Institution's Curriculum Initiative Program National Advisory Board.

Her work in new technologies and society continues through her appointment as a 2012 visiting scholar at the University of Oxford's Bodleian Library, by a host of publications ranging from books to juried academic articles, and by her many international academic presentations including recent talks at the Oxford Internet Institute and at the British Museum.

An award-winning teacher, she has been on the George Washington University faculty for just over 20 years. Harvey worked as a reporter in Native American print journalism; in research, script development, and production for educational film; in production and operations in public access television; and with the International Documentary unit of the Seattle public television affiliate station. Harvey balances her academic career with international theater, multimedia, and documentary productions in both physical and virtual spaces. She has had her original dramatic work produced professionally in Scotland; Ireland; New York; Pennsylvania; Vancouver, Canada; and Washington, D.C.; as well as having original radio drama aired on Canadian public radio in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and on RTE-One, Ireland's premiere public radio station, which broadcast her 2001 *Driving in Ireland* as a Play of the Week. She is a member of the University Film and Video Association, the Irish Film Institute, and the Dramatists Guild of America, as well as a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute.

List of Contributors

Natalia Abuin Vences
Universidad Complutense
Tony E. Adams
Northeastern Illinois University
Jason Michael Adams
Grand Valley State University
Alisa Agozzino
Ohio Northern University
Sadiya Akram
University of Canberra
Gordon Alley-Young
Kingsborough Community College
Ines Amaral
Instituto Superior Miguel Torga
Reynaldo Anderson
Harris-Stowe University
R. Bruce Anderson
Florida Southern College
LaKesha Anderson
Indiana State University
Janelle Applequist
Pennsylvania State University
Catherine Aquilina
Florida Southern College
Judith Aston
University of the West of England
Robert K. Avery
University of Utah
Hakan Aydogan
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Lázaro M. Bacallao-Pino
CH-CIALC, National Autonomous University of Mexico
Ingrid Bachmann
Pontifical Catholic University of Chile
Credence Baker
Tarleton State University
Stijn Bannier
Maastricht University
Soumia Bardhan
St. Cloud State University
Boris Barkanov
Harvard University
Michael J. Beatty
University of Miami
Ralph Beliveau
University of Oklahoma
Carole V. Bell
Northeastern University
Anat Ben-David
University of Amsterdam
Josh Bendickson
Louisiana State University
Roy Bendor
Simon Fraser University
Magdalena Bielenia-Grajewska
University of Gdansk, Poland and SISSA, Italy
Rebecca Bishop
Independent Scholar

Rena Bivens
Carleton University
Jason Edward Black
University of Alabama
David Bobbitt
Wesleyan College
Samuel Boerboom
Montana State University–Billings
Dieter Bögenhold
Alpen-Adria-University Klagenfurt
Grant David Bollmer
University of Sydney
Bradley J. Bond
University of San Diego
Helen Bond
Howard University School of Education
Stephanie E. Bor
University of Utah
Sarah Boslaugh
Keenesaw State University
Johannes Botes
University of Baltimore
Melanie Bourdaa
Université Bordeaux 3
Ryan Branson
Harris-Stowe State University
Swati Jaywant Rao Bute
Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Dehli
Francisco Sierra Caballero
University of Seville
Romina Cachia
Universidad de Sevilla
Steven J. Campbell
University of South Carolina, Lancaster
Gordon S. Carlson
Fort Hays State University
Pilar Carrera
Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
Catherine Cassara
Bowling Green State University
Pablo Castagno
Universidad Nacional de La Matanza
Jeanette Castillo
Ball State University
Leslie Caughell
Virginia Wesleyan College
Jacquelyn Chinn
Texas A&M University
Sujin Choi
Kookmin University
Chandra D. Clark
Florida State University
Amanda Clarke
University of Oxford
David E. Clementson
University of Miami
Joshua Cohen
Stanford University
Deborah Elizabeth Cohen
Sogang University
Yosem Companys
Stanford University
Richard S. Conley
University of Florida
Earl Conteh-Morgan
University of South Florida
Gary Copeland
University of Oklahoma
Tina Cota-Robles
Florida Southern College
Brett J. Craig
Nazarbayev University
Shirley M. Crawley
Western Connecticut State University
Andrew Jared Critchfield
Communication and Culture Consulting
Francis Dalisay
University of Hawai'i at Manoa
Emirhan Darcan
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Amber Davisson
DePaul University
Emiliana De Blasio
CMCS Luiss
Antonio de Velasco
University of Memphis
Carla De Ycaza
New York University
David DeIuliis
Duquesne University
Jeffrey Delbert
Lenoir-Rhyne University
Wendy Dent
University of Southern California
Benjamin W. L. Derhy Kurtz
University of East Anglia
Tiffany Derville Gallicano
University of Oregon

Philip Di Salvo
Università della Svizzera italiana
Larry Diamond
Stanford University
Michael Dick
University of Toronto
Dimitra Dimitrakopoulou
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
John Dolan
Pennsylvania State University
Aziz Douai
University of Ontario
Sarah A. Downey
Independent Scholar
Delia Dumitrica
University of Calgary
Catherine Easton
Lancaster University
Justin Eckstein
University of Denver
Jennifer Edwards
Tarleton State University
Anthony C. Edwards
Tarleton State University
el-Sayed el-Aswad
United Arab Emirates University
Jennifer Epley
Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi
Ben Epstein
DePaul University
Daniel C. Faltesek
Oregon State University
Paul Falzone
Independent Scholar
Anna Feigenbaum
Bournemouth University
Eran Fisher
Open University
Katherine R. Fleck
Ohio Northern University
Courtney V. (Vail) Fletcher
University of Portland
Jaime R. S. Fonseca
Technical University of Lisbon
Sean D. Foreman
Barry University
Lisa Foster
University of Oklahoma
Lucas G. Freire
University of Exeter
Mike Friedrichsen
Stuttgart Media University
Janie Fritz
Duquesne University
MacKenzie Gailey
Florida Southern College
Deborah Gambs
Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York
Bradley A. Gangnon
Arts Institutes International
Alberto Garcia Garcia
Complutense University of Madrid
Dustin Garlitz
University of South Florida
Charlotte Lucy Garraway
Texas A&M University
Carolyn Garrity
Birmingham-Southern College
Sherice Gearhart
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Matthew Geras
Florida Southern College
Paolo Gerbaudo
King's College London
Hannah Gifford
Florida Southern College
Homero Gil de Zúñiga
University of Texas at Austin
Mark J. Glantz
St. Norbert College
Debra Glassco
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Simon Gottschalk
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Tommaso Gravante
University of Seville
Matthew J. Gritter
Angelo State University
Tracy Groenewegen
University of British Columbia
Anastasiia Grynko
National University of Kyiv–Mohyla Academy
Darin Gully
Ithaca College
Chao Guo
Indiana University Purdue University–Indianapolis

Justin D. Hackett
California University of Pennsylvania
Alem Hailu
Howard University College of Arts and Sciences
Ernest A. Hakanen
Drexel University
Michael Hammer
University of Georgia
Kyle A. Hammock
Knox College
Josh Hanan
Univeristy of Denver
Jason Hannan
Northwestern University
Summer Harlow
University of Texas at Austin
Kandace Harris
Clark-Atlanta University
Dominique Harrison
Howard University
William Hart
Norfolk State University
Val Hartouni
University of California, San Diego
Jason A. Helfer
Knox College
Marion Jeanette Herbert
Independent Scholar
Brian Heslop
University of Memphis
John Hickman
Berry College
Arne Hintz
Cardiff University
R. Lance Holbert
Ohio State University
Daniel Holgado
Departamento de Psicología Social Universidad de Sevilla
Mohammed Ibahrine
American University of Sharjah
Brandon M. Inabinet
Furman University
Ece Inan
Girne American University
Chris Ingraham
University of Colorado Boulder
Daniel Jackson
Bournemouth University
Susan Jacobson
Florida International University
Isidro Maya Jariego
University of Seville
J. Jacob Jenkins
California State University Channel Islands
Manel Jiménez-Morales
Universitat Pompeu Fabra
Janet Johnson
University of Texas at Dallas
Wilson R. Kaiser
Jacksonville University
David A. Karpf
George Washington University
Kelly Kaufhold
Texas Tech University
Anandam Kavoori
University of Georgia
Ahmet Kaya
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Chun-Sik Kim
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies
Spencer H. Kimball
Emerson College
Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St. Andrews
Jon Klos
Florida Southern College
Randolph Kluver
Texas A&M University
Anna Klyueva
University of Oregon
La Loria Konata
Georgia State University
Piotr Konieczny
University of Pittsburgh
Tetiana Kostiuchenko
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy
Bill Kte'pi
Independent Scholar
Joanna Kulesza
University of Lodz
Chenjerai Kumanyika
Pennsylvania State University
Matthew J. Kushin
Shepherd University
Jennifer L. Lambe
University of Delaware
Patricia G. Lange
California College of the Arts

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University
Mark C. Lashley
University of Georgia
Regina Lawrence
University of Texas–Austin
Danielle Lawson
Edinboro University
J. Roselyn Lee
Ohio State University
Megan A. Lee
Knox College
Jooyeon Lee
University of Leeds
Lara Lengel
Bowling Green State University
Cathy Leogrande
Le Moyne University
Christopher Leslie
Polytechnic Institute of New York University
Koen Leurs
Utrecht University
Jenifer L. Lewis
Nazarbayev University
Eric Liguori
California State University, Fresno
Darren G. Lilleker
Bournemouth University
Min Liu
Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville
Kim Lorber
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Sarah Maben
Tarleton State University
Kristen L. Majocha
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
Steven Malcic
University of California, Santa Barbara
Rick Malleus
Seattle University
Jimmie Manning
Northern Illinois University
Francisco Paulo Jamil Almeida Marques
Federal University of Ceará
Terry Marsh
Norfolk State University
Marcienne Martin
Université de La Réunion
Tamara Martsenyuk
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy
Ryan McGrady
North Carolina State University
Kelly A. McHugh
Florida Southern College
Heather McIntosh
Boston College
Stefania Milan
Tilburg University
William J. Miller
Flagler College
Diane M. Monahan
Saint Leo University
Aaron J. Moore
Rider University
Mel Moore
University of Northern Colorado
Jessica L. Moore
Butler University
Marco Morini
Macquarie University
Yvonne Mulhern
Tarleton State University
Paul Murschetz
University of Salzburg
Siho Nam
University of North Florida
Heather Nance
Texas Tech University
Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Meredith Neville-Shepard
University of Kansas
Ryan Neville-Shepard
Indiana University–Purdue University Columbus
Joyce Neys
Erasmus University Rotterdam
Konrad Ng
Smithsonian Institution
Gage Nicholas
Florida Southern College
Gwendelyn S. Nisbett
University of North Texas
Safiya Umoja Noble
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
José-Manuel Noguera-Vivo
Catholic University of San Antonio

Alison N. Novak
Drexel University
Eric J. Novotny
American University
Patricia Núñez
Complutense University
Pamela C. O'Brien
Bowie State University
Timothy J. O'Neill
Southwestern University
Jonathan A. Obar
University of Toronto
Magdalena Olszanowski
Concordia University
Sule Yüksel Özmen
Karadeniz Technical University
Jeremy Packer
North Carolina State University
Yong Jin Park
Howard University
Han Woo Park
Yeungnam University
Sung Gwan Park
Seoul National University
Justin Paulette
Independent Scholar
Shayne Pepper
Northeastern Illinois University
Kaitlyn Pettet
Berry College
Alexander E. Pichugin
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Georgia Piggot
University of British Columbia
Mihaela Popescu
California State University, San Bernardino
Colin Porlezza
Università della Svizzera italiana
Narissra Maria Punyanunt-Carter
Texas Tech University
Mark A. Rademacher
Butler University
Veena V. Raman
Pennsylvania State University
Leslie Regan Shade
University of Toronto
Marie-Eve Reny
University of Chicago
Leslie Reynard
Washburn University
Jennifer J. Richardson
Southern Vermont College
LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University
Jason Roberts
Quincy College
Michelle Rodino-Colocino
Pennsylvania State University
Leocadia Díaz Romero
Independent Scholar
Devan Rosen
Ithaca College
Nathaniel T. Rosenberg
Knox College
Rafal Rybak
Northeastern Illinois University
Magdalena Saldana
University of Texas–Austin
Sergei Samoilenko
George Mason University
Eric C. Sands
Berry College
Kim Sawchuk
Concordia University
Lisa Saye
Independent Scholar
Dan Schill
Southern Methodist University
Hans C. Schmidt
Pennsylvania State University–Brandywine
Jason Schmitt
Green Mountain College
Stephen T. Schroth
Knox College
Gilson Schwartz
University of São Paulo
Sónia Pedro Sebastião
ISCSP, Technical University of Lisbon
Marc-David L. Seidel
University of British Columbia
Donatella Selva
Luiss University of Rome
Emily Shaw
Thomas College
Fei Shen
City University of Hong Kong
Tamara Shepherd
Ryerson University
Kaia N. Shivers
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Carlos Nunes Silva
University of Lisbon
Maria Anne Simone
Rowan University
Aram Sinnreich
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Jörgen Skågeby
University of Stockholm
Alexandra Nutter Smith
University of Washington–Tacoma
Melissa M. Smith
Mississippi University for Women
Latisha Smith
Harris-Stowe State University
Christina M. Smith
California State University, Channel Islands
Nicole E. Snell
Bentley University
Meghan R. Sobel
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Hanna Söderbaum
Uppsala Universitet
David Spiegel
Institute for Advanced Study
Ralf Spiller
Macromedia University for Media and Communication
Carmen Stavrositu
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
Keri K. Stephens
University of Texas at Austin
Maria G. Stover
Washburn University
Ingrid Sturgis
Howard University
Jennifer Summary
Southeast Missouri State University
Chit Cheung Matthew Sung
Lancaster University
Molly Swiger
Baldwin-Wallace University
Saman Talib
Humber College
Rhon Teruelle
University of Toronto
Doug Tewksbury
Niagara University
Neal Thomas
University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill
David B. Tindall
University of British Columbia
Catalina L. Toma
University of Wisconsin–Madison
Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University, Business and Social Sciences
Sebastián Valenzuela
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Damien Van Puyvelde
University of Texas at El Paso
Karrin Vasby Anderson
Colorado State University
Andreas Veglis
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Anastasia Veneti
University of Athens
Daniela Vicherat-Mattar
Leiden University College, The Hague
Raquel Vinader Segura
Complutense University of Madrid
Cindy S. Vincent
University of Oklahoma
Beth M. Waggenspack
Virginia Tech
Don J. Waisanen
Baruch College, City University of New York
Camille Walfall
Howard University
Jefferson Walker
University of Alabama
Kevin Wang
Butler University
Jennifer Ware
North Carolina State University
Ann Warmuth
Independent Scholar
Christine Rose Warne
Florida Southern College
Yael Warshel
University of California, Los Angeles
Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College
Brian E. Weeks
Ohio State University
Adele Weiner
Metropolitan College of New York
Jeremy Weinstein
Stanford University

David Weiss
University of New Mexico
Jennifer Whitmer
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Terry Winograd
Stanford University
Tony E. Wohlers
Cameron University
John R. Wood
Rose State College
Todd Woodlan
University of California, San Diego
Rhonda Louise Wrzenski
Indiana University, Southeast
Shuang Iris Xia
Texas Tech University
Masahiro Yamamoto
University of Wisconsin–La Crosse
Qingjiang Yao
Fort Hays State University
Jina Yoo
University of Missouri, St. Louis
Jillian C. York
Independent Scholar
William Lafi Youmans
George Washington University
Dzmitry Yuran
University of Tennessee
Yuliya Zabyelina
Masaryk University
Lorenzo Zamponi
European University Institute
Jason Zenor
State University of New York, Oswego
Weiwu Zhang
Texas Tech University
Pei Zheng
University of Texas at Austin

Introduction

"Politics," it has been said, "is a practical art." In the early years of the 21st century, it is also a technological one. The explosion of "social media" into the American political process began with the Internet's entrance on the voting scene around 2004, when Facebook debuted on American campuses as a kind of "cruising and schmoozing" network, and Howard Dean ramped up his earlier success at Internet fund-raising to a fever pitch. Now, in late 2013, social media of many types are exploding across the political landscape, with unforeseen and, to some extent, still unknown eventual effects. Their impact on the political process has eclipsed even that of the Internet, if one measures in terms of the sheer volume of messaging they carry, and they have achieved this prominence in a much shorter time than the 30 years it took the Internet itself to rise to its current status as a taken-for-granted tool in mainstream politics.

Electronic voting, Internet campaigning, proliferating political use of tweeting and texting, blogging and vlogging, online polling and Facebook "friends" all hawking their favorite candidate, issue, or policy point: For better and for worse, electronica has infiltrated the American political process in a way that, some argue, actually re-shapes it. This is the case despite three bedrock realities about the political use of social media, which are that (1) it gets more sophisticated, nuanced, and potentially invasive almost constantly; (2) it is increasingly ubiquitous; and (3) we do not know nearly as much about it as we would like.

But in the short time since the Internet opened to commercial exploitation, the modifier *industrialized* itself has lessened in relevance as a useful criterion for sorting nation-states into their traditional First, Second, and Third World categories. This taxonomy depends, increasingly, on what I call a nation's relative degree of "informationalization" instead—the ability to collect, generate, store, transmit, interpret, share, and/or hoard data per se. A second important signature trait, as a signifier of First World status, is the capability to build, acquire, maintain, and deploy the technology that is required to manage, mine, and maximize information, including but not limited to "Big Data" sets. In the era of "Big Data" and the information industries, it makes much more sense to divide the world into "informationalized," "emerging," "hybrid industrial/informational societies," and "noninformationalized" sectors instead of relying exclusively on the old standards related to manufacturing and industrialization. The changes implicit in this paradigm shift are indicative of just how profound a societal transformation has resulted from the combined effects of social media and contiguous digital, mobile, and online technologies.

This new way of thinking about "data" as a harvestable crop has profound implications for all aspects of collective life, even if they are not the

implications one might expect or predict. It could be argued that the most significant anthropological paradigm shift of the late 20th and early 21st centuries is the changing relationship between human beings and the electronic devices designed to serve them. This is especially true of communications and media electronica, beginning with the Internet's transition to a public entity in 1996 and continuing through to the near ubiquitous presence of today's mobile personal communications like cell phones, BlackBerries, and tablets, and the social media they both spawn and support. New media pioneer Nicholas Negroponte, famous as one of the founding members of MIT's 1980s Media Lab, captured the enormity of this paradigm shift when he wrote: "Computers are not about computing any more. They are about life."

In much the same way, "personal" media are not about personal life any more. They are about the tensions between cultural, social, and economic change and stability, stretching all the way from the small crises and triumphs of suburban households to the mammoth ambitions of collective governance. They are about people and institutions connecting with each other in virtual ways, with the side effect of dodging each other in the flesh. They are about reinventing the workplace, redefining journalism, revolutionizing commerce, education, medicine, and consumer identity. They challenge conventional ways of teaching, learning, parenting, dating, filing taxes, staying well, planning travel, finding a plumber, understanding the world, governing the country. They have changed, and continue to change, the practice, the process, the philosophy, and perhaps the very nature of politics. This encyclopedia is an attempt to capture, describe, and contextualize the elusive leading edge of this phenomenon, which has already demonstrated its ability to generate very concrete effects on 21st century self-governance. Some of the challenges it faces in achieving that goal reflect the unique nature of the social media themselves.

Defining "Social Media" in the Political Sphere

Defining the "social media" is not nearly as cut-and-dried as may first appear, and depends, in part, on cultural geography. Europeans approach several of these issues very differently than do North Americans, and even within this continent alone, regional distinctions can complicate any simple answer. "True" social media success depends on who and how many people retrieve what one sends out, not on pre-identifying at whom one aims a particular message. "Aims" in the technical, not the functional, sense of that word: Twitter users may not actually address their messages to specific receivers, but they do go to enormous lengths and great pains to craft the kind of regular tweet stream content and Twitter profile that will draw the attention of the kind of person they want to reach. In this way, some of the social media replicate the audience attraction model employed by broadcast television and radio, while they actually invert the "known caller" principle of person-to-person technologies like the telephone.

Once we start digging, it becomes easy to see why there is a lot of debate about what actually constitutes the social media. Does e-mail count? How about reposting modalities, which do not add anything new to the actual content but which enjoy an aura of personal endorsement by the simple fact that someone found it worthy of sending forward to his or her followers? How about sites like Reddit, that connect candidates and voters in a kind of large-scale electronic conversation? Or Tumblr, or Pinterest, and other similar "pastiche platforms," which can provide a highly textured portrait of a public figure's preferences in music, art, theater, food, literature, current fads and fashions, as well as his or her informal commentary on assorted political topics of the day? What about YouTube? Texting? Even blogging, a new media format that has already seen heavy action as a vehicle for political expression, exploration, and opinion-sharing?

Signature Traits of the Social Media

Given the challenges involved with defining social media according to their technical design and/or functionality, it might be useful to approach the question from the other direction, and to describe the social media in terms of their characteristics as experienced by users within the new media mix, especially as those user impressions might relate to political activity. I would like to suggest that social media, per se, exhibit the following specific characteristics, in varying degrees and with different applications, depending on the use context in which they are situated.

- Social media are technologically organized as one-to-many transmissions but are experienced as one-to-one, peer-to-peer communications.
- Social media feel personal, even if they are not.
- Social media proliferate organically according to their salience for social network users and their perceived relevance to topics of the day.
- Social media proliferation can also be the result of institutional (and sometime individual) manipulation via the use of social media optimization tools, search engine optimization strategies, and wikis.
- Social media messages are short, to the point, usually personal, and often extremist.
- Social media encourage a communication context in which the usual rules do not apply.
- Social media appear to level the political playing field, even if they do not.
- Social media content travels.
- Social media create a sense of community.
- Social media are instantaneous, and thus seemingly spontaneous, expressions of belief, opinion, observation or experience.
- Social media are fun.
- Social media can be dangerous.

Social Media and Candidate Politics: Game-Changers and Go-Getters

In the days when the Internet was a fairly recent post-Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) phenomenon, the idea of using it for any type of buying or selling was faintly heretical; it was perceived as a way for scholars and researchers to collaborate across time and space rather than as any sort of "public highway" or shared social space. Only during the halcyon days following the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which in its own right represented a radical reversal of the notion of telecommunications, per se, as a public resource more than a private enterprise, did the privatization of the Internet and its companion activities really take off.

In the online land rush that followed, spectrum space and technical resources were obtained and positioned by private interests such as cell phone service providers and the emerging personal computer industries, opening the door to the barrage of social media inventions and applications that followed.

Turning points in this journey include 1991, when the Internet expanded into the World Wide Web as a free public resource; the 1992 Clinton-Gore and the 1996 Bob Dole campaigns' use of the Internet as voter outreach tools; the 1999 decision by the Federal Elections Commission enabling online credit card donations to qualify for federal matching funds; John MCain's and Howard Dean's early successes at online fund-raising in 2000 and 2003 to 2004, respectively; Barack Obama's now-legendary 2008 and his more recent 2012 presidential victories, both watershed events for using social media as ways to enhance—and in some cases, reinvent—virtually every aspect of running for office; and the crucial role played by social media in establishing the Tea Party, as it morphed from a loosely connected group of disaffected voters into a serious political entity capable of challenging the Republican Party for the loyalty of a coalition of unhappy conservative voters, as well as some disaffected "independents" and a smattering of restless Democrats.

The 2012 race for the White House saw social media grandmaster Barack Obama and Republican challenger Mitt Romney both capitalizing on every type of social media outlet, channel, venue, and platform available, from Pinterest to YouTube to brand new virtual campaign applications that gave them access to the full spectrum of voters' online behaviors and preferences, allowing political strategists to microtarget potential supporters with the same efficiency—and privacy intrusion—as, say, commercial interests such as Amazon.com or Walmart.

Measuring Social Media Political Impact

A unique and ubiquitous aspect of the social media/politics relationship is the degree to which theory is vastly outstripped by practice. There is not complete academic consensus about social media's impact in the political sphere and the best ways of measuring it—but by the time this encyclopedia hits the bookshelves (or the spectrum), there might be. Trying to get a clear look at social media's "real" impact on the sociocultural infrastructure is like trying to nail down water—as impossible to achieve as it is frustrating

to attempt. And yet, attempt it we must, if for no other reason than to get traction on its palpable effect on the permanent gears of social machinery—like voting, for instance. We must find ways to see it clearly, even if the ability to capture it in accurate numbers and meaningful measurements might elude us. Although it is a natural candidate for ethnography, quantitative material about the social media is more highly prized because it is the most immediately useful for those who study and who deploy them in the political arena, for the simple reason that the stakes involved in social media political deployment always come bundled in quantitative form, like what something costs in terms of dollars and what it might yield in the number of added votes it might garner.

On a slightly different note, the modern-day Tea Party, a splinter group within the Republican Party which erupted onto the national political landscape in 2008 and moved into mainstream status with the 2010 midterm election, relied very heavily on Twitter, Facebook, and related social media as they deliberately distanced themselves from traditional conservatives and formed their own political agenda and developed the party organization to promote it effectively.

Measuring social media's political impact, then, is clearly just as much of an art as it may be a science, whether that "measurement" comes couched as actual numbers, or is assessed in terms of the likely result of specific political dynamics in which the social media may have figured. Pursuing and refining accurate and usable social media measurement techniques will no doubt rank high on the "to-do list" of political managers and activists in the days, and in the elections, and in the public debates yet to come.

Contemporary Issues: Social Media in a Political Context

In light of everything we have discussed about the mercurial and elusive nature of the social media throughout this essay, it seems fitting to frame the issues surrounding their current incarnation as points of salient inquiry rather than as statements of permanent fact. If there is one constant attribute shared by all of them, it is the penchant for change, a feature that suggests the issues surrounding their deployment in the political atmosphere will change as well. A "good answer" is only valid as long as the context surrounding it remains stable, but a "good question," to paraphrase the tagline of the diamond industry, is forever.

This, then, is a kind of "20 questions" laundry list of some main questions and concerns, debates and discussions about the political role, nature, impact, and future of social media in the current American political environment:

1. Do the social media really level the political playing field?
2. Do social media favor incumbents or challengers? How does this play out in particularly close elections?
3. Will the social media replace, augment, or operate independently of traditional media in the political process?
4. How do we know which of the social media are a passing fad and which are here to stay?
5. Will the social media literally transform the political process?
6. What demographics most accurately characterize different social media constituencies, and to what degree do these correspond to conventional political constituencies?
7. How can social media impact be measured in the political arena?
8. Do people actually trust social media as a source of political information?
9. To what degree, if any, will social media replace face-to-face political discourse, dialogue, and action?
10. What privacy issues are involved with the harvesting and mining of personal information when using social media for campaigns or in social issues initiatives?
11. How do the social media compare with legacy media in affecting public opinion?
12. Whose voice(s) dominate the social media landscape, why is that so, and what does it mean?
13. Are the social media capable of actually creating new political relationships and attitudes, or do they merely reinforce and/or reconfigure existing ones?
14. Do the social media contribute to political polarization?
15. Do different types of people respond to and/or use, create, and deploy social media

political content in different ways and for different purposes?
16. Do the social media really empower grassroots organizations and political entities, and, if so, what are the most effective strategies for capitalizing on that?
17. What codes of best practices should and/or could be developed for social media campaigning, outreach, and voter education, and who should be liable when breaches occur?
18. How are the social media changing the fund-raising process in political action and candidate politics?
19. Do the social media make possible some forms of political action, expression, organization and public influence that simply could not otherwise exist?
20. Is that a good thing across the board, or should the social media be somehow licensed and/or regulated, as was the case with earlier forms of electronic media, and, if so, who should do this?

Looking Forward

In October 2012, the much-respected Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project reported that 60 percent of adult Americans use at least one type of social media, and that of that 60 percent, approximately 66 percent have widened their everyday use to include political activity, ranging from low-investment action like using social media as a platform for sharing their own political opinions and listening to others, all the way to forming groups and organizations that take civic action in the physical world, an expression of the kind of deep commitment to political matters that was debated so hotly in the Malcolm Gladwell–Clay Shirky discussions.

These statistics about increased public use of social media as a political resource become even more significant when they are contextualized within the escalating use of social media, in general. Social media alpha-blogger Cara Pring noted in February 2012 that "Social networking is still the fastest-growing active social media behavior online," an observation made politically important by the Pew Internet and American Life (2012) finding that "35 percent of social media users have the tools to encourage [other] people to vote . . . and 34 percent [of social media users] have used the tools to post their own thoughts or comments on political and social issues."

"Smart phone users now spend as much time using social networking apps such as Twitter and Facebook as they do playing games," Pring also reports, a use change that will factor heavily in upcoming American politics if another social media expert, Tomi Ahonen, is right in his prediction about the mobile industry becoming the dominant player on the global scene.

At first glance this seems like an extreme and somewhat exaggerated bit of technological crystal ball gazing, until one realizes the base numbers from which Ahonen's prediction is made. Almost 6 billion active mobile phone accounts already exist worldwide, although once they are parsed for people with more than one account, that figure reduces to something like 4 billion unique mobile phone users, still a stunning number when one considers that the world's 2013 population is only around 7 billion. As has been the case historically, the world's population keeps increasing, but what is new on the historical scene is that the proportion of that population that is hooked to social media keeps increasing as well.

Social media's continuing trajectory into the heart of American politics is not just about mobile telephony. A November 2012 Pew report revealed that "55 percent of registered voters have watched political videos online this election season, and 52 percent have had others recommend political videos for them to watch online" (November 2, 2012), and that around 10 percent of people who donated money to the 2012 presidential candidates did so via a text message or cell phone "app."

The people who run campaigns are not waiting for the academy to make up its mind about the efficacy of social media in getting their candidates into office. They are just going out there and doing it, and they are doing it at warp speed. Certainly, they dial into academic research on the topic, and often commission their own studies on preferred ways and means, but they are willing to leap into a kind of raging torrent of best guesses about the best practices for using the social media to win political contests at all levels of governance. And that means that this encyclopedia and other reference works like it are best understood

as compasses rather than as maps in the social media journey.

Inspired by *CQ Researcher* (www.cqresearcher.com), another product in the SAGE family of publications, we even undertook our own research for the table of 2013 Congressional Social Media Use. The table, which contains material that is unavailable anywhere else because we actually generated it, illustrates the particulars of how our national leaders use different types of social media as part of their work on Capitol Hill.

In 1995, I had the very great honor and the singular experience of being part of a National Science Foundation Task Force convened by the Clinton White House. We were handed the Herculean task of developing an anthropological research agenda on Internet issues for the next 100 years. That was our mandate, almost verbatim, and we took it very seriously, especially since we only had three days in which to do it. After being locked in the basement of the St. James, a Washington "grand dame," we eventually consumed enough coffee and donuts to come up with an agenda for, at least, kicking off that mammoth undertaking. (There is, of course, both a federal report and a scholarly publication attesting to this.) But we thought the tidal wave of cultural change we saw coming was all about the Internet, and that was engulfing enough. No one had a clue that something even more totalizing was just around the virtual corner . . . and not a one of us would have predicted how very quickly that technological torrent would froth over into all aspects of American life.

In the course of my own research on new technology, culture, and the political process, it has recently come to my attention that the U.S. Library of Congress now archives Twitter. The rationale behind this is that Twitter represents a one-of-a-kind cultural resource. The library press release announcing the project explained the thinking behind this seemingly quixotic decision:

"The Twitter digital archive has extraordinary potential for research into our contemporary way of life," said Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. "This information provides detailed evidence about how technology based social networks form and evolve over time. The collection also documents a remarkable range of social trends."

Every public tweet since Twitter's launch in March 2006 has been carefully preserved in a digital collection now numbering in the billions, which is not surprising since, according to TechCrunch, in 2013 "we see a billion tweets every 2.5 days." In acquiring the entire public Twitter record since the medium's inception, the library has in one bold stroke rewritten the seriousness with which residents of today's digital era will perceive this most notoriously trivial social media modality.

Of course, Twitter was moving toward acquiring an impressive amount of political gravitas anyway, as it became more and more of a central presence in sequential rounds of national elections. But to have a world-class institution like the Library of Congress acclaim a medium named after "inconsequential chatter" as a "unique record of our time," as Bill Lefurgy, the library's digital initiatives program manager, told the Federal News Radio Network, sends a signal that is cultural as much as it is political.

The message is simple, and stunning, and it pushes social media per se into a new class of cultural significance from which it will now never retreat. The message is this: Even the most lightfooted of today's social media modalities carries enough political clout and contains enough social and cultural value to take its place in the American archive of record, a public resource of global as well as national excellence, which has at its core the personal library of U.S. political icon and former president Thomas Jefferson. Because it is Jefferson's own collection that formed the nucleus of the Library of Congress, when he willed his beloved cache of personal books to the fledgling nation as a lasting legacy. And now that cache will share digital shelf space with Twitter.

One cannot help but wonder what Thomas Jefferson would have to say about that. Could he express it adequately in only 140 characters? But it is still a good question, the kind of question that might elicit brief enough answers that they could eventually find their way into the American Twitter archive at the Library of Congress. Even better yet, the question itself might be provocative enough, intriguing enough, quixotic enough, and most of all, short enough . . . to go viral.

And what, I wonder, would Thomas Jefferson make of that?

Kerric Harvey
Editor

Chronology

1945: In his essay "As We May Think," published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Vannevar Bush argues for creation of a collective memory, which he called the memex, to facilitate and augment the powers of human thought by storing and organizing information; this essay is often cited as the first to suggest the properties later realized through hypertext.

1946: AT&T establishes the first mobile telephone network, making mobile telephone calls possible, although the equipment required was so cumbersome that it was only practical if installed in a vehicle (a truck driver placed the first mobile phone call on June 17, 1946).

1962: J. C. R. Licklider articulates the basic concepts behind the Internet in a memo in which he discusses the possibilities of what he calls the "Intergalactic Computer Network."

1965: AT&T launches an improved mobile phone system, transmitting signals over radio channels. Demand for the service far exceeds the capacity of the channels to carry signals.

1967: Jef Raskin coins the term *QuickDraw* in his Penn State University doctoral thesis on the GUI (graphical user interface).

1969: The ARPANET, a forerunner of the Internet, transmits a message from computers at Bolt Beranek Newman in Massachusetts to computers at Stanford University and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), in California.

1969: CompuServe becomes the first major commercial Internet service provider in the United States, using dial-up technology; it remains a dominant player in the field through the 1980s.

1971: Ray Tomlinson develops the first network e-mail program, and specifies the "@" symbol to indicate the Web address.

1972: Two information services, Dialog (Lockheed) and the Don Jones-Bunker Ramos News Retrieval Service, go online.

1973: The ARPANET establishes connections with computers in the United Kingdom and Norway.

1973: Motorola produces a prototype handheld mobile phone; previous mobile systems were so large they had to be used in vehicles.

1973: The Xerox Alto, a computer intended for personal use, is developed at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center; among its innovations are the

graphical user interface (GUI) and the computer mouse.

1974: The first chat room is created at the University of Illinois by Doug Brown and David Roolley.

1974: In a conference paper, Vinton Cerf and Robert Kuhn become the first to use the term *Internet*.

1974: Theodore George Paraskevakos, a Greek immigrant to the United States, is granted a patent for an "apparatus for generating and transmitting digital information," laying the groundwork for the smartphone.

1976: Before there was even an Internet, Queen Elizabeth II of Britain sent her first e-mail as part of a network technology demonstration put on by the British military and research community. It was sent over ARPANET. She is reputedly the first head of state to use the medium.

1976: Presidential hopeful Jimmy Carter and his potential vice president, Walter Mondale, use e-mail to coordinate campaign event planning.

1978: The Advanced Mobile Phone System, an analog cellular system, is introduced in the United States.

1978: In February, Ward Christensen and Randy Suess create the first public bulletin board system (BBS), allowing users to make online postings.

1978: The first virtual world, Multi-User Dungeon (MUD1), is created at Essex University in the United Kingdom.

1979: In Tokyo, Japan, the first commercial automated cell telephone network begins operation.

1980: The Usenet begins operation; it allows users to post messages to online newsgroups organized around different topics.

1981: The IBM PC (personal computer) is introduced.

1983: The domain name system (DNS) is developed at the University of Wisconsin, including the use of familiar extensions such as .com, .org, .edu, and .mil.

1983: The DynaTAC mobile phone, created by Ameritech, becomes available in the United States. The first world's first commercial portable handset cell phone, the device was developed by the now-defunct Ameritech and sold by Motorola for $3,995 per phone.

1983: The ARPANET divides into two networks: MILNET (to serve military purposes) and ARPANET (to serve research purposes).

1984: The AT&T Bell telephone system, a government sanctioned monopoly since 1913, is broken up into seven regional holding companies (Baby Bells), in accordance with the 1982 U.S. District Court decision in the antitrust case *United States v. AT&T*.

1984: The Prodigy online service begins operation; by 1990 it becomes the second-largest U.S. Internet service provider, second only to CompuServe.

1985: Quantum Computer Services launches Q-Link, an online service; the company renames itself America Online (AOL) in 1991.

1985: The WELL (the Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link), an early virtual Internet community, is created by Stewart Brand and Larry Brilliant.

1985: Lloyd Bentsen coins the term *astroturfing* to refer to organized political campaigns that attempt to hide the sources of their funding and present themselves as grassroots efforts.

1987: Apple Computer includes HyperCard, originally called WildCard, an early hypermedia system, on all new Macintosh computers.

1988: An Internet "worm" created by Robert Tappan Morris infects an estimated 10 percent of Internet hosts; Morris became the first person convicted under the 1986 Computer Fraud and Abuse Act.

1989: Tim Berners-Lee, working at CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research),

proposes the protocol for distributing information that is eventually used in the World Wide Web.

1989: Quantum Computing Services, later America Online (AOL), launches the first instant messaging service, also introducing the familiar greeting "You've got mail!"

1990: Tim Berners-Lee, along with Robert Cailliau, present the protocol for distributing information eventually used to create the World Wide Web in a paper.

1990: The first Web page was "served."

1991: The space shuttle *Atlantis* sends the first e-mail message from space.

1991: The first users outside of CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research) joined the network.

1992: Delphi becomes the first commercial provider of Internet access service.

1993: CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research) announces that the World Wide Web would be freely available for anyone to use.

1993: Over 3 million Americans subscribe to online services.

1993: Mosaic, the first graphical browser, is developed at the University of Illinois, facilitating the development of Web pages.

1993: Howard Rheingold publishes *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier*, a book about virtual communities, including the early online virtual community The WELL.

1993–94: The White House first goes online and uses the Internet.

1994: In February, Jerry Yang and David Filo begin developing an index to keep track of their personal interests on the Internet; it is originally called "Jerry and David's Guide to the World Wide Web," but the title is later changed to Yahoo!; by the fall of 1994, it receives over 1 million hits on a single day.

1994: A forerunner to the smartphone, the IBM Simon Personal Communicator is introduced to the U.S. market. It includes a mobile phone, touchscreen (used by tapping with a stylus), and features such as a calculator, address book, and calendar; can send e-mails, faxes, and text messages, as well as phone calls; and carries a retail price of approximately $899.

1994: America Online (AOL) begins selling advertisements and grows to 1 million members.

1994: GeoCities, a virtual community that allows users to create their own Web site, and which was organized around the concept of "cities" based on common interests, is launched in California as BHI (Beverly Hills Internet).

1994: The world's first blog is created by Justin Hall, a college student; he continues publishing "Justin's Links From the Underground" for 11 years.

1995: Clifford Stoll publishes an article in *Newsweek* with the headline "The Internet? Bah!" and the subhead "Hype Alert: Why Cyberspace Isn't, and Will Never Be, Nirvana."

1996: America Online (AOL) grows to 5 million members.

1996: The search engine Ask.com lets users type in queries using natural language rather than key words.

1996: Stanford University students Larry Page and Sergey Brin create a search engine known as BackRub, with the goal of organizing the huge amount of information available on the World Wide Web; they later rename this project Google.

1997: The term *Weblog* is coined by Jorn Barger.

1997: One million sites exist on the World Wide Web.

1997: America Online (AOL) introduces the stand-alone software Instant Messenger, allowing users to chat over the Internet.

1997: Matt Drudge founds the *Drudge Report* online; the site becomes famous when, in January 1998, Drudge publishes information about an alleged affair between President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky on his Web site DrudgeReport .com.

1998: Open Diary, an online community that allows users to create online journals without needing to know HTML (hypertext markup language), begins operation.

1999: The BlackBerry 850, a two-way pager (not a telephone), is introduced.

1999: Blogger and LiveJournal begin operation; like Open Diary, they allow individuals without technical expertise to create online journals or blogs.

1999: Jon Stewart becomes host of *The Daily Show*, a satirical television program on Comedy Central that becomes famous for criticizing the mainstream news media as well as politicians, and becomes an important source of news for many young adult viewers.

1999: The Federal Election Commission rules that online credit card contributions to candidates in the presidential election are eligible for federal matching funds.

2000: Seventy million computers are connected to the Internet.

2000: Google introduces AdWords, an online advertising program whose revenues will reach $28 billion by 2010.

2000: Advertising for the Swedish company Ericsson refers to its R380 mobile phone, a flip phone using the Symbian operating system, as a smartphone.

2000: Jef Raskin publishes *The Humane Interface: New Directions for Designing Interactive Systems*, arguing that current interfaces are inefficient and make it difficult for people to use computers effectively.

2000: Senator John McCain raises over $6 million online over the course of his presidential campaign.

2000: The policy advocacy group MoveOn.org launches an Internet discussion forum.

2000: AOL acquires MapQuest and merges with Time Warner.

2000: Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger launch Nupedia, the prescurser to Wikipedia, as a forum to publish articles by experts in their field as free content.

2000: Josh Marshall founds the political Web site talkingpointsmemo.com.

2000: The dot.com bubble bursts.

2000: In December, the Pew Research Center announces results from a study showing that one-third of Americans who were online got news about the campaign online, for a total of 18 percent of Americans getting news about the election online (as compared to 4 percent in the 1996 election).

2001: In January, Filipinos take part in a mass demonstration against Philippine President Joseph Estrada, organized in large part by forwarded text messages; a large crowd gathers within a few hours, and grows to over a million in a few days.

2001: Wikipedia, the first online, user-created, open source encyclopedia, begins as a side project of Nupedia. The domain name is registered in January, and over 20,000 entries are created in the first year alone.

2001: Meetup.com, a Web site that helps people arrange in-person group meetings based around common interests, begins operation.

2001: StumbleUpon, a Web site that allows users to vote on content they find compelling, begins operation.

2001: Google buys Deja.com's Usenet Discussion Service, including about 500 million archived Usenet discussions; the service is improved and relaunched as Google Groups.

2002: Markos Moulitsas founds the political blog Daily Kos.

2002: AOL has 34 million members.

2002: The social network site Friendster begins operation and later becomes the first social networking site to attract over 1 million users.

2002: LinkedIn, a professional social networking site, begins operation.

2003: The Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing (CAN-SPAM) Act creates national standards for commercial e-mail but is viewed as largely ineffective in terms of actually controlling unsolicited commercial e-mail.

2002: In December, Trent Lott, then Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate, makes racially charged remarks at the 100th birthday celebration of Senator Strom Thurmond; the remarks are not covered by the mainstream media until after they are published online by several bloggers, and attract sufficient attention that Lott resigned his post, an event often cited as an early demonstration of the political power then held by bloggers.

2003: In January, a survey by the Pew Research Center shows that about 10 percent of online Americans used the Internet as a principal source of campaign news; the Internet remains a relatively minor player, however, as half of those surveyed listed television as their principal source for campaign news.

2003: Google introduces site-targeted advertising, where ads are placed on Web sites based on matches on keywords, domain names, and so forth.

2003: Wordpress, a free, open source content management system, begins operation.

2003: Linden Lab creates Second Life, an Internet virtual world.

2003: Myspace, a social networking site, begins operation; over 1 million people join in the first month.

2004: Almost one-third of Americans (over 60 million people) reported seeing a political documentary in 2004, according to a study released in January 2005 by the Pew Research Center; in contrast, only 7 percent said they attended a campaign rally, and 16 percent said they read a book about politics in 2004.

2004: Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean demonstrates that it is possible to raise large amounts of money for a political campaign over the Internet, raising more than $25 million by September.

2004: Digg, an Internet social news-sharing site, begins operation.

2004: Gawker Media founds *Wonkette*, a satirical online political magazine.

2004: Google reports that its index includes 6 billion items, including 880 million images and 4.28 billion Web pages.

2004: Harvard college student Mark Zuckerberg launches TheFacebook.com, a social networking site originally restricted to students from a few elite colleges.

2004: In October, a study released by the Pew Research Center found that the Internet was a minor player in terms of political advertising during the presidential campaign, with $330 million spent on television ads versus $2.66 million on Internet ads between January and August 2004.

2004: Flickr, an Internet photo hosting and sharing site, begins operation.

2004: Marc Andreessen and Gina Bianchini found Ning, which grows by 2012 to become the world's largest platform for creating social media Web sites.

2005: Myspace is purchased by News Corporation, Rupert Murdoch's global media company.

2005: In February, Google announces that it has over 1 billion images indexed in Image Search.

2005: In March, the Pew Research Center releases a report stating that 61 percent of Americans who use the Internet (37 percent of the adult population) used the Internet in connection with politics; specific instances of use include contributing to candidates, volunteering for a political campaign, discussing candidates and issues through e-mail, and getting news and information about politics.

2005: In May, Google releases Blogger Mobile, a service that allows bloggers to post and send photos to their blogs from mobile phones.

2005: Arianna Huffington founds the Huffington Post, a news aggregation Web site and blog; the site is sold to AOL in 2010.

2005: YouTube, an Internet video-sharing platform, created by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim, begins operation.

2006: In April, Michelle Malkin founds the political Web site HotAir.com.

2006: In August, a video of Senator George Allen (R-VA) referring to a young man of Indian descent as "macaca" is widely distributed and damages Allen's re-election bid.

2006: Google announces it has indexed over 25 billion Web pages and 1.3 billion images and receives 400 million queries per day.

2006: In September, the Pew Research Center releases a report stating that 19 percent of adult Internet users (about 26 million Americans) used the Internet to get information or news about politics and the upcoming midterm elections.

2006: In September, Facebook allows anyone 13 and older to register (i.e., a *.edu e-mail address is no longer required).

2006: In November, Google purchases YouTube.

2006: Twitter begins operation, allowing users to send messages of 140 characters or less.

2006: Spotify, a music streaming and playlist-sharing tool, begins operation.

2006: In December, the Pew Research Center releases a study showing that 64 percent of registered voters reported having received robo-calls (recorded telephone messages) during the 2006 midterm election campaign; in contrast, only 24 percent reported receiving campaign phone calls from live callers and 18 percent reported receiving home visitations in connection with the campaign.

2007: In January, the Pew Research Center releases a study showing that 15 percent of American adults used the Internet to get most of their information about the 2006 midterm election; of those who used the Internet for political purposes, 23 percent report creating or forwarding political commentary or videos.

2007: In February, presidential candidate Barack Obama meets with Marc Andreessen to discuss using social media as part of his presidential campaign.

2007: Facebook begins the Beacon advertising system, using information about user purchases to post targeted advertisements to users; the Beacon system is abandoned in 2009, in part due to objections that it violated user privacy.

2007: Brave New Films, founded by Robert Greenwald, releases its first films, *The Real Rudy* (about Rudy Giuliani) and *Fox Attacks* (about the Fox News Channel).

2007: The social networking, photo-sharing, and short-form blogging site Tumblr begins operation.

2007: In June, Apple releases the iPhone, which features a touch screen and allows the user to make phone calls, browse the Internet, and take digital photographs.

2007: In July, Facebook announces it has 30 million users.

2007: The political Web site Change.org begins operation; it attracts 20 million users by 2012.

2008: In January, the Pew Research Center releases a report stating that 42 percent of Americans age 18 to 29, and 24 percent of adult Americans overall, say they use the Internet to find political information.

2008: Nate Silver founds FiveThirtyEight.com, a blog specializing in statistical analysis of political topics (the name refers to the number of members in the electoral college); the blog became an online feature of the *New York Times* in 2010, and became famous in 2012 by combining and weighting polling data to correctly predict the outcome of the presidential election in 49 of 50 states.

2008: Apple introduces the App Store, a distribution platform for applications for the iPhone and iPad; by 2012, the App Store offered over 700,000 mobile applications, and over 25 billion apps have been downloaded.

2008: Clay Shirky publishes *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*, a book that argues that social media tools allow individuals to organize themselves and act collectively in ways formerly only possible within organizations.

2008: Google is the most visited Web site in both the United States and the United Kingdom.

2009: Foursquare, a location-based social networking site, begins operation.

2008: In October, Google introduces the Android operating system and it quickly becomes the dominant operating system for mobile phones.

2009: GeoCities, a California-based Web site that facilitated creation of Web pages by nontechnical users, ceases operation except in Japan; it had 38 million Web pages at the time it ceased U.S. operations.

2009: In April, activists in Moldova use social media, including Twitter, Facebook, and LiveJournal, to organize protests against their government.

2009: In April, the Internet fund-raising platform Kickstarter begins operation; it allows people to pledge money to support other people's projects, in a manner similar to pledge drives conducted by public radio.

2009: In April, the Pew Research Center releases a study showing that over half (55 percent) of adult Americans used the Internet in 2008 to get information about the election or to become involved in politics, and about one-third used the Internet to share political content.

2009: In June, the death of Iranian protester Neda Agha-Soltan is captured on a cell phone; this video (and links to it) rapidly spreads around the world on social media, including Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook, circumventing Iranian censorship.

2009: Facebook becomes the world's largest social network, with over 200 million users.

2009: Captain Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger is forced to land a commercial flight in the Hudson River in New York City after the aircraft struck a flock of geese. The first notice of this event is posted on Twitter by a user who saw the event from a ferry.

2010: Crowdrise, a Web site founded by actor Edward Norton, film producer Shauna Robertson, and online retailers Robert and Jeffrey Wolfe, begins operation; it allows users to create fund-raising pages for free and provides prizes to be distributed among those who contribute to charitable causes.

2010: Apple introduces the iPad, and it becomes the dominant tablet computer.

2010: The term *app* (as in "mobile application") is chosen as "word of the year" by the American Dialect Society.

2010: Clay Shirky publishes *Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age*, a book in which he posits that online tools allow people to use their leisure time more creatively and productively than was true in the past.

2010: Facebook has over 400 million users.

2010: The Democratic National Committee hires a manager to oversee President Barack Obama's social media accounts.

2010: An estimated 1.97 billion people worldwide use the Internet, amounting to almost 30 percent of the world's population.

2010: The Pew Internet and American Life Project announces that more Americans get news on the Internet than from newspapers.

2010: Pinterest, an Internet social scrapbooking site, begins operation, and acquires 10 million users faster than any other stand-alone site in history.

2010: Dan Savage and Terry Miller found the It Gets Better Project to encourage gay and lesbian young people. Savage and Miller posted a video on YouTube discussing their early lives and how their adult lives were much better than they could have imagined when they were being bullied and harassed as children, and encouraged others to do the same; the project grew so large that it now has its own Web site, www.itgetsbetter.org, which included over 50,000 videos (as of November 2012) and had been viewed over 50 million times.

2010: In December, a study released by the Pew Research Center indicates that 26 percent of American adults used their cell phone in connection with the 2010 midterm elections, either to get information or to participate in some other way, for instance to tell people they had voted (14 percent) or to pass along information about conditions at their local polling place on election day (6 percent).

2010: In December, video of Tunisian protester Mohammed Bouazizi setting fire to himself is captured by amateur videographers and posted on YouTube, inciting protests that eventually lead to the January 14, 2011, abdication of Tunisian president Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali.

2010–11: Social media plays a key role in a popular uprising in north Africa and the Middle East known as the "Arab Spring," although experts debate whether social media acted as an instigator or merely facilitated the uprisings.

2011: In January, President Barack Obama becomes the first speaker in the YouTube World View speaker series; after his State of the Union address, the president answers questions from citizens.

2011: In January, the Pew Research Center releases a study showing that 73 percent of American adults who use the Internet got news or information online about the 2010 midterm elections and 22 percent used Twitter or social networking sites to connect to a campaign or to the election.

2011: The professional social networking site LinkedIn reports that it has 100 million users.

2011: The Pew Research Center releases a report stating that adults who use the Internet are also more likely to be involved in offline group activities, contradicting the stereotype of Internet users as isolated loners.

2011: Lady Gaga and her mother Cynthia Germanotta found the Born This Way Foundation to work with the Berkman Foundation at Harvard University to promote social tolerance, fight against bullying, and encourage young people to build strong communities.

2011: Android becomes the predominant operating system for smartphones, surpassing Symbian.

2011: In May, U.S. Representative Anthony Weiner (D-NY) sends a sexually suggestive photograph of himself over Twitter; he resigns in June as a result of the outcry from this incident.

2011: In July, Ning claims that it is the world's largest social media Web site, with over 90,000 customers in 223 countries, and 65 million unique monthly visitors.

2012: In March, KONY 2012, a short film about Uganda warlord Joseph Kony, is released; it spreads rapidly over the Internet, attracting over 93 million viewers on YouTube alone.

2012: In May, Facebook announces that it has 901 million users worldwide; at this point, if

Facebook were a country, it would be the third-largest in the world in terms of population.

2012: In June, the Federal Election Commission rules that political campaigns may accept contributions by way of text messages.

2012: In September, the Pew Research Center releases a study revealing that one-quarter or more of those who use social networking sites say they are important for political activities—for instance, 36 percent say social networking sites are an important way they keep up with political news, 26 percent say they are important in recruiting people to political causes, and 25 percent say they are an important way to discuss political issues.

2012: In September, a randomized controlled study published in *Nature* and based on the mid-term elections in November 2010 indicates that messages delivered to Facebook users on election day resulted in a small but measurable increase in voter turnout.

2012: In October, the Pew Research Center releases a study indicating that 60 percent of American adults use social networking sites and that two-thirds of those have used social media for political or civic activities.

2012: In October, the Pew Research Center releases a study indicating that 10 percent of those who contributed to one of the candidates in the presidential campaign did so via a cell phone app or by text message.

2012: In November, a picture of President Barack Obama embracing his wife Michelle became the most retweeted and most-liked post in history; posted early in the morning of November 7, when it became clear that Obama had the state of Ohio and thus had won re-election, it was retweeted almost 700,000 times on that day alone, and a posting on Facebook received over 3.23 million "likes" and over 400,000 shares.

2012: In November, over 31 million tweets related to the U.S. presidential election are sent on November 7 (election day) alone, making it the most tweeted about event in history.

2012: In November, the Pew Research Center releases a study indicating that over half (55 percent) of registered voters had watched at least one political video online in the period leading up to the election; video news reports were the most common type of video reported (48 percent), followed by recorded speeches, conferences, or debates (40 percent), and issue-oriented informational videos (39 percent).

2013: On January 11, Internet activist Aaron Swartz committed suicide. Swartz, who was active in developing the social Web site Reddit, the organization Creative Commons, and the Web feed format RSS, was facing charges under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act due to his use of an MIT computer in 2011 to download large numbers of journal articles from the digital library JSTOR.

2013: On July 23, the Web site thedirty.com releases pictures and sexting messages sent by New York City mayoral candidate Anthony Weiner under the alias "Carlos Danger"; although Weiner remains in the campaign, his candidacy is severely damaged by the scandal, and he came in fifth place in the vote.

2013: On August 20, The Qatar-based Al Jazeera Media Network launches a new television channel, Al Jazeera America, with headquarters in New York City and 12 bureaus located throughout the United States.

2013: On September 16, the Pew Internet & American Life Project reports that a majority of the American public owns a smartphone, that 63 percent of adult cell phone owners use their phone to get online, and that 21 percent of all adult cell phone owners do most of their online browsing from their phone, not a computer or other device.

Sarah Boslaugh
Kennesaw State University

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AARP

AARP (formerly known as the American Association of Retired Persons, and now known simply as AARP) is a nongovernmental public interest organization that assists communities and older people with health care benefits, employment security, and retirement planning. Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus founded AARP in 1958 as an extension to her previous organization, the National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA). NRTA assisted retired teachers who were in need of health insurance. AARP is also a powerful lobbying group.

There are two AARP organizations: AARP Services and AARP Foundation. AARP Services offers supplemental insurance and discounts on travel and consumer goods, while the AARP Foundation operates like a charity. They both focus on providing better income and housing and alleviating hunger for senior citizens. The goals behind the creation of AARP were (1) to promote independence, dignity, and purpose for older persons; (2) to enhance the quality of life for older persons; and (3) to encourage older people "To serve, not be served."

AARP Services provides members with discounts on goods and services such as groceries, dining out, electronics, rental cars, hotels, and airline tickets. It also offers insurance benefits, such as health, home, and auto insurance. There are AARP credit cards and retirement planning options. These discounts and optional benefits are solely for the members of AARP.

AARP helps organize volunteering in communities across the United States. One of their outlets is Create the Good. This organization has over 2,000 volunteer options. Create the Good allows volunteers to do simple tasks around the community, such as collecting school supplies, as well as help health professionals, assist in classrooms, and read at local libraries. Depending on specific locations of members, options for volunteering are vast.

Branding and Promotion

In order for AARP to promote its name and brands, it has created commercials, magazines, and Web sites. AARP also has several different types of commercials on television. These range from promoting health insurance and life insurance to advocating for older persons' benefits. By promoting their various options for members through different commercials, people looking for diverse facets of AARP will be reached. By using television as a source of recruitment, AARP reaches a broader scope of older persons than it does through its use of Facebook and Twitter.

On its Web site, AARP lays out the key components that older persons are looking for once they

have retired or are looking for what comes next in the steps to retirement. There are links to spotlight stories relevant to topics chosen via links at the top of the page. Each link offers support in areas of member benefits, health, work and retirement, money, home and family, and other issues relevant to the typical AARP member. The site is relatively easy for members to navigate and understand. Another interesting link on the AARP Web site is their game link. These games seem simple enough to the everyday Internet user, but are chosen to help stimulate the brain. Games such as mahjong, bridge, and solitaire are available to be played online. There are also crosswords, blackjack, and even disco bowling.

Social Media

Recently, AARP completed a study examining how adults over age 50 use technology and social media. After gaining a sample of 1,360 adults over age 50, GtK Custom Research analyzed the findings. Results showed that 40 percent of the sample felt at ease using the Internet and many accessed the Internet from their desktop computers. About 27 percent used Facebook for social networking.

One of the best ways of getting the AARP name out into the social media world is through Facebook and Twitter. These two sites are a quick and easy way for people to locate information and collaborate with others in their same situation. On Facebook, members can get information via their state's specific pages, the national page, and a link to the AARP Web site. This is also a great way for AARP to promote events, volunteer opportunities, and specials on memberships. The microblogging site Twitter is also a quick way to communicate with members of AARP. Though Twitter has been dominated by a younger demographic, AARP has numerous state and national Twitter accounts.

Conclusion

Since 1958, AARP has helped popularize the idea of older persons continuing to live very active lives. With the Internet and commercials on television, radio, billboards, and in magazines, AARP has become the widely known option for retired or retiring Americans. Though AARP is not the only option for older persons looking for insurance, benefits, and volunteer ideas, it is widely recognized as a good option. It is also widely talked about among several age groups.

Narissra Maria Punyanunt-Carter
Heather Nance
Texas Tech University

See Also: Age; Campaigns, Grassroots; Health Care; Medicare; Social Security; Special Interest Campaigns.

Further Readings

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Activists and Activism, Digital

Activism is engagement in activities designed to foster social change or, alternatively, to resist it. Usually, there is a great deal of conceptual overlap between activism and participation in a social movement, though social movements, by definition, involve participation by collectivities of individuals and organizations. Activism, in some rare instances, may be initiated by individuals or small groups.

Conventional wisdom argues that people participate in collective action and social movements because they have strongly held beliefs or are highly discontented about something. However, a number of social movement scholars have pointed out that discontent or ideological support of a movement's goals are usually not enough to

ensure an individual's engagement in activism. Indeed, the vast majority of people who typically support a movement's goals remain inactive. What is important to whether or not people participate is whether they have social network ties to other participants and become targeted for participation requests.

The scholars Bert Klandermans and Dirk Oegema argue that at the level of the individual, becoming a participant in a social movement can be conceived of as a process with four different steps. The steps are: (1) becoming a part of the mobilization potential (e.g., sympathizing with the movement's goals); (2) becoming a target of mobilization attempts; (3) becoming motivated to participate; and (4) overcoming barriers to participate.

Another factor that influences participation is whether or not individuals are biographically available to participate. That is, are their personal schedules sufficiently free or flexible to allow participation in activism? For instance, full-time employment and child-rearing obligations are two barriers to social movement participation.

Whether or not one participates in activism is also affected by the risks and costs involved. Activities vary in terms of the risks that activists may face such as the likelihood of physical violence. Activities also vary in costs in terms of money and time.

Identity is another important aspect of social movements. Individuals are more likely to engage in collective action if they have a shared collective identity. Social networks provide referent others and groups with whom an individual can make social comparisons in the collective identity formation process.

Individuals who are more embedded in a social network tend to have higher levels of movement identification. This is a reciprocal process. The higher one's identification with the movement, the more motivated one is to make social ties to other movement participants. On the other hand, the more ties one has, the more information one receives about the movement and the more likely one is to receive support for identifying with the movement. Some social movement scholars see collective identification as a necessary condition for collective action. Other scholars see the creation of new identities as being an outcome of particular social movements.

Social Networks

Social networks are thought to be a key aspect of social movement phenomena. A social network refers to a set of social units (individuals, groups, and so on) and the interrelationships among them. In recent years, social movement scholars have given considerable attention to social networks in social movements.

Digital social networks (such as those created through Facebook or Twitter) are just one mode of social networks. Researchers have long known about the importance of interpersonal networks based on face-to-face interactions and/or joint memberships in groups (such as social movement organizations). In recent years, attention has turned to the role of digital social networks.

In previous studies on face-to-face social networks, the following intervening variables have been implicated as relevant to network mechanisms: (1) communication, (2) recruitment appeals, (3) identification, (4) social influence, (5) incentives and sanctions, (6) social support, (7) socialization, (8) knowledge and information, (9) personal efficacy, (10) norms, (11) subjective interest, (12) beliefs about others' willingness to contribute, and (13) trust.

Social media and related digital technologies may modify these and other traditional social movement processes. For instance, biographical availability is thought to influence participation and, relatedly, to be associated with the costs and risks of participation. But, for some types of activism, social media and other digital technologies may bring down costs, so biographical availability may not be a barrier to the same extent as for some types of offline activism.

Relatedly, the relationship between network ties and identification may be modified in similar ways. Indeed, in offline activism, participation in certain types of activities—such as attending a rally or protest demonstration—involves potentially revealing one's personal identity and the linkage between personal and collective identities. Certain types of social media (such as Twitter, for example) allow one to engage in social movement discourse and other forms of activism without necessarily revealing one's true personal identity.

Digital Activism

Social media is intertwined with the World Wide Web, the Internet more generally, and mobile phones. Many social movement organizations and social movement activists have Web sites where people are invited to follow them via Facebook and Twitter. Many social media posts link to Web sites. Many people utilize social media via their mobile phones. Many social media functions are linked to e-mail. Thus, this suite of digital technologies needs to be considered simultaneously.

Social media and other digital technologies are revolutionizing the way people live and how they communicate and interact with others. They have enabled the development of transboundary social networks, and the speed, reliability, scale, and relatively low cost of digital networks have in turn allowed for an unprecedented expansion in the scope and reach of contemporary activism. Digital activism refers to the use of digital technologies, such as mobile phones and Internet-enabled devices, in campaigns for social and political change. Indeed, contemporary social movements are using these technologies as tools of communication and mobilization and to access alternative forms of media, which serve as both a means and target of social and political protest.

One of the first social movements to use the Internet was the Zapatista movement in southern Mexico in the early 1990s. In this movement, the Internet, along with telecommunications and videos, was instrumental in disseminating information from the Zapatistas to the rest of the world and in organizing a global network of solidarity groups, which helped to create an international public opinion movement that deterred the Mexican government from engaging in extensive repression.

A few years later, antiglobalization protests in Seattle, Montreal, and Genoa were supported by e-mail systems, the World Wide Web, and the short message service (SMS). The use of the Internet and other digital technologies for the purpose of movement activity has increased and diversified in the 21st century, even within the realm of institutional politics. For example, strategic voting emerged as an online movement during the 2000 U.S. presidential election as a way for American citizens to renegotiate their participation in the electoral process by using Web sites that were designed by several individuals and small groups to allow voters from different states to coordinate their votes. Social media played an important role in Barack Obama's first successful campaign for president of the United States in 2008.

Such examples illustrate the instrumental function of digital technology with respect to social and political activism; it helps communication in information dissemination, networking, and action coordination. Less often discussed—and more contentious, as is discussed below—is the symbolic role that this technology plays in social movement activity. By serving as a potential forum for the development of a sense of solidarity, commonality, and trust, the Internet and other information communication technologies (ICTs) can help build a collective identity among participants and supporters of a movement.

These two major functions of digital technology are copresent to varying degrees depending on the type of activism under consideration. There are four broad categories in which participation using social media and other kinds of digitally enabled social movement activities can be placed. The first entails information distribution through Web sites, listservs, and Internet-enabled devices wherein these technologies serve not as interactive media but as information hubs about causes, social media organizations (SMOs), and social movements.

The second category includes online activities (such as social media) in support of offline protest events such as marches and rallies. Such activities include providing information on, and logistical support for these events as well as recruitment of participants and supporters. Here, too, the Internet does not serve as an independent arena of activism; rather, it is simply a space for organizing and coordinating nondigital activism.

Third, digital activists make use of social media and other online avenues for participation, such as online petitions, boycotts, letter-writing, and e-mail campaigns and more contentious forms of Web site "hauntings" and virtual sit-ins. Last, the fourth category encompasses the organization of entire campaigns and movements online—sometimes referred to as e-movements. In this type of digital activism, all aspects of organizing take place without face-to-face coordination; social media, Web sites, blogs, or listservs are often the organizing centers of protest action.

Effect of Digital Technology

A major debate among scholars of digital activism pertains to the question of whether its fundamental driving processes differ from offline activism. Does utilization of social media and other digital technologies for the purpose of social movement activity amount to a qualitative or merely quantitative shift in activism? Put differently, do these relatively novel technologies have any enduring impact on activism, and if so, do they simply augment activism, or do they alter it in a more fundamental way. The debate on this issue has unfolded among scholars in three clearly discernible camps.

Those in the first camp argue that, over the long term, there will be no real, lasting impact of usage of digital technologies on social movement processes. According to this approach, the digital network is a poor substitute for face-to-face interactions in terms of its ability to foster the enduring bonds of trust and commitment thought to be critical to mobilization. Some within this camp further argue that the digital divide—the uneven distribution of access to, use, and knowledge of ICTs—undermines the impact of the Internet on activism or even risks further disenfranchising those without ICT access.

Scholars in the second camp contend that the differences between online and offline activism are in degree rather than in kind. Along this line of thought, the effects of social media and other digital technology on activism can be considered scale-related effects because ICT usage is seen as simply augmenting or accelerating the processes driving contemporary activism and protest by, for example, enabling a transboundary or fully global reach. Further, although social media and the Internet (more broadly) may allow for relatively inexpensive and quick dissemination of information, they do not change the fundamental nature of the activists, what they do, or how they do it, explain Lance Earl and colleagues in addition to Jennifer Bennett.

The third camp is populated by those who argue that some uses of ICT may in fact alter the dynamics of activism in significant, "game-changing" ways. First, some scholars taking this position insist that the low cost of ICT-enabled social movement activity has significantly decreased costs to the emergence, expansion, and success of movements. The alteration of resource costs has consequences for the probability of successful mobilization. Second, it is argued that the proliferation of ICT has led to the emergence of new and fundamentally different kinds of social protest activities, bundled together in an emergent "digital repertoire of contention." The resultant "*new* new social movements" are conceived of as diffuse, relatively unstructured, and capable of bringing together activists with diverse backgrounds in virtual public spheres.

These "internetworked movements" depend more on information exchange and communication than on the support of traditional SMOs, the importance of which has also been undermined more simply by the low cost of online organizing. Therefore, in the modern social movement, social activism is becoming less reliant on institutions as individual activists themselves—movement entrepreneurs—are gaining greater capacity to participate in an increasingly diverse set of movement activities. Indeed, as a result of the proliferation of digital technology, the social movement has been shifting from the "grand coalition" among SMOs toward ad hoc, ephemeral, group-based, "direct action politics."

Some scholars argue that the meaning and structure of activism have been transformed by the use of social media in particular, which has allowed for small-scale, many-to-many forms of politically oriented communication or "microactivism." Actions such as the formation of political Facebook groups, retweeting of articles of political interest, and sharing videos of a political nature on YouTube reflect microlevel intentions and are not necessarily geared toward mobilization.

However, while the two latter camps differ with regard to their estimations of the effects of digital technology on activism, they tend to focus on different types of protest. Indeed, the scholars who find that social media and other online technology simply augment or accelerate the drivers of contemporary activism tend to study online activities that support or facilitate offline protest, whereas those who find more fundamental changes have been largely focusing on online mobilizations. In the first case, social media and other ICTs allow for movement-related messages to be spread globally, instantaneously, and inexpensively to gain broader support for a movement

These protesters in New York City gathered in support of Egyptian democracy activists on January 29, 2011, in the early days of the Arab Spring protests. The Occupy Wall Street protest movement, which began in New York City on September 17, 2011, and spread to numerous cities, drew inspiration in part from the Arab Spring movement earlier that year.

but do not thereby alter the fundamental dynamics of the offline struggle.

In the second case, however, the dynamics of online disruption are likely to differ from those of offline protest; for instance, protesters are less likely to be motivated by group solidarity than by the perceived effectiveness of the protest action compared to offline activists. Further, as a result of the speed, convenience, and general appeal of social media and other ICTs, the demographic composition of activists is shifting and diversifying. For example, the technological leap experienced in the developing world wherein most young people own mobile phones even if their homes are without electricity or running water has opened up the world of activism to those who may not otherwise have participated in it. This is also the case with youth in general, among whom the use of digital technology, and social media in particular, is disproportionately intensive and widespread.

Among those who agree that digital technology has changed the game of contemporary activism, there is acknowledgment of both the benefits and limitations of this technology. On the one hand, the Internet has several advantages as a public sphere; as alluded to above, it opens up space for ordinary citizens and groups typically excluded from mainstream media to gain visibility and forge links across a range of issues. Indeed, those mobilized across digital networks against neoliberal globalization are increasingly afforded greater opportunities to exchange information outside the control of the dominant media corporations.

The emerging digital community and social relations have been characterized as decentralized, democratic, heterogeneous, fluid, open, informal, and in many ways self-governing. In particular, the ease with which individuals can generate and share content via social media is seen by some as indicative of a more democratic and egalitarian society. Social networking Web sites and services provide "radical public spheres" that constitute new forums for the development and expressions of political citizenship, forums that are less subject to elite control.

On the other hand, some scholars argue that such microactivism may do more harm than good. Although social media provide new and open spaces for social and political engagement, the ease with which individuals can create and join communities of interest may in fact detract from more serious and coordinated efforts to bring about social and political change, resulting in weak ties and low-risk activism or "slacktivism." Liking digital items on Facebook or retweeting a news story demands little effort but the positive feeling derived from engaging in such activity may satisfy one's need for social connection, negating the drive to interface with formal political power.

Nonetheless, the proliferation of online spaces to craft political identities helps "bind politics to everyday life," states the scholar José Marichal. Indeed, some scholars have asserted that the proportion of the population (in Western societies) that is considered to be part of a social movement is somewhat exaggerated. This points to one way in which this exaggeration may get fostered: participation in trivial, low-cost, and low-impact activities that participants self-perceive as meaningful social movement activity. Indeed, this insight might serve as a counterpoint to the "social movement society thesis," that scholars David Meyer and Sydney Tarrow describe as the routinization and institutionalization of social movements and protest in Western societies.

Web-Supported Offline Mobilization: The Arab Spring

In the 2011 Arab Spring protests, social media networks facilitated the rapid collapse of two regimes, Tunisia and Egypt, and aided sociopolitical mobilization in Bahrain and Syria. Protesters used Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to schedule and coordinate the protests and to share their plight with the rest of the world. Thus, digital media undoubtedly played an important role in the political upheavals in the Middle East, which spawned a revolutionary fervor that spread across regions, countries, and continents. Indeed, Occupy Wall Street, which began in New York City and spread to countless other cities across the globe, drew tactical inspiration in part from the Arab Spring. So, too, did the student protests in Quebec, Canada, organized under the banner of the Maple Spring.

A matter of contention, however, is how significant the role of social media was in bringing about the uprisings in the Arab region. Some skeptics argue that real, progressive sociopolitical change is brought about by high-risk activism, strategic hierarchies, and a precise division of tasks; social media, rather, creates loosely structured and relatively leaderless networks incapable of launching revolutions. Consequently, these networks have a difficult time establishing goals and achieving consensus.

Further, some have argued, the protest movement in the Middle East was ultimately caused by the underlying sociopolitical and socioeconomic conditions in the region. For example, in Egypt, the sociopolitical disparity between the small ruling elite and the masses had long reached critical levels, "prompting most experts on the region to expect a major upheaval at some point," states scholar Ekaterina Stepanova. Indeed, a variety of cautions have been employed against overgeneralizing about the importance of social media in these cases. For instance, food prices and food shortages played a role. In some countries (such as Tunisia), there was a relatively highly educated and underemployed youth cohort. Further, some scholars have argued that old-school technologies such as fax machines actually played significant roles in some instances. Also, some scholars have noted that Western journalists focused mostly on English-language Twitter posts, blogs, and so on, and this may have distorted the centrality of these technologies to those living in the affected countries.

However, while social media was not the sole cause of these revolutions, it enhanced the ability of citizens to affect domestic politics. Indeed, the fact that the movement occurred and spread as quickly and garnered the participation and support that it did was largely due to the mobilizing effects of ICT and social media tools, access to which significantly lowered the costs of collective action, especially for protesters in Tunisia and Egypt. The use of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube galvanized the movement by revealing the extent of concern for and commitment to addressing the sociopolitical and socioeconomic issues faced by citizens in the Arab region and, therefore, fostering a "public sense of shared grievances and potential for change."

For example, before and after the protest events, social media messages about liberty, revolution, and freedom were sent worldwide, and the offline protests often followed sharp increases in revolutionary conversations. Further, Tunisia, with a very large population of Facebook users, and Egypt, with more Internet users than any other country in the region save Iran, experienced greater civil disobedience and pressure toward change. Thus, social media also aided in the organization of the movement by synchronizing the actions of the impassioned public, allowing citizens to unite and coordinate rapidly and on a larger scale than would have been possible in the absence of these media technologies. This function is particularly critical in the context of states that exercise tight control over access to mainstream sources of information and means of communication.

Therefore, although social media may be deemed a "weak activist" tool by some, in the case of the Arab Spring, it was used to encourage and facilitate risky offline activism; protesters filled the streets to demonstrate against—and indeed overthrow in some cases—some of the world's most enduring and unruly dictatorships. In other words, in the case of this movement, the use of digital media enhanced the scale, speed, and reach of the mobilizations. As such, the impact of digital technologies on activism in the context of the uprisings in the Middle East is illustrative of the second thought camp outlined above.

Online Mobilizations: Hacktivism and Anonymous

Much of the world's attention has recently been captured by Anonymous, the "rhizomatic, digitally based protest movement," according to scholar Gabriella Coleman. Although initially a name used to coordinate Internet pranks, Anonymous has become a worldwide, decentralized network of individuals focused on promoting freedom of information, expression, and transparency—even as they remain committed to protecting their own privacy and identities. This clandestine, anarchic online group is steeped in hacktivist culture, which was birthed through the Internet. The term *hacktivism* is an amalgamation of the words *hacking* and *activism* and describes politically motivated hacking. It involves digital protest activities such as virtual sit-ins or denial of service (DoS) attacks, which entail targeting Web sites or online applications with false external requests so that they are unable to respond to legitimate traffic, as well as defacement of Web sites or "e-graffiti."

Anonymous emerged out of an extremely popular Internet image board called 4chan, where users engaged collectively in online pranks, says Coleman. Beginning in 2008, some factions of Anonymous began to engage in political action—launching DoS attacks, creating and circulating images and videos, as well as taking to the streets, first protesting against the abuses of the Church of Scientology, then in 2010 against the Motion Picture Association of America in support of the file-sharing Web site The Pirate Bay and against PayPal and MasterCard in support of WikiLeaks, the online organization dedicated to facilitating whistle-blowing and publishing classified materials.

Another turning point in the development of Anonymous as a political protest movement came during the Arab Spring in 2011, when they aided the antigovernment protesters in Tunisia by launching DoS attacks against government and tourist Web sites, circulating videos of the street violence and compiling information packets for Tunisian cyberactivists and protesters detailing how to evade government surveillance, describes Coleman.

While Anonymous has continued since then to engage in a wide range of operations elsewhere in the Middle East as well as Europe, the group has paid particularly close attention to the activities of the U.S. government since the suicide of Aaron Swartz, digital activist and former co-owner of the social news Web site Reddit. At the time of his death, Swartz was facing up to 35 years in prison and a fine of $1 million for the alleged theft of online journals with the intent to post them on the Internet.

In response, deeming the case against Swartz "a grotesque miscarriage of justice," Anonymous launched Operation Last Resort, a campaign in protest of the American criminal justice system and cybercrime laws. This operation largely involved hacks on the property and databases of the U.S. government, including defacing the Web site of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, replacing the home page with a video and a message that

read, "The federal sentencing guidelines enable prosecutors to cheat citizens of their constitutionally-guaranteed right to a fair trial"—a reference to the fervent pursuit of charges against Swartz and a justice system whose minimum sentencing laws unduly empower government prosecutors to elicit guilty pleas from suspects afraid of facing hefty prison sentences at trial.

Anonymous is a self-described decentralized network and purports to have no leaders, hierarchical structure, nor any geographical epicenter, according to Coleman. Membership is open to all—Anonymous is a name that any individual or group can adopt as their own. However, even though there are no formal barriers to participation, there are certain kinds of knowledge, skills, and values that lead some and not others to engage in such "electronic civil disobedience." These include computer programming and hacking skills as well as various digital media literacies, such as video editing, Web design, and the technical capability to use Internet relay chat (IRC). Thus, although Anonymous has no formal leader, the IRC operators hold more authority on the chat and are charged with maintaining order, explains Coleman.

Further, although the group maintains an anti-leader ethic, when it comes to operations like targeting hacking, only a relatively small group of extremely tech-savvy Anons can participate. While the "power to hack" does not translate into the power to lead all actions within the movement, those who have more of a presence on IRC, have put in more work, and have taken greater risks carry somewhat more authority.

Indeed, because what Anonymous and other hacktivists do is in the fuzzy, gray area of legality, if not outright illegal, their brand of social movement activity carries more risk than other forms of digitally enabled protest, such as signing an online petition or creating a Facebook group about a relevant sociopolitical issue, the opportunity costs of which are negligible. To be sure, hackers in general tend to have higher confidence in their approaches to problem solving and engage in more risky behavior than the general public. However, it is debatable whether online protest activities such as targeting hacking carry more risk than traditional forms of protest; nonviolent, offline protests have been historically

Aaron Swartz, the former co-owner of Reddit and a digital activist, in Boston, Massachusetts, in 2009. Swartz committed suicide on January 11, 2013, while being pursued on charges of wire fraud and violation of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act.

effective because participants faced risks of serious personal harm, either from the violent suppression of opposing authorities or from the participants themselves. Further, as mentioned above, in general, the riskiest hacktivist activities carried out under the banner of Anonymous are performed by only the most technically proficient sects, who are extremely skilled and knowledgeable when it comes to concealing their identities and physical locations, treating anonymity as a political tool to regulate risk as well as accountability. On the other hand, the power structures against which the group organizes are disposed with highly sophisticated and resourced agencies geared toward protecting the digital security of the state apparatus from such threats and identifying the culprits.

At any rate, the disruptive online tactic known as hacktivism and those who perform it such as

Anonymous are strong candidates for elements of contemporary activism, which might be said to be game changers. Indeed, although Anonymous engages in online activities that support offline activism, and participates in the offline protests themselves, the nuance of this movement lies in its use of such digitally based civil disobedience. The dynamics of this kind of online protest likely differ from offline forms, both in their organization and their role in contentious campaigns. By coordinating and carrying out skilled, targeted attacks on the computerized and virtual assets of those in power in the context of a relatively decentralized, faceless global network, Anonymous serves as a compelling illustration of the groundbreaking brand of activism conceived of within the third camp discussed above.

Conclusion

Social media and other digital networking technologies are central to contemporary activism. They can greatly reduce the costs of organizing and increase the efficiency of organizing. Social media and related digital technologies can provide information about events and about substantive and ideological issues. Again, this can be done more efficiently—such as by providing links to uniform resource locators (URLs).

Social media can have subtle effects with regard to interpersonal social networks. For example, social media can provide an indicator of the numbers of others who support or participate in a movement and which, from the individual perspective, may affect the tipping point or threshold for influencing one's participation. Social media can provide reference points for self–other comparisons that are utilized in the formation of collective identities. Indeed, social media can make people's social networks more visible (for instance, by showing the friends of an individuals friends on Facebook, information that is not usually as systematically available for offline social networks based on face-to-face interactions). At the same time, it can also distort perceptions about the composition of a given actor's social network (e.g., when an individual friends strangers on Facebook or starts following unknown Twitter followers).

In *Digitally Enabled Social Change*, Jennifer Earl and Katrina Kimport talk about two schools of thought about the effects of the Web on activism: (1) supersized—it magnifies traditional processes; and (2) Theory 2.0—it actually changes the processes that underlie activism. These conjectures continue to constitute hypotheses for future research on social media and activism.

David B. Tindall
Tracy Groenewegen
University of British Columbia

See Also: Anonymous; Clicktivism; Cloud Protesting; Cyber-Vigilantism; Hacktivism; International Unrest and Revolution.

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Actors and Social Media in Politics

After the 2008 U.S. presidential election, pundits began to describe Barack Obama as the first technological or social media president. While part of this moniker was due to the president's desire to retain his personal technology, such as his BlackBerry and e-mail, after being sworn in, it also referenced his use of social media during the campaign. One of Obama's Web sites, My.barackobama.com, was the hub of a carefully constructed campaign designed to utilize social media for encouraging voter turnout, soliciting campaign contributions, sharing information, and encouraging civic engagement. Celebrities such as Chris Rock, Orlando Bloom, and Matthew Broderick were featured prominently in many of the social media efforts, especially YouTube videos showing how regular people could help Obama, just like their favorite celebrity, by taking the day off to help on election day or making campaign phone calls. A similar campaign was used in Obama's 2012 re-election effort with celebrities such as Penny Marshall and KaDee Strickland.

Political Campaigns

In addition to showcasing the potential of social media, Obama's 2008 election also heightened awareness and discussion of celebrity endorsements of political candidates. The partnership of politicians/political parties and celebrities is not a modern phenomenon. Warren Harding's 1920 presidential election saw celebrity endorsements from Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, and Al Jolson. Franklin D. Roosevelt had the support of luminaries such as Judy Garland, Humphrey Bogart, Orson Welles, and James Cagney. President John F. Kennedy was endorsed in 1960 by Sammy Davis, Jr., and Dean Martin. Ronald Reagan, not surprisingly due to his Hollywood background, received support from many celebrities including Frank Sinatra (who personally planned inauguration events after both of Reagan's elections).

In the early days, however, celebrities were more on the fringe of campaigns serving as quiet fund-raisers or doing meet-and-greets. Today celebrities have become actively involved in election campaigns and they are not afraid to voice their opinions. Conversely, politicians have "gone Hollywood" by appearing on entertainment programming (starting with candidate Bill Clinton's saxophone playing on the *Arsenio Hall Show* up to Vice President Joe Biden's appearance on *Parks and Recreation*). While it is clear that politicians rely on Hollywood actors for visibility and fundraising, any impact that such endorsements have on voting or opinion formation is much less clear.

The 2008 election, however, provided an opportunity to conduct a broader study of the effect of celebrity endorsements on political elections due to the long duration of the contest, as well as the number of celebrities involved, especially Oprah Winfrey. Winfrey is one of the most influential media figures today not just because of her television ratings, but also her ability to influence opinion and purchase decisions. Books selected for her book club become best sellers, including Obama's

Oprah Winfrey at a rally in support of then-candidate Barack Obama and his wife Michelle Obama in December 2007. One estimate found that Winfrey may have brought the 2008 Obama campaign as many as 1 million votes through her endorsement.

book, *The Audacity of Hope*, which was touted on her show in 2006, and her annual list of favorite items drives sales. In addition, prior to 2008, Winfrey had never endorsed any political candidate, which gave her endorsement of Barack Obama additional credibility. Studies of her impact on the election resulted in the discovery of what has been dubbed "The Oprah Effect." The Oprah Effect is a calculation of how many votes Obama earned due to her endorsement of his candidacy. The formula estimated that over 1 million votes were cast for Obama because of Winfrey's support. The thought is that if Oprah can bring 1 million votes, other, even lesser, celebrities could have a similar impact, even if it is only thousands or tens of thousands of votes generated.

Platforms

In order for the media or celebrities to have an impact on someone's point of view, the message must first be created, circulated, and then repeated, usually by opinion leaders (family members, valued friends, or celebrities). In other words, people need to have access to the conversation before the conversation can change their views. This is where social media can heighten the potential impact of a celebrity endorsement. Social media is a global platform for opinion leaders of all kinds. In fact, good use of social media can turn the average person into a worldwide opinion leader. Perez Hilton, for example, began as a simple blogger who was an unknown until he used his social media footprint to build a brand of celebrity gossip that has now become a leading source of celebrity news.

Social media thus becomes another platform for promotion, whether it is the promotion of movies, books, or social/political causes. Celebrities must always ensure that whatever they are posting or supporting works to maintain the brand that the actor and his/her team have carefully created. Branding is not a new concept in the digital age. Fans' perception of an actor are based on a created image that is devised by an actor's team, or, in the Golden Age of Hollywood, the studio that owned the star's contract. Fan magazines, fan letters, and appearances on radio and television used to be the ways in which fans learned more about their favorite celebrity. Now this information is carried (often in real time) through Web sites, Facebook pages, or Instagram. One of the key differences between the traditional media fan/celebrity interaction and social media interaction is that the frequent updates/posts shared through social media convey a greater sense of personal connectivity between the celebrity and the fan. In social media, celebrities are able to control the ways in which they reveal themselves to their fans. It is their choice to say what they want and when they want it. They can let fans see a part of their lives that would otherwise be off limits even to the paparazzi. The result is a sense of greater connection between the fan and the actor.

The current trend of posting "selfies," or photos of a celebrity that they take of themselves (usually with the help of a mirror) often in a bedroom, bathroom, or behind-the-scenes area, allows fans

into the most private of spaces. Of course, such intimate glimpses of a celebrity's life are only available to fans that have been "invited," by agreeing to follow or "like" the celebrity.

Celebrities are opinion leaders and thus have a greater potential to impact thoughts and decisions, even if the impact is to only reinforce an already held belief. It is not uncommon for a fan to buy a product simply because their favorite celebrity endorses or recommends it. In one study by Ani Istanboulian, 43 percent of respondents indicated that they have learned more about a cause because of a celebrity they follow online.

This is not necessarily unique to social media. In World War II, the government relied heavily on celebrities to help sell war bonds or to create propaganda films that raised the spirits of the troops and citizens on the home front. Actors also worked to reinforce the official government discourse about what was occurring overseas. In addition, celebrities also worked to influence the government's stance on issues relating to how to fight the war. For example, Walt Disney created the 1943 animated/live-action film *Victory Through Air Power* to try to convince the U.S. government to shift its military strategy to dominance in the skies (through war planes) rather than on the ground or sea. The film was a visual adaptation of Alexander P. de Seversky's book and featured de Seversky in the live action portion of the film. Disney was a firm believer in de Seversky's theory of the importance of air superiority and thus served as an endorser of this cause.

Social Media Reach

While politicians or political causes have always looked to celebrities to bring visibility and dollars to their campaigns, social media increases the volume and reach of the conversation. In addition, social media tools create a straightforward system for tracking the potential strength of a celebrity endorsement. The number of followers that a celebrity has on Twitter or Facebook, for example, is a strong predictor of their popularity and potential influence. Lady Gaga has over 38 million followers on Twitter and over 57 million on Facebook. Justin Bieber has over 2 billion views on YouTube and over 40 million followers on Twitter. Oprah has over 19 million followers on Twitter and 8 million "likes" on Facebook. Conversely, Bill Clinton has less than 800,000 Twitter followers. But how does this translate into influence?

In June 2013, a teenage girl posted an Instagram picture of Justin Bieber—who she happened to be sitting next to at an NBA basketball game. Her Instagram following jumped to over 1,000. However, subsequent pictures showed the young pop star touching her arm (most reports say the touch was accidental contact). Justin Bieber fans viewed the image differently and mistakenly thought that the two were dating. The picture went viral and the "Beliebers" (the name given to Bieber's dedicated fans) began to send the girl death threats and hate posts. As a result, she had to change all of her social media profiles to private settings, as well as leave the game early as she feared for her safety.

While this example is extreme in terms of showing the influence that celebrities can have on their fans, as well as how that influence can escalate very quickly in social media, it also points to the fact that fans can be radical in their feelings about a celebrity. In addition, it shows that age matters in terms of possible impact of a celebrity endorsement. If a voter or consumer is younger, they are more likely to be influenced by a candidate or product endorsed by a celebrity, especially if the celebrity himself or herself is younger. This does not mean that older celebrities are not useful as endorsers, it just indicates that is it important to know the audience that is being targeted when seeking the support of a celebrity. There are some celebrities, however, that have been shown in a study in 2007 by *Forbes* to have a negative influence on opinion: Rosie O'Donnell, Madonna, Jane Fonda, Tom Cruise, and Donald Trump.

Influence can also be seen in a celebrity's Klout score, which tracks influence across eight social media platforms. A Klout score is based primarily on the topics discussed, people's reaction in terms of "likes" and retweets, who posts are shared with, frequency of posts, and number of followers. The highest Klout scores (out of 100) belong to Justin Bieber, Justin Timberlake, and Rihanna with 93. They are followed closely by Lady Gaga, Taylor Swift, Oprah Winfrey, and Stephen Colbert (who helped convince Bill Clinton to join Twitter). An interesting note is the decline of Ashton Kutcher, who was once seen as the pre-eminent social media

user. However, Kutcher suffered very negative publicity over a series or tweets, especially regarding his dismay over the firing of Joe Paterno. After this incident, Kutcher turned his social media accounts over to a public relations firm. As a result, Kutcher's Klout score dropped to a low 87.

Comedians

While Kutcher may not have benefited from tweeting controversial statements, numerous comedians have made their livings by criticizing politicians or social issues in a humorous, but sometimes controversial manner. Bill Maher's *Politically Incorrect* and Dennis Miller, the faux news anchor from *Saturday Night Live* who followed up with his self-titled show, shaped a genre of entertainment in which the lines between comedian and commentator became blurred. Such faux newscasts or talk shows gained tremendous popularity on Comedy Central in the early 2000s.

The Daily Show with Jon Stewart and *The Colbert Report* (both on Comedy Central) have taken the satire and parody of news and politics to new levels. One key difference is that now the politicians are in on the joke and use the shows to promote their agendas. *The Daily Show*'s "Indecision 2008," Stewart's "March to Restore Sanity" versus Colbert's "March to Keep Fear Alive," and Jon Stewart/Bill O'Reilly's "Rumble in the Air Conditioned Auditorium" brought significant attention to the presidential campaigns while providing issue information to the shows' fans. The messages are conveyed through social media with Facebook, Twitter, and dedicated Web sites serving also as platforms for discussion.

It has been noted that younger voters rely more on the above shows for news regarding elections or current events than they do on traditional media. Other comedians, however, have taken a more straightforward approach to message delivery. Victoria Jackson, a former *Saturday Night Live* cast member, is cohost of a Web series, *PolitiChicks*, that provides a platform for her political commentary rather than comedy. Jackson is a supporter of the conservative Tea Party movement.

Other Causes

The interconnectivity between Washington, D.C., and Hollywood is well evident during election years (or the White House Correspondents Dinner, where politicians try to out-do each either by inviting A-list celebrities). Over the last decade or so, however, celebrities have shown a greater willingness to support a social or political cause that they believe in rather than a political campaign. Supporting the wrong political party or candidate can tarnish a star's brand or decrease their fan base. Supporting philanthropic endeavors is a safer endorsement option. By supporting a cause rather than a candidate, celebrities are able to appear with politicians from both sides of the aisle, which gains visibility for the cause without potentially angering fans who may not hold the same political ideology. For example, Jeff Bridges wrote on his Web site prior to the 2012 conventions that he would be attending both the Democratic and Republican conventions to talk to politicians on behalf of No Kid Hungry, a group dedicated to eradicating childhood hunger in America.

Passion and commitment are key to the success of a celebrity endorsement of either a politician or cause, and can successfully leverage the popularity of an actor's fan base and get fans to participate. Lady Gaga, Justin Bieber, Ashton Kutcher, Matt Damon, Britney Spears, and more have used social media to spread the word about causes they support. Celebrities are able to deliver the message of a candidate or a charity to vastly more people through their social media networks, or reach, which results in increased awareness, as well as more donations of money and time. The collaborations between nonprofits and celebrities are mutually beneficial as the actor gets positive publicity and the cause gets validation. In other words, a fan will see a group as legitimate and worth supporting if an actor they trust is involved in the organization.

Many celebrities want to have part of their brand be identified with political and social awareness and activism. Edward Norton cofounded Crowdrise, which is a grassroots donation platform. Crowdrise allows users to tap into their social networks to raise funds for their charitable causes. Celebrities such as Seth Rogan, Danny Devito, and Will Ferrell all use the site. Crowdrise allows users to create a microsite to raise money for a cause. The microsite can be permanent so that a person who is truly committed to the cause can friend-to-friend fund-raise continually. The better a celebrity is at social media, the greater their chances of soliciting

high levels of donations. Actor Ian Somerhader from *The Vampire Diaries* raised $120,000 in one month for one of his charities. The additional benefit of Crowdrise is that an actor's public profile allows everyone to see what issues matter to them, important for branding efforts.

Malaria No More is another charity that has successfully leveraged celebrity endorsements to promote awareness of an issue that is not perceived to be of high priority by many in the United States. Malaria No More designed a campaign that used well-known comedians. The results ended up on the popular Funny or Die Web site. The campaign resulted in 300,000 Facebook and Twitter supporters and $750,000 in donations. In 2010, Lady Gaga supported a campaign to repeal the military's "Don't Ask Don't Tell" (DADT) policy. The social media activists asked her followers to visit the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network and within three days over 100,000 people went to the site. Almost all of those were first-time viewers. Her comments on Facebook resulted in over 50,000 "likes." Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid posted comments to Lady Gaga, through his campaign's Twitter account, about the upcoming vote that would repeal DADT. As a result of the exchange, some of Gaga's followers tweeted their support of Reid.

The recent debate over gun control illustrates how one celebrity can work to influence opinion through social media posts. Dean Cain, who played Superman on the TV series *Lois and Clark*, posted a question on Twitter on April 10, 2013, asking his followers if gun control could work. Along with the post, he shared a link to a video that analyzed the effectiveness of Australia's semiautomatic gun control ban. Cain did not engage in a hard-sell approach, but rather let the video inform his followers so they could formulate their own opinion (or at least feel that they have formed their own opinion rather than being manipulated by the choice of video). Conversely, Jim Carrey took a more direct approach on the other side of the same issue by mass tweeting members of the U.S. Senate. Allowing people to come to their own conclusion, especially if it is the conclusion supported by the celebrity, politician, or advertiser, is an important grassroots strategy. Social media further provides validity to an issue by allowing "regular" people to post their own stories. In the Dean Cain example, followers from Australia posted in support of the video's message that Australia's gun control laws did not work.

Drawbacks

There are downsides to having celebrity endorsements, especially in the age of social media. Social media allows for a message to be posted and reposted, but the creators cannot control the reposting or the editing of certain content. A recent example was Clint Eastwood's address at the 2012 Republican National Convention. Eastwood has a long political career from his support of Richard Nixon in the 1960s to being mayor of Carmel-by-the-Sea, California. During the convention, Eastwood engaged in a 10-minute debate with an empty chair that was used to symbolize Obama. It became a defining moment in the campaign as the meme "Eastwooding" went viral along with the posting of pictures of empty chairs. In just a few days an "Invisible Obama" Twitter account had over 32,000 followers. Even Obama tweeted an image of himself sitting in a chair in the White House accompanied by the line "This seat's taken."

Other celebrities have changed their support for a cause or candidate. Matt Damon, a strong supporter of Obama in 2008, was extremely vocal in his lack of endorsement in 2012. Damon asserted in social and mainstream media that he felt that Obama had not delivered on his promises. Damon, however, is still active in his support of other causes through social media such as the H_20 Africa Foundation. But even the negative social media case studies demonstrate that celebrities get people talking about the politician or cause.

Another potential concern is the trend of celebrities viewing Twitter or Facebook as a revenue stream rather than a transparent form of communication with fans. Currently, there are a handful of celebrities who are willing to be paid to tweet by an advertiser. The level of payment is based on number of followers. For example, Kim Kardashian is paid $10,000 per tweet to reach her almost 18 million followers, while Tia Mowry commands $1,275 per tweet for her just over 1 million followers. The sponsored tweets are apparent, but if more celebrities adopt this practice it may impact the appearance of sincerity of any of their tweets.

Conclusion

While the potential for celebrity influence via social media sounds significant, this is still a new area of study and more long-term research needs to be conducted. In the short term, it appears that having a celebrity who is passionate about the cause or candidate can have a positive impact. They are able to keep an issue in front of the public for a longer period of time, that is, change the story's news cycle, and keep the issue on the cultural agenda. If nothing else, they allow for a broader, cross-platform conversation among a global, activist audience.

Pamela C. O'Brien
Bowie State University

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; *Colbert Report, The*; *Daily Show, The*; Musicians and Social Media in Politics; Television and Social Media; Television Personalities and Social Media in Politics.

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Adbusters Media Foundation

The Adbusters Media Foundation (AMF) is a Vancouver-based, not-for-profit, anticonsumer culture, pro-environment, activist organization founded in 1989 by Kalle Lasn and Bill Schmalz. The AMF has an anti-institutional ideology that focuses on challenging traditional notions of consumerism, and represents itself as an organization for and by activists involved in building resistance against consumer culture. The AMF is especially critical of the advertising industry, claiming that it is the source of many of society's problems, which, the organization argues, are all worsened through excessive and increasing consumerism.

Characterized by some as anticapitalist, the AMF publishes *Adbusters*, a reader-supported, advertising-free, bimonthly magazine with an international circulation of approximately 120,000 people in 60 countries. *Adbusters* features critical views of consumerism and advertising, as well as criticisms of academia and its impact on public policy decisions. In the place of paid advertisements, *Adbusters* features satirical "anti-ads" that often mock traditional advertisements and promote public service and nonprofit

A protester at George W. Bush's second presidential inauguration on January 20, 2005, holds a satirical "Corporate American Flag" created by the Adbusters Media Foundation that features corporate logos in place of stars and is marked "sold."

organizations. In 2013 AMF released a book written by Lasn titled *Meme Wars*, offering a harsh critique of the way neoclassical economics is taught and written about.

A key component of the AMF's ideology and practice is the concept of culture jamming, a vehicle used by many anticonsumer culture movements to advocate for less consumerism through civil disobedience and the interruption of traditional media culture. The AMF believes that culture jamming is the key to deconstructing consumer culture as it currently exists. Participants in these activities are called culture jammers. The AMF's approach to culture jamming is largely inspired by situationist theories, which emphasize the reversal of received messages in order to undermine traditional power structures.

Common culture jamming tactics include refiguring logos, fashion statements, and product images; advocating various forms of hacktivism to overcome traditional cyberspace restrictions; and purchasing airtime on major networks to advocate for anticonsumption ideals. In addition, culture jamming sometimes entails transforming mass media to produce ironic or satirical commentary about itself, using the original medium's mode of communication.

Campaigns

The AMF has launched numerous international anticonsumerism campaigns designed to encourage people to decrease their participation in consumer culture. The AMF created and cosponsored events such as "Buy Nothing Day," "Unbrand America," and "TV Turn-Off Week," which the organization believed would help citizens lessen their involvement in excessive consumer consumption. The AMF has also sold Blackspot shoes, which are made in an "antisweatshop" facility in Pakistan.

The most notable of the AMF's campaigns has been Occupy Wall Street. According to the AMF Web site, along with groups such as Occupy Wall Street, USDayOfRage, NYC General Assembly, Take The Square, and Anonymous, the AMF called for

> 20,000 people [to] flood into lower Manhattan [on September 17, 2011], set up tents, kitchens, peaceful barricades and occupy Wall Street for a few months.

The AMF promoted the Occupy Wall Street protest with a poster featuring a dancer atop Wall Street's iconic charging bull and the AMF staff created the #OCCUPYWALLSTREET hashtag on Twitter. The movement, which has gone global, was started by the AMF, but the group does not control the movement or its participants.

The AMF has received praise as well as criticism for its opposition to consumer culture. Some claim that it represents a cultural revolution and offers inspiration for the changes needed for a more just world, while others argue that the organization is making a commodity out of cultural resistance and lacks the necessary money or power to create any lasting change.

Meghan R. Sobel
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Economic and Social Justice; Hacktivism; International Online Communities; International Unrest and Revolution; Occupy Movement.

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Addiction, Social Media

Social media addiction is an increasingly popular term used to represent heavy use of social networks that interferes with daily life. Many studies

have shown that social media possess addictive qualities similar to drug, alcohol, or chemical addictions. Terms associated with social media withdrawal, similar to those of other addiction withdrawals, include frantically craving, very anxious, extremely antsy, miserable, and jittery.

Excessive usage of social media is only beginning to be examined in a modern, media-laden world as a possible psychiatric disorder and by-product of the cultural adoption of mediated platforms at an increasing rate. The scope and examination of social media addiction is derived from studies that focus on Internet addiction. Other addiction studies relating to pathological gambling and substance dependency also provide a framework for evaluation. A study by the International Center for Media & the Public Agenda (ICMPA) at the University of Maryland concludes that most college students are not just unwilling but functionally unable to be without their media links to the world. "I clearly am addicted, and the dependency is sickening," says one respondent.

Forms

The six different types of social media outlets from which addiction may stem are (1) Wikipedia, (2) blogs and microblogs, such as Twitter; (3) content communities, such as YouTube; (4) social networking sites, such as Facebook; (5) virtual game worlds, such as World of Warcraft; and (6) virtual social worlds, such as Second Life.

Cell phone addiction is identified as a form of social media addiction. With 6.7 billion mobile subscriptions, 1.3 billion smartphones, 2.3 billion users consuming news on mobile devices, and 4 billion users receiving ads on their mobile devices, the mobile segment possesses a 94 percent penetration rate for the planet and significantly adds to the ubiquity of social media access.

Assessment

Although mobile technology may increase social media addiction issues, some scholars say that engaging social media regularly is an activity that benefits children and adolescents by enhancing communication, social connection, and even technical skills.

Questions of whether social media addicts are addicted to the platform of social media or the associated content have become an area of increasing debate among psychological communities. Scholars identify that social media users become addicted to different aspects of media usage. One of the first studies to assess Facebook addiction was crafted by Cecilie Andreassen of the University of Bergen, Norway. She identified addiction occurring more regularly among younger users than older users. Andreassen also identified that people who are anxious and socially insecure use social media more than others, possibly because those who suffer from social anxiety find it easier to communicate via social media than face to face.

It has also been found that organized and more ambitious individuals tend to be less at risk from social media addiction as they will often use social media as an integral part of work and networking. People scoring high on narcissism tend to be more active on social network sites as those sites provide opportunities to present oneself in a favorable way in line with one's ideal self.

Research that evaluates gender and the usage of social media has indicated that women are more at risk of developing social media addiction, which many scholars believe is a result of the social nature of interacting with the media.

The five-factor model of personality, also known as the Big Five, assesses broad domains or dimensions of personality that are used to describe human personality and has been used as a tool to understand addictive tendencies and their relation to personality type. The model focuses on personality assessment based on five main dimensions: (1) extraversion (being outgoing and talkative), (2) agreeableness (being sympathetic and warm), (3) conscientiousness (being organized and prompt), (4) neuroticism (being nervous and moody), and (5) openness to experience (being creative and intellectually oriented).

Social media addictive tendencies have been reported to be positively related to extraversion and negatively related to conscientiousness. Scholars have reported that extraversion, neuroticism, and openness to experience were all positively associated with frequency of social media use. It has been suggested that extroverts use social media for social enhancement, whereas introverts use it for social compensation, each of which appears to be associated with elevated use. People who score low on conscientiousness are assumed to use social

media as a way of procrastinating; hence, conscientiousness is assumed to be negatively associated with social media use. Neuroticism is assumed to be positively related to use of social media as it may be a way of seeking support. In addition, social media gives people with high scores on neuroticism more time, compared to face-to-face interactions, for contemplation before acting.

Andreassen's Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale is based on six basic criteria, where all items are scored on the following scale: (1) very rarely, (2) rarely, (3) sometimes, (4) often, and (5) very often:

- You spend a lot of time thinking about Facebook or plan use of Facebook.
- You feel an urge to use Facebook more and more.
- You use Facebook in order to forget about personal problems.
- You have tried to cut down on the use of Facebook without success.
- You become restless or troubled if you are prohibited from using Facebook.
- You use Facebook so much that it has had a negative impact on your job or studies.

Andreassen's study shows that scoring of often or very often on at least four of the six items may suggest that a person is addicted to Facebook.

There have been other measures to assess social media addiction, including the Facebook Attitude Scale. This scale has six items for assessing attitudes toward Facebook. Each item is rated on a 5-point scale with anchors of 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores then reflect positive attitudes toward Facebook, according to N. B. Ellison and colleagues.

The Online Sociability Scale is comprised of five items, each pertaining to frequencies of different uses of Facebook, such as comments on photographs or sending private messages. Scores are rated on a 9-point scale using the anchors of 1 (less than once per year) and 9 (more than once daily). Higher ratings reflect high frequency of Facebook use.

The Addictive Tendencies Scale has three items representing salience to, loss of control of, and withdrawal from Facebook usage. Each item is rated on a 7-point scale with anchors of 1 (strongly disagree) and 7 (strongly agree). High ratings indicate high addictive tendencies.

The NEO-Five Factor Inventory is a short, 60-item version of the NEO Personality Inventory-Revised, which provides a brief, comprehensive measure of the domains of the five-factor model of personality: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

The BIS-BAS scales assess behavioral inhibition using seven items. Focus is on measuring predisposition to avoid threatening or punishing stimuli. The BAS scale of 13 items assesses predisposition to approach appetitive stimuli.

Conclusion

Overall, the swell of social media prominence and its associated addictive qualities is an area of increased investigation from academic, corporate, and technological orientation. As media increases bandwidth, cell phone networks continue to stream faster data, and device capacity increases, the end user is interacting with more complex information becoming traded on social media spaces. This exchange of information continues to situate technology and the end user in an increasingly complex relationship, with addictive tendencies seemingly on the rise.

Jason Schmitt
Green Mountain College

See Also: Attention Crash; Cognitive Surplus; Facebook; Social Computing and Social Information Processing; Social Media, Adoption of; Superconnected.

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Advertising and Marketing

Increasingly social media is the first thing that people check when they wake up in the morning and the last thing that they check before they go to bed. Staying connected via smartphone or tablet (the PC is rapidly being replaced globally as the device of choice for accessing the Internet) is not restricted to teenagers or young adults, although they are still the heaviest users of social media. Worldwide, one out of seven people had a Facebook page in 2013 (approximately 1 billion people or more than three times the population of the United States, with 680 million of those being mobile users), and close to four out of five people visit social networks or blogs on a regular basis. Twitter doubled its user base in the last six months of 2012 and has surpassed 200 million active users. YouTube has 4 billion views per day with 72 hours of content being uploaded every minute, and Flickr provides users access to over 8 billion photographs. While these numbers are impressive, the figures will continue to increase as consumers turn more to second screen (mobile) devices to not only stay connected through social media, but also to watch and discuss the majority of their entertainment and news programming. As the eyes of consumers turn more and more to social media, companies look increasingly to social media as a key platform for delivering advertising messages.

By 2017, it is predicted that social ad spending will rise to $11 billion, up from $4.7 billion in 2012. The importance of such high connectivity for social media advertising and marketing is magnified, because social media sites are able to collect tremendous amounts of both demographic (age, sex, race, income) and psychographic (values, beliefs, desires, consumption patterns) data. Such market research is referred to as "netnography." In spite of these values, companies have been slow to incorporate social media into their advertising mix. This is due in part to a lack of clear understanding regarding how social media fits into a traditional integrated marketing communication (ICM) plan, as well as an inability to effectively measure the metrics that demonstrate a return on investment. In spite of the concerns, advertising through social media can offer companies unique opportunities to engage with their customers through open communication, collaborative information creation, and rapid feedback. Also, social media advertising has shown promise as a way to influence product awareness, opinions and attitudes, information seeking, purchasing, and postpurchase discussion. This is the case even if—perhaps, especially if—the "product" being marketed is a political candidate, an advocacy agenda, or a particular ideological stance on a salient social issue. These benefits of social media advertising will become clearer as social networking sites continue to refine their advertising and marketing platforms.

According to a Vizu study in October 2012, 75 percent of advertisers are using social media, shifting budgets from offline to online to do so, as they recognize the need to create advertising campaigns for both traditional and social media. Social media marketing (SMM) involves both paid and unpaid practices. Unpaid platforms can be corporate Facebook pages, blogs, YouTube channels, or Twitter accounts. These are all clearly identified as being created and maintained by a corporate entity, as transparency is very important in social media advertising. Paid platforms involve ads on any of the above sites or the sponsorship of blogs. The paid portion of social media efforts are a relatively small percentage of advertising budgets, with 70 percent of advertisers only spending between 1 and 10 percent of their budgets on social media. It is anticipated that this percentage will continue to rise, as over 64 percent of companies plan to increase their social media advertising spending in 2013.

By 2017 social media advertising may account for almost 20 percent of a company's total advertising budget. Of the money being spent, over 50 percent of advertising dollars are going to Facebook ads, with Twitter and YouTube a distant second with 13 percent. But SSM spending is not consistent worldwide. North America dominates social media advertising spending, accounting for almost half of all ads globally. Western Europe and Asia each spend approximately one-fourth of all global social media advertising dollars, while the Middle East and Africa combined account for less than 1 percent. These figures do not match with social media and Internet use as the United

States ranks fourth in social media use behind Indonesia, Argentina, and Russia.

The primary area for paid advertising on social media is through what is known as native advertising. Native ads are ones that are extremely relevant, that is, targeted to specific users and embedded within news streams on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn. Native ads could involve video or interactive content, but the goal of native advertising is to find commonalities between target audiences and advertising to bring the two together. This is where social media excels, as individuals seek out social media sites or groups that match their own interests. The search for commonality can lead to the creation of brand communities where consumers gain information, share ideas, play games, and more. Advertisers need to find, or occasionally create, such sites to reach their target audience(s). Such targeting is engaging, relevant, and fosters word-of-mouth or viral spread of the advertising message. Social media sites have been creating multiple ways to assist companies in the distribution of native advertising and the formation of brand communities, as can be seen in the sampling of techniques and platforms that follow.

Google

One of the earliest advertising services on the Internet was Google AdWords, which launched in October 2000. Through AdWords a business creates an ad and then identifies key words related to the business. Whenever a potential customer performs a Google search using one of the key words, the business' ad might appear. The system worked on a pay-per-click basis (also known as cost per impression or CPM): companies were only charged if someone clicked on the ad that directed them to the advertiser's Web site, and prices per click were relatively low, with many at $0.25.

In 2002, AdWords was switched to an auction model where companies have to bid in order to receive key placement and a greater chance of their ad being shown. This has resulted in significant price increases, with some searches costing $100 per click in order to receive the highest placement on Google. Placement does matter, as advertisements in the top positions receive 10 times as many clicks as ads that are in side locations. While Google AdWords is very profitable for Google, and 2012 revenue increased 35 percent to $12.21 billion (97 percent of that revenue is from advertising), return on investment for the companies placing the advertisements has decreased due to increased cost. However, businesses still see profitability, as there is an average $2 return for every $1 spent through Google AdWords.

Facebook

Facebook, a company that posted $305 million in advertising revenue in 2012, is constantly updating and expanding its tools for advertisers. In July 2012, the company launched page post targeting enhanced, which allows organizations to target their page posts based on key demographic and psychographic information such as "likes," gender, relationship status, and more. This then helps

Industry representatives gathered in Facebook's booth at ad:tech London, an event for online marketing and advertising specialists in September 2010. By 2012 Facebook's advertising revenues had exceeded $300 million.

to drive traffic to a company's Web site by collecting user information on the Facebook domain based on the clicking of the "like" button. This was followed in August by Pages You May Like, paid-for sponsored stories, and Sponsored Results, ads that display near searches as well as more refined ad targeting techniques. Facebook's tools are not limited to large companies. Page Like Ads are designed to assist small businesses in creating ads for either the mobile or desktop platforms.

More recently, Facebook added Partner Categories to track user data across the Web as well as outside the Web. Previously, advertisers only had access to data in a person's Facebook profile. With the Custom Audience feature, advertisers receive not only Facebook profile information, but also offline information such as purchase history, job category, and lifestyle. While there are many privacy concerns with such tactics, as will be discussed later, Partner Categories do not share information about one specific Facebook user. Rather, they create categories that show advertisers the number of users who fall into them, such as dog owners. If that is a category that a company's advertisement appeals to, then the Power Editor tool will allow a target message to be driven to those Facebook users. All of these advertising features, as well as a tool to set the advertising budget, are easily accessed through the Ads Manager button on a company's Facebook page. Advertisements on Facebook must be kept simple, as the ad headline can be no more than 25 characters and the text is only 90 characters. An ad may feature an image, but that image will then be the thumbnail everyone sees on the company's Facebook page.

Twitter

Twitter began to refine its advertising options in 2010 with Promoted Tweets, Promoted Trends, and Promoted Accounts. These types of promoted advertisements are clearly labeled as such, but can be targeted to relevant users and thus appear in their timeline. Users can click on the tweet, trend, or account for more information or they can dismiss the information out of their timelines. However, users cannot opt out of receiving future promoted items. Prices for Promoted Trends are $200,000 a day, and Twitter recommends a cost-per-click bid of at least $0.50 for Promoted Tweets, but in order to receive a higher placement rate the recommendation is $1.50. Companies that want to increase their chances of having their tweets appear can bid more. In addition, companies can pay a recommended $2.50 per new follower to have their company included in the "Who to Follow" box on the Twitter home page. Facebook also allows companies to push coupons or promotions to potential customers through Facebook Offers. Offers can be shared with other users and will appear in a user's timeline.

In February 2013, Twitter bought Bluefin Labs, a company that captures social media analytics, which resulted in the launch of Twitter TV Ad Targeting. This service allows television advertising campaigns to be synced to Twitter ad campaigns. The service tracks when an ad runs on television and then who tweets about the show. While there is no guarantee that a tweet about a TV show means that a person saw the ad, it does indicate a higher level of engagement. Companies can build in interactivity, and there is an increased possibility of consumer-to-consumer communication. The goal of all of Twitter's advertising platforms is to help businesses target individuals who will more likely become customers, and conversion rates can occur for as little as $0.60. The strategy appears to be working. In just two years of offering paid advertising, Twitter's advertising revenue grew 213 percent to $139.5 million in 2011 and $288 million in 2012.

Another trend for advertising on Twitter makes use of the high number of people who follow tweets by celebrities. Fans like to feel that they really know their favorite celebrity and posts on social media allow this to occur (although many posts are made by public relations firms rather than the celebrities themselves). Companies are beginning to pay celebrities to tweet about their product or service. For example, Kim Kardashian is paid $10,000 for a sponsored tweet to reach her over 17 million followers. Charlie Sheen joined Twitter and quickly was paid $9,500 to tweet about internships.com. The site received over 95,000 clicks in one hour. Such sponsored tweets are akin to having paid celebrity endorsers, but it is not always clear to readers that the tweets are being sponsored.

YouTube

YouTube also has a booming advertising business, showing in 2012 a 60 percent increase in

revenue over 2011. Advertisers paid over $4 billion to YouTube; this will likely increase because of new revenue-sharing programs. The new programs eliminate the need for content creators to seek YouTube's permission to pair their videos with a sponsor. There is now a simple "monetize" button that permits content creators to connect with a monetizing partner almost seamlessly—although some users do report glitches, delays, and even interruptions in monetizing through the "green button" function. Content creators keep roughly half of all of the revenue. Ads can occur before the video or on the home page. YouTube's Ads Leaderboard allows possible advertising creators an opportunity to view which ads are currently the most popular. YouTube's advertising processes are tied to Google's AdWords through TrueView suite.

Integrated Marketing Communication

Regardless of which social media platform(s) a company selects to advertise on, the advertising messages must be part of the company's overall marketing plan (IMC). Integrated marketing communication is a process in which companies create a coordinated plan across all aspects of the marketing mix in an attempt to control and unify the messages distributed to consumers about an organization's objectives or goals. Traditional IMC plans rely on managers to carefully control what is being said and how it is being said. Since social media is heavily consumer-generated, companies lose part of that control. That does not mean, however, that social media cannot be incorporated into an IMC plan.

Companies need to recognize the unique nature of social media in order to utilize it effectively. For example, companies need to talk to, not at, consumers, as well as listen to what the consumers are saying. Hard or direct sell tactics are not the most effective in social media ads. This is due, in part, to the multiple communication channels seen in social media: company to customers, customers to company, and customer to customer. While this does shift the balance of power toward the consumer, social media–savvy companies realize that this is the new landscape consumers operate in. Consumers trust social media sites for providing unbiased information, although this may not be a correct assumption, and turn to them more frequently when they are seeking out information on a company or product.

A company's social media sites should become the primary place that consumers go to seek out information. Because companies cannot control all of what is being said about them in social media, they do need to monitor on a regular basis what is being said about their products or services. The comments, if positive, can be used to help promote the company through sharing the posts across social media platforms or to implement a predetermined communication plan to deal with negative posts. All companies need to have social media policies and plans in place.

Another drawback to social media marketing is a lack of effective metrics to measure success of advertisements. Therefore, many companies utilize social media primarily as a way to build brand image and awareness, which is measured using pins, "likes," views, click-throughs, shares, and retweets. Advertisers would prefer to find a way to assess brand lift and sales through social media marketing. Without an effective way to gather this data, greater use of social media as an advertising platform will continue to be limited. Many companies are working to develop effective metrics, and a beta test by Twitter of one such metric demonstrated that promoted tweets had a 22-percent higher message association.

The potential downsides of social media advertising do not outweigh the potential benefits. Companies who use their social media walls to push their advertising messages witness strong conversion rates, clicks that result in sales, sign-ups, time on-site, or other tangible activities. Unpaid social media ads can also result in strong referral traffic such as sending potential customers to company-sponsored blogs. Regardless of what a company uses, either paid or unpaid, it is important to use social media as a way to help customers as much as possible. As with traditional advertising, social media ads need to show how a company or product can solve a problem that a customer is facing. If a company can convince that targeted individual that their product will most successfully correct the problem, then a sale can occur. In social media, however, such successful problem solving can go viral and be spread to thousands, if not millions, of other people. It is word of mouth on a digital, global scale. In addition, social media benefits

from the fact that all posts, whether advertising or not, appear organic and thus, people are willing to share those posts with others, especially if they involve a good success story.

There are many other strategies for how to effectively use social media marketing as part of an IMC plan. Experts consistently reference social media's ability to easily track consumer preferences through what they "like" or follow. Companies can use this information to seek out the sites that bring customers together based on common interests related to a company's core business. These sites provide engaged potential customers that should be more receptive to related advertising messages, whether sponsorship of a site or a banner ad. Shared interest also allows for feedback that the company can use to improve its messages or the products themselves. In addition, allowing consumers to share what they are "liking" throughout their entire social media presence makes consumers feel like they are part of the process (or dialogue), while also becoming another form of unpaid advertising.

Customer Participation

Research has shown that social media advertisements that encourage some level of customer participation or interaction are also effective. Examples include loyalty programs, online voting (especially for social causes to receive funding), or gaming. Games may not appear to be an ad, but if created properly they can be an effective way to promote a product. Movie companies have embraced this form of online advertising. These examples tie into the need for companies to think outside the box of what an advertisement should look like, as well as a willingness to be a bit outrageous in the creative content of an ad. For example, Dove's "Evolution" campaign featured a short video that exposed the make-up and Photoshop tricks used to make models appear more conventionally beautiful. The video was designed to encourage discussion about distorted body image and issues of self-esteem. The video was viewed over 44,000 times the first day and 12 million times within the first year. The bigger benefit for Dove is the estimated $150 million of free advertising the campaign created due to viral spreading of the video that resulted in mainstream media discussion of the ad.

Other Issues

It is important to note that there are other issues that companies need to be aware of when they are creating a social media marketing plan. Many of these are legal issues that relate to privacy. Over the last few years, there have been increasing numbers of lawsuits aimed at clarifying the relationship between the types of information that social media sites gather about their users and what they can provide to advertisers. Learning such personal information is key to the ability to use social media to effectively target the consumers advertisers are trying to reach, but is this a violation of user privacy?

California now requires that all apps (either on the Apple App Store or the Android Store) have a privacy policy that is available to consumers prior to downloading an app. Other states and Congress are currently looking into privacy issues and more regulation will be likely in the future. Regulation regarding collecting personal data from children has already changed as a result of an amended Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) of December 19, 2012, by the Federal Trade Commission that seeks to limit the information a company can collect and share about children under the age of 13 without parental consent.

Conclusion

Regardless of how social media is used as an advertising tool, businesses need to keep in mind that some aspects of good advertising do not change. First, companies need to clearly define the objects that they wish to achieve through social media. Advertising is driven by assessment and accountability. Companies need to know that they are receiving return on investment as well as meeting all of an IMC plan's goals. Clearly defined outcomes will help a business to carefully select the marketing channels that best fit their corporate message, since there are too many social networking sites to utilize them all for each campaign. Companies need to pick the ones that best match with the marketing objective. Regardless of which traditional or social media platforms they select, all advertising messages must be kept consistent and straightforward. Effective social media marketing campaigns should be simple, show a product's advantage of price and quality over the

competitors, contain an engaging or fun advertising message, and clearly convey the unique selling proposition of the product or service.

Pamela C. O'Brien
Bowie State University

See Also: Buzz Creation; Cause-Marketing Campaigns; Click-Through Rate; Engagement Advertising; Focus Groups; Going Viral; Google AdWords/AdSense in Campaign Strategy; Interactive Advertising Bureau; Proxy Measurements; Return on Investment; Rich Media Ad; Search Engine Optimization; Sponsored Listings; Viral Marketing.

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Advocacy Groups, Political Branding of

Advocacy groups, or interest groups, are specific actors that undertake a systematic effort to further or achieve specific policy goals, to some extent, through the influence on public opinion; therefore, their impact in the development of political, economic, and social systems is undoubted. Advocacy groups might include nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), lobby organizations, pressure groups, activist groups, or social movement organizations. Advocacy groups may differ by size and objectives—either long-term impact or short-term response to the issue in focus. The range of issues addressed by various advocacy groups covers issues addressed by local, state, and federal governments, as well as issues that are not addressed by government, but are of interest to a specific community. This range can cover labor, civil rights, democracy, education, health care, the environment, commerce, religion, or the justice system. Motives may vary from political and religious to commercial spheres. Methods used by groups for advocacy activities include lobbying, media campaigns, publicity stunts, polls, research, and policy briefings. Some groups are supported by powerful business or political interests and exert considerable influence on the political process; others have few such resources.

Some groups have developed into important political institutions or social movements. Powerful lobby groups are sometimes argued to be manipulating the democratic system for commercial gains; therefore, lobbying activities have become strictly regulated in some countries as a result. Advocacy groups with less financial resources may use direct action, protests, and riots as a form of civil disobedience; therefore, in some countries they are accused of being a threat to the social order as "extremists."

Advocacy groups can initiate policy changes through various channels apart from government or the political structure, such as media messages along with public opinion campaigning. Groups will generally use two distinct styles when attempting to manipulate the media—they will either put across their outsider status and use their inability to access the other channels of influence to gain sympathy, or they may put across a more ideological agenda. Examples of such groups were the trade unions that would campaign in the form of industrial action and marches for workers' rights, gaining much media attention and sympathy for their cause. The activities of advocacy groups with less or no financial resources for campaigning are especially interesting with respect to assessing opportunities for the use of social media to facilitate civic engagement and collective action.

Social Media and Political Branding

The whole idea of "branding" products, services, or ideas is about communication with a target group. Advocacy groups, especially those formalized as NGOs or lobby organizations, aim to address policy issues, and therefore may need to interact with their target communities through a political brand.

The use of social media is a feature of political and civic engagement for millions of people around the world. The survey conducted by the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project in the United States in 2012 discovered that around 60 percent of American adults use social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter, and that 66 percent of those social media users—which is about 40 percent of all adults in the United States—have done at least one of eight civic or political activities with social media. The following figures from this study also support the statement that political branding of advocacy groups through social media is essential nowadays: 38 percent of those who use social networking sites or Twitter use those social media to "like" or promote material related to politics or social issues that others have posted; 34 percent of social media users have used the tools to post their own thoughts or comments on political and social issues. Also, 21 percent of those who use social networking sites or Twitter belong to a group on a social networking site that is involved in political or social issues, or that is working to advance a cause. There are no major differences by ideology or partisanship when it comes to using social media this way. About 31 percent of social media users have used site tools to encourage other people to take action on a political or social issue that is important to them.

Advocacy Groups and Social Media Use

Advocacy groups are using the Internet to accomplish organizational goals, and have been doing so for more than 10 years. It has been suggested that the Internet has had a positive impact on the activities of social movement organizations by increasing the speed, reach, and effectiveness of communication and mobilization efforts. Assessing the extent to which social media can facilitate civic engagement and collective action requires a broader and deeper understanding of how social media are being used and perceived by groups who strive to accomplish certain goals.

A study on the use of various social media engines by advocacy groups was conducted in 2012. According to its outcomes, advocacy groups of different political and ideological orientations operating in the United States are using social media to interact with citizens every day. A survey of 169 representatives from 53 national advocacy/activist groups operating in the United States assessed the extent to which these groups perceive and use social media as tools for facilitating civic engagement and collective action. To assess how members of advocacy groups perceive social media as tools that can facilitate civic engagement and collective action, social media/communication directors were asked to rank five social media technologies (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, and e-mail discussion lists) in terms of their effectiveness in facilitating various advocacy-related tasks.

Quantitative results reveal that all groups are using a variety of social media technologies to communicate with citizens almost every day. Facebook received the strongest scores overall, with Twitter and e-mail discussion lists often being noted as other strong options. YouTube was overwhelmingly regarded as the worst or among the worst in most cases. Among the larger groups, other applications being used include Flickr, Tumblr, Foursquare, Identi.ca, Picasa, and Vimeo. Medium-sized groups reported that they use Vimeo as well as Jumo, Diigo, and Constant Contact. Of the small groups, some use Flickr and also Joomla, JamSocial, Myspace, and Atheist Nexus, a social media site for the Atheist community.

Qualitative results suggest that groups believe that social media can facilitate civic engagement and collective action by strengthening outreach efforts, enabling engaging feedback loops, increasing speed of communication, and by being cost-effective. As noted in the study,

> . . . while some groups raised doubts about social media's ability to overcome the limitations of weak ties and generational gaps, an overwhelming majority of groups see social media as essential to contemporary advocacy work, and laud its democratizing function.

Individual Engagement

Social media provide considerable impact on initiating and proceeding with the political communication campaigns that engage individuals with advocacy activities. The branding of political messages is a powerful networking tool. Moreover, branded political communication helps activists gain access to the mass media on terms far more favorable to activist messages than if those messages were packaged in more conventional ideological terms.

Activist networks using branded communication strategies can sustain long-term political initiatives even in the absence of the strong central coordination and the organizational resources that seem to be required for success in more conventional advocacy politics. At the same time, there may be political disadvantages in loosely networked consumer activist campaigns that lack the decision-making capacity and strategic coherence of more conventional campaigns run by NGO advocacy organizations.

Individuals disconnected from traditional social and political institutions can therefore join advocacy campaigns through social media. For increasing numbers of citizens—especially younger generations—politics in conventional (collective, government-centered, electoral) forms has become less salient.

The campaign as a permanent basis of political organization can be traced directly to the changing social conditions of globalizing societies and their weakened group, party, and ideological bases of political organization and mobilization. Campaigns in such social contexts thus serve more than just the purpose of communicating political messages and achieving political goals. They also become mobilizing and organizing devices in contexts that lack more fundamental organizing mechanisms such as strong parties, formal interest groups, or ideologically defined social movements.

The Internet in general and social media in particular are actively used in global activism for reasons far beyond reducing the costs of communication. The Internet uniquely facilitates the loosely structured networks and affinity ties of this brand of late modern politics. Electronically driven stories contain the potential to scandalize a campaign target with a blitz of electronic information that rises from an activist information chain to more general Web sites (blogs and social networking sites), and then appears in the mainstream press that monitors and may even own such Web sites. Many news stories may first appear in social media as catchy phrases and anecdotes that take on a life of their own when thousands and even millions of networked citizens hit their send or forward keys.

The place of the Internet and social media in the structure of global issue activism activities is rather central with respect to the relations among different players. Some authors argue that the importance of social media as a means of mobilizing action increases with such characteristics of the social movement as the number of actors and organizations in a network, the diversity of issues and goals, the geographical reach, or the length of run time for a campaign. Another prediction is that the stability, effectiveness, and strength of member identification with complex (multi-issue, multi-goal) campaigns increase with the emergence of network coordinating hub organizations that use e-mail and Web news to keep dynamic networks in communication over time.

Another angle of using social media by advocacy groups and activists is that the alternative movement opposed to branded products or companies can become strong and influential in social media. Some multinational companies have been developing their brand histories for decades; therefore, to confront them advocacy groups may need to create alternative branded campaigns, especially when arguing about particular policy changes.

One of the recent studies of the social media effect in advocacy campaigns and global activism analyzed a case involving Nike in which one activist network was aiming to pressure the multinational company to join standards monitoring systems. The advocacy group and activists did that independently of government brokering. The case reflects the perception of many activists that international labor standards regimes have largely slipped past governmental regulation and that organizations such as the International Labor Organization are ineffective advocates. As a result, many sweatshop activists seek to create labor standards monitoring systems that must be sustained and enforced through consumer

pressure. Combining the low cost and global reach of social media with the public salience of logo campaigns (that might begin on the Internet and spread out in the mass media), sustainable activist networks have developed successful political strategies based on targeting companies and their brands.

Tetiana Kostiuchenko
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Bottom-Up Campaigns; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, 2012; Citizen Journalism; Demonstrations, Organizing; Facebook; Lobbyists; Nongovernmental Organizations; Special Interest Campaigns.

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Africa, North

The 21st century has seen social media in north Africa play an important role in politics. Various social media platforms have been used for political organizing and outreach, have been co-opted by mainstream media and citizen journalists alike, have allowed a means to circumvent government censorship, and provided people a place to debate issues of social importance. The use of social media in politics in the region has blurred national borders and to a large degree torn down political information silos.

Political Outreach and Organizing

Political movements, parties, politicians, and activists use social media to reach beyond those who already support their cause or party and seek to further gain support. Social media have been useful tools for political outreach in north Africa, with political messages reaching populations that were not particularly politically active and drawing those people into political activism. For example, in Egypt, young people were galvanized to move into the streets to protest in 2011 because calls to action were heard through Facebook and through the messages of popular bloggers.

In Algeria, particularly in the south of the country, organization of youth activism around issues of social and economic justice have been enabled in part by the use of social media. Protests in several cities in March 2013 demanding a more equitable distribution of wealth in Algerian society received wide coverage on social media. Part of political organizing is mobilizing supporters. In Libya, when activists and those fighting the revolution in 2011 were running from the Libyan army or had no access to state controlled media, they took to using social media platforms as one method for reaching their supporters to inform and mobilize them into action.

The most obvious demonstration of social media's importance in politics in north Africa can be seen in the popular uprisings that took place in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. While the precise importance of social media's roles in those uprisings is still being debated, it is clear that social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter were used as means for citizens to speak out and as a vehicle to gather in virtual space. These gatherings in virtual space often translated to political gatherings in physical space, like in Tahrir Square in Cairo, the site of the most visible symbol of the Egyptian revolution.

Politicians in north Africa, particularly after the revolutions in that region, recognize the importance of social media in communicating their political messages. The Egyptian military began to use Facebook to communicate with Egyptian citizens after the uprisings and the fall of President Hosni Mubarak, clearly indicating they recognized the utility of that social media in political outreach.

Social media play an important role in north African politics during elections. For example, in both rounds of the 2012 presidential election

Thousands of people fill Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt, on July 29, 2011, during a protest called the "Friday of Unity." Social media, including not only Facebook but also YouTube video and Flickr pictures taken from within crowds like this one, are thought to have encouraged even more Egyptians to join their fellow citizens in publicly protesting years of authoritarian rule during the Arab Spring.

cycle in Egypt to elect the first post-Mubarak leader of Egypt, candidates and political parties had a social media presence, having learned the efficacy of communicating through social media with supporters, the general public, and mainstream media from the experiences of the revolution. Both Mohamed Morsi and Ahmed Shafik, the two Egyptian run-off presidential candidates in the May 2012 elections, maintained a presence on Facebook. Smaller parties in the 2011 Tunisian election cycle used Facebook to recruit supporters and train poll station observers. In an Associated Press interview, Tunisian election observer University of Washington Professor Philip Howard noted that female candidates in that election seemed particularly inclined to use Facebook.

Not only do politicians and political parties use social media in north Africa for organizing and outreach, but so do citizen activists. For example, a young Egyptian female online activist, Dalia Ziada, has used blogging to organize both online and street protests over several years during Egypt's transition from authoritarian rule to a new regime.

Citizen Journalism

It is through social media in north Africa that major political events are being written about, recorded, and filmed in real time by ordinary people acting as citizen journalists as those political events unfold. Twitter feeds from the revolution in Libya, Facebook posts in Tunisia, YouTube videos uploaded and blogs written in Egypt are all stories from a citizen's perspective, often appearing as the events take place or very soon thereafter. It is hard for a government and its political leaders to deny a story that is politically damaging when there are people's own experiences of that event online for citizens and people around the globe to see, read, and hear.

Social media coverage by citizen journalists of major political events that include visual images often strike the strongest political chord with audiences. YouTube video and Flickr pictures from within the crowds at Egypt's Tahrir Square encouraged people to come out onto the streets in protest and join their fellow citizens in showing their anger and frustration with years of authoritarian rule. Facebook and other social media images of street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation in Tunisia in protest of the confiscation of his goods by municipal authorities brought Tunisians onto the streets in angry protest.

Whether it was witnessing other citizens' political actions in the Egyptian revolution, or seeing a graphic demonstration of the results of government agents' disregard for an ordinary man in Tunisia, social media serve as a galvanizing political force when used by citizens to document their own or others' experiences.

Social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook have also been used by citizens to document important political occasions or milestones. During the Egyptian elections in May 2012, for example, citizens were using social networks to document their voting experiences. People posted pictures to Facebook of voting, of waiting in lines to vote, and even of the ballots. They tweeted accounts of the day on Twitter, enabling records of that historic event to be captured for themselves, their friends, and followers. This personalizing of political discourse and experience in north Africa is made possible by the capabilities of these social media.

Censorship

Due to state control and censorship in the north African region, social media capabilities allow for citizens and opposition groups to find ways to communicate political messages through mediated channels that are not blocked. Many governments in the region do not have good records of respecting media freedom. In their 2013 ranking, Reporters Without Borders ranked north African countries like Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, and Algeria with relatively low scores in respect to media freedom. Social media provide a platform for voices to be heard who have no other media outlet or limited media choices.

One example of the use of social media to get around government censorship efforts was seen in Libya in January 2011. In the wake of the Tunisian uprising and some riots in Libya sparked by housing concerns, Libyan opposition Web sites were hacked (as many political scholars and media professionals suggest, by Libyan government agents) so that their sites had pro-Muammar Qadhafi messages in place of their regular content or had been taken offline. In response to this censorship, opposition groups switched to social media platforms like Facebook until they could get their Web sites up and running again. This allowed them to be in contact with their supporters who had access to those social media and get around the censorship efforts of the Libyan regime.

Another example that demonstrates north African government recognition of the importance of social media can be seen in the Egyptian government's attempt to block access to the Internet in January 2011. This censorship was a crude attempt to silence multiple avenues for dissenting voices to protest and organize on social media.

Mainstream Media's Use of Social Media

Mainstream media, both within north African countries, as well as internationally, make use of politically important news about north African politics found on social media. This use may sometimes be to supplement the professional reporting gathered by a mainstream source, but is also sometimes used as primary reporting material.

One example of this mainstream media use can be seen in footage of the Libyan revolution unfolding in the streets shown by Al Jazeera television provided by social media sources. Citizens took the video footage on their cell phones and then posted that video to social media sites. During the Libyan revolution, activists like Danya Bashir used Twitter to provide journalists, especially journalists outside of Libya, information about what was taking place around them, so that information could be reported internationally. This was a deliberate strategy of using social media to connect with mainstream media.

Mainstream media use social media as political news dissemination channels in north Africa as well. For example, international news organizations like CNN and Al Jazeera used Twitter in the coverage of the Egyptian revolution, and their

tweets were influential. Their tweeted reports on the Day of Rage protests in Cairo, the limiting of Internet access by the Egyptian government, or the resignation of President Mubarak influenced what was trending on Twitter.

Forum for Debate

Social media play a critical role in politics in north Africa as they provide citizens with a mediated forum for discussion and debate about issues of importance in their societies. It is important to note that political discourse often takes place on social media before, during, and in the aftermath of important political events.

For example, political discussion on blogs was taking place before the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt on topics of concern like liberty and democracy. Through discussion on social media, citizens who were opposed to the leadership in their countries were able to discuss what concrete goals should be achieved in order to bring about political change.

Blurring National Boundaries

Social media enable political messages and discourse to cross geographical and national boundaries in north Africa. This development allows people in the whole region to see how political groups organize, to hear their messages, to gauge the effectiveness of political strategies, and to anticipate governmental responses to political movements.

Researcher and communication professor Philip Howard of the University of Washington and his team analyzed over 3 million tweets, YouTube content, and blog posts and concluded that discussion on social media played a role that was central to shaping political debates in the revolutions across north Africa. As Howard states,

> Our evidence suggests that social media carried a cascade of messages about freedom and democracy across north Africa and the Middle East, and helped raise expectations for the success of political uprising.

Limitations of Social Media

While social media play an important role in politics in north Africa, it is important to realize that there are limitations to social media's impact. First, social media exist in conjunction with mainstream media, and do not serve all the functions nor have all the conventions of the mainstream press. For example, journalists are trained, and taught how to tell stories and report on situations objectively, something that is not expected of a person in the midst of a protest in Morocco or fighting in Libya.

Second, the populations in north Africa have social, political, and economic grievances and concerns about governance that stretch back decades, and so the power of social media in changing governments through revolution, or changing long-standing political patterns should not be overstated. Third, social media enhance rather than replace more traditional forms of political organization in north Africa like door-to-door campaigns, radio and television advertising, and speeches at political rallies.

Rick Malleus
Seattle University

See Also: Africa, Sub-Saharan; Al Jazeera Effect; Arab Spring; Egypt; Feb 17 Voices; Developing Nations; Libya; Tunisia.

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Africa, Sub-Saharan

The objectives of disseminating knowledge, ideas, and news and the sharing of common feelings, concerns, and thoughts with large groups are as old as human existence's dependence on collective aspirations and efforts. In view of the industrialized nations' leading role in advancing the technological and sociopolitical infrastructures of communication and interaction, sub-Saharan Africa's participation in this global new medium has been greatly undervalued or outright dismissed as inconsequential. But understanding the transformation in the context of the realities of the region is vital to developing a fuller appreciation of a global phenomenon.

Background

Sub-Saharan Africa has lagged behind the world in its industrial and technological developments in the modern era. The continent's limited access to electricity, technology, and software, combined with poverty and restrictions to freedom of expression and free flow of information, have been given as explanations for its lack of vigorous social media. Yet, many traits such as low level of economic development and technological advancement, and persistence of political and social structures of authoritarian governance, are shared by other regions. While the drawbacks of limited institutional and social barriers have some validity in constraining social media, the overall determination of the people coupled with alternative ways of communication and organization leave a great deal of room for the viable development of social media. Social media may be a new means of laying the foundation of information exchange and shared learning that could lead to building freer and more prosperous sociopolitical communities.

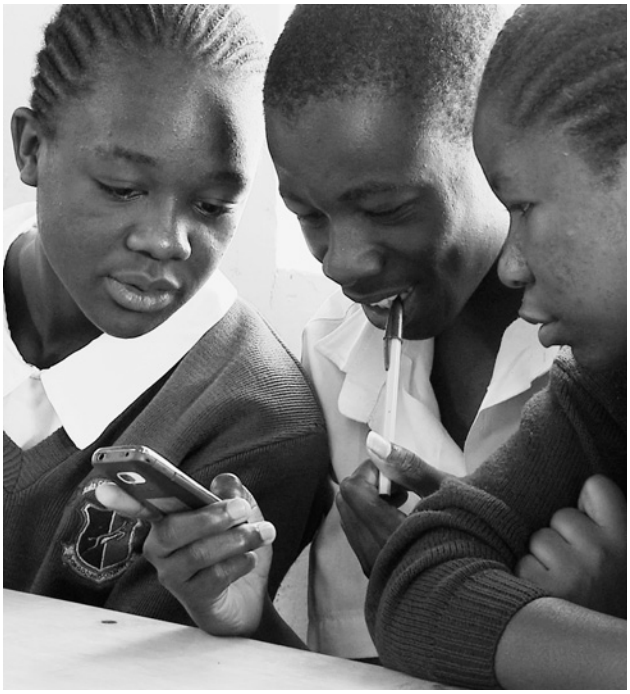
As of mid-2012, only around 15 percent of Africa's population had access to the Internet. However, this statistic hides an underlying reality in which social media is playing a significant role in influencing politics on the continent. Mobile phone subscription in the region, estimated to be as high as 750 million, is believed to provide access to information and communication for individuals, movements, and institutions, proving in many cases to be a crucial component in improving political stability and security, as well as contributing to a growing sense of government as being accountable to the governed, as indicated by citizen satisfaction measurements. As in much of the world, patterns of voting, governance, and monitoring the works of public servants have been reshaped to demand ethos of transparency, accountability, and pluralism in politics. Government leaders, civic groups, and movements for change in Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Uganda, and many other countries in the region have been forced to alter their platforms and political behavior patterns in line with international calls for high standards of democratic rules. Internet access, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, and countless venues of information currently avail themselves to the hopes and aspirations of Africa's youth eager to play important roles in their nation's futures. Public servants such as the national leaders in Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and Rwanda joined international trends of having open lines of communications with hundreds of thousands of their people following their ideas on Facebook and Twitter.

Adapting the Medium

Clearly, Africa's less developed socioeconomic and political structures have not offered ideal conditions for the use of social media to realize accelerated transformations. The creative adaptation of information technology to sub-Saharan Africa's realities has brought about significant changes for the region. Innovative approaches to overcoming the challenges include using mobile technology to compensate for the high costs and limited availability of computers.

A major factor in the relative narrowing of the gap has been the sharp rise in access to mobile services. In contrast to fixed landlines, over 60 percent of people in Africa are estimated to use mobile phones. Mobile broadband services requiring less electricity and technical know-how have consequently been introduced to the region, offering opportunities for easier and more user-friendly access to populations that might not have adequate literacy.

Through the spread of mobile telephony that provides connections to the Internet, growing numbers of Africans have been able to take advantage of both local and global social media for gaining



While only about 15 percent of Africa's population had access to the Internet in mid-2012, over 60 percent of people in Africa are estimated to use mobile phones. These Kenyan students played a game on a smartphone in August 2012.

access to information and communicating their ideas. Pay-as-you-go airtime models and inexpensive handsets have also widened mobile phone use. These practical applications of information communication technologies (ICTs) in addressing the continent's unique conditions have led to greater qualitative use of social media despite limited technological and economic structures.

The suspension of mobile communication is believed to have been instrumental in the revolt and riots in Togo where protesters, using camera-equipped mobile phones, succeeded in putting international pressure on the repressive government. Similarly, demonstrators in Côte d'Ivoire gained international sympathy for their cause by exposing violent reprisals with their cameraphones and lively blogging platforms in Abidjan. André-Michel Essoungou has underscored the view that African bloggers are charting new courses for democratic society. Greater access to the public square is being built with alternate media such as the Congoblog and Ushahidi in central and east Africa.

From Senegal to Angola and Zimbabwe to Sudan, activists from below and government officials from above continue to wage contests to win public opinion through the use, blocking, or negotiation of social media as a tool understood to have a profound impact on local, regional, and global politics. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, texting, and other venues are used for civic engagements, political mobilization, and dissemination of ideas and information. Public servants and heads of government including Raila Odinga, prime minister of Kenya; Jonathan Goodluck, president of Nigeria; Lindiwe Mazibuko, leader of the opposition in the parliament of South Africa; Paul Kigame, president of Rwanda; David Coltart, leader of the New Party in Ghana; and others maintain Twitter accounts for communication by the government and political parties. Opposition groups also use social media platforms to inform their followers and influence opinion.

Social Media and Politics

Social media, largely understood as the alternative mode of communications fusing human and technological dimensions of communities, has clearly had a strong impact in Africa with the myriad aspects of health, agriculture, security, business, and leisure all affected by its advent. The political component linking the headline-grabbing upheavals of the Arab Spring and other regions has not been as glaring and noticeable. Still, for observers who look deeper, the effects have been remarkable. The circular causality of the dynamics is evident in the ways state and nonstate actors have sought to respond to the effects resulting from the use of social media. Issues of governance, accountability, opennesss, and human security are raised by the global phenomenon of social media pertaining to sub-Saharan Africa. Movements for greater democratization, human rights, and social justice have adopted varied programs of change in different parts of the region.

Reflections of the global and local in the region are indicated by the fact that Facebook has become the most visited Web site, with more than 17 million users and Swahili, Hausa, and Zulu languages incorporated into the medium. The fact that President Goodluck first announced his candidacy in Facebook similarly underscores the depth of the change in the continent.

In Uganda, groups opposing inflation, corruption, and political mismanagement mounted campaigns on Facebook, Twitter, and blogs culminating in walk-to-work protests believed to have been stopped by the government jamming of the use of all social media. The government of Mozambique also sought to quell food riots by blocking the tools of dissent. While technologies, economic opportunities, and economic infrastructures in sub-Saharan Africa might fall short of those of the affluent world, the consequences of the spread of social media and their impact on politics is, however, as profound and enduring.

Alem Hailu
Helen Bond
Howard University

See Also: Africa, North; Bottom-Up Campaigns; Cloud Protesting; Diaspora/Migration; Digital Revolution; Economic and Social Justice; Human Rights; International Examples of Political Parties and Social Media; Poverty; Ushahidi.

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Age

Just over half of all Americans (56 percent) have a social media profile and about half of Americans are active users. But more than four out of five young adults are on social media (83 percent, ages 18–29) while less than a third of the oldest Americans are (32 percent, 65 and over). This is the inverse of traditional news use and political participation by age; that difference has fueled a robust body of research on the role of social media in democracy. Much scholarship has found that those who follow news and politics in social media or have friends who do so are better informed, more engaged, and more active in politics, but a competing hypothesis is that social media displaces traditional news use, limiting engagement and participation.

Traditional media use, methods of civic engagement, and political participation are all down substantially since the 1960s, and many of these declines are generational. In the 1960s, the youngest and oldest Americans read a daily newspaper at nearly the same rate. The oldest Americans, those now of retirement age, still largely read a daily print newspaper, belong to a social or fraternal organization, union, book club, or sports league—and more than two-thirds of them vote. Americans under 30, on the other hand, are much less likely to follow news in print or on TV, to join an organization, or to vote. They are more likely to be online than the oldest Americans and much more likely to be active in the social media space. In fact, social media have been described as the new inbox for young adults. The results are promising, but mixed, as to whether social media or online engagement complements or displaces traditional political participation.

Social media and politics intersect in four important ways: As a conduit for the dissemination of information from political leaders and candidates; as an aggregation and distribution source for opinion leaders to attain and share knowledge; as a platform for the manifestation of

pure, participatory journalism and democracy, in which anyone can share knowledge with (potentially) anyone; and as a digital town hall, in which citizens can directly converse with leaders, candidates, and each other. Much of the motivation for the first and fourth forms—for politicians to engage in "direct-to-consumer" contact with the public through social media—is to reach young potential and actual voters.

The scholars danah boyd and Nicole Ellison define social network sites as online communities that allow users to (1) build a public profile, (2) connect with selected users, and (3) peruse and interact with content created by those users. The fact that users define their own communities means that social media connections are networks of peers, and tapping into this peer-to-peer architecture is how things go viral. Politicians and other political actors, and members of advocacy organizations and other nonprofits, greatly employ Facebook, the microblogging site Twitter, and the video sharing site YouTube in their public outreach, beginning in earnest in 2008 but diffusing widely since then. As an example, both MoveOn.org on the left and the National Rifle Association on the right are highly active on all three platforms, which are then used to interact with each other. The federal government's antibullying arm, stopbullying.gov, embraces Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and an active blog expressly to reach teens who are most at risk to be involved with bullying.

The reason for social media outreach is clear: Young adults in the United States follow the news at about half the rate of their elders and even the migration to news online has been led by adults in their 30s and 40s. Ever since the Baby Boomer generation reached adulthood in the 1960s, they, and each subsequent generation, has been less informed, less civically engaged, and less politically involved than the generation before. Social media seems a rich environment in which to reverse this.

Age, Media Use, Civic Engagement, and Political Participation

Robert Putnam painstakingly detailed the generational decline in news use, civic engagement, and political participation. Active leadership in neighborhood and fraternal organizations is half what it was in the 1960s; union membership, signing petitions, and church attendance are all down dramatically and newspaper readership has dropped by half. All of these factors are age-related—the oldest Americans, those of retirement age, are still much more likely to participate in these ways. Sixty percent of adults aged 65 and older still read a newspaper regularly and 69 percent vote; 22 percent of those under 35 regularly read a newspaper and half vote. While all Americans are more likely to get news online, Americans over 30 are much more likely to get news online than those under age 30. In fact, Pew data shows that online news use is up 51 percent among 18- to 29-year-olds but it is up 140 percent among 60- to 64-year-olds. Pew also found that teens are increasingly likely to be adding Twitter, Instagram, and Tumblr accounts while losing a little affinity for Facebook.

Age and Social Media in Politics

Social media use in political campaigns first appeared in meaningful numbers in the 2006 midterm congressional elections, when about one in six candidates from the Democratic and Republican parties populated Facebook pages. By 2008 it was more than half. In both of those elections, population age was a strong predictor of Facebook use in the campaign: Candidates running in districts with a large population aged 65 or older did not use Facebook; those representing younger constituents did.

President Barack Obama was a pioneer in targeting young voters online in the 2008 presidential election, when he won the most lopsided margin of young votes (70 percent voted Democrat) since 1976. The race was called the social media election and *U.S. News and World Report* referred to the victory as the Facebook election and the Facebook effect: 2008 was the first year in which candidates truly engaged in a social media conversation with citizens through Facebook and Myspace; it was when Facebook partnered with mainstream news organizations, including ABC News and CNN, and was the first time CNN employed YouTube to integrate citizens' questions into presidential debates.

By 2010, the lesson had been learned as the Republican Party (GOP) took the lead on Facebook and Twitter, outspending and

outperforming the Democrats in midterm congressional races, which went overwhelmingly to the GOP. Voter turnout among young adults, 18 to 29, was 20 percent; but this time only 58 percent voted Democrat.

The Two-Step Flow of News

Columbia University scholars Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld found that news did not reach all people in the same way but that news reached some people (opinion leaders) who then curated and disseminated it through their networks. This happens robustly in online social networks but the important political variable is whether there is a high-information node in a network, sharing news with peers. A seven-nation study of youth-oriented civic engagement Web sites throughout Europe found that social identity, online and off, was a major predictor of civic engagement and efficacy among young adults. Shakuntala Banaji and David Buckingham, education scholars in London, learned that having older adults positively engaged, online and off, helped inspire young adults and teens to believe that they could successfully become engaged in political discussions and actions. A lack of personal modeling or engagement, on the other hand—the lack of a peer opinion leader—failed to deliver the same engagement.

Competing Hypotheses

There are two competing hypotheses regarding social media use, civic engagement, and political participation, and age is highly predictive of which is dominant. One body of literature suggests that traditional, offline habits, like news use, talking politics, and voting, migrate nicely into the social media environment and, in fact, may be improved, especially among active users, who tend to be young. Another recent area of study argues that time spent with social media may displace time spent on traditional civic activities like following the news, spending time with neighbors, and heading to the polls.

Homero Gil de Zúñiga and his colleagues have repeatedly found that migrating traditional news and political values into social networking, like seeking and sharing political information, increases civic engagement and political participation. Among those who are active in information gathering and sharing, and in civic engagement online, political participation increases both online and off. Young adults who share news and political opinions through social media are more likely to correspond with candidates and representatives; contribute, volunteer, or contact a news outlet online; and to vote offline. Another recurring finding is the importance of internal or self-efficacy—the belief that one can influence the political process. Since efficacy is an established, predictive variable of both civic engagement and political participation, it has often been measured in social media. Behaviors that have long been known to support civic engagement and political participation offline, like news consumption and self-efficacy, have repeatedly been shown to do the same in social media. Young adults who are exposed to political news through social media are more likely to engage in political activities like volunteering, donating, and voting. Older adults, who are more likely than the young to follow the news and be engaged and politically active, are also more likely to migrate those behaviors into social media. These findings support a complementary hypothesis, in which social media sharing serves as an adjunct or able replacement for diminished use of traditional news media. Given the sparse use of media by young adults in comparison to their elders, this complementary hypothesis offers reasons for optimism.

A competing hypothesis comes from Putnam, who suggested the decline in civic participation is because entertainment media, especially television, is displacing time that used to be spent engaging in social activities, like bowling leagues and fraternal organizations. This time-displacement hypothesis may also apply to social media use. A 2011 study found that college students who were highly active on social media (spent the most time, visited the most frequently, considered it highly important, and had many friends) were less informed and less likely to follow political news. Those students who were active news seekers were more highly informed and more likely to share news through social media. But they were also much less likely to spend time with social media than those who were not as well informed.

Another important variable in social media research is ambient exposure to news. It is hypothesized that those who score highly on social

media involvement will be more likely to be accidentally exposed to news through that channel as their friends share news. What occurred, instead, is that large networks of young adults, who are the least likely to follow news and politics, were also the least likely to share these items through social media. This tends to support the displacement hypothesis. This finding has been countered somewhat by Gil de Zúñiga and others who have found that, among people who do follow news, large networks contribute to civic engagement and political participation.

Youth, Social Media, and Activism

Students have been leaders in the use of social media, especially Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, for organizing major social movements. Notable examples include the 2006 immigration protests, especially in California; support for voting, especially for candidate Obama in the United States and against copyright reform in Canada in 2008; protests following the Iran election in the summer of 2009; tuition hike protests in the United Kingdom in 2010; and the Arab Spring early in 2011.

Paolo Gerbaudo, in *Tweets and the Streets, Social Media and Contemporary Activism,* writes about some pitfalls at the intersection of social media, youth, and politics. In the Egyptian uprising which began the Arab Spring in January and February 2011, Egyptian leaders had taken a hands-off approach to limiting access to social media for the strategic purpose of winning over young, middle-class Egyptians. This was the cohort by far the most likely to be online and to be active in social media. In fact, they became known as shabab al-Facebook and they emerged as a powerful source for information and instigation in the spread of the Arab Spring.

Conclusion

The complexity of the social media environment, news, and political involvement is largely explained by age because age largely predicts media use, which predicts civic engagement and political participation. The oldest Americans are the most likely to follow news in print; those of middle age, on television; but those in their 30s and 40s—not their teens or 20s—are the most likely to follow news online. For this reason, the social media environment, where the youngest adults dominate, remains an important space in which to try to reach young adults.

Kelly Kaufhold
Texas Tech University

See Also: AARP; Campaigns, Congressional (2006); Campaigns, Congressional (2008); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Mobile Connectivity, Trends in Politics and; Social Issues Advocacy, Netroots Driven; Voter Demographics; Youth Engagement.

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Aggregation

The term *aggregator* refers to a person or service involved in the collection, refinement, and indexing of information from a variety of online sources. This term has been used on the Internet for years, based on the idea that the Web functions to combine a variety of distinct sources of information into a single coherent form. In the most general sense, a search engine functions as an aggregator, scanning Web pages and producing indexes that can be efficiently surveyed as a form of extractive media. Search engine results and

other aggregated media are intended for browsing rather than immersive reading. There are a number of types of aggregator Web sites, ranging from those that collect pictures to economic data. News aggregators and poll aggregators are distinct. The differences between news and poll aggregation can be used to understand aggregation as a general concept.

News Aggregators

News aggregators collect materials from a number of news sources, providing direct links to the original material and possibly brief summaries of content from a number of sources. The interfaces provided by aggregator Web sites allow users rapid access to information that has been refined and indexed. The particular methods for refinement and indexing explain the differences among aggregator brands. An aggregator might rewrite headlines to emphasize a particular argumentative perspective in order to better serve a market segment. A popular culture aggregator might include news items but only in the sense that they fit with the overall theme and style of the brand. A political aggregator would likely not include the funny pictures of cats that have come to typify pop culture aggregators in favor of poll results and analyses. Functionally different aggregator sites segment the market similarly to cable television channels.

Aggregators typically eschew the traditional news schedule, releasing material as it is collected or created. This draws users regularly as the pages include a much larger range of regularly updated information than a single news source. For readers, the appeal is clear: Aggregator sites provide quick access to a large amount of information that has confirmation from multiple sources. Nonlinearity is a major advantage for aggregators as users can access different news stories at random outside the narrative context of traditional news that might provide occasions for advertising. By removing material from the context in which it is presented alongside advertising, news aggregators have been accused by content providers of damaging their businesses. The relationship between aggregation and newspaper revenue is complex. Some content producers have argued that aggregation deprives their sites of traffic and thus revenue. Content aggregators respond that a large number of clicks on headlines on aggregator services leads to users reading full articles, serving as a major source of online traffic for newspapers. The *New York Times* has demonstrated that paywalls (methods of requiring users to pay for online subscriptions after reading small samples of articles) offer a way of using aggregation as a form of advertising and securing revenue.

Poll Aggregators

Poll aggregators work in a similar but distinctly different way. A Web page that aggregates poll data does not collect material from legacy news sources but information from a variety of sources that needs an effective index. Several sources provide real-time aggregation of Twitter output and trending topics. These collected measures provide users a refined sense of what is happening on social networks in concrete terms. More sophisticated aggregation systems, such as those used for tabulating aggregated election statistics, employ algorithmic technologies to create value-added indexes for a number of quantitative data sources. By synthesizing inputs from a number of sources, aggregator Web sites provide a more robust form of information.

Poll aggregation Web sites played a major role in the final weeks of the 2012 presidential election. When major information aggregators' projections tended to show a substantial lead for President Barack Obama, the use of aggregated data became a news story in itself. Aggregators provide important forms of public information in that they present information coherently through an objective process over traditional, highly impressionistic forms of political reporting. This has been described as providing what has been termed *big data* in the world of journalism. Aggregators provide a site where dialectical processes are applied to data before public consumption, providing aggregators credibility beyond narrative journalism beholden to a fragmented public sphere. In this sense, arguments are predebated to create coherent results that are judged to be the best from an objective standpoint. The importance of data aggregation for social media-enmeshed publics will likely increase as the rapid argument presentation and testing on social network sites will require increasingly comprehensive forms of data for users' needs.

Poll aggregation offers a major source of value for news agencies or news aggregators as the concept of aggregation solves major issues for publishers. Managing relationships with aggregators can be a complex matter as management methods are mixed: Some rely on human editors, while others function through user preferences or other automated means. The importance of the integration of mechanical elements should not be understated—if an aggregator uses a publicly accessible method for collecting and analyzing data, the relative credibility of the aggregator can be substantial and can be inoculated against arguments of bias.

In terms of aesthetics, aggregated information functions as a sort of collage. Instead of presenting a single argument or perspective at one time, aggregation allows users to see a number of perspectives to evaluate simultaneously. Google News, for example, uses a juxtaposition of different popular articles covering an event, providing a rapid glimpse of multiple possible readings and sources the reader can choose among. Other aggregators carry articles that cover a number of topics and ideas with looser organization. In poll aggregation, information converges. Instead of presenting a sea of numbers, refinement techniques allow the aggregator to present a single representation of a current fact or stream of online social activities. Typically, additional information is available for more interested users. Aesthetically, these methods for managing the arrangement of information are a form of rhetorical activity.

Conclusion

Aggregation provides opportunities for users to gain rapid access to refined indexes of information. As a form of computational reasoning, this gives aggregated data sets credibility for use in public argument. News and culture aggregators have effectively produced a form of continuous, in-the-moment information uniquely suited for persons using social networking systems. Aggregators are likely to increase in importance as their capacity to drive traffic to news sites with paywalls becomes more apparent and as the cultural logic continues to provide substantial gains for collections and collages of news over singular news sources.

Daniel C. Faltesek
Oregon State University

See Also: Algorithmic Authority; Blog Syndication; Forecasting Elections; Information Abundance; Information Aggregation.

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Al Gore's Penguin Army

On May 24, 2006, the same day that Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* was released, a two-minute video titled *Al Gore's Penguin Army* was released on YouTube. The video sparked a series of controversies as many viewed the video to be a product of astroturfing by a major company to dispel any potential truth from Gore's movie. The video has a definitively amateur feel with very low production quality. The drawings are primitive, and the sound effects seem to be more in tune with middle-school projects than professionally developed marketing tools.

The *Wall Street Journal* found the release date curious and chose to investigate the video more closely. They ultimately traced the video back to the DCI Group—a Republican public relations and lobbying firm that represents both General Motors and ExxonMobil. While many in the public believe either company could be behind the video (although most seem to believe Exxon is responsible), to this date the actual developer has yet to be identified, and DCI refuses to release the information. As of today, the video has been watched 630,426 times while collecting 1,410 thumbs-ups and 4,003 thumbs-downs.

At the beginning of the video, a penguin carrying an umbrella and designed to look like Al Gore leads a group of other penguins into a lecture hall where he presents a talk on global warming. As his audience grows increasingly bored with his presentation (which attempts to link global warming to the Middle East crisis, the latest Lindsey Lohan scandal, and even the Red Sox winning the World Series), the Gore penguin uses a twirling motion of his patterned umbrella to hypnotize the others. Once hypnotized, the background changes to something called Red State Theater. At the theater, there are long lines of penguins waiting to see the X-Men movie, while less than a handful are waiting for Gore's movie. While the penguins at X-Men have a great time, those at *An Inconvenient Truth* are sleeping.

After the movie scenes, the video returns to the classroom setting where Gore tells the sleeping penguins they must take action to stop global warming. He fails to even realize that the audience has failed to hear his point—let alone become willing to act on it. The screen then proceeds to provide a series of recommendations on how citizens can stop global warming. The list includes not exhaling, being a vegetarian, walking everywhere, and taking cold showers. At the very end of the YouTube video, a shark eats a penguin and the screen flashes "The End" before Gore opens his umbrella and begins attempting to hypnotize the audience.

While the video is somewhat humorous, it has a homemade quality. At first viewing, it seems more likely to be the product of a college student creating a quick video satire in his or her dorm room than a professionally done video with an explicitly political message. Most viewers believed the individual who posted the video (Toutsmith—a 29-year-old claiming to be from Beverly Hills) was exactly that.

Of the initial watchers, few felt there was any mass conspiracy behind the video or effort to influence public attitudes through the video's posting—it was simply viewed as a humorous satire. *Wall Street Journal* reporter Antonio Regalado, however, noticed a peculiarity. Despite being a very low-quality YouTube video, it was the first sponsored hit in Google when searching for Al Gore. This suggested someone (or some group) had spent a large sum of money on search engine optimization and to buy ad space for the video.

Former vice president and Nobel laureate Al Gore speaking on climate change and poverty in Davos, Switzerland, on January 24, 2008, at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum.

Curious as to who or why, Regalado e-mailed Toutsmith and found that he was working from a computer associated with DCI.

DCI refused to discuss the linkage, citing client confidentiality in their defense. Yet, after Regalado's communication, the sponsored links on Google were removed. The video contains no actual information and instead focuses on simply attempting to discredit Al Gore and *An Inconvenient Truth*. Assuming DCI was responsible for the creation of the video, it is clear they were building on America's distrust of the mainstream media. Rather than presenting an op-ed, they posted the video on YouTube in an effort to get citizens to buy into the content and presentation. With social media, however, this is becoming an ever-increasing concern. If citizens are unwilling to trust mainstream media and believe any presentation of fact is largely based on some biased opinion or attitude, they will turn toward sites such as YouTube, which permit individual citizens

to create their own accounts and videos. But, sophisticated lobbying and media relations agencies have quickly realized that these mechanisms can be successful and have started taking strides to infiltrate the medium. What they learned from the *Al Gore's Penguin Army* video, however, is the need to dot all the I's and cross all the T's. If not for the Google search purchases, the farce would have likely been successful.

To date, Exxon, General Motors, and DCI have all refused to acknowledge the controversy and the party responsible for the creation of the video and purchase of the Google-sponsored ads remains a mystery. The video has had little impact on the climate debate—as evident by the failure to reach a million hits in over five years. Yet, the work of Regalado helped to protect social media sites like YouTube from poorly conceived efforts by political players to falsely represent their funders and goals in posting content.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Deception in Political Social Media; Environmental Issues; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Flog; Lobbyists; Online Smear Campaigns; Opposition Videographer; YouTube.

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Al Jazeera Effect

Philip Seib employed the term *Al Jazeera effect* to describe the impact of the global proliferation of emerging news organizations and communication channels on world affairs. While inspired by the transformative influence of the Al Jazeera satellite TV network on international and regional politics, it also connotes new media in general, including various state-funded broadcasters and the assortment of Web and mobile information and communication technologies (ICTs). New forms of media and news sources are changing politics because they "altered the dynamics of influence" such that "states, media organizations, and political actors cannot set agendas or establish boundaries of discourse" as effectively as they once could. This, of course, comes with several caveats.

Seib proposed the Al Jazeera effect as a parallel to the CNN effect, which asserted that media coverage of overseas events or issues could compel governments to act, leading to less governmental autonomy in foreign policy. Taking a different course to the same long-studied question of the power of media in politics, Seib asserts that governments are losing control over news and information and are forced to compete with new types of actors, including nontraditional news organizations, citizen journalists, bloggers, insurgent media, social movements and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). New media are "superseding the traditional political connections that have brought identity and structure to global politics."

Seib's description of the Al Jazeera news channel's impact on Arab politics shows why the Qatar-based network's name is borrowed for the term. Although it is a relatively young station, founded in 1996, one of its biggest "strengths" was to inject "contentious debate into an Arab news business that was previously known for its drab docility." The effect is about the disruptive power of a more greatly distributed media ecosystem in the political realm.

Seib proposes the "virtual state" as an emerging counterweight to the primacy of the territorial states that made up the world system. This new form is an ICT-based community that actualizes what Seib calls "imagined" comradeship, borrowing on Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities." The "virtual state" gives cohesion to collective identities that lack what states are premised upon, the physicality of a defined territory. These are formed by deeper affiliations than the types of connections the more commonly used term *network* denotes. Seib holds out as an example

the assemblage of Kurdish Web sites, chatrooms, TV stations, and press that manifested a "Kurdistan" when none existed on the map. This Kurdish identity, which draws together a multilingual people whose homeland overlaps with contiguous regions of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, presents a particular challenge to the governments of each state. They still operate on a traditional concept of sovereignty to repress expressions of Kurdish nationalism, with varying degrees of success.

Another example of a "virtual state" exemplifies the "dark side" of the effect. Al Qaeda and its affiliates' effective use of media and communication to recruit "citizens" to its ideology undermines the traditional state system. With franchises in Iraq, north Africa, and supporters elsewhere in the world, Al Qaeda uses violence to pursue its transnational objectives in defiance of governments. In Al Qaeda's war, the realm of media is a crucial battlefield. Al Qaeda's media production unit released videos to news organizations and its Web sites are intended to further their cause and weaken their enemies.

The Al Jazeera effect, however, could be most pronounced in shaping global politics, where it gives more connective form to the great supranational identities. A global Muslim *ummah*, or community of followers, could start to articulate itself more completely through wide use of ICTs. Though the concept is in the Koran, the Muslim holy book, numerous national, ethnic, and sectarian divisions brought fragmentation of the more than 1 billion people in the world calling themselves Muslim. While only a possibility thus far, the unification of the *ummah* could fundamentally transform global geopolitics and push states to submit their foreign policies to pursuit of a popular, pan-Islamic agenda. While Seib admits this is speculative, it demonstrates how a dramatic shift in world affairs is made possible.

Domestic Politics

New media not only alter international affairs, but also redirect domestic politics in all but the most destitute and isolated countries. Many politicians embrace changing media environments, using ICTs, for example, to present themselves "unmediated" to potential donors or fund-raisers. This is more revolutionary than the introduction of television, which made candidates' telegenics in political campaigns of central importance. Politicians adjust and politics changes to meet the demands of new media.

In authoritarian states, the emergence of media outlets challenges governments that resist reform and control the flow of information. New sources of information are more likely to let the public discover the failings of official state media that stick closely to the government's line. Citing China as an example, citizens in constricted political systems are finding ways to get news the ruling powers seek to block. China, like many countries, faced the dilemma by which Internet access is important for economic development—since international business requires it—while stimulating internal dissent seen as a threat to the reigning political order. Within this balance, China's many censors play a cat-and-mouse game to block Web content while activists and interested citizens find new ways to circumvent them.

Still, Seib recognizes the growth in communication avenues involves negative consequences beyond the added benefit to terrorists, scammers, and others with nefarious motives. With so much information out there, people struggle to determine what is valid, amounting to an inaudible "cacophony." Such overload can be worsened as greater circulation is given to falsehoods, especially as the gatekeeping functions of traditional news organizations weaken. With greater competition, the economics of media may shift, and shriveling advertising and subscription revenues do not sustain operations. Also, many emerging news organizations are more like political actors, affiliated with states or nonstate movements, making them active participants in conflicts. They may advance particular agendas and become targets of military attacks as quasi-combatants.

For all the potential of new ICTs, they clearly will not solve some of the most pressing social problems, Seib admits. In societies failing to meet basic living needs, their potential to improve political processes is highly unlikely. Even in places and geopolitical fields ripe for social and political change, communication and media as forces for change compete with many other, sometimes more powerful factors. The Al Jazeera effect is therefore limited and conditional.

Overall, the tide of new information sources is uncontrollable and that can make predicting the

success of democratization and peace-building difficult. Seib is still cautiously optimistic that the Al Jazeera effect can engender greater transparency and "intellectual independence" among the public. The public will more easily make demands on state officials and agencies that are finding it harder to ignore popular will. New media empower democratization movements and amplify voices seeking reform. Seib argued this would likely materialize in the Middle East, but he could not say when. As popular uprisings raged across the Middle East in 2011, many observers have debated the role of media in fermenting them—the question at the heart of the Al Jazeera effect.

William Lafi Youmans
George Washington University

See Also: Arab Spring; Bahrain; CNN Effect; Cyber-Jihad; Egypt; Human Rights; Libya; News Media; Television and Social Media; Tunisia.

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Algorithmic Authority

Most Americans, it is often argued, have become distrustful of the mainstream American media today. While many citizens have a particular source they follow closely and trust, they assess allegations of bias on any source that fails to adhere to their personal views of the world. It was with this in mind that Clay Shirky—a professor of new media at New York University—suggested in November 2009 that the nature of authority is up for grabs in the current news environment. Shirky argues that new classes of aggregators (such as Google, Wikipedia, and even Facebook) are eroding the institutional monopoly of authority previously held by large corporations. With the advent and further development of social media, the reliability of these new aggregators has become even more important. After all, whether we can truly believe everything we read on the Internet ultimately depends on where we're reading it.

When we give a source authoritative status, it demonstrates a few things. First, it says that we trust the particular source of information. Not everything posted on the Internet is true. Countless examples exist of individuals pulling information from the Internet and declaring it fact, only to be proven incorrect. It is why academics resist the urge to cite sites like Wikipedia, despite the information provided. But, most important, authoritative status tells us that others accept the information presented by a particular source as correct. This explains why students may opt to not cite Wikipedia as their faculty members may give little credence to information from the site. Even if students believe it to be true, whoever they are reporting to must share that faith before the source is viewed as authoritative.

Shirky defines algorithmic authority as:

> . . . the decision to regard as authoritative an unmanaged process of extracting value from diverse, untrustworthy sources, without any human standing beside the result saying "Trust this because you trust me."

In his characterization, Shirky presents three key elements of algorithmic authority. First, Shirky asserts that the algorithmic authority takes material from multiple sources. Of these sources, none are widely regarded as being universally trustworthy. No single person ever is tasked with indicating the results are valid (or reliable) before the information is published. Ultimately, such functions

exist widely on the Internet. Google does this for PageRank, and Wikipedia largely does the same through its transparent postpublication review.

The second key element according to Shirky is that the algorithm must produce good results. By producing these sound results, people learn to trust it. At this point in the process, the aggregator becomes an information tool—but it is still not an authoritative source. The third characteristic demonstrates the development of the aggregator as an authority. When people become aware of their own trust along with the trust of others, an authority is born. Think about Wikipedia as an example. If an individual trusts Wikipedia, but those the individual is talking to do not trust Wikipedia, citing the site will not gain the individual credibility. If they do trust Wikipedia, however, the individual will be able to relay any information from the site to the people he or she is speaking with, and no one will question the information presented.

Shirky discusses how the development of algorithmic authority is both similar and different to how we have always derived authority. Most important, however, is that authority is a social arrangement, not a cultural fact. As a result, authority runs on a wide spectrum. As Shirky explains, some forms of authority are respected enough to settle a bar bet, while others should be included in congressional speeches or dissertation defenses. At present, algorithmic authority seems to be more closely aligned with the bar bet pole, but as sites like Wikipedia have begun focusing on validity and citations, it has grown in authoritative value. For Shirky and others who now study the idea of algorithmic authority, the key takeaway is that the concept is at least being placed on the spectrum and seen as a potential authoritative source moving forward.

Algorithmic authority is not universally viewed as authoritative yet for myriad reasons. First, the authority status can change daily. Some elements may be authoritative, while others are not (consider the difference between YouTube and the YouTube Government channel). Second, they can still be manipulated almost as easily as the megacorporations they are potentially replacing. And third, some types of information and knowledge are not able to be measured for accuracy. Nevertheless, algorithmic authority allows individual users to judge the validity of information presented unfiltered. No longer does an institutional monopoly serve the role of determining what information is correct or incorrect and presenting it as so.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Aggregation; Edgerank; Googlearchy and Politics; Search Engine Optimization; Social Authority; Social Media Optimization.

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A-List Bloggers

See Alpha Blogger

Alpha Blogger

In a broad sense, an alpha blogger can be considered someone with a highly respected opinion within a specific community in the blogosphere. But, in a networked media system, any message in the blogosphere (as well as in other social networks) can be quickly spread to other media spaces, platforms, and communities. Therefore, the message must be a respected opinion that was created from blogs, and it can be easily expanded to other media systems, such as the mainstream media. This opinion leader is not just respected

within a blog's community. An alpha blogger's message can be used in other media spheres, and this coverage has consequences, such as the change of media agenda or even the pressure over politicians, companies, and other public actors.

The concept of influence is a key point, at least in terms of generating echo and debate, and therefore, it is important to underline that not all widely read authors can be considered alpha bloggers. Many bloggers have good search engine optimization and huge statistics of unique visitors, but their articles and opinions are not taken into consideration by the people who are interested in that topic. This point leads us to a second characteristic of an alpha blogger: His or her influence is over a specific theme, such as technology, fashion, media, education, or politics.

Initially, the first alpha bloggers were identified within the media tech agenda. The first alpha bloggers showed a growing influence over tech media thanks to reputation, novelty, and a special way of reporting in their articles. Due to the small size of the blogosphere during the first years of this community, identifying alpha bloggers was not complicated. People like Dave Winers, Doc Searls, and Robert Scoble became alpha bloggers; they knew how to become heavy influencers within specific topics.

Before taking into account the personal influence of some bloggers, it is important to remember that the blogosphere itself is a sort of community that has gone through different stages. The first was the appearance of bloggers in 1999; the second lasted until 2004, when the blogosphere attained popularity in the media; and the beginning of the third stage occurred in 2005, when blogs became a sort of professional media with commercial operations such as the purchase of Weblogs Inc. in October by America Online (AOL) for $25 million. In this deal, the media group AOL acquired 85 blogging sites about many different topics, from technology to movies and travel. This event proved media were aware of the influence of many bloggers.

In every one of these stages are examples of how bloggers became individual influencers within specific topics. Today, the blogosphere is no longer a new network and its growth has slowed, but its maturity as a social network allows analysis with more perspective.

Social Media as Surveillance and the Influence of Blogs

Within a scenario of growing surveillance of social media over actors such as politicians, companies, and media, there is no doubt that bloggers have become some of the most active watchdogs of the media landscape. And, following the work of Hugh Hewitt, there are several examples of this surveillance.

Journalists themselves are under surveillance by the blogosphere. Dan Rather of CBS News is a high-profile example who suffered from its impact. In September 2004, some messages were published on forums at FreeRepublic.com discussing the validity of the documents used by CBS to show the alleged privileges of President George W. Bush during his tenure with the Texas Air National Guard. This was the beginning of a blog campaign against Dan Rather, signalling the beginning of his fall, which concluded when it was demonstrated that the documents Rather reported were forgeries. In this case, blogs such as PowerlineBlog.com, WizBangBlog.com, and RatherBiased.com can be identified as strategic nodes that developed the story that finally ended with Dan Rather's resignation. These blogs, in collaboration with others, got the proof necessary to demonstrate that the documents were false, and they got the story to the mass media. Based on the Rather incident, Matthew Sheffield (RatherBiased), Paul Mirengoff (Powerline), and Kevin Aylward (Wizbangblog) can be considered alpha bloggers. They changed the media agenda and public opinion, resulting in the fall of Dan Rather.

In another political case, the resignation of U.S. Senator Trent Lott from Mississippi is a paradigmatic example of blogger political surveillance. Lott made some racist statements at the end of 2002 at the birthday party of Senator Strom Thurmond. The tipping point was the fact that prestigious media like the *Washington Post* did not mention the controversial and racist comments. But, Josh Marshall, with his blog Talking Points Memo, started a conversation around the issue.

Josh Marshall covered what the professional media had missed. This case is one of the earliest examples of the power of the blogosphere to modify the mainstream media agenda and to force the media to report on issues they may not want to. Although mainstream media reported almost

nothing of Trent Lott's segregationist statements, on the Internet, the news was quickly spread by hundreds of blogs.

Alpha bloggers are no more than the channels for collective intelligence, tipping points on the Web that give relevance to those issues that should be part of the mainstream media agenda. Alpha bloggers are not the cause of this visibility, but they accelerate it. The reason for the effectiveness of alpha bloggers lies in the credibility they gain over long terms on the Web, their ability to tap resources and acquire proof that professional media did not obtain, and their independence from large media groups and political and business lobbies. This independence is perceived by bloggers as their best advantage.

Today, becoming an alpha blogger is more difficult than during the first years of the blogosphere. Now, the community is much bigger, the media ecosystem is more complicated and interlinked, and there are more social networks (microblogging) that are competing for attention in a crowded marketplace.

José-Manuel Noguera Vivo
Catholic University of San Antonio

See Also: Blog Storm; Blogosphere; Blogs; Buzz Creation.

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American Debt Crisis and Twitter

The American debt crisis refers to the 2011 financial scare when Republicans threatened to obstruct legislation required to raise the debt ceiling if the Democrats did not agree to sweeping spending cuts. The debt ceiling is a distinct piece of legislation that is ancillary to the budget process, requiring congressional approval and a presidential signature. The debt ceiling is viewed largely as a formality required to continue the Congress's and the president's economic agenda. Failure to raise the debt ceiling could result in a financial calamity, sending the United States and possibly the world economy into an economic depression.

Despite the real and measureable consequences attached to the debt ceiling, congressional leaders used its built-in sense of urgency as a rhetorical and political tactic. These debates took place in the context of what many economists call the worst economic recession since the Great Depression. Nervous investors worried that failure to act swiftly could cause credit agencies to downgrade the U.S. credit rating, which would instigate a double dip recession.

Similarly, frustrated citizens took to social networking sites, like Twitter, to express their discontent. Here, the aggregated voices of citizens inaugurated a new regime of public participation in economic policy as Twitter changed the nature of the debt ceiling debates. This entry traces the relationship between the American debt crisis and social media—from its origins in the dot-com bubble of the mid-1990s to the debt ceiling debates and the public's response on Twitter.

History

The story of the American debt crisis begins in the late 1990s with the dot-com bubble and subsequent collapse. While the harbinger to the Internet, Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET), was developed in the early 1960s, it was not until the early 1990s—with the introduction of Netscape's browser Mosaic—that the Internet fully entered the public's imagination.

By the mid-1990s, Internet industries began posting record profits by trading on the public's high expectations that everything from banking and investment to travel and entertainment would now become digital. Corporations ranging from Netscape to eBay pioneered new revenue streams grounded in what became termed as the "attention economy."

Public reaction to the American debt crisis and the resulting debt ceiling debates included both street protests and innovative use of social media. These marchers carried banners referencing the housing crisis at an Occupy Wall Street protest against the Bank of America and its foreclosure policies on March 15, 2012. The event included a symbolic "occupation" outside of a bank branch office.

The premise of this attention economy is information overload, which envelops consumers in a flood of goods and services. In this environment, the material production of goods is secondary to securing the antecedent conditions for consumption—mainly capturing attention through advertising. Unlike traditional economic models that privilege supply over demand, the attention economy privileges demand over supply. As the volume of goods increasingly exceeded demand, consumption became less of an automatic process and more an act of strategic decision making on behalf of the consumer. In short, people's attention became another commodity that was bought, sold, and traded. In the dot-com bubble, it was the shiny, new technologies that entranced investors and begot rapid speculation over future earnings.

Unfortunately, the good times proved unsustainable because a schism grew between the actual value of Internet start-ups (use value) and their speculative representations in public culture (exchange value). Netscape, for example, had no proven earnings yet grew exponentially from its initial set price of $28 per share to $71 in a matter of months. The dot-com boom, as it is called, earned savvy investors millions. As G. Thomas Goodnight and Sandy Green note in their essay "Rhetoric, Risk, and Markets," the growth of Netscape was premised almost entirely on assumptions about its future earning potential. Whereas previously, companies such as Microsoft had to prove their earnings through years of operational experience, Netscape and countless other dot-com start-ups traded exclusively on their perceived capacity to produce massive revenue. Goodnight and Green suggest that this sort of behavior, which produced the dot-com bubble, as the hope of new communication technology, rapidly surpassed its material capabilities. The bubble burst on Friday, March 10, 2000, when the National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations (NASDAQ) tanked and drew into relief the differences between use and exchange value.

The dot-com collapse, as Joshua S. Hanan observes in his essay "Home Is Where the Capital Is," forced Wall Street to find new financial outlets for profit-making. The same year that NASDAQ witnessed major declines, Wall Street lobbied Congress to pass the Gramm–Leach–Bliley Act (GLBA), which repealed some of the consumer safeguards codified in the Glass–Steagall Act of 1933. Congress reasoned that gutting some of the post-Depression era protection would invite a swell of capital and resuscitate the United States' ailing economy. The passage of GLBA dissolved the regulations that separated investment from commercial banks, allowing Wall Street to participate in practices previously reserved only to commercial banks—such as credit default swaps (CDs) and collateralized debt obligations (CDOs).

In addition to Congress's deregulation of Wall Street, the Federal Reserve also felt compelled to intervene by lowering national interest rates to unprecedented levels, hovering around 1 percent by 2003. This move prompted mortgage lending institutions to offer home loans at historically low rates and made home equity lines (which are contingent on the federal interest rate) increasingly appealing. At Congress's and the Federal Reserve's behest, financial institutions also began offering products aimed at giving low-income families the means to secure homes. This new kind of loan, dubbed subprime mortgages, had lax qualification standards and was not insured by the federal government. Banks compensated for the risky investment by charging higher interest rates and deferring their risk to the new securitization processes opened up by CDOs.

Housing Bubble

All across the United States, people felt compelled to buy up homes with a fervor never before seen. From home valuation Web sites such as Zillow.com to television shows like *Flip This House,* a larger cultural trend emerged that conceptualized the home as an investment more so than a residence. Rather than serve merely as an adequate representation of home values across the United States, Zillow.com helped produce such values by virtue of the site's linguistic organization. By entering a number of complex debates centered on the present economy, countless renters, homeowners, and real estate professionals perceived their discourse as an instrument that could reflexively manipulate the invisible hand of the marketplace. Unfortunately, this irrational exuberance could not be maintained as home prices began appreciating at unsustainable rates. By late 2005, the United States replaced dot-com speculation with a housing bubble. As huge deficits began mounting on Wall Street and Main Street, the pocketbooks of the federal government ultimately became infected. By late 2007, America was embroiled in the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.

Crisis

As a response to the crisis largely attributed to President George W. Bush, U.S. citizens elected Democrat Barack Obama as president and charged him with the task of fixing America's financial woes. His first policy directives included passing the $800 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, or the economic stimulus, as it is more frequently referred. Almost immediately after Congress ratified the stimulus, conservatives expressed concern that it was counterproductive and reckless. If irresponsible spending created this mess, Republicans reasoned, more spending certainly would not help the problem.

Many citizens agreed with the conservative critique of Obama's fiscal policy, and they gave Republicans control of the U.S. House of Representatives during the midterm elections in November 2010. This afforded conservatives leverage in the upcoming budget negotiations due to occur that summer. In April 2011, Obama gave a national address on the budget, which outlined $4 trillion in cuts to nonentitlement programs and defense spending over the next decade as well as tax increases on those making over $250,000 per year. Republicans scoffed at this legislation, suggesting that it relied too heavily on taxing the rich and failed to include enough spending cuts.

In May 2011, Secretary of the Treasury Timothy Geithner announced that the government was quickly approaching its debt ceiling, and while the Treasury could take some measures to prolong the time before the United States passed its borrowing limit, legislation was needed before August 2, 2011.

Republican Speaker of the House John Boehner seized this opportunity to force the Republican agenda and argued that neither he nor any Republicans would support the upcoming debt limit increase without deep spending cuts. Annie Lowrey, writing for *Slate*, described the debt ceiling as a "political football" that oppositional parties—both Republican and Democrat—have used to advance a partisan agenda. Republicans held the debt ceiling hostage until their demands were met. For example, Lowrey reported that Representative Michele Bachmann advised Congress to immediately slash $125 billion a month in spending rather than lift the debt ceiling. The debt ceiling debates, as the media came to call them, became a proxy battle for broader economic stewardship. Each side adduced a fiscal agenda on how to handle the United States' massive debt moving forward.

The Debt Ceiling Debates and Twitter

The public reacted to this impasse by taking to the streets and various social networking platforms. Jeff Jarvis, a prominent U.S. blogger and journalist, took to Twitter to express his frustration. He tweeted, "Hey, Washington assholes, it's our country, our economy, our money. Stop fucking with it," and "People, it's time to get fucking pissed off." The next day, Jarvis exclaimed "FUCK YOU WASHINGTON. C'mon, people. Let's hear it." On July 24, 2011, "#FuckYouWashington" trended on Twitter and generated 20,000 hits in under an hour. In response to this new trending top, Jarvis joked, "I do hope Twitter doesn't have a prissyfilter for trending. #FuckYouWashington." Beyond frustration with partisan bickering, the Twitter flow portended a broader public concern for America's standing in the international economy. Whereas America was historically viewed as the global debtor state—with its currency functioning as the gold standard up until the early 1970s—citizens worried that America, "the shining city on the hill," was dimming. Jarvis's digital act of defiance demonstrates the complex relationship between social media and the American debt ceiling. Not only were social media responsible for the origins of the crisis (through the dot-com bubble), but they also became a powerful medium that created a temporary space for disagreement and dissent regarding proposed solutions. Indeed, the more individuals expressed their concern about the debt ceiling, the more attention it received. This process is theorized at length by Damien Smith Pfister who notes in his essay, "The Logos of the Blogsphere," that blogging platforms, such as Twitter, allow the public to shape deliberation.

Pfister outlines three overlapping ways social media shape matters of public concern, such as the American debt ceiling. First, social media grant the public a new voice by allowing them to circumvent the gatekeeping of traditional media outlets that set the agenda for matters of national importance. Indeed, it is highly unlikely that an editor would allow #FuckYouWashington to appear in a periodical. Twitter bypasses this traditional sieve, favoring the aggregate (or trend) to dictate which conversations will be seen by the public. Conventional news outlets are then forced to reflect on the discourses as the tweets become ubiquitous in the public sphere. For instance, on July 25, 2011, the newspaper periodical *Reuters* published an article on the #FuckYouWashington Twitter feed that highlighted the nation's anger with an increasingly dysfunctional political system. Many other news outlets followed suit shortly after.

Second, bypassing the gatekeeping function allows for a diversity of views that facilitate the production of novel lines of argument, or topoi. In contrast to the media's coverage of the debt debates that focused on the partisan bickering, Jarvis injected his frustration and citizen's discontent. Third, Twitter enables instantaneous and continuous publishing of arguments, thoughts, claims, and gripes, which accelerates and diversifies the number of arguments available. While old models of media require publication time—printing, editing, and so on—Twitter is instantaneous. As such, it provides an excellent platform for citizen participation because it provides an outlet that can keep pace with a rapidly changing debate. In short, microblogging platforms provide a communication medium that truly brings ordinary citizens into the public sphere.

The nation's reaction to the American debt crisis on Twitter offers an interesting example of how social media have transformed the ways citizens participate in public policy—particularly in regard to economics. Whereas economic policy

has historically been relegated to the deliberative expertise of economists, congressional leaders, and the likes of the Federal Reserve, social media have carved out a space for citizens to engage in these increasingly pressing matters. As the #FuckYouWashington Twitter feed demonstrated for so many, social media are increasingly breaking down the meditational buffer between citizens, public representatives, and economic valuation. Unfortunately, such dissent was not enough to halt Standard and Poor's August 5, 2011, decision to downgrade the United States' credit rating from an AAA to an AA.

Justin Eckstein
Joshua S. Hanan
University of Denver

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaigns, 2012; Innovation and Technology; International Online Communities; International Unrest and Revolution.

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American Enterprise Institute

The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) bills itself as a nonpartisan think tank composed of scholars and supporters who are committed to supporting the advancement of "liberty, increasing individual opportunity, and strengthening free enterprise." It is one of the most powerful and influential think tanks in Washington, D.C., and boasts a staff of over 185 employees and 50 adjunct fellows. It should be noted that its nonpartisan stance does not mean it avoids taking sides on political issues. Generally, its views are closely aligned with the business/economic wing of the Republican Party, though it does not generally comment on social issues that energize other portions of that party's base. The institute has seven focus areas for its research: economics, foreign and defense policy, politics and public opinion, education, health, energy and the environment, and society and culture. Not only does it widely publish its reports on a variety of related issues, but it also has become an important online presence and favorite source of information for American conservatives. Its *AEIdeas* blog has daily traffic that sometimes exceeds 40,000 visitors and its online magazine *The American* also maintains a prominent place on the Web, in part because of its American.com Web address.

A brief look at the history of the AEI shows that it traces its roots back to the 1938 founding of the American Enterprise Association (AEA), in an age when economic issues were very much a part of politics as evidenced by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal policies and the efforts to recover from the Great Depression; yet at the same time economists played almost no direct role in the government or major advocacy groups. AEA began its academic and advocacy role in 1943, when its members wrote a series of 50 analyses of different bills before the U.S. Congress. These analyses were meant primarily to assist legislators in understanding how a given piece of legislation might impact the business and economic interests of the United States and particular industries. The following year, the AEA established another important piece of its ongoing identity and role in the Washington, D.C., power structure when it created a board of several eminent academics, including people like economist

Milton Friedman and political scientist James Q. Wilson. By the 1960s, the AEA became more of a force in wider American society. In addition to continuing to publish its legislative analyses, which according to its own bookkeeping had been consulted by 85 percent of senators and 73 percent of House members, it also created materials for use in school debate programs. In 1962 it changed its name to its current American Enterprise Institute.

One of the most unappreciated aspects of its history is AEI's role in creating daily press briefing materials for Congress. This practice was so beneficial, that soon the White House began releasing its own daily press summary in order to provide its take on the day's news. In essence, it was one of the world's first news aggregators. Furthermore, it was one of the earliest research/advocacy groups to incorporate computer technology in order to process more data, in this case regarding the U.S. federal budget. From the 1970s onward, AEI would host some of the most famous economic and political scholars in the United States, many of whom had served or would go on to serve in the administrations of Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and George W. Bush.

AEI scholars, including Irving Kristol, have even been credited with launching the neoconservative political movement, though others like Norman Ornstein are openly more centrist or liberal and are also allowed to publish under AEI's auspices. In recent years its activities with the more Democratic Party–aligned Brookings Institution have produced notable publications on the process of political campaigns and public engagement and the role of the various institutions of government in providing access points for the public to interact with the state. It is in this sense in particular that one sees that its claim of nonpartisanship is given actual funding and support in its research activities.

Social Media

For social media users, AEI's online magazine and blog are clearly two of its most popular tools for quickly disseminating information and encouraging public advocacy on behalf of certain laws and causes. *The American* was begun in 2006 and took the legacy of AEI's earlier print magazines online. It uses Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds to push content directly to its subscribers. The magazine mainly uses the form of news essays to provide more detailed accounts of various items that have recently been in the news, and to provide political analysis in line with AEI's research specialties. Articles range from foreign policy to monetary policy to popular sports. Many of the articles contain an element of advocacy and offer various policy prescriptions to problems with economic development, political disputes, or other issues. As is standard, each article can easily be shared on all the major social networking sites by readers, making it easier for a story to go viral. On the whole, the articles evidence a leaning toward fiscal conservatism, an emphasis on American interests in the conduct of foreign policy, and a strong focus on the economic implications of various regulatory policies. However, a look at the site's archive reveals that many articles express disagreement with both major U.S. political parties on a host of laws and issues, which burnishes the AEI and American .com's credentials as an independent think tank.

AEI's blog AEIdeas is another essential element of its social media strategy. Its daily traffic numbers are among the highest of any think tank, and testify that not only does the blog generate interest, but also readers return to it as a trusted source of information. Under the banner Freedom Opportunity Enterprise, the blog hosts a number of columns that are devoted to AEI's research divisions. There are also columnists who make regular contributions on dedicated pages. These articles are quickly searchable by topic and interest area. They are also written by people who are well-known area or issue specialists, giving them additional credibility. Subscribers to the blog can get daily updates on Afghan/Pakistani politics, U.S. economic policy, and a host of other issues tailored to their interests.

Its 75 years of traditional research and advocacy, or think tank, operations when combined with its formidable online presence featuring dozens of the most famous public policy analysts in the United States places the American Enterprise Institute in the clear position of one of the most influential think tanks in Washington, D.C., and one that looks likely to maintain this position for the foreseeable future.

Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St. Andrews

See Also: Aggregation; Blogs; Foreign Policy; Lobbyists; Nonprofit Organizations; Political Economy; Public Intellectual.

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Amplification

In the past two years, social media marketing has begun to focus on the concept of amplification. Amplification with social media involves taking some positive action or statement and then sharing it far and wide across social media platforms. Politicians have utilized such ideas in the past, but not in the concentrated way they are used through social media. If we look at George W. Bush's 2000 election strategy of enrolling volunteers to call their friends in support of his candidacy and then asking those friends to call 10 of their own, we see how word-of-mouth endorsements from individuals we already know can make for a successful campaign strategy. As a result of the new potential presented to amplify via social media, it is important to understand how it can become a politically viable means of quickly passing along information.

When purchasing ad space on any type of social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.), there is a limit as to how many ads a person can buy since he or she pays per click. On Google, for example, the purchaser buys per paid search; on Facebook, the buyer pays per display. But with social media, everyone that becomes involved in a person's particular network has a network of their own that their activities are shared with. So when John Doe "likes" a person's post, his network of friends is exposed to that person's post because of John Doe's action—and the person is not responsible for paying for that. If John Doe has 1,000 friends or followers and combined they have 1 million friends and followers, a person's reach can exponentially grow from the actions of John Doe.

Amplification is the rate at which individuals who follow you take another individual's content and share it across their own personal networks. On Twitter, this focuses on retweets. Facebook and Google+ look at the number of shares per post. YouTube and blogs look at the number of share clicks per video or post. Analytically, the information gleaned from measuring amplification can be quite useful. First, one can determine what types of posts or videos are most likely to penetrate into one's second- or third-level network. Further, one can examine what times of day lend themselves to amplification, which can help shape one's social media scheduling. If one's messaging is truly successful, the hope is that one's network will grow as second-level individuals ultimately choose to become first-level supporters.

As amplification has become more widely recognized as an important social media metric, more sophisticated efforts at increasing amplification have been developed for various forms of social media. On Facebook—which has always presented the most opportunities for sharing and endorsing—Sponsored Stories have been created that allow companies to pay to repost any action an individual takes regarding them. These stories show up in the far right column of a person's friends' feeds, thus appearing as a personal endorsement from that person. Further advancements are permitting payers to place the sponsored stories directly into your Newsfeed. Twitter has a similar ability through the use of embedded tweets. This feature gives someone the option of embedding a tweet onto a Web site, consequently allowing followers to spread a message in other mediums.

From a political standpoint, we know that politicians have become increasingly curious about social media since Howard Dean's 2004 primary campaign and Barack Obama's successful utilization in both the 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns. Through amplification, a message can reach a large audience very quickly at very little cost and lead to more first-level connections. The downside, however, that is largely ignored in the current literature is that as quickly as a candidate or campaign can share good news with

large numbers, others have the same capabilities to share bad news. Thus, the idea of amplification can work for or against a politician depending on the news being shared. While a campaign can control the content of information sent over social media from their own handle, they lack the ability to control whatever anyone else has to say. In this way, amplification has quickly become a double-edged sword for political consultants and politicians as unsatisfied citizens have the same tools at their disposal (although with a presumably smaller audience, at least initially).

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Facebook; Klout Score; Social Media, Definition and Classes of; Social Media Optimization; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; Twitter; YouTube.

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Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life

The Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life aims to shed light on how new technologies of communication and innovative outreach can be used to increase political understanding and participation. Most of the institute's research efforts are therefore dedicated to applied research. Founded in 2000, the institution was named in honor of Annette Greenfield Strauss, a former Dallas mayor, community leader, and philanthropist who devoted most of her life to helping others.

Student activists speak with an educator at an event in a series called "Why Bother? Engaging Texans in Democracy Today," cosponsored by the Annette Strauss Foundation in 2012 and 2013 to address low civic engagement in central Texas.

At the heart of the University of Texas at Austin, the institute is aligned with the university's public role of designing and testing new ways of increasing civic involvement. It benefits from the collective expertise of scholars who are nationally renowned for their contributions to the study and development of civic participation and the conditions that give rise to or suppress engagement. Through nonpartisan research, education, and outreach, the institute seeks to understand and overcome obstacles to civic engagement.

Programs and Activities

Among the current programs related to social media and politics, the institute's New Politics Forum is one of the most prominent. The forum focuses on engaging college-age adults by either providing the necessary skills to become effective as citizens, or by sharpening and honing their abilities and talents to take leadership roles in their communities. The New Politics Forum increasingly relies on social media tools to more efficiently communicate with its targeted audience, and to more readily engage youth in civic activities.

In fall 2011, the New Politics Forum organized the 21st Century Civic Engagement Conference, offering an overview of new online platforms that

citizens use to engage with politics and government uses to engage citizens. Based on the premise that there exists a new landscape in civic engagement, the focus of the conference was, in essence, how citizens can talk to each other to increase engagement and improve governing. Speakers from some of the most innovative efforts to use digital technologies to engage citizens (such as Code for America and SeeClickFix) discussed new platforms, social innovation, and global citizenship.

In spring 2012, the New Politics Forum hosted The White House Youth Town Hall in partnership with the White House Office of Public Engagement. The town hall focused on how young people can engage their government and each other to address community problems. This event leveraged several interactive technologies, including a statewide conference call, a moderated Twitter feed, and LinkedIn groups created during the town hall. Thereby, social media and communication technologies allowed viewing groups around the state to interact directly with Ronnie Cho (of the White House Office) and to discuss collectively through Twitter hashtags and LinkedIn groups the problems addressed by the event.

Every spring, the Annette Strauss Institute offers the Campaign Boot Camp, an intensive course on how to be effective working on political campaigns, and how to use social media for political organizing and mobilization. Also, the Executive Communication Training Seminar, usually offered once a year, always includes a component on social media. All activities organized by the institute encourage the use of social media, and engage external audiences by posting videos, uploading pictures, and using Facebook pages and Twitter hashtags to disseminate events.

Finally, the new initiative of the institute, called "Why Bother? Engaging Texans in Democracy Today" comprises a series of public dialogues and news stories produced in partnership with KUT Radio and KLRU-TV. This initiative is not aimed in particular at young people or college students, but instead at all citizens of central Texas, in order to discuss new forms of engagement, exploring ways to inspire more people to get involved.

"Why Bother?" has included an active social media presence. The most recent public dialogue, about how citizens can effectively engage state legislators, was also shown over Ovee (https://ovee.itvs.org), a platform that allows for online interactive viewing with panelists chatting in response to viewer comments, including a "like" function. The goal is to let people have more than one option for engaging with events.

Research

The Annette Strauss Institute conducts research that furthers scholarly and public understanding of media, politics, and civic participation. In the field of digital and social media, there are several concurrent projects being conducted, one of the most prominent being the Engaging News Project. The goal of this project is to provide practical, research-based techniques for engaging online audiences in commercially viable and democratically beneficial ways. The project is directed by Natalie Jomini Stroud, associate professor of communication studies and assistant director of the Annette Strauss Institute.

Given the increasing influence today's digital media landscape exerts over citizens' civic lives, the Annette Strauss Institute recently housed and launched the new Digital Media Research Program (DMRP) led by School of Journalism Associate Professor Homero Gil de Zúñiga. This newly added research unit will develop a systematic research program generally aiming to address the influence of new technologies use in people's daily lives, as well as the effect of such use on the overall democratic process. More specifically, the DMRP will shed light over the impact of new communication technologies use (i.e., social media), and user-generated content with respect to several benchmarks of a healthy democracy: citizens' political knowledge, political discussion, and overall civic and political engagement.

Homero Gil de Zúñiga
Magdalena Saldaña
Regina Lawrence
University of Texas at Austin

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Internet Gathering; Networks, Political; Social Capital; Voter Turnout; Youth Engagement.

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Anonoblog

Blogs are conceptualized as tools that have been designed to promote immediate interaction between the host blogger and blog visitors. Blogs feature artifacts such as comments, trackback, blogrolls, and archives. Furthermore, blogging culture embraces a particular set of norms that encourage linking to other blogs and sharing via comments additional information regarding any subject being discussed. However, there has been an emergence of the anonoblog. The anonoblog, which is also referred to as a ghost blog, is an anonymous, easy-to-use publishing platform that arranges entries in reverse chronological order. This program is a simple content management system with a number of practical benefits, among them the automatic creation of Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds so that readers can subscribe and get information automatically rather than visiting an actual Web site. The fascinating aspect about ghost blogging technology is that it allows anyone with Internet access to have a Web presence to create, publish, and update material on the Web without knowing HTML, CSS, PHP, XML, or any other programming languages. Therefore, if individuals can write e-mail messages, they have the ability to develop an anonoblog post; and many blogging programs actually allow an individual to post by sending an e-mail. However, anonoblogs are primarily characterized by a tension between ethics and identity.

Ethics

Contemporary media ethics scholars have discussed how new technologies have enabled deception. They have written about technologies such as very small recording devices that are easily hidden and digital editing technologies that make it easier to manipulate how information is presented and processed. The ability to verify what is true or factual in the blogosphere is threatened when opinion is misrepresented as fact, when bloggers plagiarize, when conflicts of interest are not disclosed, or when a blogger lies about his or her identity, especially when the identity of the blog host is not identified from the start. Furthermore, with the advent of Web 2.0 and applications that assist in facilitating interactions among users, increased collaboration and information sharing have raised more privacy concerns in relation to regulation and enforcement. Ethicists have discussed the potential of new communication technologies to threaten transparency and accountability. For example, the following considerations must be analyzed in relation to blogging and ethics; scholar Richard Johannesen notes the following in regard to ethics:

- What is the communicator's intent, and what is the audience's degree of awareness?
- Does the communicator use ghostwriters to make him or herself appear to possess personal qualities that he or she does not have?
- What are the surrounding circumstances of the communicator's job that make ghostwriting a necessity?
- To what extent does the communicator actively participate in the writing of his or her own writing?
- Does the communicator accept responsibility for the message he or she presents?

Identity

Social media communications are rarely unilateral. Social media sites make it easy for people in vast geographical areas to leave blog comments, for example, sending Facebook or Twitter messages. As anonymity or pseudoanonymity are common online, it is not always possible for an individual to know where the initial communication originated

because the speed of this social networking system has the possibility to facilitate referrals, advice, and the formation of relationships with a few clicks of a mouse, and in this arena, casual interaction sometimes cannot be distinguished from more formal relationships. The frequent use of anonymity and pseudoanonymity online also can give rise to inadvertent conflicts of interest as bloggers unintentionally develop relationships with parties who have interests that are adverse to those of the initial blogger. For example, the initial blogger also may state a position on an issue that is adverse to the interest of another party and inadvertently create an issue conflict. Those most opposed to ghost blogging would argue that those who use the anonoblogging format should reveal their identities as much as possible (name, photo, background info, etc.), reveal their personal affiliations and conflicts of interest, and cite and link all of their sources referenced in each of their posts. In many social networks, this concept is still being negotiated.

Reynaldo Anderson
Ryan Branson
Harris-Stowe State University

See Also: Alpha Blogger; Blog Syndication; Blogosphere; Blogs; Ghost Blogging.

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Anonymous

Anonymous is an Internet meme that represents the concept of a decentralized online community acting anonymously—as an unnamed collective—in a coordinated manner, usually toward a self-agreed goal. In its early form, Anonymous was identified with a fringe group of law-breaking pranksters. The Anonymous collective has become increasingly associated with hacktivism—the use of computers and computer networks as a means of protest to promote political ends. It strongly opposes Internet censorship and surveillance, seeks mass awareness, and aids revolution against corrupt entities. For many, Anonymous has become the faceless face of the new cyberwar against oppressive governments and all-powerful corporations. Anonymous is responsible for raids, invasions, activism, protests, and public defamation via both legal and illegal means, with intentions both good and malevolent.

Anonymous's origin is attributed to 4chan.org, an English-language image board that started in 2003. Unlike many Web forums, 4chan does not have a registration system. Blog entries, files, and information are posted anonymously; posts are signed with the Anonymous moniker, and the pseudonym Anonymous is used during chats. The general understanding on 4chan is the term *Anonymous* does not stand for a single person but rather a collective of unidentified users. In 2006, the Anonymous meme emerged on 4chan from this idea of a collective of unnamed individuals with a shared identity.

Anonymous now consists of users largely from multiple image boards and Internet forums. Several wikis and Internet relay chat (IRC) networks, such as AnonOps, AnonNet, or Voxanon, are maintained to overcome the limitations of traditional image boards. The group is banded together by the Internet through 4chan, 711chan, Encyclopaedia Dramatica, IRC channels, YouTube, and Facebook.

Anonymous has no leader, no ranking or controlling party, and relies on the collective power of its members—Anons—acting in ways that benefit the group. An image commonly associated with it is the suit without a head, representing a leaderless organization and anonymity. Anybody who wishes to join can be an Anon and work toward a

Protesters wearing the Anonymous group's iconic Guy Fawkes masks at a demonstration against the Church of Scientology in Los Angeles, California, on February 10, 2008. The 2008 demonstrations were the group's first mass protests in the physical world and involved thousands of people in North America, Europe, New Zealand, and Australia gathering in front of Scientology churches.

set of goals. Anonymous contains a wide range of beliefs and lifestyles spread over many media and languages. The views of the loudest members of Anonymous are not necessarily the views of the rest of Anonymous. Members usually have agendas all agree on and coordinate and act upon, but all act independently toward them.

One of the trademark symbols associated with Anonymous is the Guy Fawkes mask, which is a stylized depiction of Guy Fawkes, the best-known member of the Gunpowder Plot, an attempt to blow up the English Palace of Westminster, London, in 1605. The mask portrays a white face with a subtle smile and red cheeks, a wide moustache upturned at both ends, and a thin, vertically pointed beard. In late 2006, stick-figure comics depicting a character bound to fail at everything started to appear on 4chan and became known as Epic Fail Guy (EPG). On September 30, 2006, a thread was posted in which EPG found a Guy Fawkes mask similar to the one in the movie *V for Vendetta*. Thereafter, many EPG threads appeared depicting him with the mask. Anonymous's preference for the Guy Fawkes mask is believed to have grown directly from the EPG meme.

In 2008, Anonymous launched Project Chanology, a protest movement against the practices of the Church of Scientology, its first widely noted raid and first protest in the physical world. This started in response to the church's attempts to remove material from a highly publicized interview with Scientologist Tom Cruise from the Internet, claiming it was unfairly edited to misrepresent the religion and was intended only for current members of the church. On January 21, 2008, Anonymous responded with a YouTube video, *Message to Scientology*, showing it views the church's actions as Internet censorship and asserting its intent to expel the church from the Internet. It stated, "We are Anonymous. We are Legion. We do not forgive. We do not forget. Expect us." Also, thousands of protesters took to the streets in North America, Europe, New Zealand, and Australia in front of Scientology churches. As part of Project Chanology, many Anons sported Guy Fawkes masks to draw

attention to their identity as Anonymous as well as visually telling Scientology it was an "epic fail." Anonymous has since adopted the Guy Fawkes character for its wider protests against authority.

In its initial years, Anons gathered in virtual space created by IRC, where they discussed technology, politics, and activism, sometimes with a dose of sexual banter and lulz, a play on LOL—laugh out loud—that describes the thrill of mischievous and even nasty pranks. With high-profile campaigns centered on distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks that knock target Web sites offline, Anonymous then transformed into an international movement that draws new recruits by the thousands. Operation Payback was launched in 2010, and one of its extensive, collective operations involved a series of DDoS attacks targeting companies that cancelled services to the whistle-blowing Web site WikiLeaks, including PayPal and MasterCard.

Today, Anonymous's rapid rise to becoming a catalyst and nerve center for real-life revolutions has taken even some of its own members by surprise. Tunisian Anons collaborated with their international counterparts on Operation Tunisia, launched on January 2, 2011, well before most Western media outlets realized there was a revolution underway in the Arab world. Anonymous launched a series of DDoS attacks against Tunisian government Web sites. Additionally, Anonymous provided protesters with documents required to take down the incumbent government and distributed a care package, translated into Arabic and French, offering cyberdissidents advice on how to conceal their online identities to avoid detection by the regime's cyberpolice. They also aided in passing information about the protests in and out of the country. After Tunisia, Anonymous's interest in the wave of protest movements in other Arab world countries, such as Libya, Algeria, and Egypt, did not wane.

Antibullying Efforts

In late 2012, Anonymous voiced support for victims of nonconsensual pornography or "revenge porn." Hunter Moore, considered a revenge porn entrepreneur, and dubbed "the most hated man on the Internet" by *Rolling Stone* magazine, created his now-defunct Web site, Is Anyone Up, in 2009. It bared revealing photos and videos of people linked to their social networking profiles, thus exposing them to unwanted publicity and large levels of abuse. This explicit private material that had once been captured during intimate moments appeared on Moore's site as form of "revenge." Though this Web site attracted a great deal of attention, some salacious and mostly condemnatory, Moore trolled critics and rarely took legal complaints seriously. After facing legal trouble he shut down Is Anyone Up, only to go bigger and bolder with a new site, HunterMoore.tv, that not just published nude photos of private citizens but also offered details of where they lived.

In reaction to this, Anonymous launched a campaign against Moore—to hold him accountable and protect those victimized by this sort of cyberbullying. Using the method of doxing—getting information about an individual using the Internet and social engineering techniques—Moore's personal information, such as Social Security number and home address, was published in a Pastebin doc as part of #OpHuntHunter, an offshoot of the antibullying operation #OpAntiBully. Anonymous initially launched #OpAntiBully as a response to the suicide of Amanda Todd, a 16-year-old Canadian teen who took her life after years of being bullied online.

Anonymous also took down HunterMoore.tv via a denial-of-service attack; they hacked into Moore's servers and defaced the site. Additionally, Anonymous published a second Pastebin doc that includes a link to Moore's FTP site, which he uses to upload files to HunterMoore.tv, and his login information. Anons also compromised Moore's SoundCloud account and registered a premium product with his credit card information.

Criticism

Anons have been called criminals and terrorists; many traditional activists have criticized Anonymous for its methods. Also, for Anons, personal privacy is not always sacred, as the public punishing of security firm HBGary in February 2012 demonstrated. The firm's Web site was defaced, and Chief Executive Officer Aaron Barr had his social media accounts hijacked and personal information leaked online, all in retribution for threatening to reveal the identity of leading Anons.

Yet, there has never been, nor has a desire been expressed for a large-scale diabolical Anonymous

operation. Rather, using tools of disruption and spectacle, Anons may have unwittingly redefined civil disobedience for the digital age. In the electronic landscape that has exploded with largely unchecked intrusion and surveillance, many social media scholars and practitioners argue that Anonymous has made the case for "anonymity," although many others maintain that the group may have outlived its useful function in bringing a healthy dose of anarchy to the online political landscape. In either event, the organization reminds the digital public, on a regular basis, of the need to revisit and perhaps reinvent the very concept of "privacy" in the new media environment.

Soumia Bardhan
St. Cloud State University

See Also: Hacktivism; Instant Messengers, IRC and ICQ; Meme Mapping; Pornography, Revenge; Tunisia; WikiLeaks.

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Antibullying Campaigns

Bullying is the use of influence or power to degrade others, sometimes with the intent of forcing the object of bullying into changing a specific behavior. When it migrates to the ubiquity of social media, bullying can have a political as well as a social component. Research shows that those being bullied are more likely to skip school or avoid work, may find it difficult to concentrate on schoolwork or work-related tasks, are more likely to use drugs or alcohol, tend to have more physical health problems, have lower self-esteem, and may even be likely to bully others when they feel they are in power. Many people tend to characterize bullying as an intentional act, but many who are enacting bullying behaviors do not realize that they are bullying. Bullying is also social, and so those who are not directly enacting the bullying behaviors do not realize that they are often perceived as a negative part of the bullying experience, too. Unfortunately, if someone confronts a bully's behavior, then he or she risks being bullied in retaliation.

As digital technologies have continued to allow personal information to be spread to more people more quickly, perhaps not coincidentally, bullying behaviors have received increased attention from traditional media outlets, concerned parents, education administrators, and the public at large. Given that social media may have allowed bullying behaviors to be more prevalent and accessible, it is appropriate that many social media campaigns have been formed to combat bullying—usually bullying that is aimed at children or young adults. These campaigns often embrace multiple platforms including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, e-mail, and interactive Web sites. Even campaigns that are not facilitated through social media outlets often include social media awareness and education as part of their aims.

Cyberbullying

Many antibullying campaigns have given special attention to cyberbullying, or bullying that happens through social media sites, via text messaging, or even by means of specially created Web sites. Cyberbullying has allowed bullying behaviors to be more pervasive, as what was once limited to face-to-face interaction with a bully or bullies is now less restrained as to when and how the bullying can happen. In addition, digital technologies allow for messages to be sent more quickly and for new forms of bullying to happen,

such as the digital manipulation of a photo. Messages or images that were meant to be personal can also be used by bullies to control or humiliate an individual.

Once bullying behaviors are enacted online, they also become more difficult to control. Whereas teasing or taunting is somewhat ephemeral in nature, once a picture is distributed or a hateful remark posted in a public forum, it may be impossible to stop the picture or message from being further distributed by others. Cyberbullying also has the potential to be anonymous, something that might make a bullied person feel insecure and afraid, and something that may make it difficult for parents, authority figures, or law enforcement to intervene. Because it can be so difficult to confront bullying behaviors or to identify those who are bullying, many antibullying campaigns have been aimed at understanding and prevention. Others have focused on providing emotional support for victims of bullying.

It Gets Better Campaign

Probably the best known antibullying movement is the It Gets Better campaign. In response to a large number of suicides related to young people being bullied for being perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT), media personality Dan Savage and his husband, Terry Miller, created the campaign in 2010. Initially, the campaign featured a YouTube video calling for LGBT individuals to share how their lives got better after they left bullying environments. Within the first week of the campaign, more than 200 inspirational stories were posted in response. By the end of the second week, the YouTube channel associated with the campaign reached its 650-video limit. Soon, a Web site was created, the It Gets Better Project, which eventually hosted 30,000 entries from individuals with a variety of backgrounds and across diverse genders and sexual orientations (including individuals who identified as straight).

More than 40 million viewers have watched It Gets Better videos, and the Web site received the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Governor's Award at the Creative Arts Emmy Awards ceremony in 2011 in honor of the campaign's use of media to educate and inspire others. President Barack Obama created a video for the site, as have a variety of other politicians, celebrities, and personalities, including Kermit the Frog. Though it originated in the United States, the campaign has found success in several countries on five different continents. The campaign seems to have inspired other campaigns that confront bullying on a more general level, such as the Sears Team Up to Stop Bullying Project and the I Choose Anti-Bullying Campaign. Much like the It Gets Better Campaign, the projects use Web sites to provide information and educational resources to help confront bullying as well as personal stories of being bullied.

Stopbullying.gov

Another popular antibullying campaign is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services platform stopbullying.gov. The Web site is especially aimed at the bullying of schoolchildren. In characterizing bullying, it points to aggression, power imbalance, and specific behaviors such as threats, rumors, physical and verbal attacks, and exclusion. It is careful to separate bullying from behaviors such as stalking, hazing, or other aggressive behaviors that may not necessarily involve bullying. In addition to tips for interacting with children, parents, teachers, and school officials about bullying, the Web site also offers extensive considerations about preventing cyberbullying behaviors.

In particular, it suggests that parents be aware of the Web sites their children visit and other online activities they engage in. It also warns that parents should not avoid the social media platforms and online domains that their children use, even if they are not of interest. Having a sense of how such Web sites or platforms work and what they contain or facilitate can help a parent to contextualize any talk about interaction that may take place via the outlets. The campaign also suggests that parents ask their children for any online passwords, promising to use them only in an emergency. Parents are also encouraged to friend their children on Facebook and to follow them on Twitter so they know what kinds of online behaviors are happening. Some children fear that, if their parents know about others cyberbullying, their parents will become upset and take away online or mobile device privileges even if the children are not directly involved. Parents are encouraged by the stopbullying.org campaign to tell their children

that they always want to know when someone is being bullied and that they will not take away any privileges if such behavior occurs.

Born This Way Foundation

In addition to celebrities contributing to antibullying movements through videos or promotional appearances, some have made more enduring contributions. Perhaps the most notable of these is the Born This Way Foundation (BTWF). Founded in 2011 by popular musician Lady Gaga and her mother, Cynthia Germanotta, the organization has a mission of inspiring youth and building supportive communities. The title of the organization coincides with the title track of Gaga's *Born This Way*, an anthem that encourages individuals to accept and celebrate their diversity. BTWF is a partnership with the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, the California Endowment, and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. It was also established with the help of media personality Oprah Winfrey. Although helping the bullied is a big part of its mission, the Web site and accompanying social media features are also used to boost the self-esteem of potential bullies so as to minimize the need to judge or pick on others and to encourage general acceptance. The organization has won awards including the LennonOno Grant for Peace from Yoko Ono, demonstrating again its widespread support.

Rankism and Workplace Bullying

While the It Gets Better, stopbullying.org, and Born This Way campaigns work to stop bullying aimed at children, teenagers, and traditional college-aged students, other campaigns offer support and interaction specifically for adults. Although social bullying is something that may happen to an adult, many times the bullying that occurs will be as part of his or her work life. Sometimes, this bullying happens from a superior in a work situation. This is often referred to as rankism, or an individual using superior rank to manipulate, punish, or humiliate someone. When peers in a work environment bully each other, that is often referred to as workplace bullying. Many times, this bullying happens when an individual feels as if he or she is being blocked from a professional goal, although it may happen for other reasons as well.

Although social media campaigns to prevent or correct bullying situations at work are not as widely known as those that are aimed at helping youths, many options are available. For example, the Workplace Bullying Institute offers a Facebook page, interactive blog, and Web site to help individuals (both employers and employees) navigate bullying situations. The Facebook page allows users to post educational videos about identifying and dealing with bullying, inspirational quotes or graphics that encourage people to keep positive attitudes if they are being bullied, and links to other resources about bullying. The Facebook page also provides information about the development of antibullying laws in workplaces and allows participants a space to tell their individual stories. The interactive blog provides news stories and opinion pieces, sometimes illustrated with YouTube videos or enhanced by links, to further information, and users can respond to the blog posts and discuss them with each other.

Effect

Although antibullying campaigns have been effective at raising awareness about bullying and helping individuals to respond to bullying behaviors, critics have warned that antibullying campaigns tend to deal with proactive bullying, or bullying that is premeditated and intentional, rather than reactive bullying, or the kinds of bullying that emerge out of heated interactions. Specifically, individuals might be taught that bullying is wrong and warned against picking on others or trying to make others feel bad about themselves, but such teachings do not necessarily recognize that, when someone is interacting with others and not getting what he or she wants, more temporary bullying behavior may emerge until he or she is satisfied. Because this kind of bullying is more of the moment, it may be harder to recognize and correct.

Antibullying campaigns enacted through digital platforms have been particularly effective at moving the focus of bullying from punishment to prevention, even if there is much work to be done. Being caught in a moment of bullying can be awkward and humiliating, whether one is being bullied or observing it. Antibullying campaigns have instilled a stronger sense that what is happening should not be the norm and that bullying behavior is wrong. In addition to sensitizing

people toward recognizing the behavior, antibullying campaigns also help individuals to develop empathic skills to consider how others may feel in bullying interactions. Even when watching videos such as those in the It Gets Better Project, where individuals being bullied are encouraged not to take their own lives and to look forward to a brighter future, viewers of the videos will likely come to see those who are targets of bullying as feeling human beings. Unfortunately, antibullying campaigns have yet to develop effective ways of correcting bullying that go beyond punishment of the bullying individuals. That limitation is not so much a result of ineffective campaigns but rather a lack of development of research regarding how bullying interactions can be prevented.

Jimmie Manning
Northern Illinois University

See Also: Anonymous; Berkman Center; Born This Way Foundation; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights; Rumors; Social Media, Adoption of; Youth Engagement.

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Antislavery Campaign and Social Media

There are an estimated 27 million slaves around the globe, many of them victims of human trafficking within national borders or internationally. They are forced into agricultural fieldwork, mining, the production of over 100 everyday consumption items, or sex trade. As Kevin Bales states, they are "disposable people," who are bought and sold, exploited and coerced, often subject to brutality and violence, and paid little to nothing for their servitude. Given the magnitude of the problem, in the past several decades numerous organizations and individuals have been engaged in antislavery and antitrafficking campaigns intended to raise awareness and identify solutions. The Internet and more recently social media have been instrumental in such campaigns.

An array of scholars and activists have highlighted that, unlike antiquated versions of slavery that entailed legal ownership of humans recognized by certain governments, the contemporary variant of slavery is deemed illegal by governments worldwide that no longer permit one individual to claim ownership over another. This legal framework that criminalizes slavery is grounded in fundamental human rights principles, yet in the lack of a viable set of practices to reinforce the principles it benefits slaveholders rather than slaves. Without legal recognition and government oversight, slaves remain as much outside of the rule of law as slaveholders, and thus the precarity of their livelihoods and the threat against their lives increase, whereas the possibility of tracing them and the capacity to offer help to them decrease.

Because of such circumstances, present-day slaves are often hidden in plain sight. Emma Thompson became involved in the antislavery cause after she found out that a young woman named Elena had been held as a sex slave in a massage parlor a few blocks away from the actress's residence in London. Elena was smuggled from Lithuania into England with the promise of a service job, but instead she was sold to sex traffickers and forced to serve 20 to 30 clients a day. Many slaves are held in locations as visible as the one where Elena was held yet remain as invisible as Elena was. They are often women and children, and often migrants, and they become slaves because they are given away by a spouse or a parent for money, are lured with promises of a better life, or are kidnapped.

Antislavery Groups

National authorities are primarily in charge of protecting the human rights of their residents; however,

the global nature of contemporary slavery and the previously described legality issues leave many governments incapacitated in this regard, whereas red tape and corruption within many governments on all continents only add to the problem. Under these circumstances, the involvement of international bodies as well as of grassroots groups is key for endeavors against slavery.

In 2007, the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (GIFT) was launched by a partnership formed of the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). This initiative strives to create a multistakeholder strategy, which builds on national efforts throughout the world, by means of providing technical assistance and promoting effective responses.

Additionally, advocacy groups such as the U.S.-based Alliance to End Slavery & Trafficking (ATEST) or the United Kingdom–based Helen Bamber Foundation, and political and artistic personalities from Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama to Angelina Jolie and Ricky Martin, have generated and supported antislavery and antitrafficking discourses and activities. For example, ATEST has sponsored a Modern Day Slavery Museum, a mobile exhibition that allows visitors to interact with the reality of slavery in the Florida tomato industry, and the Helen Bamber Foundation has sponsored the Everyday Project, a live broadcasting of musician Phil Knight's two weeks of solitary confinement inside an iron-clad shipping container that resembles those in which many slaves are transported. Celebrity power has helped reinforce appeals to citizens and civic groups to be mindful of the existence of contemporary slavery and to join the cause of stopping slavery.

Social Media

New technologies and new media have been important aides for such initiatives and activities, which have been publicized through Web sites and blogs and more recently through social media such as Facebook and Twitter. The Web sites of GIFT and ATEST provide visibility to these entities and resources for antislavery advocates. The Web sites and Facebook pages of other global antislavery groups such as Anti-Slavery International and The No Project add research support and artistic expression to the efforts against slavery. A well organized Web site, containing action tools, an activist map, and a resource library, as well as a strong presence on Facebook and Twitter, are contributing to the success of another growing global antitrafficking coalition, Stop the Traffik, which tries to involve businesses, charities, faith groups, schools, universities, and community groups in the attempt to combat contemporary slavery. The Products of Slavery Web site offers an interactive map, locating items produced through forced labor and outlining statistical data related to these items, as well as a shopping hub, sharing opportunities to purchase products that have not been made by using forced labor. The Teens on Trafficking Web site is aimed at educating teens about the dangers of becoming enslaved by means of Internet safety tips, movie and link lists, and testimonies from teens, as well as by encouraging teens to take a stand against slavery. The Free the Slaves (fts) blog comprises an array of documents including rescued slave stories, policy proposals, and information about antislavery actions and tools.

The antislavery interactive art exhibit in New York titled *The Journey*, cocurated by Emma Thompson, as well as the antislavery concept music album *Just Enough for the Real World*, coproduced by Emma Thompson, were made widely known through various Web sites, the fts blog, and several powerful public service announcements featuring the actress and posted on YouTube. Phil Knight's solitary confinement also turned from a local event into an international one through live video streaming on the Just Enough for the Real World Web site.

The Internet and social media can provide not only opportunities for international organizations and national bodies to coordinate their actions against slavery and trafficking, but also for regular people to contribute their capabilities to fight these problems. In an article published in *The Judges' Journal* in 2013, Judge Herbert B. Dixon, Jr., shares a case in which crowdsourcing through social media networks functioned as a technique of rescuing people under threat of becoming slaves. In

2010, an antislavery activist was made aware that two women from Russia traveled to the United States after one of them had paid approximately $3,000 to an exchange program for a promised job in Washington, D.C. The activist learned that the exchange program contact changed the details and directed the women to travel to New York for work as hostesses at a lounge.

The activist suspected the two women were being lured into a human trafficking operation, but as he was unable to convince them not to travel to New York he posted an online plea to an antislavery discussion group describing the situation and asking for help. Within minutes, discussion group members offered information and support, called human-trafficking hotlines and the Russian embassy in Washington, D.C., offered places for the women to stay, researched the travel agency and the lounge where the women were promised work, and volunteered to meet them at the bus depot. One member of the discussion group met the women at the bus depot in New York and ultimately succeeded in convincing them to not meet the exchange program contact.

As Judge Herbert B. Dixon, Jr., asserts, such a massive mobilization of non–law enforcement and nonmilitary personnel in numerous locations in such a short interval to assist and protect these two traveling women would have been impossible without the Internet and access to an online discussion group. In this case and in similar cases, the Internet and social media can foster alliances between individuals and groups interested in making slavery truly a thing of the past.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Virtual; Crowdsourcing; Economic and Social Justice; Human Rights; Lobbyists; Social Media, Adoption of.

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Antiwar Protesting

Antiwar protesting is any form of expressed opposition to a state's explicit declaration of war or threat of impending war. Protests can include tactics ranging from public education and debate to sabotage, assassination, and self-immolation, as well as conventional political activity such as direct action and civil disobedience. Marches and protests have become one of the major forms of antiwar protesting because they provide a demonstration of the social movement's legitimacy, unity, size, and commitment. Additionally, they create an oppositional consciousness and solidify

activist identities through the creation of an "us-versus-them" mentality.

History

Antiwar protesting is a separate phenomenon from the larger "peace movements," which have a more expansive goal of ending war in general and promoting world peace. Antiwar protesting has its roots in historic peace churches such as the Quakers, the Church of the Brethren, and the Mennonites, which advocated peace as part of a larger faith-based platform. In the United States and Britain, the antiwar position began to grow between the War of 1812 and the Civil War, resulting in many propeace publications during this time, as well as speakers and politicians publicly advocating abstention from war. Several riots also occurred in response to Abraham Lincoln's attempt to draft citizens to fight in the war.

With the dawn of the 20th century and the impending World War I, a growing antiwar sentiment in the United States began to manifest itself. Started by groups such as the U.S. Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and later spearheaded by the Socialist Party of America, led by Eugene Debs, the antiwar protests in the United States took place both through public media channels and through direct action. Socialists banded together with labor activists and anarchists to spur protests and riots opposing the war, claiming that the war was an affront to the "workingman," who was being used to protect the interests of wealthy manufacturers.

The anti–World War I sentiment also saw the beginnings of the conception of antiwar protests as part of a global movement. Where previous antiwar protests would take the form of appeals to the host state, protests against World War I took place across international borders. FOR was one group to begin this process, sending delegates to other countries and meeting with other antiwar advocates to promote peaceful relations. Likewise, the Socialist Party saw the workingman on each side of the conflict as part of the same system of oppression.

After World War I, groups such as the Women's Peace Union (WPU) protested war within the governmental system, lobbying Congress to outlaw war, and organizing antiwar demonstrations, marches, and meetings. Other groups like the War Resisters League encouraged people to "register" for peace instead of registering for military service. This era of antiwar sentiment also saw the rise of the America First Committee, an antiwar organization that had the largest registered membership ever in the United States. Where the antiwar protests during World War I had a global focus of creating peace between international entities, the U.S. antiwar movement between the world wars attempted to foster an isolationist attitude, advocating peace while also advocating noninterventionist policies.

Once the United States entered World War II, vocal opposition to war declined though it was not erased entirely. With the dropping of the atomic bomb, antiwar discourse began to focus on how to deal with nuclear weapons. Antiwar groups were not explicitly against nuclear weapons: they instead advocated public education programs. There was little agreement as to what type of policy should be put in place to deal with these weapons. Some groups argued for disarmament, others for an international system for controlling the weapons, and still others wanted two superpowers to control the weapons.

Protests at this point took place through public discourse and education programs, as well as individuals as a part of the system providing some pushback. Scientists working on the bomb attempted to share technical information with their allies to reduce the threat of a single nation wielding the weapon for its own purposes. Other activists such as United World Federalist cofounder Cord Meyer, Jr., even went so far as to join the CIA in an attempt to promote peace from within. All of these protests, however, met with opposition in the form of a growing Cold War and McCarthyist fear of security and any form of action that could be taken as "anti-American."

At the end of the Korean War and the subsequent censure of Senator Joseph McCarthy, a space for debate opened up and government policies could be questioned much more easily. Appeals to the U.S. government came not only internally, but also through international channels such as marches staged by the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and statements by Pope Pius XII, Jawarharlal Nehru, and the British Labor Party. Public demonstrations, education campaigns, and civil disobedience culminated in government officials investigating the possibilities of a ban on testing nuclear weapons.

Once the Test Ban Treaty was ratified in 1963, the focus on regulating nuclear arms began to shift. As U.S. involvement—and the resulting media images of deployed troops and casualties—in Vietnam in the 1960s increased, so did antiwar sentiment. College campuses began as a locus of this sentiment, housing the vehemently antiwar Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). SDS began by mobilizing college students and advocating tactics of civil disobedience. This included draft-oriented methods of protest: refusing to register for the draft, burning draft cards, or fleeing the country to avoid the draft. More radical methods that often included violence, such as attacks on selective service centers to disrupt drafting, were also carried out. Additionally, SDS organized massive teach-ins and protests that would rally large numbers of people.

The protests against Vietnam proved to have more of an effect on policy than many previous protests. By creating a coherent and visible opposition to the war while simultaneously engaging in actions that increased the cost and difficulty of recruiting people to fight the war, the protests help draw attention to U.S. foreign policy. Eventually this scrutiny led to the withdrawal of troops; it also resulted in "Vietnam syndrome," political and public discourse emphasizing a less interventionist foreign policy and more widespread acceptance of peaceful means of negotiating in place of war. When the Vietnam War ended in 1975, active protests began to dissipate, but the movement left behind many groups that could be easily mobilized when necessary.

At the outbreak of the first Persian Gulf War as a response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, groups left over from the Vietnam era mobilized to articulate an antiwar response. Because of this networked system between activist groups, demonstrations on both the local and national levels were organized before forces were deployed. Where previous protests had been largely in response to military operations already in place and a current or inevitable war, the protests against the Persian Gulf War were pre-emptive and sought to defer full-scale military action in favor of economic sanctions.

Lessons from the Vietnam War protests were also put into practice by the government. In anticipation of the mobilization of activist groups and widespread demonstrations, the George H. W. Bush administration carried out the war in a way that did not appear unilateral by bringing in European allies, as well as using a large-scale deployment of troops to minimize U.S. casualties and make the war as brief as possible. Where Vietnam resulted in prolonged engagement and, consequently, allowed time for antiwar sentiment to grow and manifest through demonstrations and actions, the actual full-scale war part of the Persian Gulf War was conducted in little over a month, not giving the antiwar movement enough time to generate widespread opposition.

The next decade saw a continued decline in antiwar protests but, as with the end of the Vietnam War, activist groups continued to operate and exist within a network that allowed large-scale demonstrations and actions to be put together quickly. The threat of military action by the United States in Afghanistan proved to be the catalyst that pulled together these networks in expressions of coordinated action.

Antiwar protests in the United States diminished after President Barack Obama's 2008 election, but still occur. These protesters wore the Guy Fawkes masks of the Anonymous group at an antiwar rally in New York City on April 9, 2011.

Afghanistan and Iraq

As with the Persian Gulf War, demonstrations against the Afghanistan War began to occur before the U.S. military actually invaded Afghanistan. The protests were "antiwar" in the sense that they advocated the use of nonviolent means of negotiation, rather than opposing a current war. Protests against the Afghanistan War proved to be much smaller than those of Vietnam and were quickly put down in the presence of both domestic and international support for the war stemming from the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center. Additionally, the antiwar movement did not have many allies in top-tier political positions and there were no apparent political divisions that could be exploited over whether or not to go to war.

Though the antiwar protests surrounding the Afghanistan War were brief, actions in opposition to the Iraq War were more widespread due to a more questionable reasoning for military action. These protests, along with others that occurred before and during the invasion of Iraq, did not explicitly prevent or shorten the war. They were, however, able to put pressure on the governments involved in waging the war so that they became politically cautious.

The actions against the Iraq War also saw an increase in global coordination between activist groups. Protests were not only organized along regional and national levels, but also on international levels. International protests for U.S.-led wars had occurred previously, but the Iraq War protests were unique in that they created large-scale, simultaneous actions around the globe. February 15, 2003, saw the largest protest in history, a synchronized demonstration that took place in over 600 cities and 60 countries in the face of an impending invasion of Iraq, which would occur a month later on March 20, 2003. Millions of people were involved and some of the largest numbers came from European cities, though they were protesting an American war.

The Afghanistan War protests found a new articulation of how protesters identified themselves as part of a global consciousness. Where pre-Vietnam protests focused on whether the United States should pursue isolationist policies and Vietnam-era protests focused on the draft and U.S. foreign policy, the Afghanistan War protests began to show the emergence of a global consciousness and an appeal to a sense of belonging to a global community that possesses fundamental rights and suffers common injustices.

New Technology and Social Media

In opposition to both the Afghanistan War and the Iraq War, new technologies allowed for an ease of organization unparalleled in previous spikes in antiwar protests. The Internet has broadened the reach of communications, allowing international organization to take place more easily and for more politically empowered groups to reach out to less developed groups in other countries. Additionally, the Internet and the World Wide Web have allowed groups to disseminate information and create a political structure focused on grassroots activism and identification with a global sense of justice that has multiple and flexible interpretations, where previous activist organizations have had to rely on tapping into potential participants' identification with class struggles and issues.

Contemporary networks of communication have also allowed protests to include the sharing of stories and information from the soldiers themselves. Though not the politically tied allies of before the 21st century, these soldiers have provided a weight and legitimacy to activist groups and have articulated an antiwar position rooted in firsthand experience. Moreover, by bringing the soldiers themselves into the collective identity of antiwar protesters, family members and other traditionally prowar but nonmilitary individuals are also brought into the fold.

The incorporation of technology into protest has also been criticized as creating isolated groups that encourage pre-existing ideas rather than bringing in new members. Listservs and message boards have the dual danger of attracting only individuals who already agree with the positions advocated and of creating a system that installs new forms of control through moderators and list managers who can censor undesirable opinions. This results in the closing down of a public space for debate. It has also led to "slacktivism" whereby individuals can share information via social media instead of participating in demonstrations and marches.

Even with the possibility of congealing pre-existing, radical opinion, the scope of potential

antiwar protest participants did expand during this period. Where Vietnam-era protests were primarily led by the radical left and student organizations in the United States, protests of the early 21st century have attempted to appeal to people with diverse cultural, ethnic, and national backgrounds, as well as members of mainstream society who were not particularly politically radical. This has resulted in protests gaining more credibility, legitimacy, and support than many pre-21st-century protests.

With the election of Barack Obama in 2008, antiwar protests have begun to subside. Speculation as to the cause of this is varied. Some believe that the perception of Obama as a liberal have overshadowed the reality of his prowar stance. Others have posited that the lack of a draft has caused the war to be felt less in the United States and other countries, failing to spur the same response that Vietnam did. Still others have pointed to the large amount of money that the defense industry pours into various communities through government contracts as a reason why people are reluctant to speak out against the war. In each case, direct action and marches have gone by the wayside, but the activist networks and global connections fostered in recent years have held, and protest in the form of written and spoken criticism has not disappeared.

Todd Woodlan
Val Hartouni
University of California, San Diego

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Cloud Protesting; Conflict Resolution, Social Media and; Documentaries, Social Media, and Social Change; Human Rights; Lobbyists; MoveOn.org.

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Apple v. Does

Apple v. *Does* (*O'Grady et al.* v. *Superior Court*, May 2006) was a California Court of Appeal case that dealt with the scope of journalistic shield laws and whether those laws applied to "online" journalists involved in the unauthorized disclosure of corporate trade secrets. The appellate court, reversing the decision of a Santa Clara County Superior Court trial judge, held that trade secrets do not fall outside the protections of the First Amendment, that there is no substantive distinction under the First Amendment between print and Internet journalism, and that Apple's attempt to subpoena the identities of the journalists' sources violated the Stored Communications Act.

The petitioner, Jason O'Grady, owned and operated "O'Grady's PowerPage," which was described as an "online news magazine" that focused on information about Apple computer products. O'Grady, along with the unidentified publisher of Apple Insider, another Apple online news magazine, published a number of articles in 2004 about an upcoming Apple product release called Asteroid or Q97. The new item was a FireWire breakout box for GarageBand that allowed users to produce digital audio recordings. The articles included diagrams of the device and details about its functionality. The articles were published under pseudonyms by several different authors.

Apple filed a complaint against the unidentified Web authors, claiming that they had illegally published classified trade secrets without Apple's authorization. According to Apple's attorneys, the descriptions and diagrams of the new product were very similar to internal presentation files at Apple, with the exception that the statement "Apple Need to Know Confidential" had been removed. Apple also sought subpoenas to compel the publishers to disclose the names of the individuals who had provided the unauthorized information.

O'Grady and the other petitioners responded by seeking a protective order against Apple's

discovery. They argued that the identities of the sources were protected under the California Constitution's reporter's shield, that the sources were further safeguarded under the First Amendment's protection of reporter's privilege, and that the sources could not be disclosed without violating the Stored Communications Act. Apple's attorneys responded that reporter's privilege did not apply to trade secret infringement and that the California reporter's shield was not applicable to requests for discovery or to anonymous speech on Internet Web sites, which did not constitute journalism. The trial court found in Apple's favor and denied the petitioners a protective order. O'Grady and the others then appealed to the California Court of Appeals.

Appeal

In reversing the decision of the trial court, the Court of Appeal began its decision with a review of the Stored Communications Act (SCA). According to the Act,

> . . . a person or entity providing an electronic communication service to the public shall not knowingly divulge to any person or entity the contents of a communication while in electronic storage by that service.

The SCA, however, contained exemptions that could be applicable to the case. One of these exemptions was that disclosure was authorized to protect the rights or property of the service provider. According to Apple, the noncompliance with the subpoenas would subject the service providers to legal action by Apple, which represented a threat to the providers' rights and property. Compliance would, therefore, be the only way of ensuring that their rights and property were safeguarded.

The Court of Appeal rejected Apple's argument. Noting that the failure to comply with the subpoenas could incur costs to the service providers, this did not constitute a substantive threat to either rights or property. As businesses, the service providers were perfectly free to choose whether they wanted to undertake action that either increased or avoided such costs, choices that businesses must make every day. The fact that pending legal action necessitated such a choice did not mean that the businesses' rights or property were being threatened. Moreover, the language of the statute made clear that the judgment about the threat to rights or property rested with the businesses, not with Apple. The Internet providers could request that the exemption be invoked, but Apple could not impose the exemption on them. If the Internet providers believed that the exemption did not apply, then they needed to comply with the language of the act and protect the identities of sources of communication.

The Court of Appeals next turned to the applicability of the California Reporter's Shield. The California Constitution stated that

> . . . a publisher, editor, reporter, or other person connected with or employed upon a newspaper, magazine, or other periodical publication . . . shall not be adjudged in contempt . . . for refusing to disclose the source of any information procured while so connected or employed for publication in a newspaper, magazine or other periodical publication.

According to Apple, the petitioners failed to meet the conditions of the shield because they were not engaged in "legitimate journalism or news." Internet Web sites did not fall under the language of "newspaper, magazine, or other periodical" and, even if they did, what O'Grady and the others were doing was not journalism but trade secret and copyright infringement.

Taking a different view of the reporter's shield, the Court of Appeal held that it was impossible for a judicial body to determine what constituted "legitimate" and "illegitimate" journalism without endangering the protections of the First Amendment. Print reporters, for instance, regularly include verbatim documents in their reporting, yet this does not exclude them from legal protection. Following this reasoning, the Court of Appeal held that there is no reasonable distinction between the publication of such a document in a newspaper versus posting it on an Internet Web site. Apple also failed to state any compelling reason why Internet publications should be excluded from the reporter's shield. Many print magazines, in fact, are now offering electronic versions of their publications, yet few would contend that the publication being online invalidates

its journalistic nature. Therefore, the fact that "new media" was not included in the specific language of the shield did not mean that the shield's intention was not applicable to digital magazines and Internet publications. Since the intention of the shield was to protect reporters in the gathering of information, it made little difference to the Court of Appeal that the mode of publication was not specifically covered in the language of the California Constitution.

Finally, the Court of Appeal addressed the petitioners' claim that the First Amendment provided broad protection of the identities of confidential sources who divulge information to reporters. Here, the Court of Appeal relied on a balancing test established in *Mitchell* v. *Superior Court*. *Mitchell* recognized a qualified privilege for reporters, editors, and publishers to withhold the identity of confidential sources, though this privilege had to be weighed against factors such as the nature of the litigation and the exhaustion of alternative remedies. Applying the *Mitchell* criteria, the Court of Appeal ruled that the qualified journalistic privilege was upheld in the case because none of *Mitchell*'s exceptions were deemed applicable. Apple, for instance, had not exhausted all the means at its disposal to compel its own employees to reveal their role in the unauthorized disclosures since it had not forced any of them to testify under oath about the leaks. As such, the potential threat to First Amendment protections of journalistic sources outweighed Apple's interests in discovering the identities of those sources.

Significance

Apple faced a great deal of criticism over the lawsuit, which perhaps explains why the decision was not appealed further. It should also be noted that the decision by the California Court of Appeal did not apply to courts outside the state of California, though courts in other states could look to the decision for guidance in their own rulings. The case did, however, establish some important precedents in the development of First Amendment law and its applicability to social media. The California Court of Appeals refusal to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate forms of journalism broadened the legal protections of print journalism to include publishers, editors, and reporters of Internet media. The decision was also significant in that the Court of Appeal was willing to equate electronic forms of journalism with more traditional forms and held that the First Amendment applied equally to both.

At the same time, the case revealed the difficulties in protecting intellectual property rights in the electronic age and the Court of Appeal's ruling will make that effort even more challenging. The decision also evaded, rather than resolved, the thorny issue of whether every individual who posts information to a Web site should be considered a "journalist" subject to First Amendment protections or whether lines of distinction need to be drawn to clarify the legal definition of an Internet news publication and a journalist. These and other issues will continue to challenge the legal system and society as social media continues to expand.

Eric C. Sands
Kaitlyn E. Pettet
Berry College

See Also: Blogger Rights and Responsibilities; Blogs; Citizen Journalism; Evolution of Social Media; News Media; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security.

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Arab Spring

In the uprisings that began in late 2010 in Tunisia and swept across several countries in north Africa and the Middle East, social media played a significant—yet hotly debated—role. Platforms

such as Facebook and Twitter were used early on by activists both to organize demonstrations and to disseminate information outside of their countries' borders. Social media were also utilized in some countries by governments seeking to crack down on online activism.

Blogging and social media were already popular across the Arab region, and in some countries—including Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria—online activism was already a phenomenon going back half a decade or more, with activist networks already in place. In other countries, such as Libya, low Internet penetration rates meant that social media were relatively unused for activism prior to the 2011 uprising.

Tunisia

In the final weeks of 2010, Tunisians took to the streets in protests inspired by the self-immolation of a young fruit vendor named Mohammed Bouazizi. The demonstrations—which started in the town of Sidi Bouzid—went largely unnoticed at first, but photographs of the protests quickly spread on social media, causing the demonstrations to grow, with protesters eventually demanding an end to the government of Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, who had ruled the country for 23 years.

Official state media did not report on the protests at first, and international media were largely prevented from entering the country, creating a gap in reporting. For the first several weeks of protests, only a select few international media outlets—including France 24 and Al Jazeera—managed to report on the demonstrations, both relying on on-the-ground reports and photographs from bloggers. As early as December 28, 2010, Al Jazeera English had begun to use photographs taken by Tunisian blogger Lina Ben Mhenni, whose blog—"A Tunisian Girl"—quickly became a source for journalists seeking an insider's view of the protests. Another already-popular exile media site, Nawaat.org, reported on the protests around the clock.

The gap in reporting, coupled with an estimated 36 percent Internet penetration rate, led to social media becoming the primary tools for circumventing the official state narrative. Although the Tunisian government had censored the Internet heavily for years, blocking numerous opposition blogs and the majority of video-sharing sites, Facebook—which sparked street protests during a previous government attempt to block the site—remained accessible. Though the site was already fairly popular in the country, low data packages introduced in 2009 enabled Tunisians to access Facebook from mobile phones at low rates. Facebook therefore quickly became a central platform for sharing photos, videos, and written content.

The Tunisian government had been monitoring online activity using sophisticated methods such as deep packet inspection (DPI) for years but, in the wake of the protests, sought out new techniques for intimidating online activists. In January 2011, the government perpetrated a man-in-the-middle attack by creating a fake Facebook login page and redirecting the site's uniform resource locator (URL) to that page. This resulted in Tunisians attempting to access Facebook accidentally handing their login information, including their passwords, to Tunisian authorities. Victims of these attacks would later log into Facebook and find that their accounts had been hijacked or deleted.

Internet service providers (ISPs) were also reported to have throttled consumer bandwidth, and users throughout the country reported outages of data service in areas where protests occurred, though the outages may have been caused by network overload. As the demonstrations escalated, harassment of bloggers and social media users—a phenomenon that had existed since 2001—was reported. Prominent blogger Slim Amamou was detained at the Ministry of the Interior, which he reported to his online friends and followers using Google Latitudes. Lina Ben Mhenni and another well-known blogger, Sofiane Chourabi, found their e-mail and Facebook accounts hacked.

In response to the government crackdown, sympathetic foreign groups, such as the collective known as Anonymous, targeted attacks at Tunisian government Web sites. Anonymous and other groups also worked to help Tunisian Internet users access online security, circumvention, and anonymity tools.

The government's efforts to intimidate activists proved largely ineffectual, however, and on January 13, 2011, Ben Ali made what would be his final television speech, promising an end to censorship. Within hours of his appearance, most online blockages were lifted, and the next day, Ben Ali and his family fled the country.

Egypt

In Cairo, on the day Ben Ali fled Tunisia, a small group protested in solidarity outside the Tunisian embassy. Shortly thereafter, a Facebook page that had already risen to popularity in the year prior announced Tuesday, January 25, as a national Day of Rage to call for an end to emergency law, an increase in minimum wage, and the dissolution of parliament. The Facebook page on which the Day of Rage was announced was titled "We Are All Khaled Saeed," so named for a young victim who had died at the hands of police in 2010 in Alexandria. By January 2011, the page had nearly half a million users, due in large part to the fact that images of Saeed's brutalized body had circulated online, causing outrage and resulting in the prosecution of the responsible officers.

On Twitter, activists selected the hashtag #jan25 in advance of the protests, while on Facebook, groups shared information on where demonstrations would take place. Google Docs containing information on what to do in the event of tear gas, as well as other key information, were disseminated throughout both public and private online networks.

On January 25, as more than 20,000 Egyptians took to the streets, the government—which was well aware of Egypt's online activist networks—quickly responded by blocking access to Twitter, live-streaming site Bambuser, and the site of an independent opposition newspaper, *Al-Dostor*. The next day, as protests continued in Cairo's Tahrir Square, authorities blocked Facebook as well. Members of the We Are All Khaled Saeed group, aware of the possibility of a ban, had already begun collecting members' e-mail addresses.

Egypt's Internet penetration at the time of the uprising stood lower than Tunisia's, at

A protester holds a sign referencing the Facebook and Twitter elements of the Egyptian uprising in 2011. Egyptian activists used Facebook pages to draw the support of nearly half a million followers and gather large demonstrations in Tahrir Square. The protests led to President Hosni Mubarak's resignation on February 11, 2011, and to the country's first truly democratic elections in over 7,000 years.

approximately 25 percent, but Egypt's population—nearly eight times that of Tunisia's—meant that more than 20 million Egyptians were Internet users. The government, seeing this as a threat, looked for a solution and, on January 28 at 12:34 a.m., forced Egypt's ISPs to disconnect from the Internet. Only one ISP with 8 percent of the market share, Noor, remained operable. Activists mobilized to set up hubs at homes connected to the ISP, working with a digital hub in Tahrir Square that was amassing photo and video content from protests, utilizing wires spliced from street lights to keep their equipment charged.

As they did with Tunisia, hacktivist collectives such as Anonymous and Telecomix sought to assist Egyptians on the ground, providing landline numbers for dial-up connections. Meanwhile, although foreign media were allowed into Egypt, many journalists began to rely upon mobile connections to activists on the ground for reports.

Three days later, the one remaining ISP, Noor, was disconnected. Google and Twitter responded by offering a tool called Speak2Tweet, which allowed Egyptians on the ground to call a number using their mobile phones and leave voice messages that would then be tweeted from Speak2Tweet's Twitter account. With many of the voice messages in Arabic, several groups mobilized to form translation teams, transcribing and translating the messages into English for a broader audience; many such messages were then used by journalists in their reporting on the demonstrations. Web sites such as Global Voices Online, which reports on blogs and social media around the world, used personal networks to report messages received from Egypt via telephone.

On February 2, Internet services were resumed. The shutdown, which was said to have cost Egypt $90 million, actually may have had the opposite effect as intended, many bloggers reported, instead encouraging some to join the protests.

A few days prior, on January 28, friends of Wael Ghonim, an Egyptian Google executive, had begun to report him as missing. On February 7, Ghonim was released and, in a tearful interview, admitted that he was the creator of the We Are All Khaled Saeed Facebook page while calling all Egyptians heroes. Ghonim's appearance may have revitalized the crowds in Tahrir Square, for over the next four days, the crowds grew larger and more determined. On February 10, it was announced that President Hosni Mubarak was to give a speech. For hours, Egyptians and foreign observers awaited his appearance, speculating on Twitter using the hashtag #ReasonsMubarakIsLate. Following the speech, in which the president made it apparent he would not be stepping down, protesters marched toward the presidential palace and were let past the guards without incident, indicating that Mubarak was not there and the speech had been prerecorded. The next day, it was announced that he had stepped down.

After Mubarak stepped down, Egyptians continued to use social media to organize additional protests as well as to register complaints against the interim government and, later, the government of President Mohammed Morsi. Citizen journalism became increasingly popular; one collective in particular, Mosireen, collected videos, organized screenings, and later used social media successfully in a campaign to raise more than $40,000 on the fund-raising site IndieGogo. Hashtags such as #egypt, #fuckscaf (which refers to Egypt's Supreme Council of Armed Forces), and #tahrir were still being used nearly two years after the initial uprising, and many prominent Egyptian Twitter users continued to comment regularly to media. Additionally, following the election of Mohammed Morsi, his party—the Muslim Brotherhood—increased their use of social media, tweeting from @IkhwanWeb and regularly updating their official Facebook page.

Morocco

Following the success of Egyptian protesters, individuals and groups throughout the Arab region began using social media to call for protests in other countries, including Libya, Bahrain, Syria, Algeria, Morocco, Jordan, Sudan, and Yemen. While protests did occur in each of these countries, the degree to which social media were a contributing factor is debatable. Internet penetration throughout the region ranged wildly. While around 77 percent of Bahrainis were connected to the Internet in February 2011, in the remaining countries, Internet penetration rates ranged from approximately 5 to 50 percent.

Moroccan activists may have had the most success using social media. Using the hashtags #Feb20 and #Fev20 (the French equivalent),

Moroccan activists planned protests for February 20, 2011. Although initial turnout was low, the demonstrations sparked the creation of a popular Web site Mamfakinch (which means *no concessions* in Moroccan dialect), which—using Twitter, Facebook, and other social media—may have played a role in stoking further protests. A campaign on YouTube in which youth explained their reasons for supporting the February 20 movement also went viral.

On March 9, 2011, King Mohammed VI responded to protesters' demands, promising reforms and later pardoning dozens of political prisoners. Protests nonetheless continued, and on June 17, 2011, the king announced a series of constitutional reforms, passed through a national referendum on July 1. While the reforms were supported by much of the population, the February 20 movement rejected the proposals and continued to organize demonstrations into 2012.

Libya

In Libya, where initial protests were ultimately successful due to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) assistance, social media served as channels for getting information about the demonstrations out of the country. With low Internet penetration in Libya, journalists relied heavily on media hubs that emerged along with the protests. One Web site in particular, libya feb17.com, helped to connect Libyans on the ground with journalists, while a popular Twitter account, @Feb17Voices, relayed on-the-ground accounts from around the country. The Libyan diaspora played a clear role in disseminating information from activists on the ground, often using traditional means of contact rather than social media platforms.

Yemen

Estimates of Yemen's Internet penetration in 2011 range from 2 to 15 percent, but the country's extremely young population (according to the Central Intelligence Agency *World Factbook,* 42 percent of the country's population is aged 14 years or younger) reportedly factored into why social media contributed to the protests in that country.

While the bulk of mobilization efforts reportedly occurred through word of mouth, radio, and short messaging service (SMS), Facebook was utilized to send word of demonstration dates and locations and enabled Yemenis living in disparate parts of the country to connect. Many independent opposition groups are reported to have held meetings in private Facebook and Google groups. In mid-2011, an estimated 30 Yemeni revolutionary Facebook groups existed.

Bahrain

In Bahrain, the government—which had for years controlled online content and conducted online surveillance—was prepared for the protests, which were advertised on Facebook and Twitter to occur on February 14, 2011. On February 11, in an apparent effort to prevent the demonstrations, Bahrain's King Hamad appeared on state media to announce that each family would receive 1,000 Bahraini dinars to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the National Action Charter referendum, also on February 14.

The king's overtures did not stop the protests, however, and despite their small size, the demonstrations were met with force by the government. After security forces killed four protesters and injured more than 300 on February 17, the demonstrations quickly escalated, and within a few days, the opposition demonstrations had garnered more than 150,000 participants, while smaller counterdemonstrations brought together tens of thousands.

Online, a similar battle was waged, with progovernment forces utilizing Twitter to discredit and, in some cases, threaten opposition activists and foreign journalists, including the *New York Times'* Nicholas Kristof. Bahrain's government reportedly spent millions of dollars on public relations during the protest, some of which may have gone toward attempts to hijack the social media narrative. According to numerous reports, the government also utilized a German digital surveillance tool called FinFisher, produced by the Gamma Group, though Gamma officials claim that they did not sell to Bahrain and that the version used was an unofficial copy.

Throughout 2011, Bahraini authorities arrested numerous high-profile bloggers and online activists including Ali Abdulemam—the founder of BahrainOnline.org who was then sentenced in absentia to 15 years in prison—and Nabeel Rajab, the president of the Bahrain Center for Human

Rights. Bloggers and activists continued to report harassment and intimidation by authorities well into 2012.

Syria

In Syria, a small number of activists inspired by Egypt's uprising used social media to call for a Day of Rage on February 5, but only a handful of demonstrators showed up. Three days later, Syrian authorities restored access to Facebook, YouTube, and Blogspot, all of which had been banned since 2007. While some celebrated this development, others cautioned that it would make surveillance by Syrian authorities easier.

On March 7, additional protests and hunger strikes were triggered by the arrest, the day prior, of several young boys in the city of Daraa for writing antiregime slogans on walls in the city. A second Day of Rage was announced for March 15, and simultaneous demonstrations took place across several cities in Syria, with protesters demanding an end to Syria's emergency law, an end to government corruption, and more freedom in general. The next day, protests continued in front of the Interior Ministry, with an estimated 200 people calling for the release of political prisoners. Several human rights activists were arrested, prompting calls on Twitter for their release. These events led to the announcement of a Day of Dignity on Friday, March 18, a phenomenon that would lead to Friday as a weekly day of protest for the first several months of the uprising.

By late March, accounts of government interference with social media began to emerge. One prominent activist, Khaled Elekhetyar, briefly went missing and returned to find government supporters had hijacked his accounts. As reports of mass killings in Daraa emerged on Twitter, foreign media began to rely on social media for their reporting; in particular, graphic videos from Daraa showing extreme violence helped draw global attention to the unfolding crisis.

As in Bahrain, an online battle also began to unfold, with a network dubbing itself the Syrian Electronic Army (SEA) perpetrating attacks on the Web sites and Facebook pages of those it deemed to be supportive of the Syrian opposition, including Oprah Winfrey. In June 2011, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad recognized the SEA as a "real army in virtual reality." Meanwhile, on Twitter, seemingly independent actors attempted to distract from opposition reports by flooding the hashtag #Syria with dozens of tweets per minute, typically linking to photos of the country and other content unrelated to the uprising.

As the conflict continued well into 2012 and the death toll rose above 15,000, foreign media—mostly barred from the country—continued to rely upon citizen media reports but, following several high-profile mistakes, frequently offered caveats when information was unverified.

The Role of WikiLeaks

While numerous reports—as well as WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange himself—credited WikiLeaks's late 2010 release of U.S. diplomatic cables with prompting the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, others viewed the whistle-blowing site as having a limited role.

Sami Ben Gharbia, one of the cofounders of the Tunisian citizen journalism site Nawaat.org, worked to coordinate translations of the cables related to Tunisia, posting them on a site he founded called TuniLeaks. Gharbia argued that, because the cables were then available for Tunisians to read, they helped tip the balance by confirming what many citizens already knew. Prominent, award-winning Egyptian blogger Wael Abbas shared Gharbia's sentiment, according to Yasmine Ryan, comparing the role of WikiLeaks to the many videos he had posted of Egyptian police brutality.

Twitter Revolution?

Prominent writer Malcolm Gladwell, in an October 2010 essay subtitled "Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted," argued that online activism cannot create the type of "strong ties" needed for real change. Citing the work of Evgeny Morozov, Gladwell also argued that governments would always have the upper hand online.

Early on, journalists revived the term Twitter Revolution, first used in Moldova and then Iran in 2009, to describe what was happening in Tunisia and Facebook Revolution to describe the events in Egypt. The successes in the two countries prompted a slew of responses to Gladwell's original piece as well as numerous academic articles debating the veracity of such claims.

While there is no consensus as to whether the various uprisings would have happened without social media, scholars have pointed to several factors to determine the utility of social media in a given country, including the degree of Internet access, the prior existence of strong online and offline networks, and the technical savvy of a given government in conducting censorship and surveillance.

Jillian C. York
Independent Scholar

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Africa, North; Bahrain; Citizen Journalism; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Egypt; Facebook; Feb 17 Voices; FinFisher; Hacktivism; International Unrest and Revolution; Iran; Libya; Mamfakinch; Syria; Tunisia; Twitter; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring.

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Artists and Social Media in Politics

The use of social media in art grew out of a movement in the 1990s called "Net Art," which attempted to harness the newly developed World Wide Web for artistic pursuits. Where Net Art focused on investigating the effects and limitations of the new technology, social media art utilized services such as Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr to create artworks that also tapped into the social possibilities of the World Wide Web. Leila Nadir and Carry Peppermint have described social media art as "environmental art" that takes place within a new media environment, extending principles of installation sculpture, performance art, and public art to the online sphere.

Social media art is typically identified as starting around 2007, with Facebook's lifting of membership restrictions requiring users to be part of universities. Facebook's more mature user base gave the Web site more legitimacy in the eyes of new registrants, which in turn propelled social

media to mainstream acceptance not afforded by the early sites such as Myspace, Friendster, and LiveJournal that catered toward younger audiences and had a much less clean and organized aesthetic. This new focus on social media as a culturally accepted way to interact with others combined with Web 2.0 principles of open information and collaboration to create blogs, wikis, and other content creation and sharing sites that opened up new possibilities for artists. Many of these technologies were also adapted to be easy to install, which in turn allowed nonprogrammers to set up and manage complex sites and databases. The rise of Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) gave access to large data sets and features in social media sites that could be used for art pieces as well.

Initially, art's engagement with social media was primarily marketing-driven and used for self-promotion. Artists, galleries, and museums attempted to find new ways to share pre-made artworks and create online brands and identities. Within a few years, however, the exploratory tendencies of Net Art had taken hold and the social media sites and principles were used as a medium in their own right to stage performances and create crowdsourced works. These artworks also began to take on a political tone, some dealing with the larger implications of technologies that allowed varying degrees of freedom and control and others drawing attention to more specific political movements and actions.

Forms

Political remix videos (PRVs) are one instance of how artists began to use access to digital technology and social media for political purposes beyond simply advertising offline art. Claiming a heritage that extended through Situationist and other types of cinematic reframing, PRVs reorganized and reframed mass media video clips as political commentary, seeking to provide a critical view of the mass media's presentation of political events and characters, as well as social issues such as class, gender, and race. The ability to host these videos on YouTube, as well as the ease of sharing through social media networks such as Twitter and Facebook, allowed for mass dissemination. However, these videos often met with copyright issues stemming from their use of protected material. In turn, this caused many videos to be taken down and subsequently reuploaded, as well as directing PRVs to focus on copyright issues in the digital age.

Social media art also extends beyond the sharing of artworks through social media networks. It often takes the form of performance, with the artist creating an artwork that unfolds over the social network through the actions of participants. Though the artist is the primary creator of the work, it often takes on a life of its own as it is modified and directed by participants. A large part of social media artworks involved the artist initializing the work, but then allowing it to develop in unintended ways according to responses from viewers or co-collaborators, many of whom were personally unknown to the artist. These artworks use pre-existing platforms such as Facebook, Second Life, Twitter, or chat rooms to deliver and create content or to organize large-scale performances that took place on the social media networks themselves. These works attempt to bring in other users of the social networks in order to involve them in the art-making process while also drawing attention to the power of crowdsourcing.

Major artists in social media art include Ai Weiwei, An Xiao, Nic Rad, Man Bartlett, Lauren McCarthy, William Powhide, Jennifer Dalton, and the "global online art collective" @Platea.

The art itself is usually composed of a process of selection, bringing in pre-made elements from digital sources. Photos, Rich Site Summary (RSS) feed entries, tweets, and data from a wide variety of pre-existing Web sites accessible through open APIs allow artists to access and manipulate data. Users can add their own data to many projects as well. Though these channels provide a great degree of access, much of it is also closed off from use by anyone other than the programmers of the specific platform. Even in the face of some restricted information, social media art has developed primarily as a medium that champions the open access of the World Wide Web and the ability to take previously unavailable data and use it in new contexts.

Themes

Claire Bishop has drawn the connection between the process of reusing pre-existing data in social media art and the appropriation art of the 1980s,

in which artists would reshow premade artworks within a new setting. According to Bishop, the difference between the two lies in the differing ways they operated. Appropriation art relies on a principle of repurposing while social media art uses selection as a major component. Instead of revisiting appropriation art's questioning of issues of authorship and originality as they exist in the age of mechanical and digital reproduction, social media art looks to provide meaningful recontextualization of existing artifacts. It focuses on the way that technology operates through assembling already existing data rather than creating it from the ground up. Such a focus on repurposing has also opened up themes initially brought up by Net Art, such as the "archival impulse" pointed out by Hal Foster.

Social media art, like Net Art, works by probing into pre-existing databases of images, information, and objects but reconstructing them into new, subjective archives. In turn, this serves to subvert entrenched systems and hierarchies by creating new arrangements and privileging individual interpretations over objective or systematic ones. Additionally, selecting archival materials serves to break apart origin myths of current power structures, removing some of their justification. By reconstructing histories within new contexts and with new subjective interpretations, legitimacies of the hegemonic power structures created by those histories are also called into question.

Many artworks take on the growing issue of the dissolution between public space and private space. They address the growing issue of sharing too much information online, causing people's lives to become lived out in the open. More prevalent in early social media artworks, these works anticipated the need for self-censorship and default privacy controls within networks, as well as discussions about how private information posted online should be used in offline and professional settings. Some works, such as Cary Peppermint and Leila Nadir's "Overexposed Dancing," look at how the new technology led to people sharing intimate moments of their lives with both friends and strangers, sometimes inadvertently, sometimes with full knowledge of an opening up of the private sphere. Others, such as Nic Rad's "PeopleMatter" series, explored how public online faces and representations become a stand-in for the private selves. Peppermint and Nadir have also asked whether the amount of shared private information will become so large that the individual and the artists themselves will disappear as a result of too much information to process, heralding a new type of anonymity.

With a focus on the redefinition of public space, social media art also seeks to make an intervention in the use of that space. Groups such as @Platea attempt to re-envision social media as a "digital megacity" and social media art as work that takes place within this city, continuing principles laid down within "offline" public art. They advocate creating artworks that exist within a public online space both as monumental works that are extremely visible and as hidden works that users can stumble upon as they move through online space. Works such as "The Dive" encourage participants to engage in a collective performance, updating social media profiles with textual or pictorial content that contain representations of "diving" throughout the day.

The purpose of these performances is to repurpose these sites and the new technological features to turn them into artistic works that cause other users not involved with the creation of the piece to question the environment they are interacting in. Occasionally, works also become social media "covers" of previous works. "Following Piece 2.0" is one such example, a reperformance of Vito Acconci's 1969 work "Following Piece" that took place as multiple artists followed people in public spaces and reported details through the #fp20 hashtag on Twitter. This work attempted to call into question what happens when people "follow" someone on Twitter and bring attention to the voyeuristic nature of many social media sites where private users can watch public and private actions of other users without a reciprocal gaze.

Social Issues

Where @Platea brings up issues of public and private space within a discourse of the World Wide Web as a city, other social media art projects examine social media's potential to create a global, public forum for discussion about political issues. #Class was a one-month project organized by William Powhide and Jennifer Dalton that sought to examine the ability to incorporate social media into a public dialogue about "the gallery model,

the commodification of art, and all the unquantifiable, intangible, unpaid aspects of participating in the art world." It broadened the notion of an online public space to include a physical gallery space that was supplemented by social media technologies, allowing participants throughout the world to become involved without having to be present physically at the time the performance was happening. The project addressed issues of access, attempting to bring art to individuals who did not live in major metropolitan art centers. Many of the panels and artworks within the project were also aimed at drawing attention to the growing class issues in the art world, as well as within the larger economic system in the United States.

Social media art has been cast as a potential venue not just for access to dominant art paradigms by artists in marginalized areas, but also to give global exposure to emerging artists. Through increased communication and the ability to share information across large distances, artists can create art worlds that do not have a physical presence in cities such as New York or London and can promote works by artists not physically present. The low cost of using a pre-existing social media platform or setting up an entirely new site allows artists who would traditionally lack access to art materials or artist groups to create and share works. As artists can communicate with less reliance on galleries and showing work in a single physical location, it is possible for artists and groups of artists to create alternative art worlds outside of the current institutional structure.

These projects, and other social media art projects, attempt to bring production back into the hands of the masses. They question the legitimacy of a single author and advocate for crowdsourced creation of art and knowledge. By bringing in multiple participants with varying degrees of input over the artwork, social media art attempts to resist hegemonic structures of power. Multiple, subjective experiences are privileged, as are fragmentation and constant evolution of the work. Many pieces, especially those by groups such as @Platea, also seek to include a global perspective by bringing in contributors from around the world.

Artists who are brought into these works are often not traditionally trained and do not need to be professional artists. The widespread and colloquial use of social media platforms allows individuals who do not have an academic understanding of art history, art theory, or even basic art techniques to work on pieces. Additionally, the ability to crowdsource pieces lets anyone with access to a computer and the appropriate Web sites give input into the project or steer it in a particular direction. Many of these artists can be temporary artists, only working on one or a few social media pieces before returning to another occupation.

The accessible nature of social media art, combined with the use of repurposed data and pre-existing elements, brings up issues related to high-brow and low-brow art. With many untrained artists creating works outside of traditional mediums, the work's adherence to formal high-brow structure and execution is put aside, replaced by a focus on innovation and collage-like reconstruction of data. Often, these works are critiqued as having a derivative style that reflects the use of the technological medium in mass culture and society. These works also tap into uses and expressions of technology as found in advertising, education, science, and everyday use. In turn, these more everyday influences bring social media art away from the realm of the high brow and into what could be identified as the domain of low-brow art. For social media art, this movement is seen as beneficial, even though it calls into question its status as "art." By tapping into low-brow art methods and sentiments, social media art can further its goal of breaking down hierarchies and promoting mass participation in the art-creating process. It also encourages participants and viewers to look at the technological media they use every day in an artistic, creative, and politically active context.

Political Critiques

Social media art also calls into question the division between online and offline worlds by seeking to make real world change. It responds to a critique of technology as a disembodying force that creates a separate, virtual environment that stands in opposition to a "real" or physical world. It seeks to explore online art as an extension of offline life, as well as the ability of online organization and sharing to effect change offline. Additionally, it seeks to use social media as art, but in ways that align with the typical use of social

media by the mainstream public. Social media art repurposes social media and accentuates its potentially creative aspects, but it seldom engages in hacking the sites or using the media in ways drastically beyond the popular use. Such tactics appear to fall short of a full exploration of the potential of new technologies, but they allow a broader population to view and add to the work. By bringing together global artists and advocating the creation of multiple, subjective narratives, social media art creates oppositional structures to offline institutions. The art world is commonly a target of these works that seek real-world change (as with #Class), but governmental structures are also often critiqued.

Ai Weiwei

Once such instance of a specific, local critique of a political institution is the work of Ai Weiwei. Working in China, Ai's work seeks to bring attention to what he feels are unjust practices of the Chinese government. Twitter is one of his major outlets, though the service is banned in China. His account has upwards of 200,000 followers and is used to share his work as well as organize gatherings while also presenting a real-time record of his art activism. His tweets often criticize the government, providing a public expression of dissent to both national and global audiences. These tweets have included hospital pictures following an assault by police in Chengdu, a list of the students who died in the Sichuan earthquake, and the organization of Say Out Your Name Activity, where Chinese nationals tweeted out their real names and locations.

The anti-authoritarian stance and alternative space of dissent that Ai has created has also resulted in a forceful response from the Chinese government. Through his highly visible and globally-followed social media accounts, Ai has gained a considerable amount of immunity from action on the part of the Chinese government. He has been able to openly criticize the procedures of the government, along with its positions on human rights and democracy. However, he has not been completely without scrutiny or without attempts at censorship. He has been beaten, placed under house arrest, and held secretly under questionable charges. Because of his stature gained through his social media artworks, Ai's imprisonment and beatings have garnered the attention of the international community, resulting in petitions and criticism from media outlets and activists in a number of different countries, primarily in the West.

A surveillance camera sculpted out of marble was one of a group of works by Ai Weiwei shown at the Smithsonian's Hirschhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C., in 2012.

Global art groups paid particular attention to his extended imprisonment in 2011. New York's Creative Time, along with the Guggenheim Museum, the Tate Modern, the United States, the European Union, and other institutions all put out public calls for Ai's release. Many of these took the form of performances that repurposed motifs from Ai's work.

Ai's work taps into many of the themes and issues that social media art in general deals with. His tweets work from behind the "Great Firewall" to make public the private actions of an authoritarian government. Bringing attention to these actions allows him to create an alternative narrative to the official, government-sanctioned one. By creating a public voice, he has

also become the centerpiece for other activists to rally around, inspiring them to form their own critiques, or to pass on his criticism and artwork to others. Through this increased visibility online, he hopes to bring about institutional change in China and increased global scrutiny into governmental practices.

Todd Woodlan
Val Hartouni
University of California, San Diego

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Documentaries, Social Media, and Social Change; Interactive Documentary; Musicians and Social Media in Politics; Pioneers in Social Media and Politics; Writers and Social Media in Politics.

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Asia

In some ways, social media can be said to have been invented in Asia, in the sense that the continent itself can be classified as an "early adopter." It is not surprising, given the variety of cultures and politics in Asia, that the use of social media in the region is varied. Some Asian countries boast the highest rates of Internet connectivity in the world (Japan, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan) as well as some of the lowest (Cambodia, Myanmar, and North Korea).

Asia, according to an analysis of Internet world statistics, boasts 1 billion Internet users out of an estimated 1.3 billion users worldwide. Because only about 28 percent of Asia's population is online, compared to 43 percent worldwide and 78 percent in the United States, its recent growth in online population means that the total Internet users in Asia may soon surpass the total number of users in the world. China, with 538 million users, already has the greatest number of Internet users of any country in the world despite its relatively low penetration rate. In addition, its policy of filtering and its restrictions on outside media have resulted in a robust local social media sphere that is much more familiar to its citizens than Facebook or Twitter.

Scope of Social Media in Asia

In 1999, well before Friendster was established and before the dot-com crash, South Korea had its own popular social media site, CyWorld. Users were given a home page and the capability to link to friends, write diaries, and share photos. They could also explore a virtual world with an avatar, as would become popular with Second Life. By 2007, the number of registered users was more than one-third of the country's population. In addition, the citizen journalism site OhmyNews was launched in 2000 by Oh Yeon Ho with the motto "Every Citizen Can Be a Reporter." Although the service soon hired a paid staff, the majority of its stories were written by thousands of registered users who are paid the equivalent of a few dollars for each story accepted by the site's editors. The site was credited with helping to elect a progressive president, Roh Moo-hyun, in 2002.

In June 2005, a photograph of a woman who came to be known as Dog Poo Girl brought to light the possibility of Internet vigilantism. After her dog defecated on the floor of a subway in Seoul, South Korea, a photograph of her and the offending mess was posted to a blog. She was identified within hours based on her bag, her watch, and her dog. Information about her, her family, and her university was used to place harassing phone calls.

In China, this sort of activity has been called *renrou sousuo* (RRSS), which translates as "human flesh search engines." In 2006, a World of Warcraft player posted to a bulletin board system (BBS) accusing his wife of adultery with "Bronze Mustache," the nickname of a student she met while playing the game online. In a short time, the identity of the student, along with his contact information, became publicly available, and enraged citizens began to pester him and his family, as well as their employers and the student's university.

Not all instances of RRSS involve public humiliation, however. In 2009, Deng Yujiao allegedly stabbed a man who sexually assaulted her. She also stabbed his companion. The two turned out to be government officials, and because Deng's assailant died, she was charged with murder even though she had acted in self-defense. Bloggers took up her cause, and the *New York Times* reported that more that 4 million posts were written in her defense. As a result of worldwide attention garnered by this online resistance, the police agreed to investigate Deng's claim and released her on bail. She was eventually convicted of a lesser crime and the government officials were censured.

A 2012 survey by the Pew Charitable Trusts of 21 countries included China, Japan, and India. The highest penetration of social media was seen in British, American, Russian, and Czech respondents, where about 50 percent reported that they used social media sites. In China and Japan, the penetration was closer to 30 percent, while India reported only 3 percent. Among younger users, however, the gap was lower. In the United States, 80 percent of respondents aged 18 to 29 reported using social media, compared to 71 percent in Japan and 61 percent in China.

The Pew survey also asked users of social media whether they used sites to share their views about music and movies, community issues, and politics, among other subjects. U.S. respondents were more likely to talk about music and movies (63 percent) and least likely to talk about politics (27 percent). The Asian countries in the study seemed to be much more interested in expressing opinions about culture; in China and India, about 85 percent of users expressed opinions about music and movies, well above the U.S. average. In terms of politics, opinions about politics were also more likely in China (35 percent) and India (45 percent), even though the rate was lower in Japan (22 percent).

Other studies confirm the popularity of social media while exploring differences in Asian users. A study of LinkedIn's 120 million users also found a robust community of Asian social networkers. Unlike Europe and North America, where a user's network would typically span about 500 miles, users in Asia tended to have much more dispersed networks of up to 1,000 miles, second only to Africa's 1,500 miles. Users in Asia and the Middle East also tended to spend more time on the site than their counterparts in other regions of the world. The public relations firm Ogilvy ranked six Asian countries (India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, and Taiwan) and Australia in the top 20 of Facebook countries, ranked by number of users. Ogilvy reported that more than one in four Facebook users (27 percent) in 2012 were from Asian countries.

In 2011, the public relations firm Burson-Marsteller surveyed social media and found that Facebook was the most preferred social media site in Australia and seven Asian countries and cities (Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand). Other countries had other top sites. In China, for instance, the preferred social media site is Qzone, with 531 million active users and 8.6 billion page views; Western sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter do not make it into the top five Web destinations of China overall, nor even the top five social media sites. Smaller sites are the most popular in other countries, such as South Korea's CyWorld (18 million active users, with 1.6 billion page views), Vietnam's Zing (15 million users, 1.7 billion views), Japan's FC2 (14.5 million users, 3.3 billion views), and Taiwan's Wretch (9 million users, 14 billion views).

Filtering and Other Controls

Web filtering began in Asia soon after the first connections were made. In 1994, China was connected directly to the international Internet and, with the help of Qian Tianbai and the University of Karlsruhe, the Computer Network Information Center under the Chinese Academy of Sciences completed the installation of a domain name server for China's .cn domain on May 21, which ended the history of top-level domain (TLD) name servers being kept abroad. The Chinese government's first Web site, Window on China, went online that same year. In January 1996, the Chinese Public Security Bureau began to take steps to solve the problems related to free international links to the Internet by restricting international access to four portals managed by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, the Ministry of Electronic Industry, the Education Commission, and the China Academy of Science, a chokehold that remains to the present day. At the same time,

the Public Security Bureau demanded that all Internet users be registered with the post office, signing a statement of responsibility and doing nothing to harm the state before they are allowed to use the Internet.

Also in 1996, China famously took steps to limit the information that is available to Chinese users of the Internet, marking a new direction in information policy. The Associated Press reported "China tightens control of Internet, blocks 100 Web sites" on September 9, 1996, when China used its bottleneck of four access points to the outside world to prohibit Internet users from seeing the Web sites of U.S. news media, Taiwan's government, dissidents, and other politically sensitive groups. According to the Associated Press, the blocking became known when the U.S. embassy received calls from Americans who found they could no longer read U.S. newspapers. Sites that were blocked included the news sites of the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Washington Post*, the Voice of America, and CNN; the dissident sites from the Taiwan Government Information Office, the Tibet Information Network, and Amnesty International; and the sexually oriented site for *Playboy*.

Similarly, in 1996 Singapore announced that its major ISPs would block pornographic Web sites in order to preserve its values, as reported in the *New York Times* on October 14. Singapore, which already had banned *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazines, extended its effort to exclude content that might undermine moral values. At first, the government allowed Internet users only to access Web pages through a proxy server that did not contain prohibited material. Recently, however, this blocking has become mostly perfunctory; in 2007, the government announced that it blocks only 100 pornographic sites as a "ceremonial" gesture.

Starting in 2000, China began to ask service providers to comply with a "self-discipline" pact and prevent the dissemination of information that harms national security and social stability—meaning that they must regularly patrol discussion boards and delete information that might be offensive to the government. This was tested by Reporters Without Borders in 2003, which found that a combination of filtering that prohibits certain words from being posted on discussion boards as well as human censors that find information that the filters missed results in the post being deleted and the user account being suspended. This, coupled with the famous capitulation of Google to prevent users inside China from seeing search results that the government finds offensive, seems to indicate that the power of the Internet to set information free has been defeated.

Spectators following events by laptop in China while waiting outdoors during celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 2009.

In 2007, the military government of Myanmar (Burma) shut down the country's Internet access for two weeks in order to stop the circulation of images of its crackdown on protests by monks and civilians in what came to be known as the Saffron Revolution. In August, the leaders of a student movement organized a rally to protest the rise in fuel prices. The movement was taken over by Buddhist monks, and by September the protest grew to 150,000. Protesters logged attacks on them by uploading video and firsthand accounts

to media outside the country. When the government shut down the Internet on September 29, the flow of images out of the country was slowed, but was still possible through trusted networks and satellite. When it is not in crisis mode, the government also restricts upload speeds for customers, which is thought to be an attempt to restrict Internet usage.

YouTube was banned in Bangladesh in 2009, when only 1 percent of its citizens were online, because it carried an audio recording of a meeting between the Bangladeshi prime minister and army officials after a deadly mutiny of border guards. In 2012, YouTube was banned again because it refused to filter a trailer to a film that portrayed the Prophet Muhammad unfavorably.

The Open Net Initiative's (ONI's) studies show a variety of approaches to filtering schemes that shape what information their citizens access in the region. China, Myanmar, and Vietnam used extensive filtering to block Web sites with politically sensitive content, human rights issues, independent media, and reform platforms, a practice that was keenly felt when it came to sites that used local languages. Thailand and Pakistan take a moderate approach to filtering, blocking only what they consider to be sensitive or illegal. Other countries use filtering, such as South Korea (which filters sites that promote reunification with North Korea) and Singapore (which strictly filters pornography).

The ONI points out that filtering in Asia often exhibits a "lack of transparency," in that citizens do not necessarily know that their content is filtered. In this way, when users cannot reach content they are looking for, it seems as if there is a technical, not political or social, block. Only users in Thailand and South Korea were presented with a block page that informed the user that the content he or she was looking for was banned. Furthermore, governments are not always clear from whence their authority to filter derives. In 2007, Thailand became one of the few countries that requires a court order before Internet content can be filtered.

Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Nepal, however, do not appear to use filtering at all. Although Malaysia has the legal mechanism to force content providers to stop communication of indecent or offensive material, the government has declined to directly censor online activities in the belief that it is essential to encourage the use of the Internet and new media. The Internet was banned outright by the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001, but after the fall of the Taliban the country was given the authority to control the .af domain. The ONI reports no evidence of filtering. In a country where only 1 percent of the population has Internet access, Mahabir Pun began the Nepal Wireless Networking Project in 2003 with the aim of bringing service to remote mountain regions.

Christopher Leslie
Polytechnic Institute of New York University

See Also: China; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Fax Machines and Tiananmen Square Crisis; Great Firewall of China; India; Indonesia; OhMyNews.com; Weibo.

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Association of Internet Researchers

The Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) is an academic society, founded in 1999, that examines the emerging, and interdisciplinary, field of Internet studies. As it came into being shortly after the Internet became popular with the general population, the AoIR has helped shape how academia conducts research related to the World Wide Web, applications, social media, and how individuals engage with these. Each year the

AoIR holds a scholarly conference where papers exploring members' work are presented. The organization also promotes online and other collaboration and cooperation among its members, and maintains AoIR-L, a listserv that serves over 2,000 subscribers.

The international system of interconnected computer networks that is known as the Internet originated during the 1960s as the U.S. government sought to build fault-tolerant, robust computer networks that would permit communication between distant sites. While the U.S. military originally was highly involved in the development of the Internet, this work built upon work done earlier in the United Kingdom.

The Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET) first connected laboratories and scholarly centers at universities and various research facilities, allowing connectivity between scientists in different cities and nations to become a reality. As groups such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) increased funding to computer network connectivity projects, the ARPANET expanded during the 1980s and then evolved to provide researchers access to university-based supercomputers.

By the mid-1980s the NSF network (NSFNET) succeeded the ARPANET, and by the end of that decade private Internet service providers began to emerge. After the NSFNET was decommissioned in 1995, the commercial uses of the Internet blossomed, as the last remaining restrictions on the use of the Internet were removed. As a result, growth of the Internet by commercial organizations and individuals boomed.

As early as the 1970s computer scientists began studying the effects of computer networking systems. While researchers in the fields of business and library science also began studying how computers were changing the ways in which individuals and groups interacted, such interest was generally not shared by scholars in other fields. By the mid-1990s, however, scholars interested in a variety of disciplines began taking increasing notice of the growth of the Internet.

In 1996, Georgetown University began offering an M.A. degree in Internet studies and the University of Maryland formed the Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies. Around the same time, the National Science Foundation, carrying out a mandate from the Clinton White House, convened a special panel of 33 Internet scholars, practitioners, critics, and visionaries to develop an anthropological research agenda for studying the Internet and society in the 21st century. In 1998 Drake University hosted a conference known as "The World Wide Web and Contemporary Cultural Theory: Metaphor, Magic & Power." At this symposium, discussions began regarding the need for a learned society that concentrated upon advancing the field of Internet studies. Consequently, the following year over 60 Internet researchers and scholars convened to form the AoIR. The organization soon took a leading role in shaping how research related to the Internet is conceived, conceptualized, and conducted.

Objectives and Services

Internet studies, as an emerging and innovative field, examines technology and individuals' and groups' response to this from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. These disciplinary perspectives include artistic, cultural, economic, pedagogical, political, psychological, social, technical, and other outlooks. Certainly studies of the Internet and its effects may be conducted by members of traditional academic departments, such as anthropology, communications, psychology, sociology, or other fields of study. Internet studies, however, has become a recognized field of study at a variety of institutions, although sometimes known as "convergent media," "digital culture," or "new media." A variety of colleges and universities have created separate departments of Internet studies, including Appalachia State University, Brandeis University, Curtin University of Technology, Endicott College, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Oxford University, and the University of Minnesota. The creation of the AoIR helped to build communication and interaction between members of these institutions and to encourage collaboration and the sharing of resources.

The AoIR believes that valuable and authentic research related to the Internet is predicated upon the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and respect for human dignity. To that end, the AoIR has established policies that its members and officers do not discriminate against individuals because of age, ancestry, color, disability, marital status,

national origin, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation. Operation of the AoIR is administered by an executive committee, which is culled from its board of trustees. The AoIR works to foster interdisciplinary and interprofessional interaction between scholars that promotes critical research into the Internet's aesthetic, cultural, economic, political, and social characteristics. Seeking to differentiate itself from the monolithic and tradition-bound practices of many other learned societies, the AoIR has eschewed many common structures in order to encourage a more organic, natural community of scholars. A key part of building this community has been the annual meeting of the AoIR, its listserv, and its publications.

A variety of scholars played lead roles in forming the AoIR. Steve Jones, professor of communications at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) served as the organization's first president and helped create the infrastructure by which the AoIR is run. Nancy Baym, a professor of communications at the University of Kansas, succeeded Jones as the AoIR president in 2003. Baym also organized the learned society's first conference in Lawrence, Kansas, that took place in 2000. Program chair for the first five AoIR conferences was Jerry Hunsiger, then at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, who also greatly helped to build the organization's technical infrastructure. The annual AoIR conference has grown to include hundreds of scholars, students, and others interested in the interdisciplinary approach to Internet research of the learned society. Because it embraces research using a variety of methodologies, the AoIR welcomes scholars from a variety of perspectives and provides a forum that is friendly and supportive of participants. Held in a new location each year, the AoIR annual meeting has taken place in Minneapolis, Maastricht, Toronto, Brighton, Chicago, Brisbane, Vancouver, Copenhagen, Milwaukee, Gothenburg, Seattle, and Salford. Each conference is organized around its own theme, and those covered to date have included performance and participation; sustainability, participation, and action; interconnections; the Internet; and bandwidth. Through 2006, selected papers presented at the conference were compiled in an *Internet Research Annual*, of which four editions were published in conjunction with Peter Lang Publishing.

AoIR-L, the listserv of the association, has over 2,000 members and has played a tremendous role in allowing discussion of methodologies, ethics, research questions, and other areas of concern to those who conduct Internet research. Various working groups have undertaken projects on behalf of the AoIR membership, resulting in leading-edge documents regarding ethics, politics, and interaction with the communities in which researchers live and work. As concerns about and interest in the nexus of social media and politics continue, the AoIR will undoubtedly continue to play a lead role in defining how research in this area is conducted.

Stephen T. Schroth
Kyle A. Hammock
Knox College

See Also: Advocacy Groups, Political Branding of; Blogger Rights and Responsibilities; Campaigns, Digital; Cyberculture; Deception in Political Social Media; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Nonprofit Organizations.

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Astroturfing

"Astroturfing" is a political, public relations, or advertising campaign that deceptively and artificially creates an impression of widespread grassroots support for a product, policy, or concept, when in actuality limited support exists. Typically, a corporation or political group employs

astroturfing to promote corporate concerns while claiming to represent the public interest and community concerns. The term is a derivation of AstroTurf, a brand of artificial carpet designed to simulate natural grass.

Astroturfers mimic and reproduce the forms and messages of traditional grassroots social movements and use software to mask their identities. Dummy interest and pressure groups (called front groups) are often used to create the perception of public backing of the client's agenda and to hide the identity of the organization or corporation funding the astroturfing effort. The names of corporate front groups are strategically selected to disguise the actual funders of the group. For instance, during the debate over the 2009 American health care law, the drug lobby PhRMA and the Service Employees International Union ran television ads under the group called Americans for Stable Quality Care. Another common technique is the mobilization of thousands of supporters or the creation of numerous online personas to post reviews and comments, call into talk radio shows, and ballot stuff online surveys. The Public Relations Society of America has decried the practice as unethical and considers assisting front groups as malpractice under the organization's code of ethics.

The term dates back to 1985, when U.S. Senator Lloyd Bentsen responded to the large number of postcards arriving in his office by saying, "a fellow from Texas can tell the difference between grassroots and astroturf. . . . This is generated mail." Such techniques, however, have a long history. In *Julius Caeser*, William Shakespeare describes Cassius writing letters "in several hands . . . as if they came from several citizens" to urge Brutus to join the conspiracy against Caesar. Astroturfing techniques flourished in the United States and are an accepted, if often hidden, aspect of public relations campaigns. Today, astroturf efforts are especially common in political consulting and digital communications firms and are usually called issue campaigns or grassroots advocacy.

Modern astroturfing campaigns are incredibly sophisticated. Many public relations firms maintain databases of citizens willing to mobilize for various companies and causes. If a voter database does not exist, consumer lifestyle databases are consulted to locate sympathetic voters located in a targeted politician's district. Public opinion polling and focus groups help refine the messages most likely to resonate with the targeted groups. Talking points and scripts are provided to the supporters, and the supporters are encouraged (and frequently paid) to make phone calls and send e-mails to their elected officials, to write letters to the newspaper, and post comments on their social networking profiles. Supporters are also encouraged and paid to fill rooms at town hall meetings. An astroturf campaign will also usually include several media events and press conferences, full-page advertisements in insider media outlets such as *Politico* and *Roll Call*, and paid research studies supporting the effort.

A spin-off technique, known as grass tops, uses influential community leaders such as mayors, religious leaders, and business executives to lobby members of Congress and regulators. Instead of blanketing Capitol Hill with thousands of identical postcards, grass tops advocacy mobilizes a handful of local and regional public opinion leaders in key states to make the case to lawmakers.

Social Media

Technological advances, including e-mail, voter databases, automated phone services, telephone banks, and social networking, decreased the cost of astroturfing and fostered its popularity. For example, persona management software can generate thousands of fictitious identities and add a degree of realness by creating a name, e-mail account, and social media profile for each virtual account, randomizing the operator's Internet protocol (IP) address or establishing IP addresses in specific geographic locations to trick geolocation services and linking dummy accounts to the profiles of other fake accounts to add legitimacy. These fake accounts are referred to as sockpuppets, and the practice of using misleading online identities is known as sockpuppeting.

Astroturfing campaigns are frequently used on the Internet to generate buzz and word of mouth via blogs, Twitter, and social networking sites. In 2006, for instance, a travel blog called Wal-Marting Across America, which appeared to chronicle a couple's cross-country trip in an RV while staying in Wal-Mart parking lots, was revealed to be funded by a front group named Working Families for Wal-Mart and written by employees of the

public relations firm Edelman, who represented Wal-Mart. On Web sites like Yelp and Amazon, astroturfers write glowing reviews. In 2010, a government investigation found that iPhone game developers were paying the public relations agency Reverb Communications to post positive reviews of games in Apple's App Store, which gave the impression that the reviews were authored by disinterested consumers. Governments have also used the technique. The Chinese government reportedly trains and funds thousands of commentators to permeate Internet forums and message boards with progovernment comments in an attempt to shape public opinion.

In the United States, the Federal Trade Commission's Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising require product reviewers, endorsers, and others providing testimonials to disclose material connections such as payments or free products. So by law in the United States, Twitter and Facebook users, bloggers, and individuals writing product reviews on e-commerce sites must disclose connections they share with the seller of the product or service. This includes celebrities, who often endorse products in traditional advertisements and on Web sites and social networking sites.

Dan Schill
Southern Methodist University

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Virtual; Deception in Political Social Media; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Flog; Sockpuppets; Viral Marketing.

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Attention Crash

Nowadays, individuals live in a world governed by modern technologies that can be characterized by an abundance of impulses related to all spheres of one's life. These attention catchers do not only engage one's concentration but also one's reaction, as individuals often have to respond to stimuli quickly and make related decisions rapidly. The increasing plethora of impulses may not enrich one's cognition and knowledge, but on the contrary, it may lead to attention crash, which can be defined as the decrease in selective concentration and wrong allocation of cognitive processes in the face of stimulus appearance.

Attention crash depends on individual and social determinants because one's attention is shaped by biological, physical, sociological, psychological, and cultural factors and consequently, people have different attention crash thresholds. The most important factor responsible for attention crash is information overload. Other terms that are used to describe the excessive quantity of information are, among others: information explosion, information overkill, information inundation, information obesity, info glut, info glitz, information dirt, information anxiety, information monster, info garbage, and information fatigue syndrome.

Information overload happens during novel situations (e.g., travel to a foreign country) that require new cognitive abilities or quick perceptions of unknown data, as well as in familiar scripts when an individual has to cope with many pieces of information simultaneously. It should be stated that not only information itself, but also the speed at which it is offered determines attention. Additionally, attention is also shaped by linguistic and nonlinguistic elements of messages. For example, novel and symbolic language devices are said to catch attention easier, whereas well-known linguistic tools often foster quicker

cognition and understanding. Taking into account the nonlinguistic dimension of information, issues such as size, color, and employed images may stimulate or hinder one's cognitive possibilities. To avoid attention crash, both information creators and recipients should be involved. Thus, those who receive information should carefully select the flow of information intake. At the same time, information overload exerts responsibility on those who create data because they should be economical as far as their content is concerned.

There are different types of information overload. The first type is called task-related information overload. It describes a situation in which a person has to go through various pieces of information to find and digest the data important for a performed task. Another type is called message overload, and it appears together with new communication media such as e-mail and social online networks. This kind of overload is connected with the magnitude of messages, each related to performing a different activity. The third type is media overload, which is related to the vast choice of media as far as channels and content are concerned.

Irrespective of the reasons causing attention crash, when attention wanes, it may lead to several short-term and long-term results. First of all, in the face of being overburdened with impulses, an individual may have problems with making proper decisions and selecting the right or needed piece of information. Second, attention decrease leads to longer response time or inability to make decisions. Third, it may also have long-lasting consequences, such as nervousness and stress.

Social Media and Politics

Attention crash is related to the technological advancement of modern times; in the past, individuals had to handle less information. Moreover, only a small percentage of people had to deal with information processing on an everyday basis. With the advent of social media and their subsequent popularity, the exposure to impulses has been increasing drastically. Individuals spend more and more time relying on and using social media. Additionally, the producers in the information industry create the need to buy newer and newer products that offer more and more sophisticated functions, although some of them are not needed. Thus, software and hardware have to be upgraded and replaced with newer models, whereas social media offer new functions and opportunities related to their use.

Attention crash in relation to social media is also related to the lack of division between professional and private life, between duties and free time. Individuals check e-mail, write blogs, and use other social media at work and at home to be constantly updated about vocational and private issues. Information overload takes place when people are overburdened due to cyber-based and place-based sources of information. Cyber-based sources of information include information and communication activities taking place with the use of the Internet, mobile phones, smartphones, laptops, computers, personal digital assistants, and iPads. Cyber-based information overload mirrors a situation in which a person is exposed to many messages simultaneously, such as e-mails and phone conversations as well as voice and text messages. Place-based sources of information are connected with factors not of electronic origin and encompass physical environments (housing, offices, public places), commuting, environmental pollution, and so on. Place-based information overload is connected to the necessity to deal with too many professional or private issues with a lack of relaxation. It should be stressed that, although place-based sources of information have no direct online electronic dimension, they are connected with cyber-based information overload.

As far as the domain of politics is concerned, attention crash may happen as the result of constant exposure to many impulses related to political issues. Thus, politicians should remember to carefully select the number of social media and the ways they use them when contacting potential voters, supporters, or antagonists to keep the stakeholders interested in their political activities, as well as to avoid information overload and consequent cognitive problems with selecting and interpreting political information.

Magdalena Bielenia-Grajewska
University of Gdansk

See Also: Addiction, Social Media; Cognitive Surplus; Social Computing and Social Information Processing; Superconnected.

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Audience Fragmentation/ Segmentation

New technologies and the emergence of the Internet have driven the evolution of the concept of audience and inherently interrelated concepts of audience fragmentation and segmentation. While political speech in past times was almost exclusively a product of an individual's personal thinking and ability to express him- or herself, the speaker of today seems to be transformed into a number of consultants and speech writers, according to Jens Kjeldsen. He asserts that both politically and rhetorically this speech has become a polyphonic compromise, and modern media have added situational complexity, thus obscuring the traditional sense of communicator and audience.

As communicators grapple with how to make effective use of social media—often referred to as Web 2.0—techies are already preparing for Web 3.0. Web 2.0 is distinguished by Internet users' ability to interact with each other online and to produce Web content themselves; Web 3.0 will feature greatly improved interactivity among computers, making the Internet much easier for people to use, says Tom Price. He asserts that together, social media and mobile devices make public affairs communication faster and less controlled than ever before, and the impact of new media grows as a rapidly growing stream of users directs their smartphones and tablet computers to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, and other social sites.

Michael Gurevitch, Stephen Coleman, and Jay Blumler state that, in the face of intensified competition for public attention and information, political news and analysis that might in the past have reached the most people in the course of a week's viewing can be easily missed; they assert that channel choices and time-shifting options lead not only to fragmentation of the audience but to the emergence of distinct issue publics. For example, MTV or Sky Sport viewers might not want to hear about crises in the global economy or the causes of international tensions, and they can exclude themselves from exposure to issues and forms of address that they find unappealing, disturbing, or mystifying.

Jae Lee conceptualized fragmentation as division of the audience into small clusters not communicating with each other or as the formulation of small and exclusive speech communities, where members of different communities fail to communicate across borders or to hold shared experiences; he operationalized it as the existence of a common agenda by means of incidental news exposure facilitated by structural factors of online communication in the new information environment. Lee asserts that the leaning toward audience fragmentation has arisen as one of the main concerns that might undercut a healthy democracy because fragmentation threatens democracy in that it prevents people from sharing public issues and from understanding each other, concluding that (1) several think that higher selectivity in the new information environment will motivate fragmentation in the public, leading to the decline of social cohesion; and (2) an extremely segmented public cannot discuss common social problems in a constructive fashion, much less agree on methods to solve them.

Political Polarization

Political observers are concerned that the fragmentation of contemporary news media and the proliferation of ideological cable news options may fuel opinion polarization among viewers; while enabling people to construct ideologically congruent information environments, media fragmentation also provides viewers with opportunities to select their own programming from a broad range of alternatives. Still, the implications of fragmentation seem quite problematic for the

functioning of American democracy: two strongly ideological camps on the left and right of the political spectrum, drawing upon entirely distinct bases of information, pursuing distinct political agendas and talking past each other rather than deliberating toward sound public policies on matters of collective, rather than particular, concerns. For instance, most entertainment media programs or political comedy shows, such as *The Daily Show, The Colbert Report,* or *Saturday Night Live,* like the news they parody, are appealing to ever more fragmented audiences.

Maxwell McCombs proposes that it is unlikely that a fragmented audience can have constructive discussions about the same social issues and reach a consensus to solve problems, and the result may be clearly deleterious for social cohesion and the proper functioning of democracy. Lance Bennett and Shanto Iyengar propose that fragmentation of the national audience reduces the likelihood of attitude change in response to particular patterns of news; as media audiences devolve into smaller, like-minded subsets of the electorate, it becomes less likely that media messages will do anything other than reinforce prior predispositions.

New Technologies and Media

In the last decade, the media and entertainment industries have experienced unprecedented levels of fragmentation, and the driving force behind this trend is the development of digital technology and the Internet. Lee recognized that new technologies have the potential to drive diversification. The heterogeneity of public opinion also grows with an increase in level of education, and the economics of the media industry and the psychology of the audience work as countervailing forces of audience fragmentation.

In today's information society, the Internet threatens to divide society into two classes, the information elite and those not linked to the Internet. It seems to be politically important because inequalities in knowledge thus lead to exclusion from social resources and inequalities in social power, as Heinz Bonfadelli claims. However, the Internet is still more an infrastructure and not a medium in the traditional sense, reaching only small segments of the population. Still, Bonfadelli asserts that, as the infusion of mass media information into a social system increases, segments of the population with higher socioeconomic status tend to acquire this information at a faster rate than the lower-status segments, so the gap in knowledge between these segments tends to increase rather than decrease; moreover, using or not using the Internet is no longer only economic, but even more educational.

The amount of content made available by the Internet together with the requirement of active selection produces a great variety of individual, content-specific usage patterns, namely: (1) people with higher education use the Internet for informational and service-oriented purposes; and (2) people with lower education use the Internet significantly more for entertainment reasons. Still, Bonfadelli admits that there are at least four barriers to people benefiting from today's information society: (1) lack of basic computer skills; (2) barriers to access, especially as these new media are expensive; (3) further barriers because of a lack of user friendliness; and (4) gaps in the way the Internet is used, based mostly on education.

Lee recognized that changes in the media environment, exemplified by the prevalence of the Internet, have apparently raised the likelihood of audience fragmentation because people now have an unprecedented number of options for consuming their preferred media content and channels; audiences are indeed more likely to turn to media content specific to their interests under media conditions with a broader range of choices, and changes in audience behavior lead to inequality in political involvement, such as news media use, knowledge, and voter turnout.

Social Clusters

Along with changes in technology and the media, there is a greater emphasis on style, packaging, and the aesthetic form and look, and the 1980s also saw the emergence of new social clusters such as the yuppie, the career woman, and the new man, according to Christina Goulding, Avi Shankar, and Richard Elliot. They argue that at the center of all of these changes was consumption, which is increasingly a productive process, goal-orientated and purposeful, and consumption, therefore, becomes a means whereby individuals can creatively construct and express the crowd of identities that are open to them; consequently, self-postmodern is characterized as *Homo consumericus,* a creature

defined by consumption and experiences derived. Of particular interest in contemporary theory are the concepts of identity, subcultural communities, fragmentation, and the creation of meaning through consumption experiences. Still, Goulding, Shankar, and Elliot argue that fragmentation is one of the central themes of postmodern approaches to consumption, consisting primarily of a series of interrelated ideas: (1) the fragmentation and concurrent proliferation of the media; (2) the fragmentation of markets into smaller segments; and (3) the fragmentation of life, experience, and society, for instance increasing political instability, increasingly rejection of political authority, and increasing disintegrating social institutions like marriage, family, and workplace.

Mass Media Effects

Maxwell McCombs argues that it is possible that the likelihood of audience fragmentation cannot be high enough to threaten the persistence of the common agenda without meeting these two assumptions: (1) The audience-side assumption is that a good portion of the public that visit diversified Web sites for public affairs information; and (2) the media-side assumption or fragmentation hypothesis is the existence of high heterogeneity in the media agenda across different news outlets, and they can be tested on the homogeneity of the media agenda and on the assumption that diversified news media offer a variety of different agendas.

Still, McCombs recognizes that, the more one investigates the fragmentation hypothesis, the more one will understand two important questions rising with the new information environment: (1) whether mass media will still have significant effects on individuals' public lives because the new technologies have eroded the centralized nature of mass communication, which raises a question about the persistence of mass media effects; and (2) whether the Internet has positive or negative effects on people's knowledge of public issues. The possibility that new technologies drive the advent of segmented audiences and lead to society failing to have a common experience is known as the fragmentation hypothesis, McCombs says.

Some foresee enhancement of the ability to segment and target online participants and to measure online opinion and the impact of online activities. Tom Price writes: "It will accelerate the ability to identify the exact people you want to communicate with." Andrew Lipsman and Carmela Aquino assert that social media's ubiquity and rise in popularity in recent years have largely contributed to shaping a more social environment online—not just among friends, but also between brands and consumers as well as candidates and voters. Today, social media has become an integral part of the political media landscape, growing as a primary channel for campaigns to reach out to their constituents, provide open lines of communication, and weigh in on the issues of the day (when they can't get on television, of course).

Bennett and Iyengar argue that information channels have proliferated and simultaneously become more individualized, and so it is important to understand if it is still relevant to conceive of mass media or if that concept has been made obsolete by audience fragmentation and isolation from the public sphere; under the underpinnings of communication processes, it is important to develop research that uncovers changing patterns of content distribution and new audience consumption habits. Thus, it is not surprising that media economics has emerged as one of the hottest subfields in economics, with important spillover into political communication, along with the growing numbers of studies on bias and market segmentation based on consumers' political preferences, the fashioning of news content to targeted consumer segments, and the impact of media competition on policy outcomes.

The development of cable television and the sudden increase of media outlets on the Internet have created a more fragmented information environment in which cable news, talk radio, and 24-hour news outlets compete for attention. For instance, new technologies such as Internet radio, MP3 players, podcasting, and satellite radio affect attitudes and usage of traditional radio, and naturally with choice comes fragmentation in consumer activity.

Through social media, companies can target small groups for conversations about specialized topics, Price adds, and such conversation and relationship-building can nurture networks of supporters who will listen to company arguments and may provide a third-party defense when the

firm faces criticism. Social media are about the stakeholders, not the company. Ian Morrison, president emeritus of the Institute for the Future, has said the following:

> A lot of people look at this as another channel for advertising and marketing, but they're missing the point. The whole issue of social media is the consumers' controlling whom they hang out with.

Price argues that to engage in conversations effectively, an organization must relinquish some control of its employees as well. Communicators must be empowered to converse with stakeholders in real time, and online discussions will pass by any organization that requires every post to be approved by a lawyer or executive. But employees must be trained for this new challenge, and companies must prepare thoughtfully.

Nowadays, it makes sense to explore the larger democratic implications of a fragmented media environment populated with vastly different audience segments, Bennett and Iyengar say. Moreover, the more homogeneous audiences are easier to communicate with due to the similarities of their needs, which justify new audience consumption habits.

Jaime R. S. Fonseca
Technical University of Lisbon

See Also: Communication; Evolution of Social Media; Innovation and Technology; Media and Communication Policy; News Media.

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Avaaz

Before the Internet, activist organizations tended to build coalitions around one or a few related issues and use a top-down approach in their decision making. The Internet, and more specifically the tools and philosophy behind Web 2.0, now brings a new generation of activism, especially transnational activism. Activist organizations now can act much more quickly and work more easily across greater distances. Also, activist organizations can now distribute decision making across their members and can allow members to choose to support à la carte the causes they find important. Avaaz is one of the new generation of activist organizations.

Unlike new activist organizations MoveOn and 38 Degrees, Avaaz is a transnational activist

organization. It is one of the largest activist networks, with over 20 million members in over 190 countries. The countries with the largest memberships are Brazil (3.8 million), France (2.2 million), Germany (1.2 million), and the United States (1.2 million). Headquartered in New York City, Avaaz has offices in 18 cities around the world including Rio de Janeiro, Madrid, Delhi, and Sydney. Avaaz operates using thousands of volunteers and approximately 50 staff members who use e-mail, Skype, and more to create a virtual office of activists.

The word *avaaz* means "voice" in Farsi and has similar meanings in several other languages. Through its Web site, Avaaz.org, Avaaz has given voice to its members and has launched hundreds of national and international campaigns. Avaaz provides an online platform for like-minded people to raise support for an issue and then persuade governments and corporations with online petitions and sometimes in-person protests. Avaaz members take on a variety of issues ranging from climate change to corruption to human rights at the international, national, or even local level.

In 2007 Avaaz was founded and initially supported by MoveOn, a progressive online activism group, and Res Publica, a British public policy think tank. The founding team consisted of several individuals, including founding president and executive director Ricken Patel. Since 2009 Avaaz has accepted no governmental, corporate, or other outside support, relying instead solely on small donations from its millions of members. As the founding architect of Avaaz, Patel, a Canadian, drew upon his past experiences to lay the foundation for Avaaz. Before Avaaz, Patel worked with International Crisis Group, a nongovernmental conflict resolution organization, in the war-torn countries of Afghanistan, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Sudan. He then volunteered with MoveOn where he gained an understanding of online activism. In 2012 *Foreign Policy* listed Patel as one of the top global thinkers.

Campaigns and Activities

Campaign ideas come from Avaaz members, not Patel. Members submit a petition to the Avaaz staff, who then send the petition to a random sample of 10,000 members. If the petition gains enough support it is then sent out to all members via e-mail alerts. The petition is also sent out via social media to garner more support and potentially more members. On Twitter Avaaz mainly tweets about campaigns and often asks readers to sign petitions and retweet posts. Facebook is used a little differently. While information on campaigns is included in posts on Facebook, Avaaz also posts activism news from its new activism-oriented news site, Avaaz Daily Briefings. Avaaz has 601,000 "likes" on Facebook and 484,000 followers on Twitter.

Once petitions gain enough signatures, sometimes millions of signatures in a few days, the subjects of the campaigns, usually government or corporation leaders, are shown the petition and signatures to persuade them to take action to address an issue. If they do not respond to the petition, Avaaz then takes action in the form of in-person protests, sit-ins, rallies, marches, flash-mobs and other creative media stunts. Avaaz may also put ads in various media.

For example, in 2011, a petition on sex trafficking in hotels had gained enough signatures and support from Avaaz members to present the petition to Hilton Hotel officials. The petition with 317,000 signatures requested that Hilton train staff to identify guests who are victims of child sex trafficking. When Hilton officials were slow to respond, Avaaz said it would put ads in the hometown newspaper of Hilton's chief executive officer. Hilton agreed to take action.

Since its founding in 2007, Avaaz has taken on other campaigns related to human rights, like a campaign in response to rapes in India and a campaign for funding education for poor children in Pakistan. Avaaz has also taken on environmental issues like climate change and animal rights, including stopping an international whale-hunting ban from being overturned. Avaaz has also taken on corruption in countries like India and Brazil.

In 2011 during the Arab Spring, Avaaz moved beyond petitions for change and took a more direct role in Syria. Initially Avaaz raised $1.5 million from 30,000 members to support citizen journalism during the Arab Spring. Avaaz began by sending cameras, satellite phones, and satellite uplink equipment to the protesters in Syria. It then sent in people to train protesters on how to

Alex Wilks, a representative from the international nongovernmental organization Avaaz, presenting 2,442,240 signatures against the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) to the European Parliament's petitions committee on February 28, 2012. He stands alongside Green Party Members of the European Parliament Margrete Auken, Sandrine Belier, and Eva Lichtenberger.

use the equipment and how to do citizen journalism to help get the news out to the international mainstream media. Using the network of activists it developed in Syria, Avaaz also smuggled in medical supplies and dozens of international journalists. And, when those and other journalists were under fire and needed to leave Syria, Avaaz helped evacuate them. The journalists were safely evacuated from Syria, but 13 Syrian activists lost their lives in the process.

Avaaz has faced criticism for its work, including the criticism that it ventured beyond its capabilities with its actions in Syria. In addition, critics of online activism like Evgeny Morozov have referred to online activism as slacktivism or clicktivism, implying that members of such organizations like Avaaz put forth very little effort and are not significantly engaged in an issue. Opponents have also claimed that Avaaz is a progressive organization funded by George Soros. Patel states that if Avaaz has an ideology, it is practical idealism, with Avaaz taking action to do good in the world.

William Hart
Norfolk State University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Clicktivism; GetUp.org.au; *MoveOn Effect, The*; MoveOn.org; Nonprofit Organizations; Syria; 38Degrees.org.uk; Web 2.0.

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Avatars

An *avatar* is an online representation of a human user. The term is derived from a Sanskrit word for the physical incarnation of a Hindu god, first used to describe the digital version of a human user by the designers of Lucasfilm's Habitat, an early virtual world from the 1980s. In Habitat, avatars were two-dimensional animated figures through which users would interact with others and the digital environment. Beyond online worlds, Neil Stephenson's 1992 cyberpunk novel *Snow Crash* depicted a virtual reality called the Metaverse in which an individual's social position was determined by the appearance of his or her avatar. In these early examples, an avatar was always a visual, graphical representation of a user. In more recent years, avatar has been used to describe nearly any representation of a user—textual, visual, or otherwise—not only in virtual worlds but in forms of social media as diverse as Internet forums, blogs, or social networking Web sites.

A user constructs an avatar so others can identify him or her as a unique and distinct individual online. An avatar usually has a visual or textual form that is mutable yet remains consistent over time. Consequentially, it both does and does not correspond to the physical body of the user behind the screen. A user of virtual worlds often identifies his or her real self as the one constructed and embodied online through the avatar. An avatar grants users the ability to play with, perform, or otherwise transform identities in ways impossible for physical bodies, often through a strategic veil of anonymity. This latter attribute of avatars has been identified as both a political strategy for a more egalitarian society and a threat to the democratic potential of the Internet. While early studies of cyberculture celebrated the possibilities enabled by avatars, questions of anonymity and identity have become increasingly prominent in debates about the politics of virtual worlds and social media, placing avatars in the center of current political debates about the Internet.

Avatars, Identity, and Representation

Because users construct their avatars, they can subsequently play with or try on different identities through their virtual bodies. Users can have multiple avatars, shifting between selves in a way that permits users of virtual worlds to embrace a kind of digital schizophrenia. Early theorists of cyberculture argued that the possibilities of online identity enabled by avatars reveal how people's identities are not stable but are flexible and constantly shifting. The avatar is not simply a representation but a real manifestation of the fluidity of people's own identities. Because of this fluidity, these theorists forecasted a future in which racism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination based on identity would wane because of the ability to remake one's identity online through disembodied avatars.

Recent studies have determined that possibilities enabled by avatars are not as fluid as initially thought. Prejudice against fat and nonwhite avatars still remains even with the variable, virtual body of the avatar. Because identity can be changed online, marginal identities are often completely erased in virtual worlds. Rather than enabling a more equitable way of understanding identity through digital representations, avatars reproduce—if not exacerbate—the prejudices about identity already present in the offline world. Because prejudices still exist online, users may choose to represent their identities in ways that simply repeat privileged identity categories. If and when marginal identities are represented online, they often are so via drop-down menus that do not permit fluid manifestations of identity. Nonwhite and nonmale avatars are often represented through reductive and stereotypical caricatures, especially when users pass as a race or gender that is different from that of their own bodies.

Avatars, Activism, and Anonymity

The anonymity of the avatar, however, still has a massive significance for the political agency of Internet users. Avatars in virtual worlds, on blogs, and on social networking Web sites permit their

users to express their personal voices in the face of repressive social and governmental regimes. While avatars may erase specific populations from online representation, they also, perhaps paradoxically, enable an individual to manifest as visible to others while minimizing very real possibilities of violence that minorities and otherwise oppressed individuals may face. This use of avatars is most commonly associated with sexuality, gender, and political activism. Gay individuals can out themselves online while remaining closeted beyond the Internet, protecting themselves from very real threats of physical violence. Female bloggers in the Middle East use the anonymity of avatars to gain some form of liberation, most often through self-expression, while still living under otherwise repressive governmental, social, and religious norms. Through avatars, activists can visibly organize and protest online while remaining beyond the reach of police power.

Avatars, however, are not nearly as anonymous as often perceived by the users and theorists of social media. Not only does the informatic structure of the Internet enable the tracking of individuals, but also avatars are almost always constructed within private, for-profit Web sites and services that have little interest in challenging established governmental and social norms. The political economy of social media privileges the identification and fixing of identity, not its continued fluidity. And, the anonymous nature of the avatar is increasingly understood to disrupt the possibilities for a democratic civil society fostered by the Internet.

A number of recent Internet policy analyses have suggested that bodily identity be definitively linked with online representations of the self. The anonymity of avatars is believed to empower cyberbullies and Internet criminals along with political dissidents. Avatars that do not represent

In an elaborate example of an avatar based on a human user, as many early avatars were, these U.S. Navy personnel at the Office of Naval Research at Camp Pendleton, California, in September 2010 demonstrate an apparatus that creates a 3-D avatar of the user for training purposes. The "mixed reality" training system used here is an Afghan environment "Infantry Immersion Trainer" for U.S. Marines.

the true bodies and identities of the user are false sockpuppets that can spread disinformation, challenging both established governmental order as well as the coherence of activist groups. The increasing prominence of these arguments challenges the belief that the anonymity of avatars is a political good. It seems that social networking Web sites, Facebook in particular, are moving toward this understanding of identity in the policing and regulation of user profiles. While the avatar has long been a feature of online sociality—and will most likely continue to be so for years to come—its fluidity and anonymity are increasingly problematic in understanding the relationship between social media, governance, and political agency.

Grant David Bollmer
University of Sydney

See Also: Cyberculture; Identity Politics; Internet Forums; Second Life; Sockpuppets.

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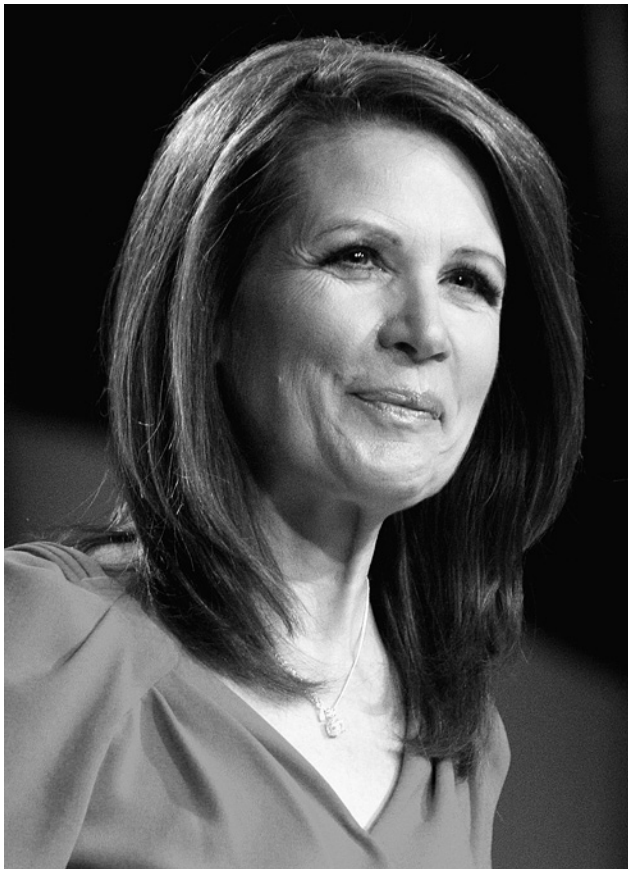
B

Bachmann, Michele

Barack Obama's deft use of social media as a cornerstone of his 2008 presidential bid helped him win the election. Social media not only allowed the Obama campaign to build a network of small donors but also empowered it to appeal to younger and first-time voters, who were better able to identify with the candidate through social media tools. Through Facebook and Twitter events, these "inexperienced" voters felt a stronger connection to Obama the candidate—an identification that is made more difficult in a televisual, talking-head context in which the candidate is often interviewed by middle-aged media elites. The 2008 presidential campaign proved the success of social media as a coalition-building, base-empowering technology. Since the Obama victory, Republicans have followed suit in taking to social media to directly engage their constituencies. Among those who have made good use of social media in recent campaigns is Minnesota Congresswoman Michele Bachmann. Bachmann is also the founder and chair of the Tea Party Caucus, a 61-member coalition of Republicans, 17 of whom were first-term members elected in the 2010 midterm elections.

Through her use of social media, Bachmann managed her persona as a political outsider devoted to her evangelical Christian faith and traditional values. Bachmann is notable for her general strategy of avoiding appearances on mainstream news programs, preferring instead to appear on sympathetic media outlets like Fox News and Christian-based television and radio channels. Bachmann generally does not write op-eds in national newspapers or appear on mainstream news. Instead, she shapes her message by distributing dispatches directly to her social media audience through tweets and Facebook status updates. Bachmann's provocative statements are ready-made for headlines, news talk programs, and the Twitterverse. Social media allow her to appeal directly to her followers and display her personality, while also engaging her critics, who further circulate her message and draw attention to her and her positions. Their attacks help Bachmann to position herself as an outsider, a victim of a censorious, elite media unconcerned with the values of common folks. This strategy works well at galvanizing her base of social conservatives who identify as having "traditional," Christian-centered values.

During her 2010 re-election campaign Bachmann used mobile attack ads against her opponent at the Minnesota State Fair—the second-largest state fair in the United States and a prime event for elected officials to target a multitude of voters. Her campaign created short, fair-themed YouTube videos targeting voters at the



Michele Bachmann in October 2011. One theory about her poor showing in the 2011 Iowa caucus after having won the first Iowa straw poll is that her reliance on social media over traditional media left her unable to sustain her momentum with Iowa voters.

fair. Recognizing that many fairgoers would have smartphones capable of viewing YouTube content, the campaign created videos that asked fairgoers why they should support her opponent, who supported raising the price of food and drink items purchased from food vendors—an omnipresent sight at the state fair. The strategy demonstrated that Bachmann and her campaign staff were able to capitalize on very specific opportunities.

Iowa 2011

In the following year, 2011, Bachmann, buoyed by her first-place finishing in an Iowa straw poll measuring support for Republican candidates to challenge Barack Obama for the 2012 presidential election, began devising her social media strategy to appeal to Iowa conservative and Republican voters—many of whom, like Bachmann herself, identified as evangelical. Bachmann embarked on a bus tour that visited each county in advance of the caucus. Because caucus rules and procedures are more arcane than are those of the more straightforward primaries (which proceed much like a general election does), and because only 15 states hold caucuses for nominating presidential candidates, they challenge candidates to make sure voters, especially first-time ones, are familiar with the rules for participation. To this effect, the Bachmann campaign attempted to make use of the popular Facebook application Farmville to help game users spread the word about the Bachmann campaign. The Bachmann Farmville application encouraged game players to knock on the doors of other player's farms and place virtual Bachmann signs in players' front yards. It is unknown to what extent the Farmville venture was successful in courting younger voters or even what percentage of Iowans actively played games on Facebook. The use of Farmville does suggest, however, that the Bachmann campaign felt comfortable enough with social media applications to employ tactics her rivals did not.

The Bachmann team posted videos from their bus tour to YouTube to serve as a guide for spreading the word about the Bachmann campaign as well as for how and where to participate in the caucus process. The YouTube video strategy also allowed the Bachmann campaign to save money on the costs of direct mail and television ads. This cost-saving gambit works so long as a targeted constituency makes frequent use of social media. Bachmann's campaign floundered in Iowa as Bachmann followed her first-place finish in the first straw poll with a sixth-place finish in the caucus elections. Evangelical voters were disproportionately represented in Iowa compared to the rest of the country. Depending upon which poll scholars rely, evangelicals made up roughly one-quarter of all Republican voters. Bachmann primarily appealed to these social conservatives.

It is not clear why Bachmann went from first to finishing sixth in Iowa. It is likely that her overreliance on social media, including YouTube, with its comments section providing space for her supporters to respond to campaign messaging, and her underutilization of paid television spots, and more important, her refusal to engage in candid interviews with mainstream news sources limited

her access to likely Iowan voters and lessened her appeal among big donors. The Bachmann campaign's bodyguards reportedly prevented journalists who were not preapproved to ask her questions or photograph her. If recent history is any sort of guide, Republicans who appeal to evangelicals tend to do well in the Iowa caucus, with Mike Huckabee winning in 2008 and Bachmann's rival for the hearts of evangelicals, Rick Santorum, triumphing in the most recent Iowa caucus. History also shows these candidates tend to struggle to appeal to a broader coalition of voters after the Iowa caucus. Santorum, by all accounts, relied upon a more traditional media campaign—including multiple television interviews—to fortify support behind his candidacy.

Iowa was a compelling litmus test for the Bachmann campaign because it demonstrated the importance of assembling a broad coalition of supporters, including those less conservative Republicans who vote primarily on economic issues. Though Bachmann is an experienced tax lawyer, can speak about fiscal policy, and is the darling of many Tea Party members for that reason, she primarily pitches her messages to fellow social conservatives. Frequently absent is an explicit appeal to moderate or independent-minded voters. Her entire New Hampshire staff resigned before the primary there due to concerns about Bachmann putting too much focus on those selfsame Iowa voters. Bachmann's campaign manager resigned during the Iowa campaign, which further complicated Bachmann's ability to appear to be the momentum candidate. Without big donors paying for television spots, and with Bachmann's near refusal to submit to candid, live interviews, her social media strategy for getting out the vote was not nearly enough to sustain her momentum forged from the results of the first straw poll.

Backlash

The New Media Index from the Pew Research Center for Excellence in Journalism noted that, after Bachmann officially announced her candidacy for president, she was the most popular subject on political blogs as well as being one of the most popular subjects on Twitter. To be dominant on both platforms simultaneously is unusual, though the content circulating among political blogs was almost uniformly negative. With Bachmann's formal announcement came increased press scrutiny, including the revelation that she and her husband, a therapist, had separately received generous farm subsidies and Medicaid payments, respectively. Also in question was whether her husband, Marcus Bachmann, practiced controversial and discredited "gay conversion" therapy. In addition, Bachmann committed a faux pas in her hometown of Waterloo when she declared it the home of John Wayne, when in fact it is actually the onetime home of serial killer John Wayne Gacy. The popular sentiment circulating around the blogosphere seemed to call into question Bachmann's intelligence and her mainstream appeal. The increased scrutiny of Bachmann's private life prevented her from adequately controlling the message of being a political outsider whose interests lie with Americans holding traditional values.

Bachmann's messaging—both in social media and through planned media appearances—sparked backlash from those not sympathetic to her positions. While preparing for candidate debates, Bachmann appeared on the popular late-night television show, *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon*, which was an uncharacteristic media move for her. Fallon unlikely shared a target audience with Bachmann. As Bachmann emerged from the green room to do her segment, The Roots, Fallon's house band, played a cover of a Fishbone song "Lyin' Ass Bitch," though those lyrics were not sung during Bachmann's introduction.

The Roots have a history of playing tongue-in-cheek songs that are topical to the featured guest. After the show, when the song's significance became apparent to Bachmann, she demanded an apology from NBC and further displayed her outrage during a subsequent appearance on Fox News. Fallon issued a tweetpology by tweeting his regrets about the introductory song played during Bachmann's entrance. The Fallon experience challenged Bachmann's control over her messaging, which was much more difficult to accomplish through broadcast media programming, which appeals to a broad audience. Too, it provides an example of why Bachmann tended to avoid engaging in those media opportunities. In this regard, Bachmann preferred not to use social media defensively—that is, to conduct damage control and manage impressions of a gaffe or humiliating media moment after the fact. Instead,

Bachmann preferred to use social media to get ahead of her direct-to-constituent message and thus maintain more control over it.

Bachmann also made waves by asserting that the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine causes mental retardation and calling for Sharia law, the practice of an ultraorthodox form of Islam, to be outlawed in the United States. Perhaps most controversially she accused Huma Abedin, a Muslim woman who served as deputy chief of staff for Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, of having ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. Many, including noted Republican leaders John McCain and Speaker John Boehner, saw this as a baseless attempt to pass guilt by association. Notably, Bachmann took to Fox News and to her social media accounts to level the same charge of having associations with the Muslim Brotherhood against fellow Minnesota representative, and the first Muslim elected to the U.S. Congress, Keith Ellison. Ellison made waves among some conservatives, including Bachmann, by taking his oath of office with his hand placed on the Quran. Despite bipartisan expressions of disappointment, even outrage, over Bachmann's comments, she did not lose favor with her constituencies. But, notably, she did not expand her constituencies either.

Conclusion

Social media provides unprecedented means for reaching and dialoguing with one's followers. The most successful politicians are able to deftly combine both social and traditional broadcast media with its diverse audience to build the largest possible coalition in order to expand both the breadth of their audiences and the depth of loyalty those audiences hold for them. Bachmann is a unique case who seemed, especially after her defeat in the Republican primaries, to have been concerned principally with cultivating her loyal constituency.

Samuel Boerboom
Montana State University Billings

See Also: Boehner, John; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, 2012; News Media; Tea Party Movement.

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Backchannel

The term *backchannel* refers to any digital communications tool that facilitates conversation away from public view. As opposed to Stewart Brand's famous phrase, that "information wants to be free," network backchannels provide an architecture within social media for maintaining privacy and secrecy. The most common backchannels are invitation-only e-mail lists operated through services like Google Groups or Yahoo! Groups. Restricted-access threads on bulletin boards and moderator-only discussion spaces on large blogs and wikis also act as backchannels. The central characteristic of backchannels is that they enable conversation among formal, semiformal, or informal networks while also maintaining barriers to public viewing. Due to the ease with which these network backchannels can be formed, they play a substantial, but hidden, role in social media-driven political campaigns. Both their existence and the challenges they create for researchers significantly complicate academic understanding of the Web.

Examples

The best-known backchannel is the (now defunct) JournoList listserv, which was shut down after a controversial leak in June 2010. JournoList was a Google Group launched in February 2007 by Ezra Klein, a popular journalist and blogger who then was working at *The American Prospect*. The list was composed of left-leaning journalists, policy experts, and academics generally known personally by Klein himself. Between 2007 and 2010, JournoList grew to include approximately 400 individuals. Conversations on the off-the-record

list spanned a wide range of topics, from policy details to sports and entertainment media. Klein describes the theory behind JournoList as "an insulated space where the lure of a smart, ongoing conversation would encourage journalists, policy experts and assorted other observers to share their insights with one another."

In June 2010, JournoList e-mails by *Washington Post* blogger David Weigel were leaked to two blogs, FishBowlDC and the Daily Caller. The e-mails featured off-color comments about conservative activists who were part of Weigel's regular beat. Within days, he was forced to resign from the *Post,* and leading conservative bloggers seized on the case as evidence of a liberal media conspiracy. Conservative commentators viewed the backchannel as a place for journalists to agree upon liberal news frames and squash inconvenient stories. JournoList participant, and *The Atlantic* national correspondent James Fallows, countered by asking, "Have you ever been on a listserv? . . . It had all of the virtues, and many of the faults, of the standard Internet e-mail list."

Key Features

JournoList displays several features common to all backchannels. It is a digital instantiation of a traditional phenomenon: In decades past, networks of journalists would gather for dinner parties, or the "boys on the bus" who traveled with the presidential campaigns would meet for beers in their shared hotels. Today, these network ties take on an additional, digitally enhanced form. The creation of a backchannel e-mail list cultivates the same network-based conversations that have always occurred among journalistic professionals and their key sources. It is now easier to cultivate these ties, however, and their digital form creates novel opportunities and threats.

Network backchannels are publicly opaque but permeable. This makes them distinct from official organizational listservs, which are publicly visible but closed. Most backchannels include a version of "Fight Club Rules" that caution list members from discussing the list's existence in public. As such, a potential backchannel list member is unlikely to know of the list's existence until he or she receives an invitation to join. Compare this to the e-mail list for the *Washington Post* editorial board. This is a publicly visible entity—editorial board members are displayed on the organization's Web site, and it is no shock that they communicate via e-mail. But, potential members face a much higher barrier to entry. From 2007 to 2010, JournoList grew to approximately 400 people. The *Washington Post* editorial board's membership size remained stable.

The opaque nature of backchannels like JournoList also make them nearly impossible to study. Though it was intermittently mentioned in news reports from 2007 to 2010, the list's Fight Club Rule meant that scholars, practically speaking, could not treat it as an object of study. What's more, the ease with which a backchannel listserv can be constructed makes it impossible to estimate the size of the backchannel universe. One month after JournoList was shut down, Jeffrey Goldberg reported that a new backchannel list had replaced it. As such, network backchannels display a Russian nesting doll character—there can be backchannel lists within backchannel lists, ad infinitum. These limits on scholarly capacity to observe backchannels lead them to generally be omitted from scholarly discourse on social media.

Criticism

There are two major critiques of backchannels—one normative, the other practical. The normative critique holds that backchannel lists subvert the online norm that everything should be public. In online communities and discussion boards that revel in the free flow and sharing of information, exclusive backchannel discussions would appear to violate the norm of publicness. Conservative bloggers hold that private online conversations among journalists and academics constituted a breach of journalistic ethics. Social media optimists who view unchecked online participation as a social good may voice concern that backchannel lists replicate traditional, exclusive hierarchies that the new medium might otherwise subvert.

The practical critique holds that, unlike old, informal networks of information exchange, these lists create digital traces that can themselves be problematic. Weigel's statements about the conservatives he interviewed were uncontroversial in context, but detached from their temporal and conversational space, they took on a very different meaning. "Off-the-record" conversations left no formal traces in the predigital era. Today,

such conversations can be leaked, mined, and exploited in new and troubling ways.

The flood of publicly available social media activity leads many observers to presume that the dictum, "information wants to be free," has come to pass. The existence of backchannel lists provides a rebuke to that presumption. Backchannel communications and coordination efforts occur online but out of sight. For practical reasons, this leads social media theorists to rarely consider them or factor them into theories of online communication. They remain a useful and frequently used tool and should be treated as such.

David A. Karpf
George Washington University

See Also: Antiwar Protesting; Blogs, Role in Politics; Chat Rooms; Internet Forums; Networks, Political; Social Network Analysis.

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Bahrain

Similarly to what happened in other countries that were part of the Arab Spring, social media played an important role in the 2011 and 2012 unrest in Bahrain, which was dubbed the "pearl revolution" by the media because of the tradition of pearl hunting in the small Gulf nation. Beginning on February 14, 2011, thousands of protesters took part in demonstrations that culminated in a month-long occupation of the so-called Pearl Roundabout in the capital Manama. In the course of this protest wave, a number of social media, from social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to video platforms such as YouTube and Bambuser, as well as blogs, Internet forums, and chats, were widely used by activists to mobilize people, to coordinate among themselves, and to inform the news media and audiences both at home and abroad about the unfolding events.

The Kingdom of Bahrain (which means country of the two seas in Arabic) is a small state composed of 33 islands on the western coast of the Persian Gulf and is a short distance from Qatar to the east and Saudi Arabia to the west. The biggest of these islands is Bahrain Island, where the capital Manama is located and where the majority of the country's 1,234,000 population lives. A former colony of the United Kingdom, Bahrain hosts a strategic U.S. naval base where the Fifth Fleet is anchored. Similarly to its neighbors, Bahrain is a very affluent country, with a per-capita gross domestic product as high as the European Union (EU) average. However, wealth is unequally distributed, and most of the economic and political power of the country is in the hands of the Sunni minority, numbering around 25 percent of the population, with the Shia majority harboring a number of grievances.

Politically, Bahrain is a constitutional monarchy, currently ruled by Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, who has been on the throne since 2002. Despite a slow path of democratization begun with the first parliamentary elections in 1973, the king continues to enjoy almost absolute power in the country. The sovereign appoints all the ministers, including the prime minister, is the commander of the military, presides over the court system, and has the power to dissolve the lower house elected chamber and to appoint the members of

the upper house of parliament. Almost all the members of the government, including the prime minister, come from the king's family. The representation of opposition is limited to authorized parties, like the Shia el-Wefaq and the secular Wa'ad, while more radical forces like the Haq movement are banned.

Corresponding to its level of wealth, Bahrain enjoys high rates of connectivity and social media penetration. According to World Bank data, in 2011 more than 80 percent of the population was Internet connected. Social media were also widely accessed as testified by a 34 percent Facebook penetration rate in the same year, according to the *Arab Social Media Report*. These figures put Bahrain together with Kuwait and Qatar among the most Internet-connected countries in the Arab world and far above countries like Egypt and Tunisia.

2011 Uprising

The 2011 uprising in Bahrain developed on the back of the events in Egypt and Tunisia. Moreover, the movement built on the experience of previous uprisings against the monarchy in the mid-1990s and the mid-2000s. A day of rage was called on February 14. This date was chosen for being the 10th anniversary of the contested constitution of 2002, which had been imposed by King Hamad without consultation, and which has been compared to the constitution of 1973, severely limiting the power of elective institutions.

In anticipation of the first day of protest, calls for participation flowed through Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and blogs, which made up for the lack of strong opposition from newspapers, radio, and television. Thousands of protesters took part in the march, which was immediately met with a violent response from police. The following day, demonstrators occupied the Pearl Roundabout in Manama and set up a protest camp in imitation of Tahrir square. The occupation continued until the morning of February 17, known as Bloody Thursday, when the police raided the camp and killed four protesters.

After reoccupying the roundabout on February 19, the movement swelled in the subsequent days, with several marches of more than 100,000 people between the end of February and the beginning of March. Most of the participants in the movement were of Shia origin, and an important role in calling the demonstrations was played by Shia clerics. But, the movement vehemently rejected the label of sectarianism that was used against it by the ruling regime. The protesters called in their majority for an overhaul of the political system in Bahrain with more power to elective institutions.

Response

Faced with the tenacity of the mobilization, the Bahraini government tried to placate demonstrators by making some concessions, including removing unpopular ministers. But, in mid-March it launched a full-scale crackdown against the movement, with the crucial support of Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates troops. On March 15, the king declared a state of emergency. On the following day 5,000 security forces with aerial support and tanks rolling on the ground stormed the Pearl Roundabout, whose central pearl monument was later demolished. Most demonstrators retreated in face of overwhelming force, and 1,000 were arrested.

In the following weeks and months, the government successfully used its repressive force to subdue the movement, arresting organizers, firing public employees sympathetic to the movement, and erecting checkpoints around poor Shia villages. But, after a phase of relative latency, with smaller demonstrations in the second half of 2011, the movement made a comeback in the early months of 2012. More than 100,000 took to the streets on March 9, 2012, in what was publicized as the biggest demonstration since the birth of the movement. Moreover, a number of protests were scheduled in the run-up to the Bahrain Grand Prix in April in an attempt to force its cancellation, as happened the previous year.

In the course of the wave of protest, social media constituted the medium of choice for the movement. In advance of the February 14 protests and in the following days, activists created dedicated Facebook pages and events to publicize the demonstrations. Twitter hashtags like #bahrain, #14feb, and #feb14, with messages written both in Arabic and English, were used to exchange information and to galvanize morale. Mobile phone networks were used to circulate practical information, such as locations of assembly points and emergency updates. Videos channeled through

YouTube and the live-streaming service Bambuser documented the numerous human rights violations committed by police.

Social media-powered citizen journalism was particularly important in the case of Bahrain because of Al-Jazeera's cold response to the uprising. The Qatar-based Arabic broadcaster gave the uprising in Bahrain much less coverage and sympathy than the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, to whose success it had strongly contributed. The network was accused by Bahraini activists of a double standard, and commentators argued that Sheikh Hamad, the ruler of Qatar, feared a contagion to his own country.

Activists

Crucial in driving social media campaigning was the close-knit community of digital activists and bloggers who had been developing in Bahrain since the early 2000s. One of the initiators of this activist community was Mahmoud al-Yousif, an engineer working in the information technology sector who came to be known publicly as BlogFather. Since 2005, Yousif used his blog to protest against sectarian segregation and to campaign in favor of freedom of expression. He soon became a target of repression by the state apparatus until he decided to abandon blogging in 2008. He was arrested in March 2011, during the crackdown against the movement.

Another prominent pioneer of digital activism in Bahrain is Ali Abdulemam, a computer engineer by profession and the founder of the online forum Bahrain Online. Established in the late 2000s, Bahrain Online has attracted tens of thousands of members and hundreds of thousands of daily visitors, who debate Bahraini politics and society on its numerous discussion threads. Since the uprising, the Web site has cast itself as the media center of the revolution and has been banned by the government. Abdulemam, who was arrested in 2010 during a crackdown against prodemocracy activists, was released on February 23, 2011, after a week of protests as a demonstration of goodwill from the government, but he was rearrested during the ensuing crackdown.

Besides blogs and Web forums, in recent years social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter have been increasingly adopted as propaganda and agitation tools by prodemocracy activists. Possibly the most famous activist tweep in Bahrain is Zainab al-Khawaja, the daughter of Abdulladi al-Khawaja, a prominent activist and the cofounder of the Bahraini Center for Human Rights. Zainab al-Khawaja maintains a popular Twitter feed in English called @angryArabiya, which counted more than 30,000 followers in early 2012. Another famous Twitter user is Nabeel Rajab (@NABEELRAJAB), cofounder with Zainab's father of the Bahraini Center for Human Rights and its current director, who was sentenced in 2012 to three years in jail because of the content of his tweets.

Censorship

The Bahraini monarchy, cognizant of the important role played by social media in the movement, has repeatedly targeted digital activists and connected accounts and Web sites. This repressive campaign has led Reporters Sans Frontieres to put Bahrain on its list of enemies of the Internet alongside countries like North Korea, Iran, and Belarus.

Since the beginning of the uprising, many bloggers and social media activists have been arrested. On June 22, 2011, 21 bloggers went on military trial for a number of charges, including defamation and insults to the king and the royal family, inciting hatred against political institutions, inciting people to commit violent crimes, misuse of social media, and defaming public figures on social media. Eight of them were handed life sentences, while the remaining 13 faced between two and 15 years of imprisonment.

Apart from legal prosecutions, digital activists have also been subject to police violence, including at least two killings. On March 31, 2012, Ahmed Ismael, a citizen journalist who had reported several episodes of police violence on YouTube, was shot dead by a plainclothes policeman. On April 9, 2011, Zakariya Rashid Hassan al-Ashiri, a blogger, was killed while in police custody, though the official version claimed he had died due to illness. The blogger Sayid Yousif al-Muhafdah has been reported missing since March 19, 2011.

The Bahraini regime has repeatedly attempted to censor the Internet through its control of BIX, the Bahraini Internet exchange. The authorities did not operate a full-scale "kill switch" of Internet communications as in the case of Egypt. Nevertheless, Internet connection in the country

Women demonstrating for the release of political prisoners in Manama, Bahrain, in the Pearl Roundabout on February 19, 2011, two days after a government crackdown at the site had led to the deaths of four protesters. That year, Bahrain was one of the most Internet-connected countries in the Arab world, with over 80 percent of its population online, and with 34 percent using Facebook.

was severely disrupted by state authorities in the attempt to weaken movement communication, with a study from Arbor Networks observing a 20 percent slowdown in mid-February 2011. The government targeted activist accounts on live-streaming Web sites like Bambuser and antigovernment pages on Facebook. Moreover, it blocked chat services like PalTalk and Internet-based chats and forums like Bahrain Online, which were used by activists to communicate. A number of Web sites denouncing human rights abuses were closed down since the start of the protests, with only a handful of them being unblocked in early 2012.

Apart from censoring prodemocracy communications, the regime of King Hamad has also tried to turn social media mobilizing potential in its own favor. Supporters of the regime created Facebook pages and Twitter accounts that were used to publicize loyalist demonstrations, such as the Gathering of National Unity on February 22, 2012. Proregime Internet users, suspected of being bankrolled by the regime and its intelligence service, trolled activist pages in an attempt to intimidate prodemocracy activists. Pictures of prodemocracy demonstrations posted online were used to identify famous personalities among the protesters, including football players, artists, and academics and to shame them publicly.

At the end of 2012, the prodemocracy movement in Bahrain continued to remain active in the face of overwhelming state repression. The regime had unsuccessfully attempted to initiate a dialogue toward reconciliation with the opposition, and the conflict remained unsolved. Notwithstanding the arrests, killings, torture, and intimidation, the community of digital activists and social media activists that has played a crucial role in the uprising also continued to be active and to maintain a

number of channels to fuel dissent and organize protest against the regime.

Paolo Gerbaudo
King's College London

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Al Jazeera Effect; Arab Spring; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Egypt; Middle East; Tunisia; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring; YouTube.

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Bambuser.com

Bambuser.com is a video streaming service that allows users to record, share, and watch live video captured by cell phones and computer cameras. These videos can also be shared on popular social media Web sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. Although the Bambuser application (app) was initially designed for social use, political activists in the Middle East have used the service to document government wrongdoing.

Bambuser.com was founded in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2007 by 12 self-described "ninjas"; the company is still run by its small staff, and currently operates an additional office in Finland. According to Bambuser's Web site, its mission is to provide an easy and inexpensive way for individuals to "share moments with the world through real-time video." In accordance with this, the company provides its services for free to charitable organizations and individuals. However, news organizations and corporations that use Bambuser must purchase a premium service.

In 2012, the Associated Press (AP) partnered with Bambuser after using its footage for more than three years; the agreement allows the AP to distribute footage from Bambuser's users to major media outlets. So far, the AP has used crowdsourced Bambuser footage in its coverage of several high-profile events, including the civil war in Syria and the 2013 Boston Marathon bombings.

In 2011, the Bambuser app was one of the most popular apps downloaded on smartphones. Although Bambuser.com is not the only service that allows users to stream live video, it has gained popularity due to its ease of use. To use the service, an individual first creates an account, and then downloads the Bambuser app. Then, the user is able to stream video from a smartphone; moreover, the app allows users to steam even in low-bandwidth environments.

In addition to its streaming video app, Bambuser also maintains a Facebook page, a Twitter feed, a blog, and an online video archive. The company's founders use social media to update users on the role of the service in broadcasting from global conflicts.

Use by Activists

Although most Bambuser.com users employ the service to share personal videos, the company has become a tool for activists and citizen journalists, especially in the Middle East. Specifically, in several countries that have experienced political uprisings during the Arab Spring, activists have used Bambuser to document government atrocities and political corruption.

For example, in Egypt during the 2010 parliamentary elections, activists uploaded videos documenting large-scale election fraud; 10,000 videos were uploaded in a single day. In January 2011, during the massive protests in Cairo against the regime, activists used the service to document police brutality; subsequently, the Egyptian government shut down access to Bambuser. In response, Bambuser set up a channel devoted to airing video footage from the protesters. After the collapse of the Hosni Mubarak government, Egyptian activists used Bambuser to document the

November 2011 parliamentary elections. Prior to the elections, two of the founders of Bambuser traveled to Egypt to help train activists to use the service to monitor for fraud.

Antigovernment activists in Syria have also used Bambuser's streaming services since the start of the civil war in March 2011. Opponents of the regime of President Bashar al-Assad used the service to document events such as funerals, bombings, and attacks on civilians by government forces. Although the Syrian government has banned Bambuser and arrested those who have the app on their phones, users have relied on satellites or wireless networks in Jordan and Turkey to stream video.

Overall, most of the live-stream videos from Syria are submitted by men ages 12 to 20. In addition, one of Bambuser's busiest times is Friday afternoons, the Muslim day of prayer, since many activists stream footage of demonstrations in the streets as people leave mosques.

Since it is difficult for journalists to cover the Syrian conflict, videos taken by Bambuser users from Syria have been shown on many major news networks, including the BBC, CNN, AP, and Reuters. For example, one Syrian activist broadcasted live during a mortar attack in Homs; this video was broadcast on 80 networks and was shown 600 different times. Bambuser has been used by other activists in the Middle East, and was temporarily banned in both Bahrain and Turkey. It has also become an outlet for anti-Vladimir Putin supporters in Moscow, and has been used by Occupy Wall Street protesters, who hope to document inappropriate police conduct.

Kelly A. McHugh
Matthew Geras
Florida Southern College

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Bahrain; Egypt; Streaming Media; Syria.

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Berkman Center

The Berkman Center for Internet and Society is a research center at Harvard University whose mission is to understand and explore cyberspace. It was founded in 1998 at Harvard Law School. Berkman Center focuses on the study and assessment of cyberspace's development and dynamics as well as on relevant laws and sanctions. Moreover, it is interested in the relation and interaction of Internet-related technologies with society. The center's research is used to further develop Internet potential and to assess Internet-related law. As is underlined on the center's homepage:

> We are a research center, premised on the observation that what we seek to learn is not already recorded. Our method is to build out into cyberspace, record data as we go, self-study, and share. Our mode is entrepreneurial nonprofit.

Berkman Center is actually the successor of the Center on Law and Technology, which was founded in 1996 by the Harvard Law School professors Jonathan Zittrain and Charlie Nesson. Based on a donation given in 1997 by the Berkman family, who owned the communications company The Associated Group, the center changed its name to Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School in 1998. Apart from the Berkman family donation, the center receives financial support from foundations, corporations, private donors, international organizations, and government entities. All corporate donors agree to give their funds as unrestricted gifts, for which there is no contractual agreement and no promised products, results, or deliverables. This policy complements the overall policies of Harvard Law School and Harvard University.

The center's overall mission and organization is shaped by its board of directors, which are all faculty members. The Berkman Center community consists of a network of faculty members (full-time staff and faculty associates), around 30 fellows each academic year, more than 100 students each year from a range of schools and disciplines, lawyers, entrepreneurs, and visual architects who all engage with the challenges and opportunities of cyberspace. The center offers classes, workshops,

and conferences. It hosts Internet-related events and visiting lecturers. It offers various Web presences reached by millions of visitors from around the world. All Berkman events, including conferences, talks, and so on are Webcast, and most of them are also available either on Berkman.tv or on Berkman's YouTube channel. It publishes books by faculty members and fellows in the Berkman publication series, academic research papers, policy papers, and blog spots. Furthermore, the center's monthly newsletter on Internet, law, and policy, *The Filter*, has a steadily growing readership of more than 17,000 subscribers; more than 8,000 people receive the weekly *Events and Digital Media Roundup*. Last but not least, the center offers fellowship and summer internship programs.

Berkman Center enjoys a global reputation for cutting-edge research on Internet-related areas. There are three basic areas of inquiry: law, technology, innovation, and knowledge; the relationship between the Internet and civic activity; and technology, law, and development. In the first field of study, the center's researchers try to find ways to balance between the need for innovation in new technologies and the need to secure broad public access to these new technologies. In the second area of inquiry, the center seeks to contribute to the ongoing discussion about the Internet's impact on democracy. Issues like the Internet promoting political participation and democratic dialogue are in the epicenter of various adversary discussions. The third area of inquiry examines the impact of technology in developing countries. Access to the Internet and consequently to more information could probably boost economic growth and enhance educational opportunities.

Projects

The Berkman Center runs a number of prominent and innovative projects. Indicatively, the following are some of the most well known. Within the context of research concerning the relationship between the Internet and civic activity, the center works on the creation of the Internet Monitor. This project is about gathering and evaluating data from multiple sources. It then offers the data freely available online, functioning as an online fact base. This base will provide policy makers, digital activists, students, and many others with rich and invaluable information. The project attempts to bypass content control and censorship of various facts. In addition, the center is also preoccupied with research on the interaction between different fields of social sciences. The metaLab(at)Harvard is a newly founded experimental research unit that focuses on arts, media, and humanities. One of the lab's major projects has been the extraMUROS. It is an open source HTML5 platform for creating interactive documentaries and new forms of storytelling.

In 2011, the center launched the Youth and Media Lab. This is a youth-driven research-and-development lab that concentrates on the media literacy and digital empowerment of young people. Its aim is to stimulate initiatives around youth and technology. The lab is a meeting point for different strands of research. The lab's activities include exploratory research, curriculum building, development of new tools, and peer teaching. The Internet Law (iLaw) program was also launched in the fall of 2011 and was an intensive, week-long Harvard Law School program and course. The program focused on the development of the cyberlaw curriculum. It involved the revision of important aspects of cyberlaw.

Among the most eminent projects are that of the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) and StopBadware. DPLA was launched in December 2010. The project aims at designing a large-scale digital public library accessible to all. In order to find effective strategies to achieve this, the center has brought together experts from cultural and educational organizations, librarians, authors, publishers, and state and local government, among others. In 2006, Berkman Center established the nonprofit organization StopBadware, whose aim is to stop spyware, viruses, and other threats on the Internet. StopBadware envisions building a safer Web. Since 2010, it functions as a stand-alone organization.

The programs mentioned here are only some of the many that the center has launched (Media Cloud, H2O, ProjectVRM, Public Radio Exchange, etc.). The Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University continues research on the development and design of methods and tools to further enhance the knowledge and the use of Internet technologies. During the last years, the center has seen continuous

growth. In May 2008, it was elevated to a major, university-wide, interdisciplinary center also known as Interfaculty Initiative. Since July 2006, the center has been located in the second floor of a renovated, wood-frame house at 23 Everett Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Berkman Center inspired the launch of further research centers, such as the Stanford Center for Internet and Society, the Oxford Internet Institute, the NEXA Center for Internet and Society at the Polytechnic University of Turin, and many others. Berkman Center maintains a fruitful collaboration with the NEXA Center, the Keio University in Japan, and other research centers and educational institutions around the world.

Anastasia Veneti
University of Athens

See Also: Born This Way Foundation; Center for Innovative Media; Cloud Computing; Digital Cultures Research Centre; MIT Media Lab; Oxford Internet Institute.

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Big Data

MaryAnne Gobble writes that the definition of big data is multifaceted, ambiguous, and dynamic, suggesting the term has different meanings between academic disciplines and practitioners. Put simply, big data sets are too big because of their volume, speed of information or velocity, or because of the variety in the type of data. Big data sets provide researchers with large amounts of information on many topics, ranging from demographics and psychographics to social networking statistics. These sets are often made usable and archived through data mining techniques.

Thomas H. Davenport, Paul Barth, and Randy Bean identify the many forms of big data, including "clickstream data from the Web, social media content (tweets, blogs, Facebook wall postings, etc.) and video data from retail and other settings." Big data also refers to any digitally archived information, ranging from recorded content from telephone call centers to biological data from laboratories. Because the term *big data* refers to so many different types of data sets, standardization of meaning and analysis is rare across disciplines.

Big data collected from social media include the recording of user-generated content such as Facebook posting, tweets, user preferences, shared links, and profile information. Big data sets also typically record other less obvious measures, such as time spent lurking, deleted content, and geotracking locations. This information is stored in large servers and databases, and is sometimes only accessible with the owner of the social media's permission.

Barbara Trish declared 2012 the year of big data in politics based upon the way the U.S. presidential campaigns of Barack Obama and Mitt Romney used large data sets to connect with voters and influence public opinion. The Obama re-election campaign used big data sets derived from Twitter and Facebook to personalize messages, track issue efficacy, and target specific segments of the larger U.S. population. The Romney campaign used big data to identify potential donors and supporters based upon social media information such as purchasing history and religious affiliation.

Controversy

Maurice Vergeer writes that new innovations in data collection and interpretation represent new possibilities in understanding the role of the Internet in politics. However, not all researcher perspectives support such an optimistic view. While the information sciences have made great advances in the interpretation and use of big data, traditional social-political science approaches still favor small-data and theory-driven approaches. Vergeer proposes the real advancement in social

and political research will only occur when the two oppositional approaches work together and support each other's inquiry.

The development and integration of big data in the 2012 election also invoked debate between strategists about the potential future of politics. The collection and documentation of private information makes up the majority of concerns regarding the ethics of big data. If social media data is private, archiving and collecting this information is an invasion of one's privacy and can be deemed unethical. Alternatively, if social media data is public, archiving and collecting such information is ethical.

Alternatively, debate surrounds access and use of big data in politics. Big data sets derived from social media giants such as Facebook or Twitter are costly, meaning that political campaigns with smaller budgets are often unable to purchase the information. What the data sets are used for is also of concern. Joe Turow writes that information gathered from big data sets is beginning to be used by online retailers who adjust prices to meet specific socioeconomic information about individuals. This means that pricing is becoming more individualized and customized to what retailers believe an individual should be charged. Turow also notes that news Web sites are also starting to customize the display of news articles to match what they believe individual viewers will most likely read. Specifically, political campaigns use big data sets to create personalized or targeted advertisements to appeal to users. Just as news media that personalize headlines to reflect what they think will appeal to viewers, language, images, and messages are being customized based upon the information gained by big data sets. Turow suggests this is problematic because possible inconsistencies may develop from such customization.

Critics are also skeptical due to the size and volume of big data sets. Vergeer writes that there is a tradeoff for volume over accuracy that plagues the collection and use of big data. In order to analyze such large data sets, generalizations about social media indicators such as relationship status and political orientation can potentially be misinterpreted. For example, big data sets cannot differentiate when a child is browsing the Internet on his or her mother's computer. Therefore, there is an acceptance of big data analysts that there is inaccuracy within the information collected.

The future of big data collected from social media for politics is uncertain, although the success of its use in the 2012 U.S. presidential election suggests that it is an important tool in campaigning. As John Timpane reflects, social media and big data sets help politicians find votes and turn potential voters into supporters. Big data is a tool and likely a new frontier in politics and campaigning because of the vastness of the data it can provide.

Alison N. Novak
Ernest A. Hakanen
Drexel University

See Also: Data Mining; Mobile Media User Data Collection and Privacy Protection; Obama for America iPhone Application; Open Data.

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BlackPlanet.com

Launched in 1999 by Omar Wasow and Benjamin Sun, BlackPlanet.com is a social network site (SNS) that was initially started as an entity to connect its members to potential jobs and

relationships. However, over time BlackPlanet .com has built an online community of roughly 20 million members and become an important forum for other social and political issues of importance to the African American community. Historically, black social networks in the form of fraternities, sororities, and other organizations have been an important source of empowerment for African Americans. Prior to BlackPlanet.com's emergence, other social network sites were launched to focus on marketing to the African American community, such as The Drum (1988), Melanet (1989), and NetNoir (1995), and they, along with others, represent a generation of black online entities that catered to specific audiences prior to and after the Internet became commercially viable. In regard to BlackPlanet.com, it was and is a pioneer in minority social media ownership, civic engagement, and social media ethics.

Minority Ownership

Historically, in the area of traditional media, minority ownership and employment has faced challenges and, in recent times, have even declined. Previously, during the civil rights movement and social disturbances that followed, the Kerner Commission successfully argued for greater minority participation in ownership and employment opportunities. Yet, by the 1990s and the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, the ownership of minority media began to decline due to consolidation of broadcast media and the undercollateralization of minority-owned outlets that struggled during economic downturns. However, the advent of new media technology provided opportunities in entrepreneurship and innovation.

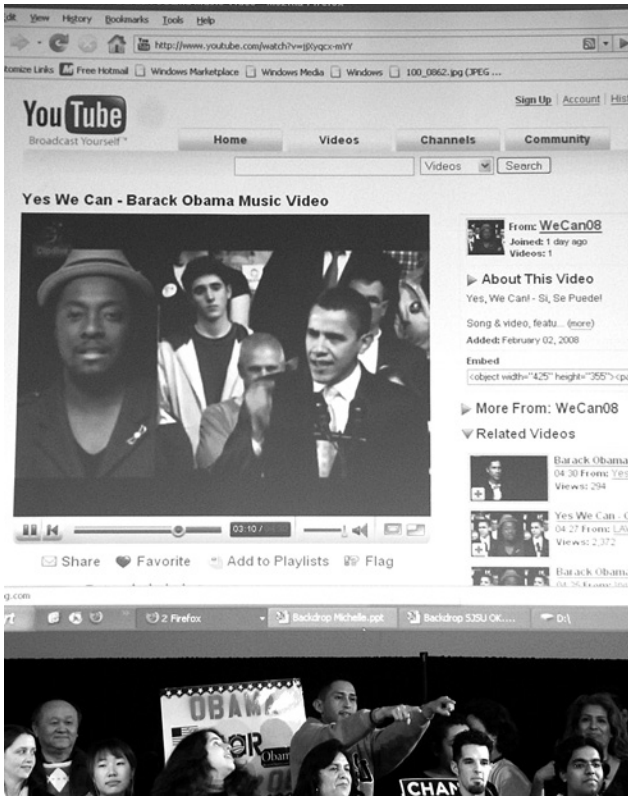
BlackPlanet.com and other minority SNSs emerged in the 1990s as entrepreneurial opportunities in response to what some scholars referred to as the digital divide. For example, recent studies indicate that African Americans more than any other ethnic group receive most of their news from the Internet and also represent, as recently as 2010, a disproportionate number of users on the SNS Twitter. Therefore, the launch of BlackPlanet .com by Omar Wasow and Benjamin Sun, the chief executive officer of Community Connects Inc., remains a historical example of where economic success merged with social advocacy. Although Community Connect, the majority stakeholder, was not African American owned, it was a culturally sensitive operation that operated a controlling interest in other minority SNSs, such as Asian Avenue.com, the English-language Latino entity MiGente.com, and the gay site GLEE.com. Yet, BlackPlanet.com, along with MiGente.com and AsianAvenue.com, were seen as so profitable by 2008 that they were purchased by Radio One, an African American media company, for the sum of $38 million.

Civic Engagement

Prior to the launch of Myspace and Facebook, BlackPlanet.com was active in regard to civic engagement in the African American community. For example, BlackPlanet.com currently engages in raising money for programs involved in public education, has raised funds for projects related to earthquake or tsunami relief, and also promotes a Riser of the Month reward, which recognizes members that are social or community advocates. However, one of the more memorable accounts of civic engagement on the site was when then-presidential candidate Barack Obama became a member of BlackPlanet.com and was able to gain close to 200,000 friends within 10 days.

Many of the members of BlackPlanet.com were also members of Myspace or Facebook, and these socially connected networking sites helped Barack Obama organize a constituency under the auspices of the Obama campaign, which transcended national borders. For example, the Obama campaign's use of online SNSs such as My.BarackObama.com, Facebook, and others allowed the viral explosion of an unsolicited Web video called "Yes We Can," by will.i.am (William James Adams), a member of the music group Black Eyed Peas. What started as a campaign from the North American region for Obama was also exhibited in the Caribbean community with overwhelming presence in polling data and musical creations reflecting this support in Jamaica and Trinidad and the other locales in the region.

The Obama campaign represented an important turning point, geographically speaking, among peoples of African descent in Western society in relation to the nexus between civic engagement and the cybersphere. Thus, SNSs like BlackPlanet.com and others have utilized the digital processes available today that have collapsed



Will.i.am's "Yes We Can" video plays via YouTube projected onto a screen above a crowd during an Obama campaign event led by Michelle Obama on February 3, 2008, at San Jose State University.

time and space on a national and global scale to such a state where change is globally synchronous or occurring at the same time in several spheres and locations, influencing history and shrinking geographical distances that previously prohibited civic engagement.

Social Media Ethics

Interestingly enough, BlackPlanet.com has become an example of how the identities chosen by online users of SNSs exemplify the relationship between technology and avatars (virtual representations) and the tension between a previously unitary identity and a virtual identity that operates under a different set of laws and hierarchies. For example, previously constructed social identities were in response to earlier conventions of norms and stereotypes, whereas the Internet allows for a collaborative approach to identity that does not necessarily conform to previous cultural logics or explanations or that conform to common awareness. Second, this approach of SNSs to virtual identity construction allows users to choose their identities, although this fact or practice can still influence users to take into account the dominant social norms of racial or gendered labels. Finally, with regard to social media ethics, BlackPlanet.com will likely be among the SNSs that will respond to the rapid change of technological innovation in relation to their various constituencies who are engaged in networking, community service, and economic advancement in their respective locations.

Reynaldo Anderson
Harris-Stowe State University

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); DemocracyforAmerica.com; Meetup.com; Race/Ethnicity and Social Media; Townhall.com.

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Blog for America

Blog for America was from March 2003 to March 2004 the official title of the campaign Weblog of Howard Dean, at the time a candidate in the U.S. Democratic Party presidential primaries. It was arguably the most important campaign blog in the 2004 elections, and it constituted the engine behind the improbable run for the U.S. presidency of the former governor of Vermont, a then

relatively unknown figure on the national political stage. Heralded as a revolutionary campaign tool capable of fostering community action, Blog for America failed, however, to gather sufficient voter support for Howard Dean, who exited the presidential race after unsuccessful bids in the Iowa and New Hampshire primaries. Scholarly assessment of Blog for America has ranged from regarding it as a vehicle for enhanced civic involvement with potential to counteract the negative effects of television on the political process to viewing it as a form of discourse inviting antagonism and thus risking to polarize society and to weaken democratic culture.

Blog for America was launched by the Dean campaign on March 15, 2003, with a post by campaign manager Joe Trippi, who explained that it was intended as a place for the campaign to let people know when, where, and how they could help, thus to get as much support as possible from the grassroots. The frequency of blog postings by campaign staffers Matthew Gross, Zephyr Teachout, Clay Johnson, and Nicco Mele increased from 17 during March 2003 to 140 during May 2003 and further to 300–400 each month between June 2003 and February 2004. The blog became increasingly successful as people began checking the information placed there, and Dean started to establish himself as an outspoken anti-establishment candidate. However, the blog surged in popularity after June 10, 2003, when Blog for America introduced the "moveable type" software that allowed viewers to write comments in response to the campaign posts. Soon thereafter, comments grew from several a day to thousands a day, and the blog reader community grew from thousands to hundreds of thousands. Blog for America became not only a campaign information hub but also a policy discussion portal, with added capacity for being a recruitment, consultation, mobilization, and fund-raising instrument for the Dean campaign.

Impact

It is thus unsurprising that in late 2003 and early 2004 the mainstream media paid much attention to the Blog for America phenomenon. At the peak of Dean's fame, journalists from the *Boston Globe*, the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, and the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* agreed that Blog for America had enabled Dean supporters to take an active role in the campaign and to be involved in the decision making of the campaign, thus feeling motivated, believing they were making a difference, gaining a sense of community previously possible only for local elections, and forever transforming political campaigns. Campaign bloggers were cited in these articles calling Blog for America a new form of open source campaigning, because of its conversational tone and its interactive possibilities, and also calling blogs the new town hall meetings, because of their potential for debate and participation. However, the limits of the blog's effectiveness were seen in the Iowa and New Hampshire primaries, in which the online energy was not translated into voter turnout. After a disappointing third place in the Iowa primary and a catastrophic second place in the New Hampshire primary (at least partially attributable to his scream during the Iowa concession speech), Dean ended his candidacy for the U.S. presidency.

Analysis

Researchers examining various aspects of Blog for America have been far from reaching consensus regarding the blog's format, functions, meanings, or impact. In 2005, researchers Matthew Kerbel and Joel Bloom mirrored 2003 journalists' conception that Blog for America had been an authentic virtual community and not just a mere conveyor of information. These scholars added that the blog had become an alternative to mass media through its focus on partisanship and advocacy. They saw it in the tradition of the 19th-century press, which boosted voter mobilization and helped support many worthy civic causes, instead of a focus on objectivity and balance, which came much later and were an imperfect response to the necessities of mass marketing.

However, in 2006, Jennifer Stormer-Galley and Andrea Baker disagreed that Blog for America constituted a truly interactive forum. After describing how the red bat, which went on to become a powerful symbol of the Dean campaign (representing Dean's projected success in the race and the campaign's success in fund-raising activities), was first suggested on the blog but finally adopted for a campaign event only after a supporter made a phone call to campaign staffers to ask whether they were listening to online suggestions, these

scholars asked whether citizens and staff were talking "with" one another or "at" one another. They contended that the Dean campaign primarily used the blog to facilitate parasocial interaction, an illusion of face-to-face relationship, in this case employed for scoring political points, rather than using the blog to assist in mobilization for action, which would have been truly transformational.

James Janack stated that while the Dean campaign may have been willing to relinquish some control over its message, thus opening up the possibility for dialogue, the participants on the blog (many of whom were ardent Dean supporters) exercised that control themselves by tagging opponents to Dean as "trolls" and disciplining such opponents by means of either ignoring or excluding them.

Benjamin Warner goes even further with denying the merits of Blog for America by asserting that this blog and other blogs such as those of the Obama campaign in 2008 used rhetorical techniques, enhanced with aid from high-tech features, of leading participants into dangerous antagonism in which the legitimacy of political opposition was brought into question and adversaries were treated with enmity. According to this argument, in taking this approach political candidate blogs go against ethical media practices and pose a threat to democracy, rather than engaging citizens and enriching democratic processes.

Whether considered a success or a failure, whether regarded as a positive or a negative development, Blog for America remains a significant development regarding the relation between social media and politics, and will continue to have an influence on political campaigns of the future.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Blogosphere; Blogs; Blogs, Role in Politics; Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Campaigns, Virtual.

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Blog Storm

Blogs are a relatively new social phenomenon that first emerged in the late 20th century. However, in the last several years, blogs have become a powerful sociocultural force. Originally developed as a system of online communication between a few enthusiasts in the mid-1990s, the blogosphere has emerged as an important mainstream artifact in relation to the digital sphere in the genres of personal diary, journalism, community forums, and entertainment. In recent years, research on social

media is addressing the influence of different types of blogs in relation to Internet practices and computer-mediated communication (CMC). One such blog phenomenon is that of the blog storm. Marvin Ammori notes that blog storms are sociopolitical ad hoc campaigns organized by groups or collectives that are private and exist due to the existence of inexpensive technology; and these groups dissipate following the conclusion of the campaign. Also, blog storms have become a common feature in the blogosphere in relation to politics, social movements, and corporate promotions. More important, there is a need to be cognizant of this particular subgenre of blogs, related technology, and theoretical perspective of a blog storm.

Blog

A blog is an online Web site that is dedicated to posts by the author or authors. Often, posts will contain related information from various forms of media, such as newspaper articles, diary entries, television, radio, and/or personal observations. Furthermore, they have the ability to embed links, photos, video, and other forms of media. Collectively, the blogosphere, as it refers to itself, does have self-referential qualities, and ongoing digital conversations are encouraged among blog authors and consumers with capacity for feedback and opportunity for posting comments, with software to account for the traffic a page can generate. There are many different types of blogs, public or private, dedicated to a multitude of topics and ideas. However, what makes the blog storm unique is its capacity and flexibility to cheaply organize highly effective social media campaigns that have the ability to influence consumers or voters.

Technology and Blog Storms

Two important technological components in relation to blog storming are Really Simple Syndication (RSS) and Atom; both are XML-based programs that increase the blog storm's ability to market, grow, and gain consumers across social media networks. The utilization of syndication technology aggregates helps the individual blogs to update new content swiftly and efficiently. Syndication technology is a push program that directs content to social media users interested in the topic on the basis of subscription, as opposed to the more traditional model of search-and-visit traffic. Syndication technology allows social media consumers the ability to customize their own tastes and news feeds, although a drawback is relying on sources to an extent that the information becomes a mere echo chamber for the consumers and can skew their perspectives. However, this feature has been common since the 1990s and has been a part of mainstream social media technology since the early 2000s.

Theory and Blog Storms

The 2004 presidential campaign was one of the primary forces driving the explosion of blogs and blog storms. Bloggers were allowed access to conventions and issued press credentials among other forms of recognition traditionally allowed to mainstream journalists. However, a theoretical consideration or explanation for the emergence of blog storms is in the area of Trevor J. Pinch and Wiebe E. Bijker's social construction of technology theory (SCOT) and sociological structuration theory (SST), as discussed by Anthony Giddens. SCOT is the appropriation of blog technology for an individual or a group's communicative goal, and SST explains the duality of structure and agency and the relationship between micro- and macroparadigms.

Two examples of these theories working in tandem with relation to blog storming in the 2004 U.S. presidential campaign were the Howard Dean and John Kerry campaigns. The Dean campaign was the first major presidential campaign to derive its fund-raising energy through a grassroots digital blog storm approach that represented an exciting alternative to the conservative media establishment. Conversely, in relation to the Kerry campaign, a conservative blog storm campaign organized around the title Swift Boat Veterans for Truth and helped to blunt the initiatives of the Democratic nominee's campaign. However, since the 2004 U.S. presidential campaign, the utilization of blog storms by ad hoc groups and other organizations has evolved in ever more sophisticated ways, particularly in corporate promotions of consumer products and entertainment.

Reynaldo Anderson
Ryan Branson
Harris-Stowe State University

See Also: Blog Syndication; Blogosphere; Blogs, Role in Politics.

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Blog Syndication

Blog syndication is a process by which the content of a blog Web site is disseminated, in full or in part, via republication on other Web sites or digital media readers. Original blog material is distributed to secondary sites via various Web feed programs. Blog syndication adheres to the same general principles by which newspaper columns and television programs are syndicated to diverse local and national media outlets.

Web syndication technology began with Apple Computer's Meta Content Framework in 1995. Studio One Networks designed the first syndicated programs intended for large-scale content distribution for American Honda in 1999. Since that time, millions of online publishers have disseminated Web site content through standard format news feeds. Political blogs quickly adopted this social media technology and now routinely share links and blog content via a diverse number of Web feed syndications.

Blog syndication is one of the principal means by which a blogger may increase Web traffic, expand viewership, and network with other Web sites. A blog site creates original material and subsequently distributes such content through Web feeds to various subscribers or secondary Web sites. While the content of most blog syndication is text based, bloggers also utilize video formats, podcasts (utilizing the success of developments such as Apple's iTunes platform), and other innovations in social media technology. Blog syndication amplifies previous modes of content distribution, including e-mail lists and self-promotion via social network sites such as Facebook.

Most blogs allow users to subscribe to a Web or syndication feed that distributes syndicated material, such as blog posts, directly to users via various digital media options, known as feed or news readers. Multiple Web feeds may be aggregated on a single reader, or aggregator, which allows users to customize their news content. Content syndication modes include Really Simple Syndication (RSS) or Atom feeds and full-content feeds. RSS feeds display headlines and, occasionally, summaries of the original post on the user's feed reader. Full-content feeds provide content as it appeared on the original site.

Alternatively, blogs may syndicate original materials to secondary, aggregator Web sites. The original post thereby reaches a wider audience, and the original Web site or blogger enjoys the prestige of content syndication on one or more aggregator Web sites. The receiving Web sites generate greater traffic and interest by aggregating noteworthy and immediate material from notable writers and sites. Blogs may permit limited use of their original Web content to specified syndication partners or may allow unrestricted syndication to any interested aggregator Web site.

The vast majority of bloggers receive no compensation through the syndication of their content, though broadened exposure and increased traffic may generate income by way of paid advertising on the blog site. Bloggers may also receive a portion of the revenue generated by paid advertisements on a receiving site, usually based upon the Web traffic attributable to their syndicated posts. Finally, bloggers may be awarded royalties based upon end-user access via licensed syndicators, though licensed blog syndication is most often limited to private, closed systems, such as university libraries, rather than publicly available aggregator sites.

Content syndication is widely employed by aggregator sites as a strategic method of link

building with regard to search engine optimization. The content of syndicated material includes embedded links that direct search engine algorithms to the Web sites to which the content is linked. As such, an aggregating Web site and, to a lesser degree, the original Web site may significantly increase their respective rankings in relevant search engine results through the dissemination and aggregation of content with related anchor terms.

Of course, as aggregator sites collect more content-related material, search engine results will inevitably link to the aggregator site before, or instead of, the original Web site on which the content first appeared. This substitution and elevation of an aggregator site over the original blog site is often cited as an unfortunate consequence of the blog syndication method, but the benefits of wider recognition and exposure have motivated the rapid expansion of the blog syndication model.

With the prolific multiplication of politically oriented blogs and, subsequently, aggregator sites, the blogosphere has been effectively saturated with political news and commentary. Blog syndication may be regarded as attempting to remedy this problem by selectively identifying the most popular and useful materials from diverse Web sites and reproducing such content on a single Web site. However, blog syndication also aggravates the problem by creating even more political Web sites and multiplying online content through the reproduction of previously published materials.

Justin Paulette
Independent Scholar

See Also: Aggregation; Blogs; Blogs, Role in Politics; Information Aggregation; RSS Feeds.

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Blogger Rights and Responsibilities

Blogger rights and responsibilities are outlined in Section 230 of Title 47 of the U.S. Code as well as case law shaping its interpretation. Part of the 1996 Communication Decency Act, the legislation called Section 230 was titled "Protection for private blocking and screening of offensive material." For the estimated 31 million U.S. bloggers as of mid-2012 (according to BlogWorld.com), this has become a safe haven with protection from legal action against others' comments made on a blog, keeping bloggers from being labeled as publishers. Some believe Section 230 gives bloggers more rights than Congress originally intended and shows how Internet publishers are treated differently than publishers in print, TV, and radio.

Content of Section 230

Initially viewed as a necessary step to ensure access to Internet content while also offering protection to Internet service providers (ISPs), Section 230 offered protection against lawsuits for hosting potentially illegal content on Web sites, servers, and more. Since 1997, Section 230 was expanded to include lawsuit protection from Web sites hosting forums, wikis, blogs, ratings Web sites, and others.

The actual text of the section, only about 850 words, sets policy protections for "Good Samaritan" blocking, and outlines definitions of information content providers and access software providers. In its findings, the section states that the Internet and interactive computer services, like those provided by blogs, "offer a forum for a true diversity of political discourse" and "Americans are relying on interactive media for a variety of political, educational, cultural, and entertainment services." The policy statement has messages about promoting the continued development of interactive services, the value of the competitive free market, user control over the information he or she receives, and enforcement of criminal laws of obscenity, stalking, and harassment.

The Good Samaritan passage says that "no provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information

content provider." The second part of this item says no provider is liable for a good faith effort to restrict access to obscene or lewd material even if material is constitutionally protected. A provider is not liable for providing means for users to restrict such materials.

Under the section, interactive computer services must notify users of parental control protections available. Section 230 has no effect on criminal law, intellectual property law, and the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986, and should not prevent state law enforcement.

Definition of Terms

Definitions provided in Section 230 affect bloggers. Interactive computer service refers to "any information service, system, or access software provider that provides or enables computer access by multiple users to a computer server, including specifically a service or system that provides access to the Internet. . ." This includes blogs, forums, and listservs. Information content provider means "any person or entity that is responsible, in whole or in part, for the creation or development of information provided through the Internet or any other interactive computer service." An access software provider simply provides the software and tools to filter, allow/disallow content, digest content, transmit, organize, or translate. A complete list of tools is included in Section 230.

Individuals Who Post Content

The ISO or Web site owner is not liable for the third-party content on his or her Web sites, but the individual who posted the content is liable for the information contributed to the Web site. These individuals can be sued for the content they contributed, whether they posted the information under their actual name (or username) or if they posted the information anonymously, according to George Pike's article in *Information Today*. Unfortunately, some ISOs are not willing to reveal the identity of anonymous posters. Their unwillingness to contribute this information might be due to potentially negative implications arising from their Web site membership. Some lawyers in anonymous poster cases have resorted to "John Doe" lawsuits (similar to anonymous music download lawsuits). Even if the individual who posted the content is identified, the likelihood of obtaining financial damages from an individual who does not have funds (judgment proof) is not promising.

Editing Content

For a blogger to exercise traditional editorial functions, like deciding which guest blogs to publish, or which comments to delete or trim, is typically immunized under Section 230. The protected functions would be those an editor would typically perform on user-submitted content. The Digital Media Law Project from the Berkman Center for Internet and Society offers guidelines to bloggers for acceptable editorial functions that would be covered by Section 230 protections: screening objectionable content, removing/editing/correcting content, selecting content for publication, paying a freelance writer for content (if the payee is an employee of the blog, Section 230 may not cover the situation—state agency laws apply), providing neutral forms or drop-down menus for content submission, or leaving defamatory third-party content on the site after being notified of its nature. Some limitations in the immunity could come when editing in the following manner: materially altering the third-party content's meaning, using drop-down menus or forms to create discriminatory content, or not upholding a promise to remove certain material (which could become a promissory estoppel issue).

Case Law

Section 230 has been tested in the courts, and between 1996 and 2009, 184 cases used the section, according to David Ardia. The majority of the cases are those with defamation-based claims, but cases also include invasion of privacy, misappropriation, and negligence. In *DiMeo v. Max*, the court found the defendant not liable for comments left by third parties on a blog. An often-cited case is *Fair Housing Council of San Fernando Valley v. Roommates.com, LLC*. In the case, a fair housing organization sued Roommates.com for violations of the Fair Housing Act. A three-judge panel found that Roommates.com was not protected by Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act because it asked questions of participants that were then used to craft member profiles. It was protected in the "additional comments" portion of its site because particular information was not

sought. The questions or prompts were a distinguishing point for the judges, and later the Ninth Circuit. Content that users provide is protected by Section 230, but case law is carving out distinctions like whether or not how the site categorizes and channels information to others is immune. For example, *Carafano v. Metrosplash.com, Inc.* contradicted the *Roommates.com* case saying the site operator receives full immunity regardless of the selection process, or editing.

Bloggers and Politics

Bloggers are both users and providers of interactive computer services. By posting content, they are users, and by offering mechanisms for commenting, they are interactive computer services. Bloggers do not have to post user guidelines or standards for what is acceptable on their blog, but it is generally recommended that they do so. When editing or curating posts, the blogger can make good faith edits. A New York court ruled in favor of a blogger who took an inflammatory comment by another and moved it to center stage as a blog post with a picture and headline. The decision was split, with the dissenters making a case for the amount of edits and treatment the post received.

Developments in 2006 brought concern for bloggers with the Federal Election Commission's eye on online communication and political advertising. The Electronic Frontier Foundation reported the final decision was that bloggers could still promote a candidate, or criticize one without compensation, without new restraints. Bloggers paid to promote a candidate, in a nonadvertisement form, could do so and were not required to disclose the payment.

Examples of Political Blogs

Political blogs might be run by a candidate, a campaign, a political action committee, a political party, or nonaligned groups (faith-based, gender-specific, or socioeconomic groups). A growing number of blogs focus on politics from the local, regional, and state levels. Some of these individual and organizational blogs include Daily Kos, Michelle Malkin's blog, and Daily Dish. Other blogs are created and maintained by certain political parties; examples include Democrats.org and GOP.com.

Daily Kos, Michelle Malkin, and Daily Dish have been studied in academic journals because of their reach and impact. Daily Kos is a blog from the liberal side of the political spectrum. Founded in 2002, it boasts 2.5 million unique visitors per month and claims to be a news organization, community, and activist hub all in one. It provides a wiki with frequently asked questions that helps set the tone and standards for the blog. One such standard is how the blog handles the "outing" of an anonymous viewer—it is a bannable offense. In response to backlash on a Chevron ad on the Daily Kos blog, founder Markos Moulitsas Zúniga created an advertising policy and concluded that running an advertisement does not imply endorsement. The site also has rules for participation in creating diaries and comments in threaded discussions, as well as handling trolls.

Michelle Malkin's blog represents conservatives. She is a syndicated columnist, author, and Fox News Channel contributor. She uses a disclosure statement and terms-of-use page to cover the basics of who can comment and how comments will be handled. As she states, "I welcome your participation, but if you abuse my hospitality, don't be surprised if you are shown the door." She asks that participants register, and be at least 18 years old. Andrew Sullivan's independent Daily Dish was formed in 2000, and purports to be one of the first political blogs. Its site statistics report an average of more than 113,000 visits a day. Sullivan's site contains a privacy policy, with a special note about Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) compliance.

RedState.com provides an exhaustive list of posting policies, with blog-specific terms like "sockpuppeting," using multiple accounts to post and thereby providing deceptive extra support for one's own position. The site even lists theories that will not be accepted by users—like a call for the overthrow of the U.S. government. In contrast, two political party blogs, Democrats.org and GOP.com, simply post terms and conditions along with a privacy policy. In local-level politics, a Cincinnati set of bloggers at CincyVoices actually references Section 230 on their blog, stating that guest bloggers, readers' comments, tips via e-mail, and Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds or other sources are considered another content provider.

Senator Strom Thurmond with Army Chief of Staff Eric Shinseki at his 100th birthday celebration on December 4, 2002. Bloggers drew attention to Trent Lott's comments at the event, in an early example of the power of political bloggers.

Implications of Political Blogs

Without the restrictions of a traditional news outlet, bloggers are offering firsthand information to the public as an alternative source of news. Even in 2002, political bloggers were exerting their power. When the mainstream media passed over the story of the racist comment made by Trent Lott at the 100th birthday party for Strom Thurmond, bloggers reported, and kept reporting, until they got the legacy media's attention. Political bloggers are important actors in the agenda-setting process, according to Kevin Wallsten's 2007 research. Mitzi Lewis found a strong relationship between blog reading and online political discussion and participation during the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign. She concludes that the potential effects of blog reading could impact the political landscape of the world.

In political discourse, Section 230 aims to open the marketplace of ideas for an exchange of varying opinions. The aim is a blogosphere with information about candidates, platforms, and forums for questions, debate, and discussion. Section 230 gives bloggers room to be an open forum for discussion, but with great freedom comes great responsibility. Journalists acting as bloggers can lean on the Society of Professional Journalists' code of ethics for guidance, but bloggers are largely operating outside of traditional journalism.

Political bloggers can self-regulate standards of responsibilities like quickly correcting inaccuracies, properly citing sources, adhering to copyright laws, and disclosing conflicts of interest or paid endorsements. For their own content, becoming an information content provider, they must realize their words will not be immune under Section 230.

David Ardia writes:

> If Congress considers modifying section 230, it should keep in mind that the rich informational ecosystem we know today is not simply a product of the decentralized, open architecture of the Internet. It is a function of the "breathing space" Internet intermediaries currently have under the law to facilitate speech that may be injurious or illegal.

Sarah Maben
Jennifer Edwards
Tarleton State University

See Also: Berkman Center; Blogs; Blogs, Role in Politics; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security; Professional Bloggers.

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Blogosphere

The *blogosphere* is a coined term describing both the network of aggregate blogs in cyberspace and the online community created by their interconnection. Through its dynamic linking of people, political parties, organizations, content, and concepts, the blogosphere has become a much-studied space, both representing and arguably facilitating an era of open source politics. Vigorous debate continues between utopian and dystopian views over the blogosphere's potential and actual impact on politics.

In considering the blogosphere's impact on the political domain, many theorists eschew the popular technodeterminist position that the movement arises from and is determined by the technology itself, stating that the growing phenomenon of blogging emerges from currents in culture over generations.

Aaron Barlow argues that rise of the blogosphere has been a slow march then sudden explosion that stemmed from increasing discontent with the noninclusivity of politics and media and an era of depressed civic engagement. The emphasis on the role of the press as an observer of society led to the disenfranchisement of people from direct participation in the spheres of media and politics, limiting their means and outlets of free expression. The traditional media incorporated public opinion through the use of experts, held as representative of the people, although they enter the political domain to further their own agenda, meaning that the true voice of the people was curtailed from the public sphere.

The pluralization of sources of information and opinion through the blogosphere has enabled the true democratization of knowledge, Megan Boler states, although it coexists simultaneously with the blatant falsification of information by government and corporate powers. Whether and how blogs then mobilize civic engagement and affect the media and political landscape becomes a key question.

While many theorists celebrate the political influence of the blogosphere, others disagree on its ability to transform politics and increase civic engagement. Some argue that, while a triumphalist narrative has been written of the blogosphere, most blogs in fact have little political influence, stating that the collective fact-checking of Dan Rather's erroneous coverage of a key news story in the 2004 U.S. presidential race (known as Memogate) serves as one of the few exceptions to the norm of blog flops.

Theorists also argue whether links between blogs—or the lack of—are evidence of isolation or of interconnection among bloggers. Bloggers commonly link solely to their own self-selected community of those sharing their political views, evidencing partisanship and curtailing the potential for expanded interaction and political thought. Theorists comment that political bloggers express emancipation as well as cynicism; however, Antoinette Pole and Matthew Kerbel argue that real political influence and civic engagement is achieved through the blogosphere.

In maps of the blogosphere (visualized through the mapping of the static or dynamic hyperlinks that connect blogs), clusters reveal distinct subgroups and niche interests (such as topics of law, military, and security dominating political communities). Political discourse is the most densely linked network neighborhood, above other niche topics such as fashion and sports. The influence of A-list bloggers also can be identified by their

core positions at the center of the network, and a distinct right and left split in the blogosphere is apparent, clearly evidencing the liberal and conservative networks of politics.

Matthew Kerbel states that the loosely affiliated community of bloggers collectively calling themselves the progressive netroots has the greatest potential to build political advantage through the decentralized nature of the blogosphere and their ability to engage real and virtual communities of activists. Others, however, argue that the expansion of channels of the social Web and speed of change in this constantly adapting digital landscape mean mapping and predicting the future of the blogosphere is largely futile.

In examining the political clout of blog networks, issues of how readers assess credibility and independence become paramount. Theorists examine how the blogosphere competes with traditional media as an informed source of public knowledge and belief and assess whether old-style journalism is now threatened by the blogosphere, about to become obsolete or to be replaced by a new business model.

Aside from ranking the top topics on the blogosphere (which include the Arab Spring), studies have shown that journalistic institutions are still the central and dominant influencers of the media ecosystem, with a majority of blogs linked not to other blogs (such as those by independent bloggers) but to traditional or legacy media. Numerous successful bloggers and sites (such as the *Huffington Post,* ranked the top political blog site) have been acquired by the traditional media.

Blogs have emerged as prime real estate for advertisements, causing the blogosphere to be challenged and influenced by commodification and commercialization and proving it to be ironically similar to the legacy media it has allegedly revolutionized. While bloggers have claimed the role of watchdog over both political and media powers, the distinction between the traditional media and the blogosphere is now blurred.

The rising numbers of hate blogs and Arab Spring blogs have also fueled debates about censorship, surveillance, and freedom of expression. Although the blogosphere emerged from efforts to circumvent the gatekeepers of the past, new gates and gatekeepers have also emerged (such as China's Great Firewall), which limit both content and access to the blogosphere itself and in turn impact the blogosphere when blogs are moved to escape their control.

While some theorists may argue that the blogosphere arose from rebellion against the controls of political forces and the traditional media, researchers now examine whether the control of the blogosphere is shifting from—or to—the domain of media empires and governments and its effect on the both the realm of the Internet and of politics.

Wendy Dent
University of Southern California

See Also: Alpha Blogger; Blogs; Cynicism, Political; Networks, Political; Professional Bloggers; Social Worlds; Vlogging.

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Blogs

Blogs (short for Weblogs, personal logs on the World Wide Web) are online personal diaries, edited in reverse chronological order, usually authored by a single individual. They have strongly contributed to enhancing media pluralism and cultural diversity worldwide. Bloggers deprived of liberty or life for their online communications, supported by human rights organizations, are considered defenders of free speech in the modern information society, a role once played solely by print and radio or television journalists. Although international law provides

for numerous guidelines on the contents and limits of the right to free expression, their practical application to media publishing is traditionally set within acts of national law. Therefore, setting the limits of free speech for online publications, including blogs, is one of the biggest challenges to contemporary human rights law. Weblogs also provoke important questions on the scope and scale of intermediary liability and project shifts in the economic model of the global media market, adding to the change in the professional situation of journalists and the advertising market. Blogs hold an increasing commercial value with the introduction of commercial blogs, or splogs, as new methods for online advertising.

Blogs Versus Traditional Media

Although blogs are sometimes referred to as journals or media outlets, their legal status remains unclear as numerous significant differences between blogs and traditional media may be depicted. The crucial difference lies in the organization of traditional media outlets when compared with blogs. The former are run by editorial boards, editors-in-chief, and publishers who all aim to provide high-quality publications significantly more professional than amateur, nonmedia publications. Traditionally, media law distributes responsibility for published content among different actors: authors, editors, and publishers. This feature usually may not be identified with blogs, where an individual usually embodies all the editorial functions, and no severability of rights and obligations may be identified. Therefore, uniformly granting all bloggers status equal to media journalists is questionable. Simultaneously qualifying blogs as media would subject their editors to any and all national and international media law regulations. A positive assertion of blogs as media would result in laying particular professional due diligence obligations and respectively higher-quality and professional standards upon their authors, ones usually required from professional journalists by law.

While it is clear that not all blogs and bloggers aspire to be professional bloggers, there exist no criteria for telling apart bloggers who wish to perform as journalists and those who do not. Packard notes that the increased popularity of social media and microblogs, such as Twitter, blurs the distinction between a professional journalist and a blogger even more.

Blogs have strongly added to the promotion of free expression by media professionals and private individuals alike. Unlike traditional press, however, blogs offer little background information on the status of their authors and publishers. Blogs often lack information on the legal status of the entities responsible for blog content or the locations of their publishers, which in turn brings doubt on their objectivity, trustworthiness, source protection, reliance on a uniform system of ethical principles, and assignment of civil liability, in particular as some bloggers may attempt to give false personal data to avoid liability for unjust criticism.

The European Parliament Culture Committee in 2007 expressed worry that bloggers may considerably pollute cyberspace with spam, misinformation, and malicious content. In order to avoid that risk, more transparency in the blogosphere was called for. The committee proposed a voluntary system of labeling blogs according to their authors' preferred status. Bloggers who wished to perform the journalistic profession online would be requested to place a suitable disclaimer on their blogs, which would result in them obtaining the rights and obligations of a professional journalist, including, for example, the right to protect journalistic sources from judicial enquiry or the obligation to show professional diligence in preparing online publications. The proposal met with much criticism as an attempted attack upon free speech online and was never adopted. Currently, no distinction between media and blogs can be made.

Legal Status

The confusion on the legal status of blogs brings numerous questions on the allowed and justifiable limits of free speech for blogs and bloggers permitted by national laws and international human rights law. Due to the transboundary character of blogs' natural environment that is the cyberspace, the issue of media freedom, thus far left to national regulations, became the subject of an international debate. Although international law provides for numerous guidelines on the contents and limits of the right to free expression, its practical application to media publishing is traditionally set in acts of national laws.

The 1947 Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) in its Article 19 provides for the basic framework of free speech as a human right. Repeated in numerous international law treaties, the internationally recognized human right to free speech allows each individual to concurrently distribute, receive, and share information. Any limitation to any of those three complimentary rights must be foreseen in an act of law and applied only in exceptional, individual instances. Grounds for limiting the individual right to free speech broadly set in Article 29 UDHR include securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others as well as meeting the just requirements of morality, public order, and the general welfare in a democratic society. Although the international community has been working for more than 60 years on defining the universally recognized particulars of those terms, no practical and universally applicable consensus may be found. National laws on defamation or lese majesty strongly differ, although all are based on the consensus expressed in Article 19 UDHR.

This disaccord on the human rights standard of free speech proves particularly difficult when faced with the transboundary characteristic of blogs. State jurisdiction, that is state competence to exercise its laws, may be recalled on the basis of availability of illegal content within state territory as the so-called effective jurisdiction. Bloggers residing abroad may therefore be considered liable or criminally responsible for their online publications in foreign states, and those states may exercise their laws over foreign defendants, as confirmed by the 2011 case of Joe Gordon, an American citizen sentenced to prison without parole in Thailand for defaming the Thai king on his blog, operated from his U.S. home. Gordon was apprehended and charged upon his arrival to Thailand for a holiday.

This lack of legal certainty among bloggers has provoked them to identify international, community-based ethical values, set within numerous blogging codes of ethics, all sharing a similar set of basic principles. While relying on the notoriously recognized principles of netiquette, blogging codes of ethics usually include the obligation to provide transparency of sources and resources, accountability for the information published, as well as commitment toward the freedom of expression and factual truth. Compliance with general copyright rules, such as a prohibition of plagiarism and obligatory quotations of sources, as well as an obligation to minimize possible harm caused by a publication are also often named. Deriving from the developments in journalism ethics, blogging ethics call for the accuracy of interpretation, without any misinterpretations of the facts, including disclosure of any possible photo editing or text clipping. Bloggers aim to seek the truth, claim editorial independence, and hold accountability and transparency vis-à-vis their readers. The development of journalism ethics proved it impossible to adopt a single, universally applicable set of detailed ethical rules. Ethics of difference, or ecumenical ethics, reflect this inefficiency by allowing journalists to act differently in particular situations when respecting the same principles. Such flexibility is necessary to allow different styles of journalism and the meeting of different agendas set for different media. It therefore also finds its way into social media, including blogging.

Rights and Responsibilities

Blogs raise uncertainty when it comes to individual responsibility for online content. Identifying an author of a blog post might be practically impossible and, unlike with traditional media, such as printed press, radio, or television, an editor-in-chief or an editorial board are rarely named within a blogging Web site. Anonymous blogs or blog posts, therefore, evoke the question of the right to anonymous speech online. The right to anonymous speech does not originate directly from Article 19 UDHR and may not be recognized as an imminent element of the right to free speech in the light of the contemporary international human rights doctrine and jurisprudence. There is no universal consensus that such a right is enforceable, and a clear line may be drawn between the U.S. acknowledgment of such a right and the European or Asian reluctance to recognize it within national systems of law. Therefore, no universal right to anonymity for bloggers may be identified, making the question of online content liability and responsibility a pressing issue. Anonymity of the authors of press publications provided for in some acts of national laws is always safeguarded with the subsidiary liability

of the editor-in-chief or the publisher, who both hold authority to decide upon the actual publication of anonymous information and hold responsibility for the overall content of the media they manage. Regarding the nature of blogs, where the author usually embodies all editorial functions, no similar mechanism may be identified.

The scheme for online content regulation recognized in most democratic countries is the so-called notice-and-takedown procedure. Originating from the 1998 U.S. Digital Millennium Copyright Act and reflected in the 2000 European Union (EU) Electronic Commerce Directive, the notice-and-takedown procedure sets Internet service providers free from the responsibility or liability for content they render access to as long as they have no knowledge of the infringing character of such content. Upon receiving a proper notification of its infringing character, service providers are obliged to temporarily or permanently disable access to such content. The access is disabled temporarily without undue delay upon the receipt of a valid notification, and it is disabled permanently after receiving a copy of a court order confirming its infringing character. Access to the content in question may be re-enabled as a result of a court decision, finding that no law infringement was caused through its publication.

In a majority of countries worldwide, service providers hold no liability for the content they enable access to as long as they have no knowledge of its infringing character. Therefore, it is bloggers in particular and content providers in general who are obliged to assure the legality of uploaded content. The situation is different in countries that exercise Internet filtering policies, such as China and the majority of Muslim countries, where information controls are based on state security and religious reasons. There, the burden of liability for online content rests jointly upon the content provider and the service provider.

Copyright Issues

The questionable legal status of Weblogs raises numerous copyright issues. An original copyright issue is raised by "ghost blogging." The term describes a practice covering blogs written by a ghost author, who is not credited for his or her works—which are credited to another person. Ghost blogging resembles a practice common in the U.S. political life, where presidential speeches are often written by unaccredited ghostwriters. While in the United States, political context ghostwriting is considered a legitimate exception from copyright protection, in civil law countries it represents a violation of the author's moral rights, such as the right to have one's name mentioned as the author of a work published or used. Moral rights may not be transferred, and their breach always results in liability toward the author. Therefore, ghost blogging ought to be considered ethically foul and illegal in numerous national jurisdictions.

While generally blogs are no different than any other Web site and bloggers are obliged to adhere to copyright laws, they constitute a vast resource of user-generated content, which once considered media resources may be subject to certain copyright exclusions. Article 2 of the 1886 Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works in its 1979 Paris version provides no copyright protection for "news of the day" and "miscellaneous facts" as long as they have the character of "mere items of press information." This same provision is repeated in the majority of national copyright acts, just to mention Article 3 of the Korean Copyright law where "reports on current events" and "miscellaneous reports published in newspapers and magazines" are considered nonworks and offered no copyright protection. A similar provision can be found in Copyright Law for Lichtenstein, which in Article 25 repeats the exact wording of the Berne Convention. Mexican copyright law excludes from protection "articles on current events," following the stipulation of its Article 10, paragraph 2.

Should blogs be considered press, their particular contents may be considered "mere press information" in the meaning of the Berne Convention and suffer exclusion from copyright protection. This exception relates solely to short and not-too-complex or refined pieces of information, lacking traits of individual and creative character. It may be argued that the nature of microblogs makes them a rich supply of "mere press information" whose authors hold no copyright to the messages they publish.

The Berne Convention, binding upon 166 states worldwide, in its Article 10 makes another exception from full copyright protection. Although news items generally are considered copyrighted

works, with the exception of mere press information mentioned above, the Berne Convention permits the quotations from newspaper articles and periodicals. They may be quoted in the form of press summaries in a manner compatible with fair practice and in an extent that does not exceed that justified by the purpose. Details of this form of permitted use of press information are set within acts of national laws, although such use must always be accompanied by a mention of the source and of the name of the author. French copyright law, next to quotations for informatory purposes, allows for making press summaries (*revue de presse*). This term is often defined broadly as to include compilations of news from different newspapers. Some scholars argue, however, that such broad interpretation is contrary to the meaning of the term, which ought to cover only parts of such articles. The wider definition allows news aggregation on large scale. Spanish law also allows press summaries when used as quotations, although their permitted scope is much more narrowly defined. There reviews of press are considered subject to quotation rights. They may only be used when serving analysis, comment, or critical assessment. In the case of using a press item for a press summary, the author's right to receive remuneration for such use is rarely granted and, if so, in a limited scope, although the authors retain their full personal rights, and so a mention of the source and of the name of the author must appear on such a press summary. Such forms of nonmonetary gratification are, however, often considered sufficient by community journalists and bloggers, which in turn strongly influence the traditional media labor market.

Employment

The sudden boom of user-generated content on social media platforms evoked by the rise in popularity of blogs and moblogging (mobile blogging) in particular has caused a significant shift in the employment scheme on the media market. The place of professional journalists, often working under employment contracts, is being taken by amateur bloggers, willing to provide labor without remuneration, considering the professional experience and reputation gained as sufficient reward. The power of the blogosphere is reflected in situations where a news item initiated in the social media is repeated by mainstream media in what is called a blog storm. Individual A-list bloggers enjoy authority and user attention far greater than some mainstream media outlets. Because there are no professional management organizations reflecting the transnational character of the global electronic media, the assertion of applicable laws and a nominal fee for the use of user-generated content remain troublesome.

Bloggers often publish copyrighted works, but unlike traditional media, they are either less persistent when claiming fees for the use of their contents or are willing to offer their works for free. Blogs have therefore added to a shift in the contemporary market mechanisms, representing what has been described as peer production. This is a concept at the foundation of a new economic model, described as a hybrid economy. The hybrid economy is the economic model well suited to satisfy the demands of global online media, also when it comes to the production and management of user-generated content. It is a mix of elements from two conventional, yet thus far dichotomous, economic models: the commercial economy, in which value of goods or services is expressed in money, and the sharing economy, invaluable in money, in which love or friendship serve as the prime examples.

This categorization was harshly disrupted by the rise in popularity of user-generated content, available online for free, usually under creative commons licenses. Peer-production may usher in a new chapter in social evolution, one that has been called the "network information economy." The term is meant to cover the creation of new resources not quantifiable in currency. Peer production may soon rule world markets. Blogs represent peer production in the media market. Therefore, the media labor market, next to the entertainment industry, may be named an economy sector revolutionized by the dynamic shift in content production and sharing schemes. The value of online content is not always expressed with money, making the traditional employment contract forever less common in the media labor market.

This economic shift in media is reflected in the fact that blogs have contributed to employment uncertainty among journalists. Many of them feel obliged to use social media as a facet of their work. On the other hand, the 2012 Eurobarometer

report on Journalists and Social Media offers an insight into a recent positive tendency in the media market caused by blogs and other social media. It states that social media positively contributed to the employment in media in Ireland because Google and Facebook have located their European headquarters there, while Twitter has announced plans to do so as well.

Commercial Potential

Companies often review the contents of social media sites, including blogs seeking opinions about their products, while advertisers distribute promotional materials through online communities. The microblogging site Twitter serves as a popular source for many companies to investigate consumer concerns about their products and services. Although often published with little or no objective of financial gain, in an effort to exercise free speech, blogs hold much commercial potential.

Next to social networks, blogs are considered the crucial resource for viral marketing—promotional information published online often under the pretense of a personal view. A recommendation given by a blogger to a certain good or service intended to influence the readers to buy the item or service is considered a commercial activity when the blogger provides such a recommendation in return for personal gain, pecuniary or not. Should they not disclose the profit-seeking motivation, they may face responsibility for misleading or covert advertising, which is recognized among unfair trade practices in numerous national legal systems.

This covert marketing method is the official business practice for flogs (fake blogs, flack blogs). These are blogs that appear to present plausible, objective information while being created by a company or organization for marketing or political purposes. They are aimed at setting off viral marketing and fake grassroots campaigns. For example, the EU Directive 2005/29/EC of May 11, 2005, concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market in Article 7, paragraph 2, refers to misleading omissions and names as such a commercial practice if, in its factual context, its publisher hides or provides in an unclear, unintelligible, ambiguous, or untimely manner any information that the average consumer needs to make an informed transactional decision. Should such an omission cause or was likely to cause the average consumer to make a transactional decision that he would not have made otherwise, such a publisher will face legal liability. An unfair advertising practice also takes place when the publisher fails to identify the commercial intent of the commercial practice, if it is not apparent from its context. Therefore, any forms of so-called grassroots marketing may fall under the definition of unfair business commercial practice, if the actual motivation of the blogger is not disclosed and the information is aimed at causing the reader to decide upon a purchase of goods or services.

Some blogs openly serve as advertising spaces. Blogs for profit and commercial blogs are emerging categories of for-profit enterprises organized seemingly as individual online diaries.

They are often organized through blog syndication. A controversial category of commercial blogs are spam blogs (splogs), which require users to follow embedded links available on the Web site. They are aimed at promoting affiliate sites and artificially increasing online traffic. In order to achieve that aim, splogs attempt to attract Web crawlers, that is, programs searching the Web for information used in search engines, with huge amounts of key words included in their contents or metadata. They rarely contain original content but rather are a set of odd words or commercial messages promoting the affiliated Web site. A splogger gains revenue for every click originating from his or her site. Splogs are considered an unwanted commercial practice, resembling spam and therefore considered contrary to existing legal regulations, either ones dealing with spam directly or unfair commercial practices generally.

Joanna Kulesza
University of Lodz

See Also: Alpha Blogger; Blogger Rights and Responsibilities; Blogosphere; Blogs, Role in Politics; Citizen Journalism; Flog; Microblogging; Splogs; User-Generated Content; Viral Marketing.

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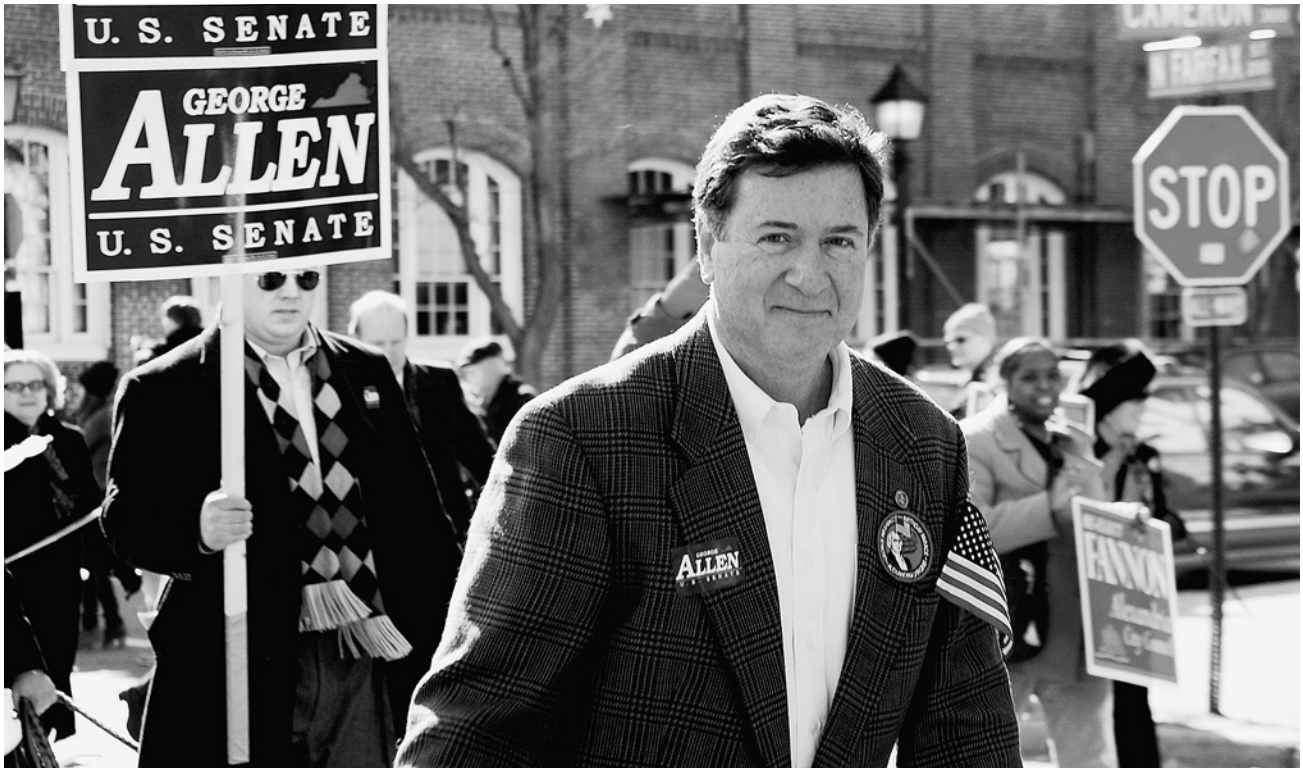
Blogs, Role in Politics

Political blogs play a variety of roles in contemporary politics. Blogs adopt a variety of forms—from low-traffic, pseudonymous, single-author sites to heavily trafficked, multiauthor sites featuring blog content by political elites. Given the wide variation in blog architecture and niches, it is perhaps unsurprising that the role of blogs in politics is both complicated and variable. Some blogs serve as virtual megaphones for individual citizens to voice their political opinions. Other blogs are the functional equivalent of advocacy groups, mobilizing large communities of interest to take collective action around elections and policy issues. Still others act to support existing institutions—both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party include blogs on their Web sites, as do most major news organizations. Then, there are blogs like the *Huffington Post* and *Talking Points Memo*, which have grown into full-fledged news organizations in their own right, creating more competition within the news environment. In the early years of the blogosphere, blogs were primarily used to challenge and pressure the mainstream media, altering and occasionally driving news coverage. Today, the two overarching themes of blogs in politics are agenda seeking and partisan reinforcement.

In the early years of the blogosphere, there was far less variation in blog types. A few prominent early moments helped craft the shared understanding of the influential role that blogs can play in politics—an influence that was largely contained within the realm of media criticism. Four



George Allen appears in a parade in Alexandria, Virginia, on February 12, 2012, during his 2012 Senate campaign. Bloggers seized on Allen's 2006 use of the word macaca *during a videorecorded campaign appearance and used the incident to raise support for the campaign of his Democratic opponent, Jim Webb. Webb narrowly won that race, and Allen lost to another Democrat, Tim Kaine, in 2012.*

events in particular, spanning from 1998 through 2006, serve as particularly important reference points. First was the central role that Drudge Report.com played in the Bill Clinton–Monica Lewinsky reporting. Second was Senator Trent Lott's 2002 resignation as majority leader following blog-driven coverage of his controversial remarks about retired Senator Strom Thurmond. Third was the 2004 Rathergate episode, in which conservative bloggers uncovered evidence that documents relied upon by Dan Rather to make on-air accusations were likely forged. Fourth was Senator George Allen's 2006 Macaca Moment. All four of these episodes demonstrate the power of blogs in relation to the mainstream media.

Bill Clinton

In January 1998, the editors of *Newsweek* magazine were debating whether to go to press with the story of an affair between President Bill Clinton and his intern Monica Lewinsky. Matt Drudge published the story himself on his Web site, DrudgeReport.com, under the headline "Newsweek Kills Story on White House Intern." By publishing the story, Drudge forced the mainstream media's hand, setting off a series of events that culminated in impeachment proceedings for the 42nd president of the United States. The *Drudge Report* is technically a protoblog. Founded in 1997, the *Drudge Report* lacks several common blog features—most notably reverse-chronological postings and reader comments. Neither the blogger.com software (developed in 1999 by Pyra Labs) nor the terms *Weblog* or *blog* existed when Drudge launched his online tip sheet. Nonetheless, the early prominence of the *Drudge Report* sent strong signals to later bloggers about the potential power of the nascent medium.

Trent Lott

In December 2002, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott offered some remarks at the 100th birthday celebration of retired Senator Strom Thurmond. Thurmond had also run for president in 1948 on the prosegregation States Rights Democratic Party (Dixiecrat) ticket. Included in those remarks was the statement that "when Strom Thurmond ran for president we voted for him. . . . And if the rest of the country had followed our lead we wouldn't have had all these problems over these years, either." Though several reporters were present at the event, the majority leader's racially charged statement received no press coverage with the exception of a brief mention in ABC News's online column, *The Note*.

Prominent bloggers Joshua Micah Marshall, Duncan "Atrios" Black, and Glenn "Instapundit" Reynolds seized on this comment and brought together evidence of Lott's history of racially questionable commentary. Pressure from these bloggers influenced the mainstream media to pay more attention to the story, and the resultant cascade of media attention led to Lott's resignation as Senate majority leader two weeks later. The Trent Lott scandal is commonly credited as the first major political impact of the blogosphere, with John Podhoretz of the *New York Post* referring to it as "the Internet's First Scalp."

Dan Rather

In September 2004, Dan Rather reported on *60 Minutes* about a series of memos that raised apparent questions about President George W. Bush's service in the Texas Air National Guard during the Vietnam War. Bloggers at PowerLine-Blog and participants in the conservative FreeRepublic discussion board examined the documents and concluded that they were forgeries. The torrent of blog-based criticism led CBS to retract the story. Though it has never been conclusively proven whether the documents were indeed forgeries, the blogosphere-generated media backlash led to the forced resignation of several producers and likely hastened Rather's retirement. The Trent Lott episode and Rathergate are commonly referenced as a pair—one blog-based success on the left, the other on the right.

George Allen

Virginia Senator George Allen's August 2006 Macaca Moment demonstrated a different type of blog power. Allen was speaking at a campaign event in rural Virginia. A tracker from his Democratic opponent's campaign (Jim Webb) was attending the event with a video camera. Allen departed from his stump speech and referred to the Indian-American tracker as "macaca," asking the audience to "give a welcome to macaca over here. Welcome to America and the real world of Virginia." Macaca is an obscure Francophone

racial slur against Algerians. The Webb campaign released the video to the *Washington Post* before posting it to YouTube, and the *Post* covered it. The liberal blogosphere—particularly DailyKos.com—seized on the video and used it to continually raise questions about Allen's past racial comments. Progressive bloggers also used it to drive money and volunteers toward the Webb campaign, raising more than $300,000 for the Democratic challenger. Webb went on to win the election by approximately 9,000 votes, giving the Democratic Party a Senate majority.

The macaca episode indicates a break from the previous moments of blog power. While the Drudge, Lott, and Rather examples all featured blogs forcing the media to alter coverage, the Allen episode featured the *Washington Post* breaking the story. YouTube, which was founded in 2005, also played a prominent role in this episode. Rather than challenging media organizations, bloggers in 2006 made use of the latest social media tools to directly participate in politics. *DailyKos*'s community blog architecture supported mass fund-raising and volunteering by a nationwide community of interest. Here, one sees the role of blogs in politics expanding but also becoming more varied. While community blogs like *DailyKos* leveraged social media to directly contribute to a Senate race, other types of political blogs influenced politics in different ways. To understand the evolving role of blogs in politics, it then becomes necessary to understand the varying architectures employed within the blogosphere.

Types of Blogs

As political blogging gained influence, it also was adopted by wider segments of society and adapted toward a wider range of ends. Developments in the underlying software platforms also contributed to varying uses. Political blogs can be placed within a four-part (two-dimensional) typology to better understand their technological affordances. The first dimension is open-versus-closed architecture. Closed blogs have a single author or a select group of authors. They offer slim opportunities for the audience to contribute content. Open blogs offer a diary structure, which allows the audience to act as a participatory community, adding their own content to the site. The second dimension is institutional embeddedness. Early blogs were counterinstitutional, usually run under pseudonyms. Later blogs began to be hosted by legacy media and political institutions. A political blog hosted by NYTimes.com plays a different role in politics than a blog hosted by Blogspot.com.

This typology yields four distinct blog types. The first (closed and individual reputation) features independent blogs. All early blogs were independent blogs, and it is the standard format for the vast majority of blogs today. The second (open and individual) features community blogs. DailyKos.com is the primary example of a community blog. It is counterinstitutional in nature but acts as a gathering space for an online community of interest. Community blogs function as quasi-advocacy groups. The third quadrant (open and institutional reputation) features bridge blogs. These blogs combine the open architecture of a community site with the existing reputation of a large political or media operation. *ThinkProgress,* the Center for American Progress's blog, and *Huffington Post* both offer examples of this format. The fourth quadrant (closed and institutional) features institutional blogs. Institutional blogs such as Paul Krugman's blog at the *New York Times* augment traditional media and political institutions rather than challenging them. Most blogs adopt the individual format, but the most politically influential blogs tend toward the other three formats.

Partisan Echo Chambers

Noteworthy within the landscape of the (American) blogosphere is the absence of prominent centrist blogging hubs. The political landscape features high-traffic conservative blogs such as Hotair.com and biggovernment.com. It features high-traffic progressive blogs such as DailyKos.com and talkingpointsmemo.com. But, no equivalent centrist sites exist. This is indicative of the echo chamber phenomenon. As originally described by Cass Sunstein, the Internet allows citizens to seek out news and information that fit with their existing preferences and biases. Politically engaged citizens in America tend toward the poles—there is no robust, well-organized American center. While the political blogosphere has not caused political polarization in America, it has doubtless been a contributor. Whereas the

broadcast news era tended toward centrism, the postbroadcast, niche news era tends toward partisan reinforcement. The blogosphere is a major example of this echo chamber phenomenon.

Agenda Seeking

Political scientist Richard Davis has helpfully coined the term *agenda seekers* to describe the role of blogs in politics. This phrase helpfully places bloggers among other sets of actors who seek to influence the political and media agenda. The early influence of blogs in politics was as a challenge to existing media institutions. Then, those institutions adapted to the blogosphere. Today, blogs serve as a cluster of outlets for citizen engagement with politics. Bloggers, like other motivated segments of the public, seek to influence the agenda. The medium has become incorporated within the political system rather than overturning it. These agenda seekers play a variety of roles, depending both upon their goals and upon the varying blog architectures they employ. There is no singular role of blogs in politics. Rather, bloggers as agenda seekers use the medium to pursue multiple ends.

David A. Karpf
George Washington University

See Also: Alpha Blogger; Blogosphere; *MoveOn Effect, The*; *Myth of Digital Democracy*.

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Blood Sport Campaigns

On September 5, 2012, former President Bill Clinton addressed the Democratic National Convention. "Democracy does not have to be a blood sport," he said. "It can be an honorable enterprise that advances the public interest." Though Clinton's statement seems uncontroversial, that did not stop critics from pouncing, and thanks to social media, they were able to post their thoughts instantaneously, anonymously, and globally. On Yahoo! News, for example, within seconds a dozen comments were posted under Clinton's quotation. Sixty seconds after Mitt Romney uttered the phrase *binders full of women*, Web domains were purchased under that name. The "war room" of Clinton's era—releasing documents to the press corps within a day of a scandal breaking or appearing on television hours after allegations erupt—is extinct. Campaigns have reached a new blood sport apex through social media.

Definition

The term *blood sport* comes from the Roman arena games in which violent fighting was a public spectacle at the expense of gladiators, religious martyrs, animals, and out-of-favor politicians. The goal was not just winning the fight and inflicting pain in the process but providing entertainment that draws blood and other physical portrayals of brutality. Modern-day "blood sport" can refer to recreational activities including football, boxing, mixed martial arts, and hunting, plus uncivilized practices like

dogfighting and cockfighting as well as cultural forms like bullfighting. Usage of the metaphor encompasses ritualistic, fetishistic, and aesthetic components in which the code of behavior rises from competing gamesmanship to impaling prey. Defining blood sport campaigns seems similar to the U.S. Supreme Court's definition of pornographic obscenity—"you know it when you see it." The literature provides working definitions for negative attack campaigns and common criteria for lowering turnout, and while news reports and mainstream books frequently mention the notion of blood sport campaigns, the scholarly literature provides no conceptual definition.

As a point of departure, one can combine the elements of the concept drawn from John Barry, Thomas Hollihan, and communication scholars including William Benoit, who describe the character traits in campaign combat. Accordingly, one defines a blood sport campaign as a campaign that deploys tactics designed to cause a political actor personal humiliation based on issues irrelevant to policy governance.

Growth of Blood Sport Campaigns

Every campaign season seems to sustain complaints of history's most negative advertising. Candidates benefit from oppositional researchers unsealing their opponent's divorce records, interviewing laid-off employees, scouring old college records, and tracking private receptions on video—methods not encountered in the average job interview. The political world, however, entices people into "rigid dichotomies of good and bad, we and they, in-group and out-group," states Hans Eysenck. Research indicates that, as cyberdiscourse finds itself in a marketplace with little to no regulatory intermediary, political operations become more polarized.

In an article about campaign speech in a changing digital landscape, Jean Seaton predicted that, the more advanced that technology would become, the more politics would devolve into less civilized terrain. According to Seaton, "Politics, always with an element of the blood sport, moves towards the ethics and psychology of the Roman arena, with a huge armchair audience enjoying the fighting for its own sake, and even having the thrill of a remote participation in the outcome."

Components

For a campaign to sink to the level of attaining blood sport status, six elements amid this social media revolution are necessary: (1) There needs to be orchestration. Dirty laundry is not aired on clothespins accidentally. Even if an operative is acting alone, the deed attains purposeful cohesion, and others latch onto it with like-minded aims. (2) The aim is the destruction of the other side. Blood sport campaigns do not cast aspersions on the opponent with any goal less than the other side failing. (3) The orchestrated, destructive act is targeted toward revealing something salacious. The violation is not a commonplace misdeed. It captures the imagination, wrinkles the nose, or stimulates the senses. (4) A victim is involved. The victim does not have to be a puppy or a pregnant spouse; it can be a concept such as justice or a notion such as consistency. (5) The act has to be captured manifestly. Gary Hart did not unravel when *Miami Herald* reporters were camped outside his home reporting allegations of impropriety; he was sunk when a photo emerged of him with his mistress on his lap. Howard Dean's 2004 candidacy was not upended by a poor showing in the caucus but later that night when he screamed in a unidirectional microphone. George Allen's 2006 re-election in Virginia was not sunk by his support for the unpopular Iraq war but by the infamous macaca video on a blog. Finally (6), the item goes viral. Allegations grow legs across the Internet.

Anonymity

The above six components of blood sport campaigns, and their growth, also mentioned above, are engendered more easily through social media largely because of the ease with which they can be executed anonymously. The identities of the combatants are often shielded. It is not uncommon to hear of political campaign practitioners taking their poll-tested, professional, astroturf messages to the digital airwaves cloaked in grassroots-attired anonymity. Operatives routinely create fake Twitter accounts, build comment threads on blogs, establish Facebook wall feeds, and buy Web site domains, all with little risk of being traced.

Reform

A democracy that thrives on free speech and open airwaves faces a balancing act of permitting views

that can be offensive and vulgar while aspiring for constructive decency in unrepressed argumentation. The agenda-setting process of today can often hinge on popular hashtags and memes. Citizens have gatekeeper roles, occupying virtual space, with the freedom to elevate discourse through online opinion forums or troll free public spheres for exploitative purposes. Scholars, media practitioners, and researchers argue over how to handle this new frontier with its abuses.

One proposal is censorship of comment sections on news sites. More promising are efforts by Web-based, fact-checking organizations like PolitiFact.com and Factcheck.org that adjudicate claims in political campaigns, and online ombudsmen who monitor the content of their own news forums. In the high-choice media environment, content has a tendency to police itself. Salience can build democratically. Bogus news stories have a way of not generating page views, and fringe voices are diluted. Advancements in microblogging technology, while giving rise to citizens essentially running their own printing presses and television broadcast studios, ought not abolish civil discourse in politics and allow the blood sport tacticians to contort public opinion.

David E. Clementson
Michael J. Beatty
University of Miami

See Also: Astroturfing; Campaign Strategy; Candidate Image; Flog; Online Smear Campaigns; Rumors; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; Trending Topic; Truth Team; Twitter; Viral Marketing; YouTube.

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Boehner, John

John Andrew Boehner (pronounced Bay-ner) became the 61st speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in January 2011. The speaker is the presiding officer of the House, second in succession to the office of the president after the vice president and the leader of the majority party in the House. The speaker and the senate majority leader are the two most powerful members of Congress. Speaker Boehner has championed the adoption of social media technologies as an integral part of Republican House members' campaigning, constituent communication, and organization.

John Boehner was born into a working-class, Catholic family in the southwestern Ohio city of Reading in 1949. He swept floors in his family's bar at the age of eight. He was a linebacker on the high school football team. He enlisted in the Navy after high school but had to leave the service because of a bad back. He received an honorable separation. Boehner worked part-time jobs as a custodian to pay for college, graduating from Xavier University after seven years. He was the first college graduate in his family.

Career in Politics

Boehner entered public office as a member of the city council for Union, Ohio. In 1985, he was elected to the Ohio State House of Representatives. Five years later, he ran against the incumbent U.S. House representative from Boehner's district and won. To date, Boehner has held this seat for 20 years, winning re-election 10 times with little opposition in his heavily Republican district.

Boehner was one of the youngest members when he entered the House in 1991, but he became one of the Republican Party's rising stars. A member of the so-called Gang of Seven, Boehner and other first-term Republicans challenged corrupt practices such as the House Bank, a congressional office run by the sergeant-at-arms, who let Democratic and Republican House members overdraw their accounts without penalties for as many as eight months, and the House Post Office's money laundering scheme involving several prominent Democratic House leaders.

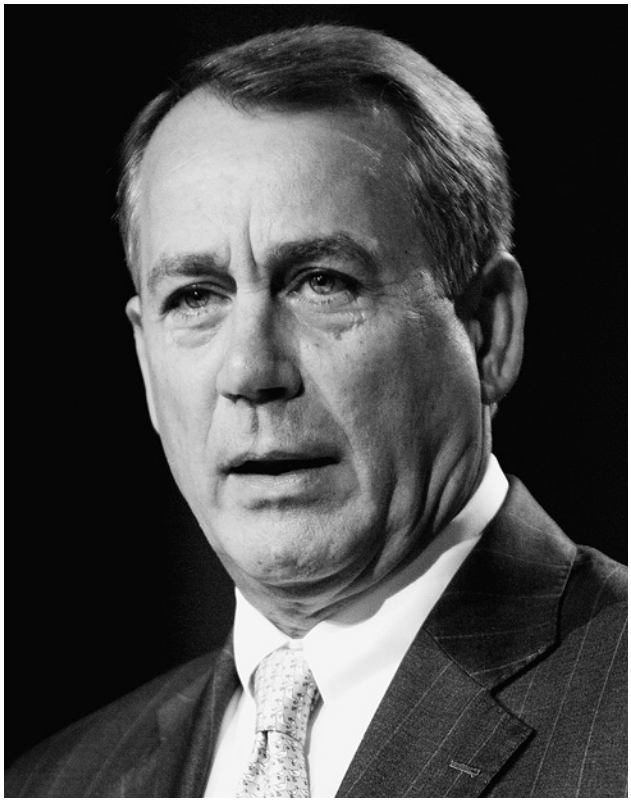
Boehner helped fellow Representative Newt Gingrich be elected the Republican House Minority Leader in 1994 and was also one of the

coauthors with the minority leader of the Contract With America. The scandals, the appeals of the contract promising reforms in Congress and in the nation's finances, and political changes outside of Congress resulted in a 1994 House election that gave Republicans majority control for the first time in 40 years.

Boehner has been an active prompter of important legislation since his election to the House. He coauthored the 2001 No Child Left Behind law with Democratic Senator Edward "Ted" Kennedy. He wrote and won passage of the 2006 Pension Protection Act, perhaps the most thorough revision of the pension system since the 1970s. He voted for the $700 billion Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) to bail out banks in 2008 but opposed President Obama's health care proposal, the president's decision to withdraw American troops from Iraq, and the Democratic Party's economic stimulus plan. Boehner's policy preferences tend to reflect his support of business and his suspicions of big-government regulation. He is also one of the House's most effective advocates of government-provided vouchers for attendance at private and religious schools.

Speaker Boehner has often challenged government efforts to regulate the Internet. In 2011, Boehner denounced Federal Communications Commission (FCC) network neutrality regulations as an attempt by the government to take over the Internet. He feared that the regulations, published in 2010 to expand to broadband providers the rules now governing phone companies, would be used to control Internet content and political views. The FCC regulations sought to insure that cable customers had equal access to all online services, content, and applications. They also sought to prohibit unreasonable network discrimination. It is unclear what "unreasonable" meant.

The House of Representatives passed the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act (CISPA) in April 2012, creating a process for private companies and the national government to share online information in order to thwart cyberattacks by foreign governments, criminals, and terrorists. President Obama threatened to veto the act, preferring a Senate version that granted the Homeland Security Department authority to monitor cybersecurity in the United States. Speaker Boehner responded that the administration wanted to control the Internet. Civil liberties groups feared the bill threatened individual privacy.



Speaker of the House John Boehner during an appearance at the Values Voter Summit in Washington, D.C., in October 2011. Boehner has been aggressive in promoting social media use by Republicans, at times having the highest Klout score in Congress.

When House Republicans were divided over efforts to stamp out piracy of online content in bills such as the Stop Online Piracy Act, Boehner agreed not to bring the bills to the floor for a vote. The bills had become a contest between traditional media and the new social media of Facebook, Reddit, Google, Twitter, and Wikipedia. Social media saw the bill as an assault on Internet creativity and innovation. They also feared that they were being enlisted in policing Internet content for law enforcement agencies. Boehner's decision to withdraw the bills from consideration left the bills' Democratic sponsors exposed, and Senate Democratic Majority Leader Harry Reid had to pressure fellow Democrats to withdraw their support.

Boehner's reputation in the House is as someone willing to deal with all parties. A major Ohio

newspaper claims that Boehner has perfected the art of disagreeing without being disagreeable.

Boehner rose rapidly though the Republican House leadership ranks, serving as chairman of the House Republican Conference during the 104th Congress (1995–97). The House Republican Conference organizes the Republican members of the House, serves as a way for the House party leaders to communicate with their members, and helps develop the agenda for the Republican Party in the House. Chairman Boehner also led the Thursday Group, a Republican House leadership group composed of two dozen interest-group lobbyists sympathetic with Republican goals, in a highly publicized lobbying effort to raise grassroots and congressional support for the passage of the key provisions of the Republicans' Contract With America.

Boehner has served as chair of the House Committee on Education and Workforce and as the Republicans' minority leader. He became the surprise winner for the position of house majority leader in 2006 over then-Acting Majority Leader Roy Blunt (R-MO). Boehner won by promising greater independence to the committees and more involvement by the regular party members in policy decisions. He also called for limits on the practice of earmarking and on government spending.

Boehner became speaker of the U.S. House after the Republicans regained control of the House in 2011. Speaker Boehner is the first speaker to serve as his party's majority and minority leader since 1961.

Social Media

Many members of Congress quickly adopted social media when they became available. For example, Twitter came online in summer 2006. In April 2007, Eric Cantor (R-VA), the Republican majority leader and then deputy minority whip, became the first member of Congress to establish a Twitter account. Boehner was one of the first members of Congress to use Facebook as a way of contacting constituents and other Americans. Almost 300,000 Facebook contacts were logged on his account (@SpeakerBoehner) by June 2012.

Boehner recognized the advantages of social media as a political weapon deployed by the minority party against the majority party in the House. He led many members of his party in an orchestrated series of demands for the House Democratic majority to return to the floor when then House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) gaveled the session to a quick end on August 1, 2008, when an important energy bill sat ignored on the House's agenda. The Republican demands for reopening the session were publicized by the members' streaming videos, tweeting, and texting from their personal cell phones and laptop computers.

Barack Obama's successful 2008 presidential campaign showed how to enlist social media and networking as ways to raise campaign contributions, persuade voters, and connect with supporters. Then–Minority Leader Boehner used this demonstration of social media's power to challenge his party members to increase their use of these technologies. In their weekly party meetings, they discussed how to effectively use social media tools and which tools were the most successful.

Boehner promised that the party would have an electoral advantage over the Democrats if they became expert users of the new media forms. Boehner taught by example, becoming one of the House's most frequent tweeters and holder of Congress's highest Klout score. A Klout score tracks the frequency of a person's name appearing in seven different social media forums.

Social media's ability to direct unfiltered messages to the public make it vastly preferable for members who worry that the print and electronic press may adversely affect the timing and content of their messages. Republican members are especially sensitive to the limits of traditional media forms because of a feared liberal bias among journalists and media elites. Television and radio are costly and may be limited in their geographical reach. Social media permit communicating direct partisan and election appeals, unlike the franking privilege, the member's ability to contact their constituents through free postal mail, which prohibits such campaigning.

The 2010 congressional elections were a watershed moment in social media history. Almost every candidate running for Congress or a state gubernatorial seat used Twitter. Minority Leader Boehner, working with his minority whip, Eric Cantor (R-VA), and chief deputy whip, Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), set up a Web site eliciting public input to create a policy agenda for the 2010 congressional

campaign. America Speaking Out continues to attract online and Twitter feeds.

Boehner's staff orchestrated an aggressive virtual campaign that helped 85 new House Republicans to be elected in the 2010 House elections. Teams of staffers generated rapid response tweets, e-mails, YouTube ads, and targeted messages to news media pointing out opponents' gaffes, inconsistencies, or alleged falsehoods. They used online virtual worlds such as Second Life to promote partisan positions. Social networking technologies directed supporters of candidates to campaign Web sites where they could make political donations. Once in office, these new Republican members were taught how to be savvy users of social networking skills.

The House speaker has used social media to help mobilize interest groups and shape and monitor public opinion. Social media also permit gauging constituent opinion and can reach out to new followers. House Republicans were early adopters of Visible Vote, a digital media application that seeks to provide immediate communication between elected officials and their constituents.

The Republican leadership prompted House committees to adopt both Facebook and Twitter. The House Financial Services and the Foreign Affairs Committees instituted a service through which citizens can send questions to ask witnesses at committee hearings. Republican Party leaders launched a Facebook application listing "where the jobs are" in 2011.

Boehner's pioneering efforts with social media and networking has affected the House profoundly. VoterTide's 2012 Social Media Index placed seven Republican office holders on its top 10 nonpresidential-candidate list of politicians who are the most linked and have the greatest impact on online sites. Boehner authorized Facebook's first live streaming of a House session. It occurred on January 4, 2011, during Boehner's formal election and assumption of the office of speaker. The House Republicans streamed a live presentation of President Obama's 2012 State of the Union address accompanied by real-time fact-checking and a social question-and-answer forum on their social media sites.

A 2012 Pew study found that Republican members of the House were three and a half times more likely to mention legislation and 60 percent more likely to contain multimedia links than were Democratic members. This study also found that Republican House members not only used social media more often than their Democratic Party colleagues but also that their tweets were both more substantial and more often retweeted than were those of Democrats in the House. Republicans also outpaced Democrats in the number of followers on their Twitter lists. Only two Democrats were among the top 20 members of Congress with the largest Twitter followers.

Conclusion

The adoption of social media is strikingly different from earlier adoptions of new technologies by members of Congress. Most congressional offices did not use e-mail until the mid-1990s. Regular televising of House and Senate proceedings did not occur until 1979. Fewer members of the House were first adopters of faxing or individual Web sites. The primary reason for the speed in which social media have been adopted is the urging of key party leaders such as John Boehner. Under his leadership, the U.S. House of Representatives and especially House Republicans have entered the social media age.

Timothy J. O'Neill
Southwestern University

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Cantor, Eric; Klout Score; McCarthy, Kevin; Pew Internet and American Life Project.

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Bookmarking

Bookmarking is the action of marking a Web site on a person's browser so that the person can easily access it for later use. This function is considered to be very significant, especially for users who are interested in visiting regularly a number of Web sites and they are unable to remember all the uniform resource locators (URLs), or they want to note interesting Web pages in order to read them later. The use of bookmarks speeds up the process of browsing and eliminates connection errors caused by errors that may occur when typing a URL. The bookmark is stored in any of various storage formats. All Web browsers include bookmark features. Bookmarks are accessed through a menu in the user's Web browser and can be organized in folders for easy access to stored URLs.

In addition to bookmarking methods offered by browsers, many external applications offer bookmark management. In the political realm, as in the business sphere, the rapid proliferation of social media combines with the relative ease of mining user identification and preference information. This permits interested parties to use social bookmarking, in combination with other "tagging behaviors," as a way to collect what users think of as private material in order to create detailed user profiles. These profiles can then provide the basis for sales, propaganda, and/or political campaigns. While this practice is of concern to a growing number of social media and political scholars, it remains completely unknown and invisible to most of the buying—and voting—public.

Bookmarks first appeared in browsers back in 1993. The first browser to offer this function was Mosaic, and they were called Hotlists. Today, all different browsers incorporate a built-in bookmark manager that controls the list of bookmarks. The list storage method varies, depending on the browser, its version, and the operating system on which it executes. One method includes storing bookmarks in an HTML file (usually called bookmarks.html). This approach permits publication and printing of a categorized and indented catalog and works across platforms. With this method, it is not necessary for bookmark names to be unique. Other browsers store bookmarks in a secure database format (SQLite). Internet Explorer's Favorites are stored as individual files. One problem that computer users have to tackle is the fact that, when they change their personal computers, they have to remember to back up, among other things, their bookmark lists. Thus, all browsers offer the function of exporting and importing the bookmark list. Also, many browsers (more precisely the later arrivals—Firefox, Chrome, etc.) include the function of importing the list of bookmarks of other browsers (usually Internet Explorer).

Users usually tend to gather many bookmarks. But, bookmarks are only useful if users keep them organized in a way that makes them easy to find again. On many occasions, organization in folders is not enough. Firefox supports assigning tags to bookmarks for easy searching. It can be time-consuming, but it does allow the user to have the same bookmark in multiple tag bundles. Firefox also introduced live bookmarks that contain a list of links to recent articles supplied by a news site or Weblog, which is regularly updated via Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds. Thus, they allow users to dynamically monitor changes to their favorite news sources. Instead of treating RSS feeds as HTML pages like most news aggregators do, they are treated as bookmarks that are updated in real time with links to the appropriate sources.

Today, many users work on multiple computers during the day. The problem is that, if a person works on multiple computers, keeping up with bookmarks requires that person to bookmark the same sites on every computer. This problem was solved by introducing bookmarking Web sites that give the user on-the-go access to links anywhere Internet access is available. A typical example of such a service is Google Bookmarks, which was introduced in 2005. Google Bookmarks is a free online bookmark storage service available to Google account holders. Users can access their bookmarks from any computer by signing onto their Gmail accounts. The bookmarks are searchable, and searches are performed on the full text of the bookmarked pages, not just the labels and notes. It is worth noting that this service is completely separate from browser-based bookmarking and should not be confused with the bookmark function on any popular browser, Google

Chrome included. It is a cloud-based service that allows users to bookmark favorite Web sites and add labels, tags, or notes. Other browsers offer similar services. An extension of the above service is social bookmarking, which enables users to add, annotate, edit, and share bookmarks of Web pages.

The term *bookmarking* is also employed in various services with a similar function. For example, in Facebook a user can bookmark a Facebook app, group, or page in order for it to constantly appear in the left-hand corner of the home page. The term *bookmark* is also employed in various applications (e.g., word processing) in order to indicate a location in a document that a user wants to access immediately.

Andreas Veglis
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

See Also: Aggregation; Blogs; Cloud Computing; Facebook; Social Bookmarking.

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Born This Way Foundation

Founded in 2012 by popular music star Stefani Germanotta (better known as Lady Gaga), the Born This Way Foundation uses social media and advocacy to improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth. The organization works to achieve this mission through communication campaigns directed at youth, through public advocacy, and by funding research to identify the causes and possible solutions to the problem of bullying. Along with Germanotta, the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University, the MacArthur Foundation, and the California Endowment are also founding partners. The organization is led by cofounder and president Cynthia Germanotta.

Aims and Activities

The foundation employs a three-pronged strategy in its mission to support and empower LGBTQ youth. It has identified the three pillars of this mission as safety, skills, and opportunity. The organization promotes the first component, safety, by providing an online space where young people can communicate openly with each other without fear. Despite advances in gay rights and the increased visibility of young people coming out as gay, bisexual, or transgender, bullying and the psychological toll it takes on youth is a persistent problem in the United States. Accordingly, with a mantra of building a kinder and braver world, the organization's first interactions with youth encourage social acceptance, safety, and community. Second, focusing on skill building, the Born This Way Foundation provides young people with training in public advocacy so that they can experience not just self-acceptance but self-efficacy. By providing training and resources to support civic engagement, youth may feel empowered to create change on their own behalf. Finally, the organization aims to provide specific opportunities for young people to become involved in programs that promote change within their local communities.

History and Core Values

Launched on February 29, 2012, the foundation is housed at Harvard University, a site that

Lady Gaga on tour for her 2011 Born This Way *album in Stockholm, Sweden, on August 30, 2012. Her foundation of the same name uses social media to empower lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) youth.*

reflects the organization's seriousness and its focus on research as well as advocacy. Its debut attracted widespread national publicity due to the fame of its founder Lady Gaga and the involvement of high-profile entertainers and other leaders, including former television talk show host and media entrepreneur Oprah Winfrey; inspirational speaker Deepak Chopra; and Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sibelius. The foundation also benefited from its founder's fan following at its launch, attracting more than 100,000 registrants to the site in its first week.

During a series of interviews around the launch with national news organizations that attracted a general audience as well as youth-oriented media like MTV, Germanotta (Lady Gaga) described an idealistic and value-driven vision for the foundation. She characterized its ultimate goal as promoting love, acceptance, and unity. At their core, these goals center on the creation of nonheteronormative attitudinal and behavioral changes in relation to sexual identity.

Germanotta also pledged that Born This Way would foster a culture of acceptance by discouraging bullying and by encouraging young people to actively challenge bullying when they see it happening around them. This is a distinguishing feature of the foundation's mission and the type of social change it seeks to promote. Guided by research on social media best practices from its founding partner, the Berkman Center, the organization conveys the message that LGBTQ youth and allies need to all contribute to creating a culture that is not just kinder and more accepting but also braver through its public communications, starting with the tagline "Empowering Youth. Inspiring Bravery." This slogan echoes the refrain of Lady Gaga's popular song, "Born This Way" from which the foundation gets its name. Promoting the belief that sexuality is a fundamental, intrinsic component of individual identity, the song became an informal gay anthem when it was released in 2011. Its lyrics proclaim not just that she was "born this way," meaning different, but also that "I was born to be brave."

Beyond the slogans and the song, the foundation promotes this core value through a variety of communications. It solicits stories of bravery from members and visitors to the Web site as well as ideas about how to build what it describes as kinder and braver communities. Consistent with the three pillars of its mission statement, by claiming bravery as its core value, the Born This Way Foundation marries the positive ethos of the gay pride movement with a more demanding normative model of citizenship that requires vigilance, activism, and civic engagement as well as affirmation and visibility from its followers.

Carole V. Bell
Northeastern University

See Also: Antibullying Campaigns; Berkman Center; Clicktivism; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights; Musicians and Social Media in Politics.

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Bottom-Up Campaigns

In recent years, the increased use of social media and the development of information and communication technologies (ICTs) have led to a significant transformation of society. Without a doubt, it also has caused substantial alterations in many areas of politics, especially in the methods of communication. Recent research has reported the potential role of social media as strengthening ties between political actors and the public. Ultimately, a healthy democracy, as currently being pursued by contemporary society, results from an accurate reflection of public needs. From this perspective, the introduction of social media has been welcomed in politics due to its characteristics in terms of being an interactive communication medium. Many observers expect social media to be a vehicle to encourage the public to engage in political activities, and the effective use of social media could be a way to overcome problems in the current political environment, such as political cynicism, political apathy, and low levels of political participation.

In general, bottom-up campaigning can refer to a campaign that is not organized by political parties or elites, but is arranged by the public. Unlike the traditional custom of political behavior pursued in the top-down manner of the political process, bottom-up campaigning is characterized by political activities of citizen groups who have acquired new political power due to the ability to deal with social media and to mobilize like-minded people to reach their final political aims. That is, the development of social media have consequently transferred prime political work such as mobilizing people and presenting social and political issues from political elites to the public. Although academic discussions on the importance of bottom-up campaigning have been mentioned in many different political subjects, it has been paid more attention due to the recent political events in 2010 in the Middle East and north Africa, known as the Arab Spring.

Arab Spring

Arab Spring refers to the antigovernment demonstrations that occurred in the Arab region in late 2010. Starting in Tunisia, both large- and small-scale political campaigns were initiated against each of the long-term governments in more than nine countries, such as Algeria, Bahrain, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Yemen, and so on. Most important, these demonstrations were organized by citizen groups who were good at utilizing social media such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. Facebook and Twitter, especially, assumed central roles in spreading the news about uprisings, forming and sharing political opinions, and encouraging the public to take part in the demonstrations. The government's attempts to suppress information via the Internet ended in failure because the public's common desire to change the regime proliferated through social media platforms; thus, any control over communication and information about uprisings that was uploaded by people on the Internet was beyond the government's capacity. As a result, the uprisings in the Arab region have been considerably successful for the public.

These unprecedented political events suggest two momentous implications: (1) the gradual rise in importance of bottom-up campaigning created by the advent of social media, and (2) the possibility of transformation from the traditional political process in which political elites are empowered to deal with the determination of political issues to a new democratic process in which public opinion is equally reflected in those outcomes. The use of social media has therefore increased, and its popularity has meant the public now has a way to freely express their political thoughts. Accordingly, the public is now becoming empowered to take over political matters that were typically the responsibility of political elites, such as mobilizing the people and forming political agendas, as noted earlier.

Howard Dean Campaign

On the other hand, the significance of bottom-up campaigning is also mentioned in the research area of election campaigning. Academic discussions regarding this matter began with Howard Dean's 2004 campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination in United States. Despite his failure to gain the nomination, his campaign is considered one of the first attempts at utilization of the Internet as a political communication medium. During his campaign, his national campaign director, Joe Trippi, used the Internet for fund-raising, and his primary works were to manage campaign blogs such as Dean for America and to update the Web site Meetup.com to communicate with the potential voters. Meetup.com is a social networking Web site that allows people who have common interests and hobbies to come together in online as well as offline discussions to be able to connect to each other.

Although Dean's Internet campaign is widely considered as an innovative campaign strategy and the creation of a new form of campaign communication using a bottom-up approach, many observers have mentioned that it failed to make a strong tie with voters at that time.

Barack Obama Campaign

Afterward, some of the ideas of Dean's campaign strategy were further developed in Barack Obama's campaign in the 2008 U.S. presidential election. At that time, Obama and his camp realized that the traditional campaign style, a top-down approach, was no longer as effective as it once was. Furthermore, he needed to challenge the Hillary Clinton campaign, which was firmly organized with skilled campaigners who had technical knowledge in managing campaigns. In particular, a lack of awareness of his brand, compared to that of Clinton, was a first priority. Taking all things into consideration, Obama chose social media to inform the public of his brand and to gather support across the country. For instance, he created his own social networking Web site, MyBarackObama.com, and initiated some Web pages for fund-raising and group e-mailing to promote voting. Similar to other social networking sites, participants could create their own profiles and invite friends to their personal blogs. It also meant that Obama and his team fully understood the characteristics of social media and the increased influence of voters resulting from the widening of communication channels that enabled them to engage in political activities.

In particular, the central point of difference between the Obama campaign and other campaigns was that it combined a traditional campaign organization, which mainly consisted of campaign professionals and skilled staff, with a new style of campaign organization, which consisted of grassroots people. This led to extensive grassroots help by assigning professional tasks to volunteers. The volunteers tried to find out how they could help Obama's campaign without any supervision from national campaign staff. They organized casual meetings by themselves to discuss political issues and to share their thoughts about campaign issues. They also canvassed to encourage people to vote for Obama. Those activities by volunteers were not designed by the central campaign organization but managed by the volunteers themselves. Although the central campaign staff trained volunteers to distribute their campaign messages, they did not direct how to spread these messages to others. That is, the staffers in the central campaign organization played a role in spreading unified campaign messages to volunteers, while grassroots people took over the role of distributors of the message.

Various arguments have been presented on whether Obama's campaign could be seen as a true bottom-up campaign in that the central staffers trained the volunteers to spread their campaign message. Nonetheless, it is meaningful that Obama's 2008 campaign has led to a remarkable change in terms of a new form of utilization of mass media, especially in the use of the Internet, and the management of campaign organization compared to most traditional campaigns. Unlike the top-down approach method of traditional campaigning, in which campaign professionals and political elites manage all the campaign activities, the Obama campaign enabled voters to get involved in many kinds of campaign activities and to be empowered to handle campaign responsibilities on their own. Given that it is not possible to manage the election campaign solely by political parties or candidates or the voters, it is possible through the cooperation of all three of these actors; the Obama campaign could then be

considered as a successful example of a bottom-up campaign.

Conclusion

Because different forms of social media such as YouTube, blogs, Twitter, podcasts, and social networking services by mobile application have been quickly introduced into politics, it is true that many alterations, especially in the form of communication between political organizations and the public, have taken place. Furthermore, there is no doubt that the development of social media has opened doors to allow the public to engage in political activities and to raise political agendas whenever they want. It also means that they are no longer passive actors in expressing their political thoughts, and they are empowered by the development of social media to achieve their political aims.

As explained earlier, the utilization of social media by the public in the case of the Arab Spring has shown the significant influence of social media in the political process, and it has proven that the public can change the world with efficient use of social media. It could be regarded as a typical example of bottom-up campaigning. Perhaps a bottom-up campaign could help to revitalize politics and lead to a healthy democracy because the party organizations would need to accept the various opinions of the public, as mentioned in the research. Therefore, the importance of bottom-up campaigning cannot be overlooked at least in terms of the establishment of genuine democracy.

Jooyeon Lee
University of Leeds
Chunsik Kim
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Cloud Protesting; Internet Gathering; Social Media Strategy and Tactics.

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Bounce Back

In its litigation with Samsung, Apple relied on several of its patents to argue that its iPhone and iPad were completely novel or, as Apple attorney Harold McElhinny stated, that its iPhone and iPad had "created an entirely new product category." Some of those patents referred to the design of the devices; for example, U.S. Patent D593087 covered the ornamental patterns and U.S. Patent D504,889 the schematic drawings. Others of those patents referred to the features of the devices; for example U.S. Patent No. 7,469,381 addressed the bounce back effect, U.S. Patent No. 7,844,915 on-screen navigation, and U.S. Patent No. 7,864,163 tap to zoom.

U.S. Patent No. 7,469,381, or in brief '381, was issued on December 23, 2008. The registration document lists Bas Ording as its inventor. Ording is also credited with inventing the dock magnification (user interface for providing access) for Mac OSX, and worked at Apple until July 2013. As specified in Walter Isaacson's biography of Steve Jobs, Apple's chief executive officer was approached in the lobby of the company by a young designer who showed him a way to fit more icons in the dock at the bottom of the screen. The young designer was Ording, and Jobs hired him on the spot. Jobs was fond of many of Ording's projects, and he was particularly connected to the bounce back effect described in U.S. Patent No. 7,469,381. The '381 patent abstract reads as follows:

> In accordance with some embodiments, a computer-implemented method for use in conjunction with a device with a touch screen

> display is disclosed. In the method, a movement of an object on or near the touch screen display is detected. In response to detecting the movement, an electronic document displayed on the touch screen display is translated in a first direction. If an edge of the electronic document is reached while translating the electronic document in the first direction while the object is still detected on or near the touch screen display, an area beyond the edge of the document is displayed. After the object is no longer detected on or near the touch screen display, the document is translated in a second direction until the area beyond the edge of the document is no longer displayed.

Thus, the bounce back effect is a method for list scrolling and document translation, scaling, and rotation on a touch screen display. This is what gives scrolling on an iPhone its rubber band-like bounce. When a user places a finger on a device screen, drags an image or document past the screen's edge, and then releases the finger, the image or document bounces back to fill the full screen. In other words, if a person scrolls too far on an iPhone, whatever he or she is looking at bounces back into position. The ongoing conflict between Apple Inc. and Samsung Electronics Co, Ltd. has in part been fuelled by the fact that, after Apple patented the bounce back effect and featured this effect on its products, Samsung also adopted a similar feature, and as such, all of the Samsung Galaxy phones have a bounce back effect.

However, in October 2012, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office invalidated Apple's bounce, scroll, or rubber-banding patent. The patent was rejected on prior art considerations, including one concerning a controlling content display by AOL/Luigi Lira published by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in 2003 and another regarding a continuous scrolling list with acceleration by Apple published by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in 2007. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office claims that no inventive step was found between the prior art and Apple's patent, and therefore it was now up to the company to prove to the patent office or the appeals court that the patent was new. As for Samsung, it already found a workaround to avoid infringing the overscroll bounce patent, but it would likely reintroduce the feature if Apple could not back up its patent.

As patent blogger Florian Mueller asserts, it is not surprising that the '381 patent faced challenges to its validity because the bounce back effect constituted a great achievement in the realm of user-interface psychology, but in a strictly technological sense, it had little merit. Additionally, as a commenter on Mueller's blog affirms,

> There is no doubt that Apple has done the best job in realizing the rubber band idea into their iOS GUI. You really have to give Apple credit for that. . . . However, just the fact that you have done it well doesn't mean others have no right to do it and catch up.

Moreover, as an analysis by Global Innovation Commons reveals,

> The breadth of the intellectual property listed in this lawsuit seems to imply that Apple is desperate to do anything in its power to hamper the market acceptance of Samsung's phones and tablet. Unfortunately, in its attempt Apple may have exposed an inherent weakness in its patent holdings. The absence of certain of its own patents in the cited art of the '381 patent represents, at best, ignorance on Apple's part. This issue, as well as others, may present significant challenges in Apple's suit against Samsung.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

See Also: Bounce Back Effect; Innovation and Technology; Mobile Apps.

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Bounce Back Effect

The bounce back effect has been one of the points of contention in a series of ongoing lawsuits between two giant technology corporations, the U.S.-based Apple Inc. and the South Korean-based Samsung Electronics Co, Ltd., regarding the design of smartphones and tablet computers. In the course of the trials, Apple representatives alleged that Samsung products had infringed upon Apple intellectual property by violating several Apple patents, including the bounce back patent for an animation that produces a rubber band effect when a user scrolls past the end of a window on an iPhone or iPad.

In 2010, Samsung supplied Apple with iPhone and iPad components with a value of $5 to $7 billion, according to a *Financial Post* report from August 25, 2011. However, Samsung's Galaxy line of products comprising smartphones and tablets is also a competitor of Apple's iPhone and iPad. In early 2011, Apple launched accusations that Samsung's Galaxy smartphones and tablets slavishly copied Apple's iPhone and iPad. However, because patents, trademarks, and designs are registered all over the world, the dispute could not be solved in the courts of a single country, and as such, the two companies started many suits and countersuits in different countries in various parts of the globe.

Apple first filed a complaint against Samsung on April 15, 2011, in the United States District Court of the Northern District of California. The 38-page document submitted by Apple included federal claims for patent infringement, false designation of origin, and trademark infringement, as well as state-level claims of unfair competition, common law property infringement, and unjust enrichment. Samsung also filed multiple complaints against Apple, the first of which was on April 22, 2011, at the Central District Court in Seoul, South Korea. This was shortly followed by trials started by Samsung against Apple in Tokyo, Japan, and in Mannheim, Germany, as well as at the British High Court of Justice, the United States District Court for the District of Delaware, and the United States International Trade Commission.

In June 2011, in the U.S. District Court in San Jose, California, Judge Lucy Koh, a Harvard-educated former federal prosecutor who had also served on the California state bench and as a partner in a Silicon Valley law firm where she litigated technology patent lawsuits, attempted to appeal to company representatives' goodwill. According to a *Bloomberg Business Week* report from March 29, 2012, Judge Koh noted, "Last time you were here you said that you had a business relationship . . ." She then wondered, "Can we all just get along here? Can I send you out to ADR," referring to alternative dispute resolution, a form of private mediation. "I will send you with boxes of chocolates," Judge Koh said. "I mean, whatever." Yet, Apple did not conciliate with Samsung but rather returned in February 2012 to the U.S. federal courthouse in San Jose to sue Samsung again.

In this lawsuit, Apple won decisively against Samsung. On August 24, 2012, after just three days of deliberations, the nine jurors on the case found that Samsung infringed Apple's patents on iPhone's bounce back effect (U.S. Patent No.7,469,381), on-screen navigation (U.S. Patent No.7,844,915), and tap to zoom (U.S. Patent No.7,864,163), as well as design patents that cover iPhone features such as home button, rounded corners, and tapered edges (U.S. D593087) and on-screen icons (U.S. D604305). However, the jury concluded that Samsung did not infringe Design Patent 504,889 regarding the ornamental design of the iPad. This jury awarded Apple $1.049 billion in damages and Samsung zero damages. Apple's attorneys subsequently filed a request to stop all sales of the Samsung products cited in violation of the U.S. patents, but this request has not been granted by the court.

Apple won the ruling in the United States, but it did not win many of the international rulings.

In August 2012, a three-judge panel at the Seoul Central District Court in South Korea delivered a split decision, declaring that Apple infringed two of Samsung's wireless patents, while Samsung violated one of Apple's utility patents, namely the bounce back effect. The court awarded small damages to both companies and ordered a temporary sales halt of the infringing products in South Korea, although none of the banned products were the latest models of Samsung or Apple devices. Also in August 2012, a three-judge panel at the Tokyo District Court in Japan decided that Samsung Galaxy products did not violate Apple technology patents and awarded legal cost reimbursement to Samsung.

In Europe, the results of the lawsuits were mixed. A court in Germany initially granted Apple's request to bar Samsung from selling Galaxy products in the European Union, but after hearing Samsung allegations that Apple evidence was tampered with to make the dimensions and features of the two firms' products seem more related and similar, this court rescinded the decision. The British High Court of Justice ruled that Samsung products are not too similar to Apple's but refused to grant Samsung a request for banning Apple products from the British market. In turn, Samsung unsuccessfully attempted to obtain court orders in France and Italy to bar Apple products from the markets in these countries.

Meanwhile, additional developments out of the courts have thrown doubt on Apple's big victory in the U.S. federal court. In October 2012, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office ruled that 20 patents relating to scroll technology lacked novelty and therefore invalidated Apple's patent on the bounce back effect. As Tim Worstall explained in a *Forbes* article on October 23, 2012, patents are granted for things that are new and inventive, and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office pointed out that Apple's scrolling bounce back was anticipated by products of other firms, and as such, it was neither new nor inventive.

Based on claims that Apple tampered evidence and that the jury foreman was not honest, as well as on arguments regarding rubber banding patent invalidation and lack of feature novelty, Samsung appealed the previous decision of the California court. The ruling was expected during December 2012, but court hearings have so far revealed an inclination of Judge Koh to reduce the amount to be paid by Samsung to Apple. Regardless of what happens in the U.S. court, the Apple-versus-Samsung litigation, including the fight over the bounce back or the rubber band effect, showcases the fierce global competition for consumer mobile communications.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

See Also: Bounce Back; Innovation and Technology; Mobile Apps.

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Brave New Films

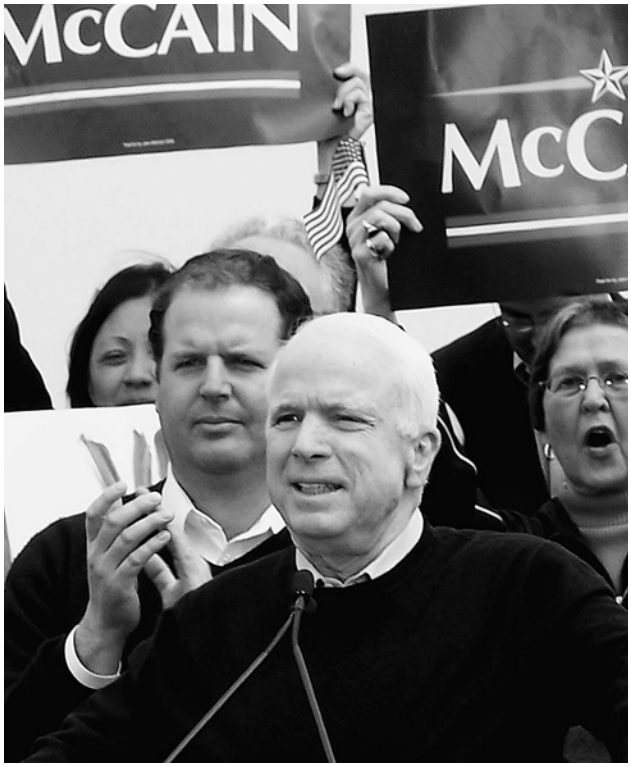
Brave New Films was founded in 2004 by Robert Greenwald, an award-winning film and television director who left industry to pursue independent production. With an emphasis on social justice, Brave New Films uses traditional and new media to encourage people to support their campaigns. Centered on documentary and short video productions, these campaigns come from a strongly liberal perspective. Common themes link these campaigns, and the organization's strategies include strategic use of digital media and alternative distribution techniques and mobilization techniques to encourage people's involvement. These activities create some impact, and they also draw criticism.

Brave New Films pursues campaigns that focus on holding corporations, politicians, and others in positions of power accountable to the public for their statements and activities. One theme in these campaigns focuses on corporate responsibility to the public, as with the documentaries *Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price* or *Koch Brothers Exposed*. Another theme centers on the media's responsibility to the public, targeting particularly Fox News, as seen with the documentary *Outfoxed* and the Web series called *Fox Attacks*. A third theme focuses on government and political responsibility. The campaigns target Republicans and Democrats alike, such as on former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani and Connecticut Senator Joseph Lieberman.

Earlier campaigns were built around documentary productions directed by Greenwald, with dedicated Web sites and social media connections. Walmartmovie.com boasts 2,500 pages about the global retailer's techniques for keeping costs down at the expense of its employees and the environment. With the growing popularity of YouTube, Brave New Films moved some of its campaign activities online and even moved away from the documentary-centered campaign.

More recent campaigns use series of short videos. For example, the popular The Real McCain campaign looked for and revealed inconsistencies in the 2008 presidential candidate's campaign through videos that juxtaposed clips of McCain's speeches and media appearances with clips from other media and interviews that provided counterpoints. One video, "McCain's YouTube Problem Just Became a Nightmare," drew 9 million views on YouTube, going viral. The viral video—or a video that gains popular and media attention rapidly within a compressed time period—functions as a key part of their distribution strategies.

Alternative distribution strategies augmented with social media help Brave New Films sidestep mainstream media in order to reach audiences directly. Several sites and YouTube offer free viewings of entire documentaries, such as *The Real Rudy*. *Slacker Uprising*, about Michael Moore's speaking tour, was offered to viewers who registered for the Web site for free downloading. On iTunes Brave New Films offers podcasts and downloads of some documentaries. The YouTube channel features more than 500 videos, drawing more than 52 million views. With the advent of Brave New Theaters, interested citizens can use the documentaries available to organize their own community screenings and discussions. The documentaries listed come from Brave New Films and other independent documentary makers.



John McCain announcing his candidacy for president on April 25, 2007, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Brave New Films used short videos on YouTube, one of which was seen by as many as 9 million people, to challenge McCain's campaign.

Project-specific Web sites organize campaign activities in a central location. In addition to embedded videos, the sites usually feature a blog, background information, and press coverage. All sites encourage viewer interaction so long as comments remain respectful. Almost all recent campaigns include social media connections with Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Podcasts, Digg, and Google+. Among these, Facebook sees the most activity, with regular wall posts to issue-related press coverage and short videos, but those activities occur only during the peak times for the campaigns. The Facebook activities remain secondary to the dedicated sites.

Alongside raising awareness, these campaigns encourage audiences to act. They suggest connecting to or using social media, such as liking on Facebook, tweeting on Twitter, or sharing on Digg. Other suggestions encourage writing blog posts, hosting screenings, writing letters to or calling politicians, signing petitions, and learning more about issues. They also solicit donations, and the organization uses Nationbuilder to help collect those monies. As incentives, those donating can receive various merchandise, such as posters, specially designed T-shirts, and DVDs and DVD sets of their films. As a 501(c)4 organization, Brave New Films relies on those donations to operate independently.

Even with all these efforts, not all campaigns succeed. When the Saints Go Marching In featured a short video and signature campaign that drew more than 120,000 signatures toward swaying one senator to vote for the Gulf Coast Recovery Act. The bill died in Congress. Further, Brave New Films and Robert Greenwald draw strong backlash from right-wing media and other critics. Fox News figure Bill O'Reilly went so far as to call Greenwald "a ridiculous human being" and "just to the right of Fidel Casto." Brave New Films posted that footage to its YouTube channel with a response.

Heather McIntosh
Boston College

See Also: Center for Social Media; Documentaries, Social Media, and Social Change; i-Docs.org; YouTube.

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Buzz Creation

Buzz creation is a systematic and organized effort to encourage people to talk about a particular organization, institution, person, brand, product, or service and to recommend spreading it to others that are part of their relational networks. The word *buzz* literally refers to a low, continuous humming or murmuring sound, made by or similar to that made by an insect. In common usage, a buzz refers to a rumor, and buzz creation refers to the making of hype, or interest in something.

Buzz is created when a receiver is captured by a message because of curiosity and interest. If the receiver considers the message interesting, fascinating, and entertaining and trusts the source, he or she will not only be influenced by its contents but may also spread it to his or her relational network.

The creation of a buzz is thus directly related to the creation of an appealing story around an event, institution, organization, person, product, or service. Stories that deal with taboo topics such as sex, deceits, bathroom humor, or unusual, outrageous, or hilarious topics, as well as remarkable stories and stories about secrets (both kept and revealed), often create a buzz.

Buzz also becomes viral through the help of advocators, likewise known as testimonials or ambassadors that support the message contents and are willing to help the sender of the message to distribute it themselves. Most effective communications are those based on personal recommendations made by fellow individuals whose comments are less likely to be viewed as corporate sponsorships. However, not all advocators are equally successful at creating buzz. A number of studies show that the most effective buzz is created by those individuals with strong recognized personal influence characteristics, such as celebrities and those who have large and extended relational networks. These studies also show how personal influence is directly linked to the diffusion of an innovation, that is, the extent to which a new product or discovery is adopted by a group of people and to the

circulation of commentaries. In other words, certain conversations expand faster and into larger groups of society because of the influential role and relational network of the advocator.

While the history of oral traditions is very ancient, only in the past decade have organizations, institutions, and political entities sought to capitalize on the impacts of personal influence in people's opinion formation and behaviors to create one-to-one conversations with those who heavily influence their peers. In marketing, scholars introduced the concept of buzz marketing as synonymous to word-of-mouth marketing, which refers to interpersonal communication between noncommercial sources about a commercial issue. Buzz marketing is a strategy to amplify initial marketing efforts by third parties through their passive or active influence in order to create positive feelings. By creating sophisticated buzz campaigns, marketing people can attract individuals and make them believe that they are influencers and thus convince them to spread the word to their friends and colleagues. Other times, organizations hire people to actively share contents on their networks on behalf of the organization and thus support buzz creation.

Not all buzz creation is positive. Large corporations, and also governments and political actors, can be targets of anticorporate groups, dissidents, and activists who can use similar marketing techniques to create and spread negative buzz about them. Leaks about organizations' and personalities' scandals often become buzz because of the secrecy and outrageous nature of the events and the inner human attraction to these types of stories. Ongoing negative buzz is potentially dangerous because it can later turn into a crisis.

With the event of information and communication technologies, the Web, and especially social media, buzz creation has increased and gained new forms of practices. Influencers use online media in the forms of e-mail, blogs, listservs, personal Web sites, chat groups, and consumer rating sites to disseminate ideas. YouTube is one of the most-used social media for creating buzz, especially when an organization creates and posts funny videos that not only attract viewers but also stimulate sharing among them. Organizations can also hire people so that they can speak positively about the organization, products, or services on their social network sites. Blogs are popular media for electronic buzz marketing campaigns. Marketers trade products or pay for bloggers' promotion among their followers. Instant messaging (IM) applications are considered a vehicle for carrying out buzz marketing campaigns, with either humans or IM bots doing the pitching. IM bots are programs that attempt to stimulate conversation as if they were real humans.

Ethical concerns have risen in relation to disguised marketing activities that create buzz, for example, when organizations deliberately engage people to influence other individuals who do not realize they have been recruited and become themselves promoters among their social networks. This approach is known as undercover marketing or stealth marketing and is based on the idea of creating buzz around a product or service so that consumers market the product to others through a network of referrals, which expands. Despite the fact that buzz creation for undercover marketing practices has been considered unethical and deceptive in the code of conduct of the Word-Of-Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) and the American Marketing Association (AMA), a number of organizations still practice them.

Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Advertising and Marketing; Campaigns, Digital; Engagement Advertising; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Going Viral; Instant Messengers, IRC, ICQ; Network Influentials; Peer to Peer; Rumors; Viral Marketing.

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C

Campaign Strategy

In the 2008 American presidential election, Democratic candidate—and now president—Barack Obama displayed the ability to learn from the past by altering the long-held, traditional advertising and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) strategies of the Democratic Party. After watching colleagues Al Gore and John Kerry fall to George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004, Obama opted to utilize new methods of communicating with voters through big-budget branding. Rather than focus on traditional strategies, Obama began working with new techniques that built more on Internet techniques similar to those that Howard Dean employed four years prior. However, the trend to move toward innovative campaigns with strong new media presences did not stop with the race for the presidency; instead, it has trickled down to the lowest-budget, local races.

Technology Gap

Referring back to the 2008 election, more than half of the voting-age population relied on the Internet as a political resource. While this number reflects the large societal impact of the Internet and implies future trends for electoral politics, it is important to take into consideration which demographics of the population were using the Internet as a resource. The data from the 2008 Pew Internet and American Life Project reveal that, while most citizens were technologically engaged, a significant portion of senior citizens were not included. Of the 37 percent of senior citizens who actually used the Internet, 60 percent were considered political users. However, during the 2008 election, only 22 percent of the entire population of senior citizens in the United States was considered politically engaged online. Because senior citizens are typically a significant voting bloc during elections, the lack of technological involvement is revealing, particularly because the 2008 election has likely revolutionized how campaigns are organized.

While a technology gap unquestionably exists in the United States, much of the past research has focused on income and education as being two variables that lead to someone being connected or not. However, when looking at the impact of campaigns on participation and civic life, age is emerging as the dividing factor. Looking back at a discussion of new campaign techniques that have developed in recent years, one finds a significant discrepancy between younger and older citizens. First, the numbers related to social networking are staggering. According to research, 75 percent of citizens aged between 18 and 24 use social network sites, compared to 10 percent of those between 55 and 64 and only 7 percent of those over 65. When considering the utilization of text messages, statistics show that 85 percent of those

between 18 and 29 have sent or received a text message compared to only 11 percent of those over 65. Likewise, 28 percent of those between 18 and 29 have sent or received an e-mail, compared to only 6 percent of those over 65.

More directly, consider that 65 percent of voters between 18 and 29 said that they had watched some kind of campaign video online, and 59 percent said they had read a political blog, visited a candidate's Web site, or used a social networking site as a source of campaign information in 2008. Among those voters between 30 and 64 years old, however, only 38 percent said they had watched a campaign video online, and 38 percent said they had looked at a blog, Web site, or social networking site. Even more tellingly, only 17 percent of those over age 65 had seen an online video, and just over 10 percent had visited a blog or campaign Web site. The divide is clearly great.

It is expected that political campaigns will continue relying on technological advancements to organize and structure their messages. Technology has proven to be an attractive resource for campaigns as their ability to narrowcast increases when constituents self-select what they access online. In addition, the number of adult Americans who report the Internet as very important to their political decision making continues to increase, from 1996 onward. This has significant implications for how technology may be used in the future by political, and perhaps civic, organizations. As the youngest generation of voters is the most attached to the Internet and soft news sources for learning about campaigns, candidates are unlikely to abandon them in favor of the media of yesterday.

On the other hand, particularly at the state level, constituent demographics continue to be taken into consideration. For example, some scholars argue that, just as constituent demographics influence the home-style representation of an official, it also influences how campaign and political messages are relayed, what type of media is used, and how issues are framed. This research also indicates that those regions reporting large numbers of elderly constituents are less likely to rely solely on technology to broadcast messages.

When looking at elderly voters, scholarship has typically focused on voters over age 65. Within this group, however, it is important to note that there are traceable differences between various subgroups. Boomers, the recently retired, and the older elderly all bring different political leanings to the table and likewise have different levels of familiarity with new media technologies. Because society continues to experience a gap in who has access to technology and who does not, it suffices to say that, in order to include as many segments of the population as possible in political life, the needs of each segment need to be taken into consideration. Old methods of engaging the population politically need not be abandoned for technological advancement. Past research has indicated a successful morphing of both new and old technology, accounting for the preferences of both the old and young. While the future of social capital in America remains unclear, it can be argued that its maintenance is contingent upon how successful campaigns are in understanding their targets and working with citizen preferences.

The 2008 Election and Internet Presence

In the age of ubiquitous computing, social networking tools saturate everyone's daily life. Campaigns are largely becoming decentralized, fueled in part by the development and advent of social networking. Having the ability to communicate in real time to anyone, anywhere, has become a major advantage when understood and utilized properly. The 2008 election proved to be the first in which social networking sites, and other forms of new media, ultimately became the medium and the message. What proves to be the best aspect for campaigns and candidates about the new technology is that it makes it incredibly easy to reach millions in milliseconds at little—if any—cost.

In 2000 and 2004, the Republican Party utilized multilevel marketing techniques to help spread news and aid George W. Bush on his path to the White House. However, their techniques, when viewed in comparison to the Obama campaign of 2008, can be considered primitive at best. Barack Obama is unquestionably the first Internet president—or perhaps wired president. He understands the Internet and the power of new technologies. Some go as far as to ask who the United States' first chief technology officer will be.

The Obama campaign ultimately took what people thought they knew about politics and turned it into a different game for a different generation.

He used the Internet in political ways that had never been thought of or conceived previously. His outside-the-box thinking and strategizing led to campaign ads appearing through text messages, Facebook wall posts, and video games. While John McCain admitted he did not use e-mail, Barack Obama successfully navigated the plethora of new media techniques on his way to the White House, where he became the first president to ask for a laptop computer to be put in the Oval Office.

The 2008 campaign proved to be a new era for the use of the Internet in political campaigns and marked the growing dominance of the medium as a political tool. The Obama campaign was successful in using the Internet to recruit and organize 1.5 million volunteers along with creating 8,000 online affinity groups and organizing 30,000 events. He succeeded in doing electronically what previously had to be done through shoe leather and phone banks: contact volunteers and donors, and schedule and promote events. The first successful step Obama took to developing a successful Web presence was beginning his Internet campaign by hiring two start-up college students, notably Chris Hughes, a founder of Facebook. Rather than attempting to strategize a plan from scratch, Obama recruited staffers who had hands-on experience with the activities he and his chief strategist, David Axelrod, felt were necessary to create the desired new media presence. With sites like YouTube, Facebook, and Myspace gaining popularity in 2006 as the new technology fads to affect campaigns, Obama immediately set out to have a strong, active presence on each. In short, Obama's Internet presence in the 2008 election helped do for the Internet what the 1960 election did for television: legitimize its role and demonstrate its potential.

The impact of this approach was clearly noted throughout—and after—the election. On Facebook, Obama had 2 million supporters, compared to 600,000 for McCain. Likewise, on Myspace, Obama had 844,927 friends, while McCain had barely more than 200,000. Beyond the social networking sites, Obama's Web site was largely considered far more dynamic than any of the others.

Whereas critics suggested that much of Hillary Clinton's Internet presence came off as disingenuous and lacking authenticity, Obama's campaign appeared to learn the lessons from earlier campaigns: Web sites should be used to bring together a large number of small donors, to draw the faithful together, to understand the dynamics of Internet giving, and to understand who uses the Internet and how one can most easily reach them. The design of the Obama site made it as easy to donate as to do any type of impulse buying. Obama's site demonstrated that he loved people rather than someone like Clinton, whose site showed little besides her love for policy.

The importance of an Internet presence is unquestioned. Researchers found that the 2008 election marks the time when upstart Internet publications upstaged their print counterparts and became a crucial method of how voters get their political news. In this election cycle, campaigns used paid-search techniques to target online advertising and direct Internet users to their own online content. Likewise, others believe that campaign 2008 is likely to be remembered as the one in which the bloggers pushed aside the mainstream media. While such an assertion has not necessarily been proven, there is some remnant of truth in the idea that, for particular individuals, blogs and online content have surpassed traditional news media. However, as the discussion has emphasized, large proportions of the electorate still have little to no online engagement.

Aside from traditional Web sites, the Obama campaign was successful with its video presence on YouTube. Begin by considering the viral nature of Will.i.am's "Yes We Can" music video, which generated millions of hits in a short period of time. Obama's YouTube video channel contained more than 1,800 videos with approximately 19 million viewings. These numbers roughly outpace McCain four to one. Rather than depending on news coverage of events, the campaigns were able to take as much footage of any event they wished and post it, edited or unfiltered, for anyone to watch on the Internet. The news media was not necessary to reach the voters.

In another form of new media, the Obama campaign successfully utilized text messaging like no campaign before. Largely by choosing to first announce his vice president choice via text message, Obama was able to garner nearly 2 million individuals onto his text message list, which he would later use throughout the campaign to contact supporters about ways to get involved in

their local communities. This use has continued—including announcing the passage of health care reform via text in March 2010.

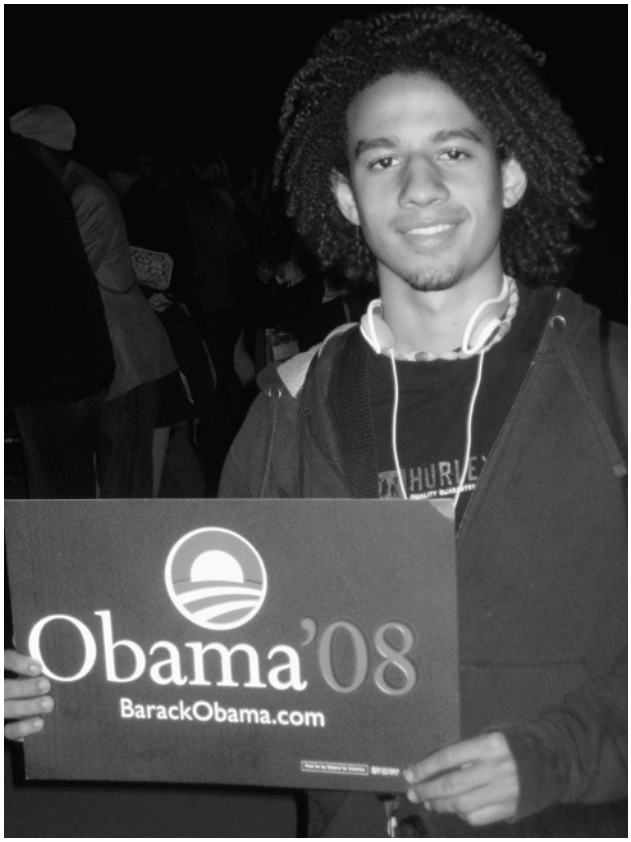
In an entirely new avenue of advertising, the Obama campaign began utilizing in-game advertising. Recognizing that the Playstation3 and Xbox360 both connect to live Internet feeds, Obama purchased advertising space in popular EASports titles, such as Madden NFL 09, NASCAR 09, NHL 09, NBA Live 09, and Burnout Paradise. Ads would appear throughout the games on scoreboards and billboards. The advertisements were targeted at eligible voters in key battleground states (mainly Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Indiana, Montana, North Carolina, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, and Wisconsin). All were considered to be swing states, and all had been won by Bush in 2004. The ad campaign ultimately cost just under $45,000 and ran for roughly a month.

Barack Obama unquestionably had a budgetary advantage, yet John McCain failed to mount a challenge in regard to social networking on other types of free media. Obama had more friends on Facebook and Myspace, more viewers watched his YouTube channel, more subscribers were tweeting him to be president on Twitter, and he had thousands of more pictures uploaded to Flickr. Obama properly understood and integrated new media into his campaign. While he used Facebook to talk about his enjoyment of playing basketball and spending time with his daughters, Senator McCain used the space to talk about his love for fishing and his favorite movie, *Letters From Iwo Jima*. The branding effect—and ultimate targeting strategy—was clear.

The Youth Vote

The Millennial Generation—those born between 1978 and 1996—has historically not been viewed as politically active. The cycle that has led to lack of involvement normally follows this logic: Young voters do not vote or participate because politicians do to not involve them; politicians do not involve Millennials because they tend not to vote or participate. As Scoot Keeter explains, high-tech high touch is supposed to work with young voters. They are ethnically and racially diverse compared to older citizens. While many journalistic accounts of generations present in America (such as the Millennials, Generation X, or the Baby Boomers) focus on overgeneralizations regarding their alleged characteristics, they can still be useful when framed appropriately as overviews of group behavior and traits.

The youth vote is unquestionably important with regard to representation. Young adults tend to be represented by politicians who are more likely to listen to the views of older citizens because they are more likely to vote. Further, it is important for political parties as they attempt to lock in young members into the future. With 82 million members, the generation has tremendous voting power and has been shown to choose to become engaged in public life when they have the motivation, opportunity, and the ability to do so. In this regard, one would expect to have seen voting increases in the 2008 election, given the attention Obama paid to making it as easy as possible for these voters to participate.



A young Barack Obama supporter at a rally on the Boston Common during the presidential primary campaign in October 2007. Youth voters voted for Obama by a two-to-one margin that year.

Youth voters, collectively, rose to meet expectations—turning out more than they had as a group since 1972 (the first year the voting age was lowered). Not only did they confirm popular suspicions by turning out, but they also overwhelmingly voted for Obama, by a two-to-one margin over Senator McCain. With roughly 23 million voters participating between the ages of 18 and 29, the 2008 election saw an increase of almost 2 million voters. Exit polls showed the role of youth voters in turning previously red states—particularly North Carolina and Indiana—blue. While overall turnout was up only modestly, young people provided much of that uptick.

Obama's candidacy became a national movement that lent itself to mass mobilization among that very portion of the population that is the most new-media friendly and tech savvy, the younger generation. They are black, white, yellow, and various shades of brown, but what they share—new media, online social networks, and a distaste for top-down sales pitches—connects them. In other words, the bond is based on the medium. They build relationships in communities that transcend cultural, temporal, and geographical boundaries, and membership in these communities provides for a civic engagement that is more connected than ever. And ultimately, once people are connected through a network, you cannot disconnect. It is like unbreaking an egg. While such journalistic explanations can oftentimes be overstated, one has yet to find evidence that suggests such assertions are not likely to be valid.

Conclusion

Clearly new technologies emerged in 2008. And, even more clearly—particularly in the general election—Barack Obama dominated in utilizing new technology. On the question of campaigns, Obama could communicate at almost no cost with any number of supporters to direct their influence throughout his election. Social networking and new media are cheap, efficient ways to reach particular voters while also allowing for detailed targeting. However, as the numbers suggest, such techniques do not reach older voters at a similarly high rate. For once, young voters are receiving attention that older voters are not. Whether this continues in 2012 or not is a question to be considered. YouTube is cheaper than running television ads. Web sites are less expensive than billboards. As Daniel Shea and Michael John Burton point out, every position paper, every ad, every news release can be posted for all to see at minimal cost. Yet, a campaign that relies too heavily on technology risks alienating, or at the least not reaching, older voters. Given that older voters are historically more reliable, this is a risk for a candidate seeking election. Will candidates opt to emphasize a traditional campaign or a digitalized campaign, or will they be forced to run both campaigns now at a higher cost? Even though social networking and online videos are free to disseminate, as Obama showed through the hiring of Hughes, there is a cost to find the best workers and consultants in the field.

At the national level, it appears highly improbable that a candidate could succeed with only a tech-savvy, youth-oriented strategy. Such a campaign simply runs the risk of not reaching enough important voters. However, this is not to say that tech-savvy campaigns are not equally important to a candidate's success. Previous research by Chapman Rackaway suggests that statewide candidates in 2009 were operating at a campaign level roughly comparable to those of presidential candidates of 1996. Yet, many of the technologies Rackaway examined involved significant financial investments. With the Obama era of new media emerging with significantly smaller marginal costs, it is important to see how quickly local candidates begin attempting to utilize it. Obama was able to demonstrate the power of running two campaigns targeted at two different groups of citizens: a traditional, more expensive campaign based on television and radio ads and a secondary campaign based on technology and the Internet to reach the younger voters with lesser direct costs. If candidates wish to reach all voters, it appears that their best approach is to balance a tech-savvy, youth-oriented campaign with a more traditional one.

Candidates fail to realize the potentially negative effects that a new media campaign can have on their images. As we discussed earlier with regard to the Hillary Clinton campaign and the John McCain Facebook page, a disingenuous new media campaign can counteract the intentions of a candidate and actually make them appear out of touch. So far, it appears that personality and image play roles in the potential success of new media

campaigns. Obama came off as a youthful politician who ran a modern campaign. He understood the technology and how it could be best utilized; he did not merely choose to use it because he felt he was expected to. The 2008 campaign demonstrated what can happen when the right online tool merges with the right online dynamic. In short, it is better to steer clear of tools like Twitter or YouTube unless the campaign plans on regularly updating them and giving followers a reason to look at them. One tweet per month will come off as insincere and disinterested. And, even in the case of Obama, YouTube presented negative attributes as well. Consider that he was put on the defensive during the Democratic primary due to the release on YouTube of the inflammatory speeches of the Chicago pastor of his church, Jeremiah Wright.

There is no question that an online, new-media presence can work well to capture the attention of young voters at a significantly lower cost; however, relying on such tactics to supplant a traditional campaign at the state and local level is asking too much if a candidate is targeting their entire campaign at a younger demographic. As a consultant, the media attention given to Obama's successful use of Twitter, Facebook, text messaging, and YouTube posed serious problems when designing campaigns for smaller political actors. A new-media presence can activate voters who have never even considered the role of a township trustee, let alone voted for one. However, such activation simply does not assure victory. New media are simply not a less costly alternative to a traditional campaign. Rather, they are a new mechanism that alters ground campaigns for successful candidates by running in parallel to more traditional campaign approaches. It casts a net over voters who otherwise would have been untouched without sacrificing the traditional approach.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Candidate Image; Evolution of Social Media; Facebook; Twitter; YouTube.

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Campaigns, Congressional (2000)

The 2000 congressional elections, held in November, determined the composition of the 107th Congress. Before the elections, the 106th Congress had a Republican majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The election coincided with the 2000 presidential election and resulted in a brief period of unified government under Republican control. As a result of the election, Texas Governor George W. Bush controlled the White House; in addition, Republicans maintained control of the House. The Senate, however, was evenly divided, with each party controlling 50 seats; this necessitated a tie-breaking vote by Vice President Dick Cheney.

Congress Before the 2000 Election

In the previous congressional elections, held in 1998, the Republicans maintained control of both chambers, despite losing five seats in the House. In the Senate, they controlled 55 seats, and the

Democrats controlled 45 seats. In the House, the Republican Party controlled 223 seats; the Democrats controlled 211 seats, and one seat was held by an independent.

Mississippi's Trent Lott served as Senate majority leader, and Tom Daschle, from South Dakota, was the Senate minority leader. In the House, Speaker Newt Gingrich of Georgia led the Republicans, and Missouri's Dick Gephardt led the Democrats. In addition, in mid-2000, Democrats gained an additional Senate seat, following the death of Paul Coverdell, a Republican from Georgia. At this point, Georgia Governor Roy Barnes appointed fellow Democrat, Zell Miller, to the seat. In the special election held in November 2000, Miller won the seat in his own right.

In the run-up to the 2000 election, approval of Congress had ticked up slightly, buoying Republican hopes of retaining control. In 1999, a Gallup poll found that Congress had a job approval rating of 37 percent, with 56 percent of respondents expressing disapproval. By October 2000, however, congressional job approval rose to 49 percent, while the disapproval rating dropped to 42 percent.

Competitive Seats

Data from the Cook Political Report indicated that only 47 of the 435 House seats up for election could be considered competitive races. This represented a decline from the 58 competitive seats in the 1998 election and was sharply contrasted with elections in 1992, 1994, and 1996, all of which boasted more than 100 competitive seats.

On the Senate side, of the 33 races in the cycle, 24 seats were held by Republican incumbents, and nine seats were held by Democratic incumbents; of those, only four races were for open seats. Moreover, only a small number of these races were considered competitive. Democrats focused on vulnerable Republican seats in Delaware, Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Pennsylvania, and Washington. Republicans focused their energies on trying to pick up vulnerable Democratic seats in Nebraska, Nevada, and New York.

Campaign Spending

Overall, the 2000 election cost more than any other previous election. Because of the narrow margins in both the House and the Senate, both the national parties and outside interest groups focused intensely on winning the comparatively few competitive races. In a sample of 12 competitive congressional races, David Magleby found that parties and interest groups outspent the candidate by a margin of two to one.

One notable trend in this cycle was the record-setting sums of soft money raised and spent by both parties. Democrats, who had in the past lagged behind the Republicans, achieved near parity in this election cycle. Specifically, Democrats raised $243 million, and the Republicans raised $244 million. This was particularly significant for Senate Democrats; the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) raised $63 million; in contrast, in 1994, the DSCC had raised a paltry $372,000 of soft money.

There was also an increase in hard money during this round of congressional elections; although both parties increased their fund-raising from the 1998 election cycle, the Republicans still maintained a significant advantage in this area. In the 2000 election cycle, Democrats raised almost $270 million in hard money, while Republicans raised more than $447 million.

Another trend was a sharp increase in outside contributions, with many groups doubling the amount they had spent in the previous cycle. On the Democratic side, the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), National Education Association (NEA), Sierra Club, and League of Conservation Voters (LCV) all stepped up their campaign activities. On the Republican side, both the National Rifle Association (NRA) and the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) sharply increased election-related spending. During the 2000 election season, interest groups collectively spent more than $260 million, one-fifth of what the national parties spent.

Issues in the Election

Although the congressional election coincided with a close presidential race between Texas Governor George W. Bush and Vice President Al Gore, neither party promoted a national campaign agenda, preferring to let candidates focus on district- or state-level issues. Although congressional Democrats had hoped to capitalize on

the continuing unpopularity of the Republican-initiated impeachment proceedings against Bill Clinton, Republican candidates responded by deemphasizing their party affiliation in election advertisements and direct mail and instead trumpeted the resources they had secured for their constituents.

Overall, pre-election polls demonstrated that no single issue captured the attention of voters. In one Gallup poll, 17 percent of voters indicated that education was their top concern, while another 12 percent stated that they were most concerned with ethics, morality, and family decline. Combined economic problems were the top concern of 21 percent of respondents, while another 11 percent stated that health care was their top concern.

During the campaign, both political parties and interest groups mobilized voters by focusing on an array of social and economic issues. Television advertising focused on abortion and health care, while direct mail advertisements tended to emphasize issues such as education, gun control, and Social Security.

Technology and the 2000 Election

Although Internet usage was growing at this time, the 2000 election did not feature the use of Internet technology and social media to the degree that those technologies have shaped, and sometimes dominated, subsequent elections. However, both of the presidential candidates had Web sites in 2000; many congressional candidates, in contrast, did not. State party Web sites did exist, although many of them simply served as a source of news about the election, and were not used to organize campaigns or as integral components of campaign strategies. Perhaps the most significant use of the Internet in the 2000 election, however, was in the area of online fund-raising, since 2000 was the year in which presidential candidate John McCain (R-Arizona) broke all previous records by using the Internet to raise $2.7 million in only three days.

During the election cycle, 54 million U.S. households, approximately 51 percent of the population, had a home computer. Although this was a 9 percent increase from 1998, only 42 percent of those with a computer used the Internet at home. In line with this, a study by Thomas P. Boyle found that only 18 percent of the population reported using the Internet to receive news and information about the election. Those most likely to use the Internet for political information were individuals in the 18 to 25 age group, with 85 percent of these respondents indicating that they had some form of exposure to online political information. In contrast, only 11 percent of voters 66 and over used the Internet to obtain political information.

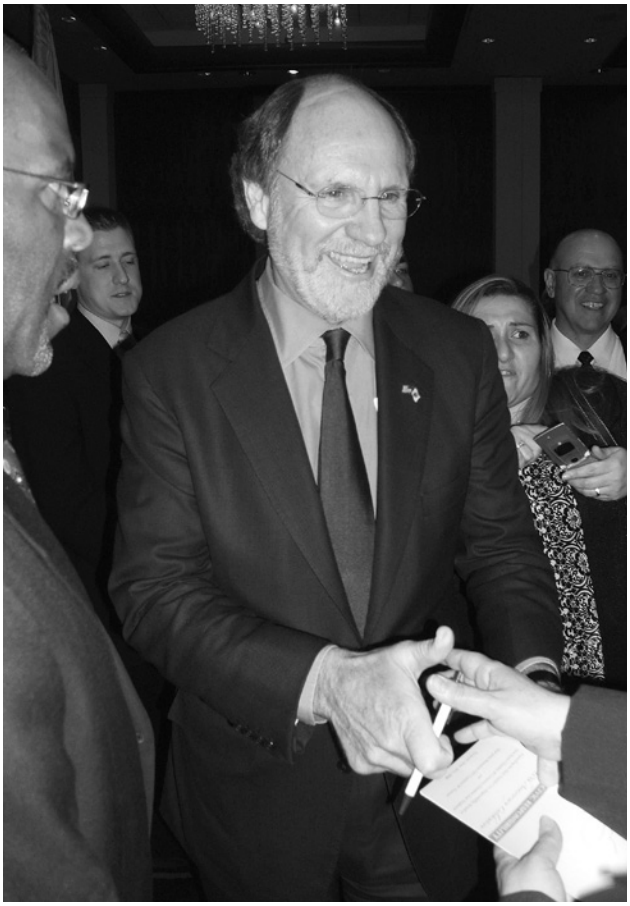
Both political parties did use e-mail communication during the campaign, although usage was limited. Specifically, the Democratic Party created only four unique e-mails, and the Republican Party produced only two. According to the Pew Research Center, in total, only 12 unique e-mails were produced during the 2000 campaign by both parties and outside interest groups. During this cycle, the dominant method used to communicate with voters continued to be traditional direct mail.

Notable Races

During the 2000 election cycle, several Senate races garnered national attention. In New York, in the race for the Senate seat vacated by Democrat Daniel Patrick Moynihan, First Lady Hillary Clinton ran against Republican Congressman Rick Lazio. Lazio vastly outspent Clinton; he spent $40 million, compared to Clinton's $29 million. Despite this disparity in funding, Clinton won the seat, securing 55 percent of the vote, compared to Lazio's 43 percent.

In Montana, a tragedy upended a close Senate race that featured Democratic Governor Mel Carnahan challenging incumbent Republican John Ashcroft. In mid-October, Carnahan was killed in a plane crash; because election law prevented Carnahan's name from being removed from the ballot so close to Election Day, his widow, Jean Carnahan, pledged to serve if her husband won. Carnahan won the close election, with 50.5 percent of the vote, compared to Ashcroft's 48.4 percent; this made him the first person to be elected to the Senate posthumously.

Finally, the race for the open Senate seat in New Jersey was noteworthy for the high sums spent by the Democratic candidate, Jon Corzine. Corzine, a former chief executive officer (CEO) of Goldman Sachs, spent a record-setting $35



New Jersey Senate candidate Jon Corzine set a record for personal money spent in his bid to win the Democratic primary—$35 million—twice the previous record. His efforts were rewarded when he won 50 percent of the vote in 2000.

million of his own money to win the Democratic primary. In the general election, he spent another $60 million, nearly doubling the record for candidate spending on a Senate race. He defeated his Republican challenger, Congressman Bob Franks, winning 50 percent of the vote to Franks's 47 percent.

Results and Subsequent Developments

The election resulted in unified government under Republican control. The outcome of the 2000 congressional election was a 50–50 split in the Senate and a small Republican majority in the House of Representatives. The House was composed of 221 Republican seats, 212 Democratic seats, and two independents. Most of the House races were generally not competitive, with candidates winning approximately 77 percent of the races by a margin of at least 20 percent. In addition, within districts, there was general congruence between the results of the presidential race and the congressional race. Specifically, congressional Democrats won 81 percent of the districts that Gore won, and congressional Republicans won 80 percent of the districts that Bush won.

Despite the Republican victory, Democrats did succeed in shrinking the Republican majority. In the Senate, Democrats defeated five Republican incumbents: Delaware's Bill Roth, Michigan's Spencer Abraham, Minnesota's Rod Grams, Missouri's John Ashcroft, and Washington's Slade Gorton. In contrast, only one Democratic incumbent, Virginia's Chuck Robb, lost his seat. In the House, the Republicans lost two seats; one was a pickup by Democrats, while the other was won by an independent. This reduced their majority to nine seats, and this constituted the third straight election in which Democrats chipped away at the Republican majority in the House.

The Republican control of Congress was short-lived, however. In May 2001, Senator Jim Jeffords, a Republican from Vermont, switched his party affiliation, becoming an independent and caucusing with Democrats. This shifted control of the Senate to the Democrats, with Tom Daschle assuming the role of majority leader.

Kelly A. McHugh
Tina Cota-Robles
Florida Southern College

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Congressional (2002); Campaigns, Presidential (2000).

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Campaigns, Congressional (2002)

The 2002 congressional elections, held in November, determined the composition of the 108th Congress. Before the elections, the 107th Congress was composed of a Republican majority in the House, with Democrats narrowly controlling the Senate. The election occurred 14 months after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, ensuring that national security issues would factor prominently in the campaign. Buoyed by the popularity of Republican President George W. Bush, as well as a favorable round of redistricting and reapportionment, Republicans maintained control of the House, and regained control of the Senate.

Congress Before the 2002 Election

The previous congressional elections, held in 2000, had resulted in a brief period of unified government under Republican control. Specifically, the outcome of the 2000 congressional elections was a 50–50 split in the Senate and a small Republican majority in the House of Representatives. In the Senate, Mississippi's Trent Lott was the majority leader, and North Dakota's Tom Daschle was the minority leader. In the House, Dennis Hastert of Illinois served as speaker, and Dick Gephardt of Missouri was minority leader.

Republican control of Congress, however, was short-lived. In May of 2001, Senator Jim Jeffords, a Republican from Vermont, switched his party affiliation, becoming an independent and caucusing with the Democrats. His departure from the Republican Party gave Democrats control of the Senate. In the run-up to the 2002 election, President Bush made clear that one of his key goals was to rally support for Republican candidates in order for his party to regain control of the Senate.

In a Gallup poll taken in October of 2002, the public appeared satisfied with Congress's performance. Specifically, 50 percent of respondents indicated that they approved of Congress, while 40 percent expressed disapproval; the remaining 10 percent had no opinion. Notably, this represented a higher approval rating than Congress had enjoyed before any of the three previous midterm elections.

Redistricting and Competitive Seats

As a result of the 2000 Census, states participated in redistricting; this had the potential to alter the composition of many congressional districts. Overall, the new map favored the Republicans, with House seats being reapportioned from Democratic areas in the Northeast to Republican areas in the South. According to James E. Campbell, if the 2000 election had been conducted with the new districts in place, George W. Bush would have won an additional 10 districts.

The result of redistricting was a map with 236 Republican-leaning districts and 199 Democratic-leaning districts. Prior to the election, it was estimated that there would be 178 safe Republican seats and 154 safe Democratic seats. According to an analysis by *Congressional Quarterly*, in the 2002 election, there were only 48 districts with toss-up races. In addition, of the 34 Senate seats up for election in this cycle, 20 were Republican-held seats and 14 were Democrat-held seats. *Congressional Quarterly* judged only 13 of these races to be competitive.

Campaign Spending

In the 2002 election cycle, Democrats raised more soft money than Republicans, overcoming what had been a traditional disadvantage. Specifically, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) raised $95 million, and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) raised $56 million. In contrast, the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) raised $66 million, and the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) raised $70 million.

The Republicans, however, continued to enjoy their traditional advantage in hard money. In the 2002 election cycle, Republicans raised $400 million, compared to the $220 million raised by Democrats. Although this was a lower level of spending than in the 2000 election, it was a record-setting amount for a midterm election cycle.

Outside interest group spending declined from the 2000 election cycle, especially on the Democratic side. Groups that traditionally supported Democrats, including Planned Parenthood, Sierra Club, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), all spent less on this election. In contrast, two key Republican-leaning groups, the Club For

Growth and the National Federation of Independent Business, increased their spending from 2000 levels.

In accordance with this, in 2002, party spending on the ground game surpassed the spending of outside interest groups. Republicans made a particular effort in this area, with House Republicans launching the Strategic Taskforce to Organize and Mobilize People (STOMP); STOMP dispatched Republican luminaries to competitive races in order to raise money, recruit volunteers, and mobilize Republican voters.

Issues in the Election

The 2002 election cycle was the first election after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when Islamist extremists hijacked four commercial planes, with three planes crashing into the Pentagon and the Twin Towers in New York City; the fourth plane was diverted by passengers and crashed in rural Pennsylvania. Nearly 3,000 Americans and many international citizens who were working in New York's financial district were killed in the attacks.

One of the most notable effects of the terrorist attacks was a spike in the popularity of the president. Before the attacks, the president's approval rating stood at 51 percent; immediately after the attacks, however, Bush's approval rating jumped to 90 percent. Although his approval rating dropped from these stratospheric levels, in the run-up to the 2002 election Bush remained enormously popular, enjoying a 63 percent approval rating.

Capitalizing on his popularity, Bush helped campaign for Republicans in competitive races. During the election, he made a total of 108 campaign stops for 46 Republican candidates for the House and Senate. He visited Missouri seven times and South Dakota and Minnesota five times each. David Magleby and J. Quin Monson estimate that, during these visits, the president helped raise $140 million for Republican candidates. Vice President Dick Cheney, First Lady Laura Bush, and former Republican Mayor of New York Rudy Giuliani also made visits on behalf of Republican candidates.

A pre-election Gallup poll confirmed that national security issues loomed large for voters. In the poll, 83 percent of respondents stated that terrorism was "very important" or "extremely important" in their voting decision. Furthermore, on this issue, Republicans held a 29-point advantage over Democrats, with 57 percent of respondents stating that Republicans could best handle the issue of terrorism and national security, compared to only 27 percent who adjudged Democrats to be superior on this issue.

Although terrorism was the dominant issue in the campaign, candidates also focused on a variety of domestic issues. On the Republican side, both the candidates and the national party focused on taxation; tax issues were the most frequent topic of mailers and campaign commercials. Another common theme for Republicans was prescription drug benefits for seniors. Specifically, the party trumpeted the House's success in passing a prescription drug bill that had stalled in the Democrat-controlled Senate. In contrast, Social Security was the most prominent issue in communications from Democratic candidates; direct mail and television commercials focused on the specter of a Republican plan to privatize the program. Direct mail communications from the Democratic Party focused mainly on prescription drug benefits and education issues.

Technology and the 2002 Election

Although Internet usage had increased between 2000 and 2002, in this election cycle few Americans sought election information online. A study by the Pew Research Center found that only 22 percent of Internet users searched online for election information; this was up from 15 percent in the previous election cycle. Of those users, 79 percent reported that they sought specific information on the positions of a political candidate, a jump from 69 percent in 2000. Overall, however, only 11 percent of users said the Internet was their main source for political information. Television remained the dominant source of political information for most voters.

Notable Races

During this election cycle, both national parties and interest groups focused intensely on a small number of competitive races, especially in the Senate. One such race was in Minnesota. The tight race between Democratic incumbent Paul Wellstone and Republican Norm Coleman, the mayor of Saint Paul, was marred by tragedy when

Wellstone was killed in a plane crash in late October. The party chose Walter Mondale, former vice president and 1984 Democratic presidential candidate, as his replacement. The NRSC spent $8.3 million on the race, while the DSCC spent $7.5 million. Coleman went on to win the election, garnering nearly 50 percent of the vote, compared to Mondale's 47 percent.

Another costly Senate race occurred in South Dakota, between Democratic incumbent Tim Johnson and Republican Congressman John Thune. The DSCC transferred $4.5 million in soft money and $1.4 million in hard money to the race; similarly, the NRSC transferred $3.5 million in soft money and $900,000 dollars in hard money to South Dakota Republicans. Including expenditures by interest groups, a total of $24 million was spent on the race, making it the most expensive in U.S. history. Johnson won the election, narrowly maintaining his seat by a margin of just 524 votes.

Results and Subsequent Developments

The 2002 midterm elections resulted in Republican control of both the Senate and House of Representatives. In the Senate, Republicans held 51 seats, the Democrats held 48 seats, and one seat was held by an independent. In the House, the Republicans controlled 229 seats, while the Democrats controlled 205.

The election represented a strong showing for the Republican Party and testified to the popularity of President Bush; Republicans bucked the historical pattern that the party in the White House would experience midterm loses. Specifically, Republicans enjoyed a net gain of two Senate seats and eight House seats. In the Senate, Republicans successfully won three seats held by Democratic incumbents in Georgia, Missouri, and Minnesota. The only Democratic pickup in the Senate was in Arkansas, where the incumbent Republican was plagued by a personal scandal.

Overall, turnout for the election was 29 percent, slightly below the turnout in the 1998 midterm elections. Some states with competitive races saw much higher numbers. For example, the highest turnout occurred in Minnesota and South Dakota, with 61 percent turnout in those states.

The competition during this election cycle was particularly low. The average margin of victory for winning candidates was nearly 40 percent. In addition, challengers only succeeded in defeating four incumbents; this occurrence was a historical low. This put the re-election rate at 79 percent for the Senate and 98 percent for the House.

Kelly A. McHugh
Tina Cota-Robles
Florida Southern College

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Congressional (2000); Campaigns, Congressional (2004).

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Campaigns, Congressional (2004)

The 2004 congressional elections, held on November 2, determined the composition of the 109th Congress. The elections, which occurred at the same time as a closely contested presidential election, resulted in Republicans maintaining control of both houses of Congress. A central issue in the campaigns was the partisan polarization surrounding the George W. Bush presidency. In addition, this election marked a large increase in Internet activity by both campaigns and voters.

Congress Before the Election

In the previous congressional elections, held in 2002, the Republicans maintained control of the House of Representatives and gained control of the Senate. In the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist bombings, under the leadership of President George W. Bush, Republicans were able to buck the historical trend whereby the party holding the White House traditionally loses seats in the midterm elections. In the 108th Congress, Republicans controlled 229 seats in the House and Democrats controlled 204 seats; one seat was held by an independent. In the Senate, 51 seats were controlled by Republicans, 48 by Democrats, and one by an independent. Dennis Hastert from Illinois was the Speaker of the House and California's Nancy Pelosi was minority leader. In the Senate, Tennessee's Bill Frist was majority leader and South Dakota's Tom Daschle was minority leader.

Prior to the elections, polls showed public dissatisfaction with Congress. In a Gallup poll in late June 2004, only 41 percent of respondents indicated they approved of Congress's job performance and 52 percent expressed disapproval. This poll, however, showed that Democrats and Republicans diverged in their assessment of Congress. Specifically, 58 percent of Republicans approved of the job Congress was doing, compared to only 28 percent of Democrats and 39 percent of independents.

Level of Competitiveness in House and Senate Races

Although the presidential race between President Bush and Massachusetts Senator John Kerry remained close throughout the campaign, several factors made it unlikely that the Democratic Party would gain control of Congress. In the Senate, the Democrats were defending 19 seats, 10 of which were in states that Bush carried in 2000. In contrast, Republicans were defending only 15 seats; all but three of those races were in states Bush had carried in 2000.

The situation in the House was similarly unfavorable for a Democratic takeover. The redistricting from the 2000 census had reduced the number of competitive seats, and prior to the election, *Congressional Quarterly* identified only 37 House seats as competitive; this was down from 47 competitive seats in 2002. Moreover, in 2003, after gaining control of the Texas legislature, state Republicans engaged in a second round of redistricting, altering the boundaries of several congressional districts with Democratic incumbents.

Campaign Finance Reform

The 2004 election was the first election in which parties and candidates were subject to the regulations of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA), often referred to as the McCain-Feingold Act. The BCRA contained various provisions designed to make the funding of elections more transparent; this included the elimination of the soft money loophole, which had allowed individuals to give unlimited money to political parties for party-building activities or issue advertising. In addition, the act doubled the limit for individual contributions to a candidate, raising it to $2,000; it also increased the amount an individual could donate to a party, from $20,000 to $25,000.

The BCRA contained a "stand by your ad" provision, which required parties and candidates to identify sponsorship of political ads. Although these rules applied to television advertising and direct mailing, at the time of the 2004 elections, the Federal Election Commission exempted most digital communications from regulation. Specifically, mass e-mail and text messages were not subject to disclosure requirements.

In this cycle, the BCRA did little to arrest the increasing costs of congressional campaigns. According to OpenSecrets.org, in 2004, the average winner in a House race spent $1 million, while the average winner in a Senate race spent $7.8 million. In contrast, in 2002, the average House winner spent $898,000 and the average Senate winner spent $5.3 million.

Issues in the Election

No single national issue dominated the 2004 congressional campaigns. This was demonstrated by a Gallup poll taken in mid-October 2004; when asked what they considered to be the most important issue in the 2004 election, 32 percent of respondents said the economy, 29 percent said terrorism, 22 percent said Iraq, and 15 percent said health care. Additionally, Democrats and Republicans indicated that different issues motivated

their electoral choices; Democrats were most concerned about domestic issues, such as the economy and Social Security, while Republicans rated terrorism and moral issues as most important.

Another issue separating the voters was attitudes toward President George W. Bush; in the month before the election, Gallup found highly polarized attitudes regarding his administration's performance. Specifically, 71 percent of Republicans strongly approved of incumbent Bush, while 68 percent of Democrats strongly disapproved of him.

Because of this polarization, in close races the national parties focused on increasing the turnout of their bases. The Republican National Committee (RNC) developed a 72-hour task force, which used databases to pinpoint likely Republican voters before Election Day. On the Democratic side, more than 30 groups, including EMILY's List and the Sierra Club, worked under the umbrella of America Votes to contact and turn out likely Democratic voters. In addition, in competitive congressional races in this cycle, an average of 21.7 interest groups participated in voter mobilization.

The Internet and the 2004 Election

During the preceding years, Internet use had grown rapidly, and by 2004, 61 percent of the adult population was online. In accordance with this, prior to Election Day, many voters used the Internet to research candidates and issues. A survey conducted by the Pew Research Center found that 31 percent of Americans got at least some of their election news online, and 18 percent of the public used the Internet as their primary source for news; this was up from 11 percent in 2000. In addition, Pew found that Americans reported using the Internet for a wide variety of political activities; among Internet users, 52 percent of adults went online to get political news or go to chat rooms, 35 percent used e-mail to discuss politics, and 11 percent used the Web to volunteer or donate money to a campaign.

When seeking online news, citizens tended to gravitate toward traditional, established outlets, with 43 percent reporting that they obtained news from sites like CNN.com and the online version of the *New York Times*. An additional 28 percent reported that they relied on service providers such as America Online (AOL) or the Microsoft Network (MSN) for election news. Notably, 33 percent of those who sought news online indicated they felt that traditional news sources did not provide enough information about political issues and candidates' positions.

In addition, for the first time, Web sites became a standard feature of congressional campaigns, and in 2004 all 68 Senate candidates maintained a personal Web site. Notably, in addition to providing information about the candidate, campaigns used these sites to encourage voting; 63 percent of candidate Web sites provided information about voter registration, and 32 provided information about obtaining an absentee ballot. This was a sharp jump from 2000, when only one-quarter of Senate Web sites provided any information about voting opportunities.

Another frequent feature on the Senate sites was a function that allowed visitors to customize an e-mail letter extolling the candidate and then send it to friends and family; this was available on 28 sites. Another 22 sites provided a template for e-mailing a letter to a newspaper.

In addition, in this cycle many congressional campaigns began using e-mail as part of a voter outreach strategy; however, it was still used less than other traditional forms of campaign communication. Specifically, in competitive states, 15.2 percent of voters reported receiving e-mail communications from a campaign; in contrast, 69 percent of voters received phone calls and 72 percent received mailers.

The national committees for both parties also invested in online advertising, with the RNC spending $487 million and the DNC spending $257 million. Most of these funds, however, were devoted to advertising for presidential rather than congressional candidates.

Notable Races

In 2004, two Senate candidates made an online strategy the centerpiece of their campaigns. In Florida, Democratic candidate Betty Castor hired Larry Biddle as her deputy campaign manager; he was a veteran of the of Howard Dean campaign. In the Democratic primary, Castor initially lagged behind her better-funded opponents; her campaign rebounded after she launched a fundraising Web site modeled after Dean's. She managed to raise $1.5 million in the second quarter of

2004 and collected $40,000 in one six-day fundraising haul.

After winning the primary, Castor continued to use an online strategy in the general election campaign against Republican Mel Martinez, secretary of Housing and Urban Development in the Bush administration. This included her Web site, BettyNet.com; the campaign used the site to communicate with and coordinate volunteers, dubbed "Betty Heads." In addition, her campaign followed Dean's in using Meetup.com to encourage supporters throughout Florida to gather in small groups to campaign on behalf of Castor. Despite her efforts to generate support online, Castor lost the election by one percentage point.

The Internet also featured prominently in the North Carolina Senate race for the open seat vacated by Democratic vice presidential nominee John Edwards. Like Castor, Democratic candidate Erskine Bowles hired an Internet strategist. A key component of his online effort was fundraising; he raised $500,000 online, with many of the donations in amounts of around $100. In addition, three months before the election, his campaign developed a blog, named "Blog for Bowles," to provide details on the candidate's activities; in response, his Republican opponent, Richard Burr, developed his own blog, named "Blogg4Burr." Bowles also communicated with a list of 100,000 supporters via e-mail and advertised extensively online, placing ads on three North Carolina news sites, as well as on Google. Bowles eventually lost the election to Burr, by a margin of 52 to 47 percent.

Another notable race occurred in Illinois to replace the retiring Republican incumbent. State senator and future president Barack Obama initially faced Republican investment banker Jack Ryan. A personal scandal forced Ryan to abruptly withdraw from the race, and Allan Keyes, a conservative activist, replaced him. As a result, this was the first Senate election in which both candidates were African Americans. During the campaign, Obama used his online presence to cultivate a national profile; during his keynote speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention, his Web site received 250 hits per second. Obama eventually won the race by a 43-point margin.

The most expensive Senate race in this election occurred in South Dakota, where Republican John Thune challenged Senate minority leader and three-term incumbent Tom Daschle. Thune, who had lost the 2002 Senate election by a little more than 500 votes, received strong support from national Republicans, who argued that Daschle was obstructing Bush's agenda. The overall cost of the race was more than $30 million; this averaged approximately $67 spent per registered voter. Thune won the election by a margin of 51 to 49 percent; this marked the first time since 1956 that a Senate party leader was defeated.

Election Outcome

The election resulted in continued Republican control of Congress, with Republicans strengthening their majorities in both chambers. In the Senate, eight seats switched parties, resulting in a net gain of four seats for Republicans. Specifically, the Republicans picked up open seats in Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana and defeated the incumbent Democrat in South Dakota. The Democrats picked up open seats in Illinois and Colorado. In the House, 13 seats changed parties, resulting in a net gain of three seats for Republicans. Specifically, Democrats won seats in Colorado, South Dakota, New York, Georgia, and Illinois. The Republicans won seats in Kentucky and Indiana and also defeated several Democratic incumbents in Texas, as well as winning a newly created district in the state.

Overall turnout was 60 percent of the electorate; this was a 5 percent increase from 2000. Republicans, however, enjoyed a turnout advantage; in House elections, Republicans had an 8.7 percent turnout advantage and enjoyed a 9.6 turnout advantage in Senate races. Overall, voters displayed strong party loyalty, with districts voting for a presidential and congressional candidate from the same party more than 80 percent of the time. In the House the incumbent re-election rate was 98 percent, and in the Senate it was 96 percent; this led one scholar to deem the election the least competitive in the postwar era.

Kelly McHugh
Florida Southern College

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2002); Campaigns, Congressional (2004); Campaigns, Presidential (2006).

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Campaigns, Congressional (2006)

The congressional elections in 2006 occurred midway through the second term of George W. Bush's presidency. In this election the Democratic Party picked up seats in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. In addition, the Democratic Party saw an electoral advance in the number of governorships held by the Democratic Party. These gains resulted in a shift in the partisan balance of power in Congress as Democrats became the majority party in both the House and the Senate. A summary of the election night returns and a brief explanation for the success of the Democratic Party is noted below.

Beginning with the House of Representatives, according to publicized election returns, Democrats gained 30 seats at the end of the electoral process, resulting in the party controlling 233 of the 435 seats. This became a newsworthy event because the Republican Party had been the party in power in the U.S. House for the previous 12 years, following their substantial seat gains in the 1994 midterm election. Subsequently, in the U.S. Senate, according to publicized election returns, the Democrats gained six seats, barely edging out the Republican Party for majority status, holding 51 of the 100 total seats. This 51 to 49 margin was achieved as a result of two Independent members, Joseph Lieberman and Bernie Sanders, declaring that they would caucus with the Democratic Party. Finally, according to publicized election returns, of those states holding gubernatorial elections in 2006, Democrats were able to gain six governorships, increasing the number of governors affiliated with the Democratic Party from 22 to 28. This included wins in Massachusetts, New York, and Ohio, formerly strongholds for Republican governors through much of the 1990s and early into the 21st century. The election was also notable because the turnover in partisan control led to Nancy Pelosi becoming the first female speaker of the House of Representatives.

Although there are a variety of explanations for this partisan swing, many experts contend that two central factors were dissatisfaction with the country's involvement in the Iraq War, and job approval ratings below 50 percent for President Bush. In addition, the Republican Party was hampered by a series of scandals that hurt the confidence of some voters in the Republican Party and culminated in lost seats. For example, Mark Foley resigned from Congress in September 2006 after the news media reported that he had sent sexual messages to underage male members of the congressional page program. The Republican leadership also became embroiled in the scandal when the House Ethics Committee reported that members of the leadership had been aware of Foley's behavior prior to the media revelations.

Social media technology has been harnessed in political campaigns with increasing fervor since around the beginning of the 21st century. Although much of this technology seems commonplace today, many social networking sites had only just come into existence during the 2006 election. The following sections address how candidates have used the technology in their campaigns, some of the risks and rewards of expanding social media usage, and the manner of media usage by citizens in 2006.

Online Fund-Raising

Modern campaigns tend to blend old media (e.g., radio, television, and direct mail) with forms of new media (e.g., Web sites, blogs, Twitter, and Facebook). As more citizens have become familiar with forms of new media and as some candidates have learned to utilize social media successfully, others have followed suit. One of the earliest forays into social media at the federal level

occurred when Senator John McCain attempted to capture the Republican presidential nomination in 2000. McCain utilized the Web to help him raise money for his campaign and collected over $2 million in a matter of days. Although George W. Bush ultimately won the Republican Party nomination, subsequent candidates followed in McCain's footsteps and far surpassed his online fund-raising.

Particular to the midterm elections in 2006, the Pew Research Center projected that MoveOn.org, a political advocacy group, was able to use the Internet to raise over $20 million in 2006. In doing so, online fund-raising became a technique used by groups as well as a platform for candidates to raise small contributions quickly. Nevertheless, Web-based fund-raising in 2006 still made up a relatively small portion of total campaign funds, with estimates at $100 million. Furthermore, most of the money collected online was still being devoted to more traditional forms of media advertising, such as television spots. Scholarly estimates placed online advertising at $40 million. It was not until 2008 that Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama showed the tremendous potential of online fund-raising as he raised approximately $500 million through the Web. The typical donor made a small contribution to the Obama campaign and made multiple donations over the course of the campaign. Thus, online fund-raising has provided a convenient way for citizens to invest in campaigns and for candidates to collect funds and information on supporters. Nevertheless, large donors are still more prevalent in campaigns and many citizens still do not contribute to political campaigns.

Political Campaign Web Sites and Social Networking

Besides online fund-raising through campaign Web sites, candidates began to use social networking platforms like Meetup.com and Facebook to connect with interested citizens and supporters. Friendster was one of the earliest social networking Web sites and burst onto the scene in the United States in 2002. The introduction of Friendster was rapidly followed by other social networking Web sites, including MySpace and LinkedIn in 2003, Facebook in 2004, and Twitter in 2006. These Web sites are beneficial to campaigns because they are an inexpensive way to reach and organize potential voters and interested supporters. They also provide a way for citizens to follow campaign news and candidate announcements with relative ease and to advertise their civic engagement to friends and family. However, they are not without risks, as candidates may have to contend with public postings of negative feedback and criticism of their pages.

In one of the earliest attempts to use social networking, Howard Dean used the Web site Meetup.com to enlist supporters in his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2004. Dean showed the potential of these platforms when he collected almost 188,000 supporters very early in the presidential primary process. Savvy congressional candidates in 2006 took notice and most worked to create a presence online. By 2006, according to one Web-based scholarly study, about four-fifths of House candidates and approximately 85 percent of Senate candidates had a political Web site. However, in 2006, the use of political Web sites by independent and third-party candidates still lagged behind that of major-party candidates. In addition, numerous scholarly studies have found that better-financed candidates, candidates engaged in competitive campaigns, and young candidates were more likely to have Web sites compared to their counterparts.

According to an analysis of congressional campaign Web sites in 2006 conducted by Girish Gulati and Christine Williams, two faculty members at Bentley College, U.S. House and Senate candidates focus on a number of criteria. In particular, candidate Web sites tend to state their positions on a variety of campaign issues, their e-mail address, news about their campaign, and a biographical sketch of the candidate. In addition, by 2006, candidates were becoming more savvy in using personal campaign Web sites to solicit campaign funds and to recruit volunteers. However, political Web sites in 2006 lagged behind modern campaign Web sites in their use of audio and video content and in posting candidate appearances, etc. In the years since 2006, campaigns have become much more adept at merging campaign information with media content. Today, presidential campaign Web sites link to separate YouTube pages chock-full of videos

about the candidate as well as profiles on Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr.

Although modern federal-level campaigns are more likely to utilize Facebook today compared to 2006, Facebook was used during the midterm congressional elections in 2006. According to a study of Facebook profiles and pages in 2006 and 2008 conducted by Gulati and Williams, less than 20 percent of U.S. House candidates from the Democratic and Republican parties personalized their Facebook profiles in 2006. However, just two years later, 72 percent of candidates had a Facebook presence and about half of these individuals opted to customize their pages. Gulati and Williams also concluded that incumbents, Republican candidates, poorly financed candidates, and candidates with weak opposition or no opposition were less likely to update their Facebook information.

Besides the rate of candidate usage, the manner in which candidates could customize their sites also changed over time. In 2006, congressional and gubernatorial political candidates could utilize a specific location on their network to create profiles. The social networking site sent passwords for the profile pages to the Republican and Democratic national committees to distribute to the individual candidates. The candidates could then add information to their pages, and friends of the profile could post on the profile page. After this trial run in 2006, Facebook modified its treatment of political candidates for the 2008 election. Candidates were given pages instead of profiles and all pages were located in a special subsection of pages for politicians. Thus, politicians were organized in the same fashion as athletic teams and film stars and had more capability to personalize their page with photos and videos.

YouTube

Besides Facebook, another technology that was novel to campaigns in 2006 was YouTube, which burst onto the scene in 2005. YouTube eventually became a medium where candidates could broadcast video of campaign stops, campaign commercials, candidate debates, etc. In addition, it became a repository where citizens could view information about political candidates. However, as some candidates learned the hard way, YouTube also increased the degree of public exposure on the campaign trail and the potential to get caught saying something controversial.

This is exactly what happened in 2006 when George Allen, a U.S. senator running for re-election, made public remarks during a campaign rally. A campaign worker who was at the event on behalf of Allen's opponent, Jim Webb, captured the controversial remarks on camera and they were subsequently broadcast on YouTube. In the video, Allen could be heard referring to Webb's campaign volunteer on more than one occasion as "macaca." The volunteer, S. R. Sidarth, was a U.S. citizen of Indian descent, and Allen was criticized for being racially insensitive. The meaning of the term is disputed but news sources contend the word is either a substitute term for "monkey" or a French racist slur used to describe Africans. After the video went viral on YouTube, Allen apologized for the remarks but stated that he made up the term and did not know what it meant.

When Allen lost his bid for re-election to the Senate, many attributed his loss to his remarks and the publicity they received, derailing his campaign and severely damaging his prospects. Allen's unexpected loss helped the Democrats to capture their very narrow lead in the U.S. Senate. Although his faux pas had an immediate effect on the 2006 midterm election, it was also instructive to candidates running in subsequent election cycles. Political candidates were put on notice that they were no longer immune to exposure and that their words and actions anywhere could be captured and broadcast with relative ease.

Although YouTube footage can hurt political candidates, it also has the potential to help campaigns. YouTube allows candidates to gain more control over the type and amount of information that is disseminated. It also allows candidates to bypass the media and to post whatever footage they feel will best showcase the campaign or the candidate.

Robocalls

When it comes to social media techniques, potential voters are arguably more likely to seek them out on their own volition. On the other hand, citizens who receive robocalls may wish to block the incoming messages because of the

nature of the message and the frequency of contact. Robocalls are automated messages used by campaigns to contact mass numbers of potential voters. Campaigns elect to use this technology because it is less expensive than other methods of contacting voters, such as door-to-door canvassing or direct mail. These automated calls are designed to encourage turnout on Election Day or to provide information with the intent of soliciting a vote for a particular candidate or a campaign contribution. However, the potential for this technology to backfire is higher than for other mediums. If the content of these automated messages is too negative or if voters are contacted incessantly, it may dissuade the individual from voting or may persuade him or her to vote for the opponent.

During the 2006 congressional election, a study conducted by the Pew Internet and American Life Project found that 64 percent of registered voters indicated that they had received a robocall in the final stretch of the campaign season. The study also found that respondents reported being contacted by robocalls more than by any other type of communication except direct mail. If anything, the use of robocalls has likely increased in subsequent elections as technology has become more adept at targeting voters.

E-mails, Cell Phones, and Text Messaging

As cell phones have become more portable and as more individuals have come to own a personal computer, campaigns have learned to capitalize on this technology. These media have become a good way for candidates to mobilize supporters, to solicit funds, and to ask supporters to initiate contact with undecided family members or friends. While the media can track YouTube posts or monitor campaign finance Web sites, they have a much harder time following e-mail chains or text messages. E-mails also advantage campaigns because they provide an inexpensive method of contacting individuals and acquiring additional personal information about the potential supporters. Despite the potential benefits of this technology, according to a study conducted by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, only 14 percent of registered voters reported that they had received an e-mail communication from a campaign in 2006.

The increase in cell phone use, however, has presented one key drawback for survey researchers and pollsters. As more youth rely solely on cell phones, conducting sound surveys is becoming more problematic. For instance, as respondents become more geographically mobile they may not change their cell phone numbers to reflect their current area of residence. This presents obstacles for researchers who wish to speak only with residents of a particular state or region.

Citizen Media Usage in 2006

Although campaigns are increasingly using technology to reach voters and potential supporters, it remains to be seen whether this coincides with where citizens actually report they are getting their campaign information. In order to determine the viewing habits of Americans and their interactions with technology, the Pew Internet and American Life Project and the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press conducted a daily tracking survey of Americans at the end of 2006. The survey showed that Americans still get the majority of their news about campaigns from television and newspapers. However, 15 percent of survey respondents reported getting the majority of their campaign news from the Internet. This figure is approximately double the number of respondents who made the same claim in 2002, the previous time midterm elections were held. In addition, the survey concluded that voters from both major political parties were just as likely to cite the Internet as their main source of news. In other words, in 2006, neither party could claim a stronger Internet presence among Americans.

For those Americans who reported utilizing the Internet in 2006, the top reasons for doing so were to collect information about the candidates and campaigns and to exchange communications about them with others. A small portion of Americans went further and reported posting their own political commentary to a Web site or blog or forwarding someone else's. Finally, campaign Internet users reported getting their political information most from news portals like Google News, from major network and cable television Web sites, from local news Web sites, and from online national newspaper content. However, approximately 20 percent of campaign Internet

users reported getting their news from less conventional sources like blogs, international news organization Web sites, candidate Web sites, and satirical news Web sites.

Rhonda Wrzenski
Indiana University Southeast

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2000); Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Facebook; Fund-Raising, Influence on Elections; Meetup.com; MoveOn.org; YouTube.

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Campaigns, Congressional (2008)

Several innovations in social media took place just before the 2008 election cycle. Many of these technologies had just been launched during the 2006 election but were so new that no one was really using them. In 2008, candidates at both the congressional and presidential level were just beginning to test the possibilities and limits of social media. Social networking sites like Facebook and Second Life were launched in 2003 and had somewhat established conventions for political campaigning. YouTube was the big story in the 2008 election, having launched only a few years earlier in 2005. The 2008 election was the first time candidates used Twitter as a campaign technology. The site had just been launched in 2006. In addition to these relatively new forms of technology, there were established online campaign techniques, such as e-mailing and blogging, which continued to be popular in 2008.

The 2008 congressional elections were an important time for the Democratic Party. In 2006, the Democratic Party won a majority of seats in the House of Representatives, and the trend toward Democratic leadership continued in 2008. All of the seats in the House of Representatives were up for election in 2008. The Democratic Party won an additional 21 seats in the 2008 election, giving them 257 seats to the Republicans' 178 seats. Unlike the House of Representatives, going into the 2008 election, the Senate was evenly split: 49 Democrats, 49 Republicans, and two Independents (Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Joe Lieberman of Connecticut). However, it is worth noting that the two Independents had been caucusing with the Democrats, so the Senate had been operating with a Democratic majority since 2006. In the Senate, 35 of the 100 seats were up for election in 2008. The Democrats gained eight Senate seats in the 2008 election, giving them a majority in both the House and the Senate. After the 2008 election, Nancy Pelosi continued as Speaker of the House of Representatives, a position she maintained until the Republicans regained the House in the 2010 election. Harry Reid continued as the majority leader in the Senate, a position he continued to hold after the 2012 election. With President Barack Obama taking office in 2008, this was the first time in more than a decade that the country was under single-party leadership.

Much of the attention in the 2008 election cycle was focused on the contentious presidential race. Candidates for both parties began announcing their campaigns in January 2008. The Republican nomination was secured by John McCain relatively early in the primary season. The Democratic Party primary contest continued through June 2008, when Obama secured the nomination over Hillary Clinton, the presumptive nominee. The 2008 presidential election was the most expensive presidential election on record. The two major candidates spent more than $1 billion during the election cycle. A major source of campaign funding was online donations. Candidate Ron Paul set fund-raising records by collecting $6 million online in a single day. Obama's campaign made extensive use of social media, online organizing, and online fund-raising. Many of the lessons of the Obama campaign would not be adopted by congressional candidates until the 2010 election. Still, there were many congressional candidates using social media during the 2008 election.

Studies and Reports

The adoption of social media by congressional candidates was likely fueled by the fact that voters were spending a substantial amount of time online in 2008. A Pew Internet and American Life Project report stated that the 2008 election was an important time for the Internet and politics. Approximately 40 percent of all Americans got their news and campaign information online. People were not using official news sites just for information. Approximately 39 percent of Americans accessed primary news documents directly from the campaigns. Additionally, 19 percent of Americans were going online once a week or more to do things related to the campaign, and 23 percent of Americans were either receiving e-mail from campaigns or using e-mail to engage in political debate. By June 2008, nearly one in 10 Americans had made a campaign donation online. The amount of voter activity online made social media an enticing place for political campaigns.

The partisan breakdown for political activity shows little difference between voter behavior based on party affiliation. The Pew Foundation reports that 78 percent of Republicans, 74 percent of Democrats, and 76 percent of independents spend time online. Of those, 55 percent of Republicans, 61 percent of Democrats, and 56 percent of independents viewed news related to the 2008 election online. The real breakdown was less along party lines and more along age lines. Younger Internet users were more likely to be Democrats and tended to favor Obama over Clinton in the presidential election. Obama supporters, overall, were more likely to use a variety of online technology: online video, e-mail, and social networking sites. Research also indicates that Democratic candidates behaved differently online. The Pew Research Foundation found that Democratic candidates were more likely than their Republican counterparts to use the Internet as a place to break a story and bypass more traditional mass media outlets.

While most voters and candidates were using the Internet during the 2008 election cycle, many of them seemed to be wary of the information they found online.

The Pew Foundation reports that 60 percent of Internet users agreed with the statement "The Internet is full of misinformation and propaganda that too many voters believe is accurate." Almost half of those polled did not believe that the news information they received online was the same as the information they received elsewhere. Additionally, more than one-third of people polled thought that the "the Internet let those with the loudest voices and most extreme positions drown out average people's views." The Internet did not seem to be a place that voters trusted for their news. Instead, 37 percent of voters said they went online to feel connected to candidates and engaged with the election process. Younger Internet users, in particular, saw the Internet as a place to connect with the democratic process.

Mike Gravel's 2007 YouTube ad, "Rock," gained him national attention and an Internet following. YouTube launched in 2005 and was first tested as a medium for reaching voters during political campaigns in the 2008 election.

Relationship Between Social Media and Mass Media

Oftentimes social media was simply a route to the mainstream media. In 2008, social media was often used to generate "earned media." Earned media is when a politician does something that generates media buzz that does not have to be paid for by the candidate. A candidate's daily activities, statements, or successes may be reported by the news media, giving him/her increased exposure to voters. In this way, it is distinct from paid advertising. Online, take for example Democrat Mike Gravel's YouTube ad "Rock." In this ad, Gravel spends the first minute staring at the camera saying nothing. Then, he turns away from the camera, throws a rock in a lake, and spends the next minute walking away from the camera. Gravel, a little-known candidate before this video, was invited to appear on news shows of multiple networks to explain the meaning of the advertisement. The commercial generated a large amount of free press for the candidate. In a year when the average cost of winning a House race was nearly $1.1 million, using social media to generate "earned media" could provide an important strategic advantage.

While online activities can help a candidate generate interest in his/her campaign, offline activities can also spur actions online that hurt a campaign. In 2008, Michele Bachmann narrowly beat Elwyn Tinklenberg and Bob Anderson to become the District 6 representative for the state of Minnesota. During the election, Bachmann received attention for going on the MSNBC show *Hardball* and calling for an investigation to determine if Barack and Michelle Obama were "pro-America or anti-America." The *Huffington Post*, an online news site, wrote stories about the event, calling Bachmann's statements modern McCarthyism. Blogging sites DailyKos and OpenLeft began distributing the video of Bachmann's interview and using the interview to direct traffic to the fund-raising site ActBlue. In the weekend following the interview, Tinklenberg received over $700,000 in donations, and ActBlue received more than $300,000. In the end Bachmann still won the election, but the event helped to demonstrate the way mainstream media reporting can impact online activities.

YouTube

YouTube was launched in February 2005, and during the 2006 election the site was still in its infancy. The campaigns for the 2008 election were an important period for candidates learning how to operate the technology and testing its potential. The Pew Foundation reports that 35 percent

of Americans watched online videos during the 2008 election cycle. Political videos were created and distributed by a variety of sources, including individuals, campaigns, and other political organizations. Research seems to indicate that many of these videos maintained the format of political commercials before YouTube. They averaged about 30 seconds and they made use of many traditional tactics seen in television campaigns. The most-viewed political videos in the congressional election on YouTube were consistently attack ads. Approximately 44 percent of the political videos posted in relation to the congressional campaigns were 30-second advertisements.

One major difference between YouTube videos and more traditional television advertising was the ability for average citizens and political organizations to distribute videos without incurring the large cost associated with mainstream media advertising. A primary example of this was a video of George Allen during the 2006 midterm elections titled "Macaca Moment." Republican George Allen served as senator from Virginia from 2001 to 2007. While running for re-election in 2006, during a campaign stop Allen pointed to S. R. Sidarth, a campaign tracker filming the event, and referred to him as a "Macaca." The term means "monkey" and was originally used by colonists in Africa to refer to the native black population. The video of the event was widely distributed online, and the attention it received from bloggers generated significant coverage by the mainstream press. The event is credited with costing Allen the 2006 election. The video and the resulting loss demonstrated the power YouTube afforded citizen journalists. Because of the video and the resulting loss, congressional candidates went into 2008 well aware of the power of YouTube.

In the Minnesota Senate race between Republican incumbent Norm Coleman and Democrat Al Franken, there were multiple allegations about Coleman's ethics while in office. YouTube users, such as NormColemanMustGo, made and distributed videos challenging Coleman and supporting Franken. Franken won the race and this was one of several gains made by the Democrats in Congress.

With so many citizens posting YouTube videos, it was important for candidates to make their own voice heard on the site. Approximately 70 percent of congressional candidates had their own YouTube channel during the 2008 election. The median number of videos posted was 20.5. Often these videos were commercials that had aired on television, speeches given on the campaign trail, or footage of campaign rallies. At the high end of the pool, Nancy Pelosi, Democratic representative from California, posted 1,445 videos during the campaign. The site was primarily used by incumbent candidates who had a strong base and the resources to devote campaign staff to developing videos.

In the North Carolina Senate race between Elizabeth Dole and Kay Hagan, traditional attack ads featured prominently on the candidates' YouTube channels. The Dole campaign posted a television advertisement called "Promises," which received more than 100,000 views. The ad accused Hagan of hosting secret fund-raisers with a prominent atheist group and asked what kind of promises Hagan was making in exchange for campaign funds. One of Hagan's most popular YouTube videos, receiving more than 130,000 views, was called "Belief." In this 30-second ad, Hagan responded to the challenges Dole made about her Christian beliefs and accused Dole of faking her voice.

The official campaigns for Dole and Hagan posted several advertisements dedicated to the question of Hagan's religious beliefs. In support of these candidates, outside organizations made longer versions of these advertisements that were also popular on YouTube. The National Republican Senatorial Committee made a two-and-a-half-minute Web video called "Godless," which included more clips of representatives from the Godless Americans PAC. In response, MoveOn and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee created Web videos questioning Dole's voting record and accusing her of taking money from oil companies to thwart green energy initiatives. These advertisements were often television commercials that were being circulated on the Web through YouTube.

Myspace and Facebook

The big social media story of 2008 was YouTube, but more traditional social networking sites also played a key role in the election. Specifically,

Myspace and Facebook were important places for candidates to get to know the voters. Myspace was launched in 2003, and Facebook followed shortly after in 2004. Both sites were used by candidates and voters to distribute campaign information in the 2006 election. During the 2008 campaign, Facebook introduced features that allowed users to design applications for other users. Campaigns took advantage of this to turn the site into a phone bank, raise funds, and release news to users. During the 2006 election, Facebook made profile pages for every candidate running for office and provided campaigns with the passwords necessary to access and maintain these sites. In 2008, Facebook switched from candidate "profiles" to candidate "pages." The original candidate profiles were similar to other user profiles, and Facebook users could friend a candidate just like they could anyone else. With pages, users "liked" candidates instead of friending them. This created a distinction between general users and politicians. Much like with the candidate profiles, Facebook required an official campaign representative to create the page and to maintain it.

Facebook was popular among congressional candidates in 2008. In the Senate, 89.6 percent of candidates had profiles and in the House it was 72.4 percent. In 2008, the use of Facebook was most successful for politicians who were already well known. Candidates such as Nancy Pelosi, Barney Frank, and Rahm Emanuel saw continual increases in Facebook supporters throughout the election. Other candidates might have sustained activity, even if it was less.

Twitter

Like YouTube, Twitter was still a fairly new technology during the 2008 election. Twitter was founded in 2006. There were approximately 1.6 million tweets in 2007, and by 2008 that number had grown to more than 400 million tweets. During the election, those politicians who did tweet used the technology primarily to report their location or talk about their activities for the day. Some early adopters in the Senate were Marco Rubio, a Republican senator from Florida who joined in August 2008, and Claire McCaskill, a Democratic senator from Missouri who joined in September 2008. McCaskill's use of social media is noteworthy in that she maintained her Twitter and Facebook accounts herself. Most political candidates hired staff to maintain their profiles and produce tweets. Neither of these politicians was up for re-election. Al Franken, a Democrat from Minnesota who was elected to the Senate in 2008, was one of the few campaigning senators to use the technology during the election. In the House of Representatives, where everyone was up for election, several candidates used the technology. Notable among them are John Boehner, Republican representative from Ohio who, as an incumbent, defeated Nicholas Von Stein with 68 percent of the vote. Boehner was quite familiar with the technology, having joined Twitter in July 2007. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Democratic representative from California, joined Twitter in August 2008. Pelosi was considered to be in a "safe district"—in 2008 she won 72 percent of the vote—but her campaign still kept up with most of the major advances in social media.

Some members of Congress were using Twitter for political conversations outside the election. Republican Representative John Culberson of Texas and Democratic Representative Tim Ryan of Ohio took to Twitter during the summer of 2008 to debate the ethics of opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska to oil drilling. Culberson and Ryan both won their elections by wide margins that year and were campaigning in what were considered "safe" districts.

While Twitter was used by candidates to discuss political issues and campaign, it was used by other organizations during the election to monitor the voting process. In 2008, a project called "Twit the Vote" encouraged users to use iPhones at the polls to tweet about any difficulties with the voting process and provide updates on wait times at polling stations. These tweets were combined with Google Maps to give voters a picture of the voting process throughout the day. The information was also collected by Vote Report to help monitor fraud and other problems on Election Day.

Second Life

Some congressional candidates were more immersed in the new media than others. For instance, George Miller, a Democratic representative from the San Francisco Bay Area who has served from 1975 to the present, used a variety of social media outlets during the 2008 campaign.

Miller had an avatar on the site Second Life, he ran a podcast called MillerTV, and he had a regularly active blog site. All of these formats have allowed Miller to answer questions directly from his constituents.

Miller was not the only congressional candidate to make use of Second Life for political campaigning. Second Life was launched in 2003, and by 2008 many universities and businesses were establishing a presence within the virtual world. During the 2008 election, several candidates set up offices in Second Life. Ron Paul, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Texas, and YearlyKos, an early version of the popular conference Netroots Nation run by Daily Kos, both held political rallies in Second Life during the 2008 election. It is unclear how much the site actually contributed to election outcomes, but the site was sufficiently established that it was a standard place for political campaigning.

E-mail was an established form of campaign communication prior to the 2008 election. Bill Clinton used e-mail as a form of political campaigning during the 1992 presidential election. Both President George W. Bush and Democratic candidate John Kerry used e-mail during the 2004 election to release breaking news and to organize volunteers. So, by 2008 e-mail, unlike other social media, had become a conventional campaign method. The Pew Research Foundation reports that 23 percent of Americans received an election-related e-mail at least once a week during the 2008 election. These e-mails often urged voters to support a particular candidate or discuss a particular political issue. Most candidates collected the e-mail addresses of supporters when they visited the campaign Web site. However, this required a voter who was proactively interested in the candidate. Republican campaign firms like Voter Contact Service and the Voter Emailing Company were popular during the election for their database of potential voters. These firms provided candidates with access to voters who might not take the initiative to visit a campaign site.

Mobile Technology

One emerging trend during the 2008 election was the use of mobile technology by political campaigns. Barack Obama broke new ground when he used text messaging to announce the selection of Joe Biden as his running mate. The presidential candidates also made use of the recent emergence of the smartphone by developing phone applications that made it possible for supporters to do campaign fund-raising from their personal phones. In 2008, congressional candidates were slow to catch on to text messaging. Mainly, they faced a problem collecting cell phone numbers of supporters. By 2010, candidates like Senator Robin Carnahan and Representative Roy Blunt were using stunts and gimmicks to get voters to contact them by text message. The contact allowed them to develop databases of voters for sending out campaign news and organizing supporters by text messaging.

Much of the movement forward in social media campaigning in 2008 was made by the presidential candidates. The slow rate at which many members of Congress adopted social media might be attributed to the rules that governed use of the Web in 2008. Prior to 2008, members of Congress were not allowed to post any official statements on social media sites. All official statements had to go through House.gov or Senate.gov. Social media sites could be used for campaigning but were not allowed for other activities. As a result, most candidates were simply unfamiliar with the sites. Additionally, most candidates hired people to do their social media campaigning, and for some candidates that expense was a luxury they could not afford.

Amber Davisson
DePaul University

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2006); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, Presidential (2008).

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Campaigns, Congressional (2010)

Social media was in its infancy and thus sparsely used in the 2006 elections. It played a more prominent part in the 2008 campaigns. By 2010, the use of sites like Facebook and Twitter became regular features in the congressional elections.

Republicans won 63 seats in the House of Representatives and six seats in the U.S. Senate. The 63 seat pickup in the House allowed Republicans to capture majority control and was nine more than they gained in the 1994 midterm election that ushered in the so-called Republican revolution in Congress.

The six seats in the Senate were less than commonly expected earlier in the year and allowed Democrats to retain control of the U.S. Senate. The use of social media helped fuel the Tea Party movement and the anti-Washington and anti-incumbent moods that aided the Republicans' ascent in the House. It also worked to curb their chances of winning some key seats in the Senate.

Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube barely existed during the 2006 midterm election. A YouTube video led to a change in campaigning as a result of the so-called macaca moment, in which Virginia Senator George Allen was caught on tape using a racial slur and eventually lost his re-election bid. By 2008 and 2010, candidates were well aware that their every statement on the campaign trail could be recorded and was likely to end up on social media sites and go viral within moments.

Incumbents and challengers used social media to advertise their positions, attack opponents, raise money, and gain notoriety in 2010. A main reason that candidates gravitated to social media is because voters were using it to gather information and make decisions about who to support. While there was tremendous activity online, there is less of a correlation to greater voter turnout or determining victorious candidates from their use of social media.

Studies and Reports

According to a Pew Internet report, 73 percent of adult Internet users used online sources to get information about or get involved in the 2010 campaigns. This represented 54 percent of all adults. Of those online political users, 58 percent looked online for news about politics, and 32 percent in the United States reported that they got most of their information about the 2010 campaigns from sources online.

About 21 percent of adults used Facebook or Myspace or another social networking site for political purposes during the 2010 campaigns, according to the Pew surveys. Another 2 percent used Twitter. Nine percent said they received candidate information, 8 percent posted political content, and 7 percent friended a candidate or political group on a social networking site. One percent said they used Twitter to follow the election results in 2010 as they were happening.

The Pew report found that political social media users were younger and generally more educated than other Internet users. About 42 percent were younger than 30 years old, and 41 percent had college degrees. Demographically, they were similar to all Internet users in terms of race, gender, and income.

The survey found 40 percent of Republican voters and 38 percent of Democratic voters got involved in the campaigns through the use of social media. About 22 percent of those who identified as Tea Party supporters used social media sites for political purposes. Of the Internet users identified in the report, they voted for Republican candidates for Congress by a 45 to 41 percent margin over Democratic candidates.

Still, the main source of campaign news for Pew survey participants was television (67 percent), which was consistent with the past two midterm

elections. Newspapers garnered 27 percent, while the Internet provided 24 percent of the campaign news. That was up from 15 percent in 2006 and 13 percent in 2002. Radio held relatively steady at 14 percent. Internet news sources cut primarily into the influence of newspapers, which dropped from 34 percent in 2006.

The percentage of adult online users who viewed videos online increased from 19 percent in 2006 to 31 percent in 2010. Users with higher education and income levels were more likely to watch political videos online. Viewing was relatively consistent across age groups. Men (36 percent) were more likely than women (26 percent) to watch political content. White non-Hispanics (33 percent) viewed online videos more than black non-Hispanic (24 percent) and Hispanic (23 percent) users.

By party, Republicans were more likely to view videos online in 2010 than Democrats in the Pew poll. About 40 percent of Republicans watched online videos, up from 19 percent in 2006, while Democrats increased to 32 percent in 2010 from 24 percent in 2006. Twenty-two percent of nonvoters admitted to watching political videos online in 2010, up from 16 percent in 2006.

The main sources of online news according to the Pew report were the major cable networks and the search engines. CNN.com was used by 22 percent, followed by Yahoo.com at 20 percent, Google.com at 13 percent, and Fox and Msn.com at 10 percent. MSNBC.com was used by 7 percent, and AOL.com and the *New York Times* by 4 percent, and then the candidates' Web sites and *Drudge Report* at 2 percent, followed by the *Huffington Post* identified by 1 percent. Twenty-nine percent of users were using other sources.

Another use of social media was to connect and interact with campaigns. Sixteen percent of adults said they sent e-mails related to the elections, and 17 percent revealed online for whom they would vote. Seven percent gathered information or organized meetings through social media, while 6 percent took part in an online discussion, listserv, or other political activity. Five percent used the Internet to volunteer, help a campaign, or get people to the polls.

One comprehensive report by OhMyGov Inc. found that Republicans in Congress fared better than Democrats in getting Facebook "likes" as a measure of fans. This was likely due to increased enthusiasm to get involved and vote. The report counted the fans and friends for the official Facebook pages from May 1 to August 31, 2010, of the members of the 111th Congress. They found that 251 of 255 Democratic members (98.4 percent) and 169 of 178 Republican members (94.9 percent) had fan pages. In the Senate, 53 of the 57 Democratic senators (92.9 percent) and 39 of 41 Republican senators (95.1 percent) had fan pages. They did not count independent members.

They measured the rate at which fans were added to measure public sentiment on Facebook. The report found that Republicans increased their number of fans faster than Democrats. Republicans also had more fans overall. They numbered 1,634,127 on May 1 and 2,148,619 on August 31. Democrats increased from 780,035 on May 1 to 952,847 on August 31. The increase among House Republicans was at a statistically significant rate, while in the Senate, there were no significant differences based on party. This was pertinent because there were fewer Republicans in Congress at the time.

Research by Bloomberg found that all 73 Democratic and Republican candidates for Senate had Facebook accounts, 72 of them had Web sites, and 70 used Twitter. There were YouTube accounts on 85 percent and blogs on 43 percent of the Web sites.

The day after the election, Facebook reported that 74 percent of House candidates and 81 percent of the Senate candidates with the most Facebook fans on their sites won their contests.

Another report by HeadCount.org also found that Republicans appeared to be more engaged than Democrats in the online world in 2010. Republican candidates for Senate had 1.4 million Facebook friends and more than 500,000 followers on Twitter compared to 300,000 friends and 90,000 followers for their Democratic opponents.

A study by the E-Voter Institute found that three out of five Americans who considered themselves as somewhat politically active were members of a social network. The study also found that 70 percent of them planned to vote in 2010. More than two out of five voters expected candidates to make campaign information available or to engage supporters using social media. Forty percent expected candidates to use Twitter, and around half of

respondents expected online ads, campaign videos, blogs, Webcasts and podcasts. Two-thirds expected to receive e-mails and TV ads. Eight out of 10 expected an official Web site.

A study from the University of Michigan School of Information and the College of Engineering looked at the use of Twitter in the 2010 campaign. It found that conservatives were the most active tweeters during the campaign cycle. It analyzed tweets from 687 candidates for the U.S. House, Senate, and gubernatorial seats. The study found that Republicans and specifically Tea Party candidates tweeted more often than Democrats. The Republicans tweeted an average of 732 times over a three-year period compared to 551 tweets for Democrats.

Republicans tended to tweet about economic issues with posts related to "bills," "budget," "deficit," "spending," and "WSJ" (*Wall Street Journal*), as well as "Bush" as top topics. Democrats focused on a variety of topics like "education," "jobs," "oil spill," "clean energy," "reform," and "Afghanistan."

The self-identified Tea Party candidates were studied closely. Despite the image of the Tea Party as a disparate, grassroots, unorganized movement, researchers found that Tea Party members formed more of an online community than the other candidates. Tea Party members retweeted each other's messages an average of 82.6 times, compared to 52.2 for Republicans and 40 retweets for Democrats. Tea Party proponents specifically tweeted about then-Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, liberal Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank, and former President Bill Clinton, all perceived as adversaries to the conservative movement.

The Michigan researchers were able to predict election outcomes with 88 percent accuracy based on the number and content of tweets, the number of followers, and taking into account incumbency. They found that too many tweets could be a campaign liability, and the proper amount and tone of the social networking done by candidates would be in a middle range.

Traditional and Social Media Blend

Both traditional and new media companies found innovative ways to use social media in 2010. Twitter and iPad formats were two of the most-used platforms by the traditional media companies.

Traditional media companies found ways to use social media to increase their brands. The *Washington Post* coined the #Elections hashtag on Twitter, the first news organization to do that. The *New York Times* created maps and charts for election monitoring that were viewable on the iPad. The *New York Times* also created a Twitter visualization to track election discussions on that social network. The *Wall Street Journal* did live election coverage available online and on the iPad.

Twitter encouraged voters to use the hashtag #votereport to tell about their experiences at the polls and use #NYCvotes specifically for New York voters. Foursquare created a real-time map of where people were voting. It also offered an "I Voted" badge to anyone who checked in at his or her polling station while voting.

Facebook posted notes to remind people to vote and apps to help people find polling locations.

Scientists from the University of California, San Diego, studied the impact of Facebook on voting in 2010. On November 2, almost all of the 61 million who signed onto Facebook received a get-out-the-vote message on the top of the news feed. The nonpartisan message included a reminder that it was Election Day, a link to local polling places, and an option to click on "I Voted" to be included in a count of Facebook users who had reported voting. It also included pictures of up to six of their friends who reported voting.

In the study, published in the September 13, 2012, issue of *Nature*, two control groups of 600,000 did not receive the pictures. One group had the get-out-the-vote message, and the other group did not receive any message. Researchers then examined public voting records to determine actual voter turnout among the various groups.

They found that the message that showed a user pictures of their friends who had voted was directly responsible for 60,000 additional votes nationwide. They also concluded that it was responsible for 280,000 indirect votes by friends of friends, which they termed the "social contagion effect."

Because only about 1 percent of Facebook users stated their political affiliations, the role of ideology or party could not be determined. With about 90.7 million total voters in 2010, about 37.8 percent voter turnout, the number of votes tracked

did not sway the national results but could have played a significant factor in individual races.

Ultimately of significance from this study, according to the authors, is their conclusion that online activities could influence real-world actions like voting.

House, Senate, and Gubernatorial Races

The candidate with more Facebook fans won six of the 10 top contests for the U.S. Senate (California, Illinois, Missouri, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Wisconsin).

Five of the top 10 candidates searched on Google in October won their races, and five lost. The top 10 most-searched candidates in Google News for October 2010 included the two candidates for governor of California. The first was Meg Whitman, former chief executive officer (CEO) of eBay and Republican candidate, and fourth was Democrat Jerry Brown.

The second-most searched was Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, who survived a re-election challenge from Tea Party candidate Sharon Angle, the fifth-most searched candidate.

The third-most searched was Rand Paul, Tea Party-backed candidate for Senate from Kentucky, who won his race. Paul, son of Texas Congressman Ron Paul, was an important figure in the emergence of the Tea Party and in making the movement a national phenomenon.

The sixth and seventh were high-profile, yet losing candidates who also had Tea Party support, Carl Paladino for governor of New York and Linda McMahon for a Senate seat from Connecticut. Then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi was the only House member in the top 10, at number eight. Patty Murray, an incumbent Senator from Washington, was ninth.

Charlie Crist, the governor of Florida who was forced out of the Republican Party by Tea Party favorite Marco Rubio, who won the Senate seat, was 10th. Crist ran as an independent against Rubio and Democrat Kendrick Meek. There was speculation late in the campaign that Crist would gain support from Bill Clinton and announce he would caucus with Democrats if he won the race in an attempt to bolster moderate and Democratic voters to support him over Rubio.

Rubio ultimately won the seat aided by his own popularity online. Rubio launched his campaign with a YouTube video on May 5, 2009, with a 2:49-minute video discussing why he was running for the Senate and used campaign videos and social networking throughout the campaign to get his message across to voters of different age groups and demographics. In the three-way race, Rubio accounted for 72 percent of all Facebook "likes," 58 percent of all Twitter followers, 85 percent of all YouTube views, 55 percent of all Web visits to candidate Web sites, and 48.9 percent of the final vote. His campaign raised donations from one in three of his e-mail subscribers. In October 2010, Rubio had 128,800 Facebook followers, compared to 51,600 for Crist and Meek combined. Rubio's television ads urged viewers to follow him on Facebook. Rubio's use of Twitter was also prolific during the campaign. Early in the campaign, he would post updates from the campaign trail using Twitter and Facebook. But, after an incident in May 2009, when he disclosed personal information about a date night with his wife that was picked by the *Miami Herald,* Rubio was more reserved in his use of social media.

Angle in Nevada had about 94,700 Facebook friends in October 2010 compared to 13,700 for Reid, the Senate majority leader. Christine O'Donnell had 25,600, twice as many as her opponent Chris Coons in the race for the Delaware Senate seat. Both Angle and O'Donnell lost their races even as they gained national notoriety for their support from the Tea Party.

According to the Project for Excellence in Journalism, President Barack Obama was the subject of the largest number of stories online from January through October 2010.

Republican Senate nominee from Delaware Christine O'Donnell, a Tea Party–backed candidate, was second. O'Donnell garnered much attention for some comments she made before she was a candidate. O'Donnell had said that she "dabbled into witchcraft" in a 1999 episode of *Politically Incorrect* with Bill Maher. When those clips became Internet sensations during the 2010 campaign, O'Donnell felt compelled to address the issue. She ran a 30-second ad in which she said, "I'm not a witch. I'm nothing you've heard. I'm you." The ad, uploaded on YouTube on October 4, 2010, had more than 1 million views and caused more harm than good for her campaign by perpetuating the story and inviting ridicule of her candidacy. It

led to Web chatter that questioned her fitness as a candidate and invited further scrutiny of her campaign. By the end of October, O'Donnell publicly regretted making and airing the video.

Meg Whitman, who spent more than $160 million of her own money on her campaign, was the subject of the third-most stories, followed by Kentucky candidate Rand Paul.

Joe Sestak, who was challenging for a Senate seat out of Pennsylvania, was fifth. Sestak was a Congressman from eastern Pennsylvania who decided to challenge Senator Arlen Specter for the Democratic nomination. Specter was a longtime moderate Republican who switched parties in 2011 to avoid a primary challenge from a more conservative Republican, which he was widely expected to lose. President Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and Governor Ed Rendell supported Specter and tried to dissuade Sestak from challenging him. An online straw poll by the Progressive Change Campaign Committee from May 6 through 11, 2009, called "Should a Draft Sestak movement be created to take on Sen. Arlen Specter in the Pennsylvania Democratic primary?" garnered 8,000 votes nationwide, with 86 percent responding yes and 85 percent of Pennsylvanians in support. Sestak took on the Democratic establishment and defeated Specter in the primary before ultimately losing to Republican Pat Toomey in the general election.

A Tea Party protest sign from the Taxpayer March on Washington, D.C., on September 9, 2009. During the 2010 congressional campaign, conservatives, particularly those identifying with the Tea Party, were the most active users of social media.

Nevada Senate foes Angle and Reid were sixth and seventh on the list, then Crist and Paladino. Arkansas Senator Blanche Lincoln, a Democrat who angered many in her party and ultimately lost re-election, was ninth. Gubernatorial candidate Brown of California was 10th.

In early 2010, the campaign of Carly Fiorina caused an online stir with a Web video. Fiorina, a former Hewlett-Packard chief executive officer (CEO), was running in the Republican primary for U.S. Senate in California. The so-called demon sheep 3:22-minute-long video posted on YouTube depicted her opponent, former Representative Tom Campbell, as a fiscal conservative in name only (FCINO) as a play on Republican in name only (RINO). The video showed footage of docile sheep walking in a field before switching to images of Campbell, while the narrator criticized Campbell's past positions as not being fiscally conservative. Then, it switched back to the field, and there was an image of a person, supposedly Campbell, in a sheep's costume and with bright, glowing-red eyes. The campaign claimed that they were depicting that Campbell was a wolf in sheep's clothing. The ad was viewed more than 100,000 times online that week and led to a #demonsheep hashtag, a top-trending phrase in a few days, largely through the ad being mocked. California Democrats countered the video with three of their own that took on the Republican challengers Fiorina, Campbell, and Chuck DeVore. Fiorina went on to win the primary over Campbell. She was defeated in the general election by incumbent Democrat Barbara Boxer. Fiorina had 306,000 Twitter followers, while Boxer had 23,400.

Another provocative ad was used by Democrat Alan Grayson in central Florida against Dan Webster for a House seat. The ad, titled "Taliban

Dan Webster," actually aired on television before it went viral and caused an Internet reaction. Grayson's ad took comments by the religiously conservative Webster out of context, quoting the phrases "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husband," and "She should submit to me—that's in the Bible." It repeated "submit to me" in trying to paint Webster as an extremist. Grayson, the incumbent, lost the seat to Webster.

In a strange twist of online activity, an intern with Rand Paul's campaign was accused of signing onto DailyKos, a progressive political blog site, with a fake identity to post negative comments about Paul's opponent Jack Conway.

Another odd occurrence was when someone using the handle WingNutWatch joined Twitter and tried to provoke Tea Party activists to tweet racist or suspicious messages. They were collected and monitored on the Web site TeaParty Tracker.

Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa took to Twitter in 2007 at age 77 and was a frequent tweeter during the 2010 campaign. One of his television ads made light of the fact that Grassley said, "I'll tweet; I'll text; I'll do whatever it takes. I work for you."

Allen West was elected in the Tea Party movement, the first African American elected to Congress from Florida since Reconstruction. The use of Facebook postings and YouTube clips helped generate excitement about West's campaign.

Sarah Palin, the 2008 Republican vice presidential nominee, used Facebook and Twitter to generate interest about her favored candidates in the 2010 primary and general election contests. Her SarahPAC raised money online to support conservative candidates and try to defeat Democrats.

When the Republican Majority Leader John Boehner (R-OH) became the speaker of the House in the 112th Congress, he had to find ways to hold the moderate and conservative wings of the Republican Party together, especially with the arrival of more than 40 Tea Party-backed candidates. The use of social media by officials once sworn into office continued to shape political debates throughout the session, including the 2011 showdown over raising the national debt ceiling.

The use of social media in 2010 foreshadowed the role it would play in the 2012 campaigns. It would now be expected that every candidate had a Web page and high visibility on social networking sites. As the avenues of social media grew and transformed, so did their roles in being used for congressional and presidential elections.

Sean D. Foreman
Barry University

See Also: Boehner, John; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Grassley, Chuck; Tea Party Movement; West, Allen.

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Campaigns, Digital

Evolving media, online technologies, and digital applications have fundamentally changed how political candidates campaign. Candidates

seeking office can no longer rely solely on traditional media outlets and historic campaign strategies to win elections; they must now also campaign where audiences and potential voters are in digital environments. This is not to say that traditional methods of political campaigning are no longer relevant, but in order for a candidate to be successful, campaigns must strategically incorporate digital campaign tactics into overall campaign strategies. Candidates have started to use digital campaign components in almost every aspect of political campaigning.

Evolution of the Digital Campaign

The history of digital campaign tools is relatively short yet substantial and significant. Digital technologies began to make a measurable contribution to political campaigns in the late 1980s, when the fax machine was used to distribute campaign information to the political press. Although, by contemporary standards, the fax machine may not be considered a revolutionary digital tool, it allowed campaigns a method of quickly controlling campaign talking points and providing rebuttals directly to the media. The campaigns of the early 1990s saw e-mail emerge as a campaign tool. E-mail allowed campaigns to send mass and chain e-mails to constituents or potential voters about particular issues or policies. E-mail messages were also seen as tools for empowering voters by encouraging recipients to become more active in the campaign.

However, these early campaigns did not necessarily incorporate e-mail as part of their overall campaign strategies, rather as supplemental communication, and continued to focus their attentions on more traditional campaign methods. As digital campaigns have continued to evolve, e-mail has remained a consistent tool for reaching supporters and potential voters. As most recipients have signed up to receive e-mail from campaigns, it is an effective communication tool, especially when incorporated into broader digital campaign tactics, and still serves as one of the key sources of campaign fund-raising.

In 1994, Senator Dianne Feinstein became the first political candidate to construct a Web site, initiating the use of a communication channel that would permanently change how politicians communicate with voters, fund-raise, and organize volunteers. Subsequent elections saw a vast rise in the use of candidate Web sites, specifically among presidential candidates, and contemporarily, a candidate cannot be viewed as a serious contender without an official Web site.

The initial integration of Web sites into campaign strategies provided a central location for voters to receive targeted information about candidates, find details about candidates' positions and voting records, and through rudimentary discussion boards, connect with other like-minded voters. Web sites also began to alter the one-to-many method of communication prominent in political campaigning. Voters had the ability to communicate directly with campaigns via e-mail as well as connect with people, across socioeconomic boundaries, through contributions to online discussion groups.

These early Web sites initiated the use of the Internet as a digital campaign tool. Campaigns quickly learned that they could, at least to some extent, use the Internet to control public perception, distribute information directly to the political press and opinion leaders, and quickly raise questions regarding the positions of opposing candidates. Campaigns began sending point-by-point rebuttals of opponent's claims directly to the media, attempted to control the flow of news, and tried to influence how debate outcomes were reported. On a broader political level, national political organizations began to use Web sites to communicate and actively connect with voters and analyze how individuals, beyond early adopters and activists, used the Internet.

However, use of the Internet during these early digital campaigns did not come without criticism. Those leery of the long-term impacts and potentials of the Internet regarded campaign and political communication occurring through it as being symbolic of nothing other than individuals engaging with a popular new medium. Critics questioned the validity of online deliberation, argued that online participation did not equate to a substantive commitment to civic engagement, and struggled to find measurable links between online political interaction and more tangible forms of political engagement, such as voting. Interestingly, many of these criticisms of early digital campaigns still resonate in contemporary assessments regarding the impact of emerging

digital tools, such as social media and mobile applications.

Although the Internet landscape has changed dramatically since the introduction of candidate Web sites, they are still essential tools in integrated political campaign strategies. Candidate Web sites continue to function as the communication hub and serve as the official face of digital campaigns. Contemporary campaign Web sites are the most effective location through which to engage in direct messaging with voters, emphasize important campaign events, and encourage community building among supporters. Candidate Web sites also provide the highest level of image control for campaigns, where embedded videos, news stories, and links to internal social networking sites can control what information voters see and, perhaps most important, what they do not.

Social media Web sites began to emerge as digital campaign tools in the elections of the mid-2000s. While the early functionalities of these Web sites were somewhat limited, they helped generate voter interest and recruit volunteers and fundamentally changed the relationship between voters and campaigns. Social media sites created the perception of a two-way relationship between voters and candidates and greatly expanded the many-to-many format of communication first experienced through discussion boards. Social networking has extended political and campaign communication, expanded opportunities for democratic engagement, altered traditional political margins and hierarchies, and made democracy more accessible. These networks have also become important vehicles through which campaigns clarify and highlight information, generate donations, and mobilize volunteers and voters. When integrated into overarching campaign strategies, social media have helped produce some of the most substantial digital political events thus far in the history of political campaigning.

Digital Campaign Landscape

Digital tools have resulted in substantial changes in how politicians campaign. Voters are no longer passive audience members who must wait for information; rather, the Internet has changed voters into active gatherers and creators of information. Digital environments provide for levels of selectivity and interactivity that are limited through most traditional mass media formats and allow for extensive engagement with the formalized political system. New interactive media environments encourage networking, organization, the generation of new spaces, and the emergence of new types of communities, all of which provide forums where voters can become integral in digital campaigns. In addition, widespread and affordable access to the Internet, mobile technologies, and other cheap, populist technological tools is providing ways for voters to become more informed, involved, and engaged. As communication technologies have continued to evolve, digital tools, such as online video, social networking sites, candidate Web sites, and mobile applications, have become essential weapons in the arsenals of political campaigns.

Online Video

Online video has become one of the most important tools in digital campaigning. Videos that are appropriately conceptualized and placed can cheaply, quickly, and effectively reach a vast audience, easily generating thousands of views and shares. With the rise of video on demand (VOD) services and the decline in traditional television viewing, the digital environment is ripe with potential audience members. Digital videos can convey a sense of informality between candidates and supporters, introduce potential voters to the everydayness of candidates, and easily reach specific target demographics. Candidates have used online video to announce their candidacies, involve the public in the selection of campaign themes, share campaign information, recruit volunteers, and solicit donations. Campaigns have created, uploaded, and shared thousands of videos, have saved millions of dollars in advertising expenses, and have generated audience views in the hundreds of millions.

Social Networking

In digital campaigns, vast networks of supporters are formed around candidates, parties, issues, and ideas via social networking sites. During election cycles, campaigns work to use the millions of candidates' "friends," posts, comments, and tweets generated on social networking sites to convert enthusiastic participants into active voters. Campaigns utilize the functionalities of

social media sites, such as interactive applications, groups, debate participation, and contests, to consistently engage potential voters in the election process. Through strategies that offer various methods of consistent participant engagement, campaigns can work toward creating a community of like-minded people that will hopefully translate into votes. By incorporating social networking strategies into other methods of digital and traditional campaigning, campaigns are able to spread messages across multiple sites and platforms that complement their target demographics. Campaigns have embraced the role of social media in digital campaigning by allocating significant resources to ensure that target audiences stay active and involved with the campaign through social networking.

Attempting to harness the power of social media, the Barack Obama campaign created its own social networking site, MyBarackObama.com. The campaign used the site, which allowed users to create profiles, friends lists, and personal blogs to encourage users to join groups, participate in fund-raising, arrange events, and participate in volunteer activities. The goal of MyBarackObama.com was to bring supporters from other social networking sites and Obama's candidate Web site to this central hub of Obama supporters, where the campaign's message could be communicated and supporters could be energized to volunteer, donate, and vote.

Campaigns also use social networking for microtargeting (techniques that involve cluster-based marketing to specific demographic segments) of voter constituencies. By establishing profiles on specialized social networking sites that are geared toward specific demographics, such as the black, Latino, Asian American, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities, campaigns can effectively target demographic segments with talking points that are of specific concern to them. Microtargeting can also be accomplished through the creation of segmented social networking sites, such as the creation of Twitter accounts for each state, which allows campaigns to target state-relevant messages to supporters. This type of digital campaigning allows campaigns to target more aggressive advertising and topics to users of specific sites based on constituency demographics.

Candidate Web Sites

Candidate Web sites remain an important hub of digital campaign communication. Web sites are where the highest levels of message control and candidate image construction occurs and where campaigns can frequently update content and incorporate interactive features to keep voters interested and returning. Voter interaction with candidate Web sites can provide a wealth of information for campaigns. These interactions allow campaigns to create databases of potential voters, effectively and rapidly access voter demographic and issue data, and quickly send targeted e-mails. Campaigns also engage in microtargeting by offering opportunities to join different constituency groups and including state-by-state content pages with local information, both of which allow for targeting constituency-based content.

Mobile Applications

Mobile applications connect voters to campaigns, literally in the palms of their hands, and possess many of the characteristics of the aforementioned technologies. Application users function as digital foot soldiers of the campaigns and through push notifications (a way for an application to send information to a user's phone even when the app is not in use) are often among the first people to get campaign updates and news sent directly to their smartphones. Through mobile apps, users can employ social integration functionalities to post tweets, updates, and messages, send e-mails directly from the campaign to their own social networking pages, help register voters, and access canvassing information directly through the app. Social integration technologies also utilize Google mapping technologies to help supporters find their way to campaign events and polling locations.

Digital Campaign Outcomes

These digital tools serve to supplement and enhance traditional campaign strategies. They also provide new ways of managing a candidate's image and presence, fund-raising, volunteer mobilization, voter engagement, community building, and targeting voters.

Image and Presence

Managing a candidate's image and presence is important in digital campaigning. Digital

technologies can help candidates effectively build their political brands and, if leveraged effectively, this presence can help candidates build political buzz, reach potential voters, build community, and work to translate enthusiasm into votes. Digital platforms are excellent venues through which to float issues, host debates and conversations about relevant campaign topics, and provide message-driven information. Digital campaigns can be used to challenge or rebut statements by or the positions of opponents, to help drive mainstream media coverage, and to circumvent media and political branding by communicating with supporters directly and interactively.

Fund-Raising

Digital fund-raising is perhaps one of the crowning achievements of digital campaigning. In 1998, Barbara Boxer's online fund-raising campaign, which was considered very successful at the time, netted $25,000. This was just the beginning of the impact that digital technologies would have on campaign fund-raising. Contemporarily, campaigns raise hundreds of millions of dollars online and routinely break fund-raising records for the amount of money that is raised in very short time frames. Digital fund-raising is substantially more cost-efficient than traditional methods of fund-raising, and while the result is often large numbers of small donations, these donations cost campaigns very little to solicit. Campaigns have developed new, inventive, and sometimes gimmicky methods for effectively reaching more donors than has been possible through traditional fund-raising methods. Digital donors often include people who have never given to political campaigns and those who are willing to give small donations repeatedly. Over time, it is possible that digital fund-raising strategies will make campaigns less beholden to wealthy donors or private interest groups.

Volunteer Mobilization, Community Building, and Voter Engagement

Using digital campaign strategies to bring together a mass number of volunteers first occurred in 1998 when Jesse Ventura's gubernatorial campaign organized a 72-hour final drive through the state entirely via e-mail. Since then, online videos, social networking, candidate Web sites, and mobile technologies have made it easier for campaigns to recruit and mobilize voters. Digital campaigns provide centralized locations through which campaign messages can resonate with potential volunteers, offline events can be organized, volunteers can post photos and testimonials of their experiences, and new volunteers can be recruited. Online volunteer mobilization has resulted in thousands of offline events being planned, volunteer groups being created, and millions of phone calls to potential voters being made through virtual phone-banking platforms. Political campaigns have capitalized on the use of digital tools to energize volunteers and engage them in event organization, grassroots fund-raising, and vote building.

Much in the same ways that campaigns have recruited and managed volunteers, digital tools have been used to build a sense of community among supporters. Using digital strategies, such as text message alerts, the ability to watch campaign speeches from mobile apps, behind-the-scenes photos and videos, and updates from official campaign blogs, have moved campaigns past simple e-mail blasts and created the sense of community with supporters. The use of social networking groups, hashtags, mobile apps, airing of campaign videos on YouTube, and the ability to check in at rallies through social media all work to make supporters feel like an integral part of the campaign community. The key way to accomplish community building is through capitalizing on the experience of being involved with the campaign, which can ultimately turn campaign supporters into voters. Through employing these techniques, digital campaigns have been successful in harnessing and mobilizing volunteers, building substantial online communities, and increasing voter engagement.

Gathering Data and Targeting Voters

Digital campaigns are also a very effective method through which to collect data about potential voters. Through data mining, microtargeting, voterfile targeting, and social media analysis, campaigns can learn about voters' online behaviors, voting trends, and the key issues resonating among certain demographics and develop the most effective strategies for cultivating relationships with these potential voters. Through a combination of

demographic and behavioral targeting, campaigns can use information about individual voters to drive recruitment and increase persuasion and turnout. Campaigns have deployed such sophisticated digital listening strategies that they can customize digital messages using social networking capabilities and use geo-targetable options to deliver ads within their voters' districts, targeting advertising almost to the individual level. Digital campaigns track each potential voter with such detail that they know once he or she has cast a ballot and then turn their attention to last-minute deciders.

Challenges of Digital Campaigns

While online tactics are essential to contemporary digital campaigns, there are inherently challenges that accompany them. The ease with which Web sites can be created and the speed at which social media posts and user-generated videos can become viral can make it difficult for campaigns to control candidates' images, keep talking points from becoming distorted, and keep the voters on point with the campaigns' messages.

This requires campaigns to manage and attempt to control both what is occurring in the mainstream media as well as what is happening in the digital environment. The fragmentation of the Internet can also make it difficult for campaigns to get and keep the attention of potential voters. With so much information and so many sites through which voters can choose to engage, retaining voters' attention and translating that attention into action, such as donations or votes, can be difficult. Finally, regulations regarding Internet campaigning lag far behind the constantly developing functionalities of the digital environment, potentially making it difficult for campaigns to know what is permissible in digital campaigns.

Conclusion

The Internet environment and digital campaign tools have already significantly impacted political campaigning and elections. These tools have revolutionized how analysts, candidates, and citizens think about and deal with politics. Digital campaigns have altered the ways in which candidates and campaigns interact with voters, substantially impacted campaigns' fund-raising abilities, and fundamentally changed political campaigning. As online technologies and the digital environment continue to change and evolve, so too will the ways in which these technologies are integrated into political candidates' overall campaign strategies.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, 2012; E-Democracy; Evolution of Social Media; Voter Turnout

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Campaigns, E-Mail

The use of e-mail in campaigns is one of the many digital communication tools enabled by Internet technology. E-mail, short for electronic mail, is a method used to exchange messages across the Internet or computer networks. In the context of political campaigns, e-mail is an efficient way for politicians to connect with large numbers of voters as message production and distribution is both quick and inexpensive. Although slow at first to emerge in the realm of electoral politics, e-mail has become a standard strategy for voter outreach. Typically used to supplement other communication

strategies, e-mail is now prevalent in virtually every campaign at all levels of government.

E-mail messaging involves asynchronous communication between a sender and a receiver. This means that an immediate response is not necessary for ongoing discussion. To engage in communication via e-mail, connection to an Internet server is only required for as long as it takes to send or receive a given message. This communication style is convenient for political campaigns because it allows them the capacity to distribute content at any time during the day. Unlike other media that require audiences to be present and engaged during the time of message distribution, e-mail technology offers senders and receivers the flexibility of attending to messages at times and locations that are most convenient for them.

The dramatic impact of Internet communications was recognized during the 2004 election. Candidates such as Howard Dean—who famously employed an array of digital tools to raise money and generate national support during the presidential primaries—used Web-based platforms such as Web sites and e-mail to connect with voters. In particular, the campaigns of presidential candidates George W. Bush and John Kerry sent hundreds of millions of e-mails in their efforts to recruit volunteers and solicit donations. Since 2004, the use of e-mail in elections has increased significantly as billions of e-mails were sent during the 2012 election.

There are several strategies that campaigns employ to generate massive lists of citizens' e-mail addresses. While an individual may actively contact a campaign requesting to be on an e-mail list, it is more common for the campaign to reach out and request information from voters. Campaigns strategically feature space throughout their literature that allows readers to provide their personal contact information. When visiting a campaign Web site during the 2012 election, it was not uncommon for visitors to be automatically redirected to a Web page that asked the users to enter their e-mails and zip codes before continuing to the Web site of the candidate.

Larger campaigns with sufficient funds may also employ the assistance of professional services that specialize in managing digital voter contacts. For example, Barack Obama's 2012 re-election campaign worked closely with the company Blue State Digital to develop and manage tens of millions of voter contacts in an e-mail campaign that engaged more than 13.5 million individual supporters. Professional e-mail services assisted 2012 candidates with crafting specific language to be used in an e-mail's subject line that would most effectively appeal to voters. In an effort to more successfully connect with individual citizens, digital professionals also helped campaigns microtarget e-mails to specific audiences. Knowledge of demographics and other personal information associated with individual e-mail addresses was crucial in allowing campaigns to send smaller and more specialized batches of messages to particular audiences.

E-mail is an effective form of campaign communication for several reasons. It can be used to increase fund-raising efforts, to better organize and mobilize volunteers, and to advertise less expensively. E-mail technology also provides an incredibly quick method for campaigns to react to media coverage or attacks from political opponents. Unlike other media messages that require considerable amounts of time and organization for production and distribution, campaigns can quickly craft and disseminate e-mail to mass audiences. For example, on October 16, 2012—the evening of the second televised presidential debate between candidates Mitt Romney and Barack Obama—vice presidential candidate Paul Ryan sent an e-mail on behalf of the Romney campaign with the subject "Mitt crushed it" just moments after the debate formally ended. The timeliness of this message was important because it immediately assured recipients of the e-mail that, despite opposing opinions being projected by Democrats, political pundits, and journalists, the Romney campaign was confident that their candidate had been victorious in the debate. The ability to quickly distribute messages via campaign e-mail allows candidates a measure of control for framing themselves and their opponents in the midst of the media frenzy and mudslinging that often accompany major elections.

In modern elections, e-mail exists as an integral part of a political campaign's integrated marketing communication strategy as it supplements the strength of other media. By announcing campaign events and featuring interactive hyperlinks to other sources of relevant digital

President Barack Obama hugs First Lady Michelle Obama following the third presidential debate with Governor Mitt Romney, at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida, on October 22, 2012. Immediately following the second debate, Paul Ryan famously sent out an e-mail on behalf of the Romney campaign with the subject "Mitt crushed it." The message was intended to reassure supporters that despite opinions to the contrary by Democrats, political pundits, and the media, their candidate had "won" the debate.

information, campaign e-mail can function as a doorway through which voters can connect with the campaign and find other more engaging ways to support a candidate. In 2012, it was common for campaigns to feature hyperlinks throughout their e-mails that would direct readers to a campaign's official Web site, where they were exposed to a wealth of additional information about the candidate. Hyperlinks to other digital platforms such as blogs, social network sites, and other digital media were also frequently embedded in campaign e-mail as a way to attract voters to these different forms of campaign communication.

Campaign e-mail often appears to come straight from the candidate. However, campaigns also rely on other influential persons to send messages on their behalf. During the 2012 election, e-mail from the presidential campaigns included messages sent from vice presidential candidates Joe Biden and Paul Ryan as well as the candidates' campaign managers, their digital directors, and their wives. Drawing on a range of senders was effective because particular messages can be more influential when sent by a particular person. In addition to political elites who sent messages on behalf of candidates, voters were encouraged to use the simple process of forwarding e-mail to spread campaign communication to their friends. E-mail forwarded by friends can exist as an effective means of connecting with voters because citizens are more likely to read, and perhaps be persuaded by, an e-mail that is sent by someone they know personally.

There are many qualities of campaign e-mail that make it a powerful platform for mediating

campaign communication. However, it is important to acknowledge the difficulty in assessing the direct effects that an e-mail may have on its recipient once it is sent. E-mail is easily deleted or ignored, and even when data regarding deliverability rates, open rates, and click-through rates are available, it is complicated to measure the degree to which a given message may or may not have impacted an individual reader. Further, once an e-mail is sent, the campaign loses control over to whom it is forwarded and how its content is used. Despite these drawbacks, the broad use and emphasis on e-mail in past elections suggests that this form of campaign communication will remain an important element of candidates' digital strategies.

Stephanie E. Bor
Robert K. Avery
University of Utah

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Digital; Engagement Features; Microtargeting.

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Campaigns, Grassroots

A grassroots campaign is a planned activity organized to mobilize public support to bring pressure on legislators, government officials, or corporations. Grassroots activities refer to public relations from the ground up, created by the people rather than targeted at the people. In politics, grassroots campaigning often becomes a public manifesto of sustained public advocacy efforts, indirect lobbying, or political activism. This form of political persuasion can be a highly effective way to alert legislators and elected officials about public concerns and spur them to action.

In recent years, the Internet and mobile technology have significantly altered traditional approaches for grassroots campaigning. Today, local activists and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) should not solely rely on traditional media to amplify the voice of the people but actively embrace new strategies and tactics for citizen engagement.

The term *grassroots* can be traced back to Senator Albert Jeremiah Beveridge of Indiana, who once referred to the Progressive Party in 1912 as the party that "has come from the grass roots. It has grown from the soil of people's hard necessities." The U.S. suffragists' campaigns and the Civil Rights and Anti-Vietnam War movements of the 1950s and 1960s set up a model for contemporary grassroots activism. Most activists embrace grassroots campaigning as a means to influence public policy, social norms, and values. Grassroots campaigns can be orchestrated by grassroots organizers or even lobbyists seeking to educate, organize, and engage constituents to contact public officials in order to affect public policy. Their efforts are successful because campaign participants are viewed by politicians as potential voters for a competitor in the next election. In the United States, grassroots lobbying has become the fastest-growing area in the political persuasion business largely due to the provisions of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995. According to this document, grassroots lobbyists are not considered professional lobbyists and are exempt from registration with the secretary of the Senate and the clerk of the House of Representatives as well as from disclosing estimates of the organization's total lobbying expenditures.

Traditional grassroots activities may take the traditional forms of organized letter writing to the local legislator, gathering signatures for petitions, raising money from small donors for political advertising or campaigns, canvassing, attending

rallies, toll-free phone lines, small group meetings, interviews with key public officials, and others. Another popular tactic is the use of telephone trees, which involves groups of constituents calling their networks and asking them to contact the office of the lawmaker with a common request or purpose. Due to limited resources, activists often use a variety of inexpensive outreach scenarios such as local press coverage, word of mouth, and political rallies to bring about social change and influence government decisions.

During the Ban Bus Campaign, an activist tour through 24 U.S. cities, intended to educate Americans about the problem of land mines and influence them to write letters to the U.S. government, the campaigners were able to build grassroots support of the anti-land mine treaty due to increased media coverage, demining performances on the streets, photography exhibits picturing landmine casualties, as well as student and veteran involvement, and so on.

Pseudo-grassroots campaigns, also known as astroturfing, are often fabricated to affect public opinion. This kind of artificial grassroots action imitates public advocacy efforts started by individuals or local communities and often withholds information about the source's financial connections. Many online astroturfers use software to mask their identities. In 2003, "grassroots" letters favoring Republican Party policies appeared in local newspapers around the United States, when signers were electronically submitting prewritten letters from a political Web site that offered petitioners points for sending a letter to a local paper. Another classic example of astroturfing is the campaign mounted in 1994 by the Coalition of Health Industry Choices to lobby against the Clinton administration's health care reform plan. Aside from other means, they engaged in an aggressive media campaign featuring Harry and Louise, a middle-aged couple who complained about the plan.

Recent Actions

The 2008 Barack Obama campaign demonstrated the advantages of social media for political activism, citizen engagement, and fund-raising. The Brookings Institution Center for Technology Innovation highlighted direct advantages in using social media to improve campaign engagement and reinvigorate American democracy. For instance, social media increased the public responsiveness and accountability of both parties.

A new model of civic engagement was created that blends traditional media with social media, where ordinary citizens can become agents of persuasion and leverage their personal networks for various political causes. Most citizens now use their inner circles as trust filters to evaluate political information. Unless political advocacy groups become trusted members of these networks, they will not be able to engage the public and influence the course of electoral events. Increased media attention to the political agendas of independent bloggers and advocacy groups have given ordinary citizens more prominence and voice in national debates. Social media have also enriched political conversation, which allows people to reach to the bottom of the story when they evaluate the information about candidates and policy ideas. During elections, candidates are now forced to answer questions coming directly from grassroots networks.

In 2010, a study by the public relations firm Burson-Marsteller found that nearly all of the 34 examined advocacy groups, including the Association of American Retired Persons (AARP), the Human Rights Campaign, and National Taxpayers Union, use at least one social media platform to communicate their views on specific federal legislation and regulation with stakeholders. New social networking sites have significantly enhanced grassroots strategies and tactics for public outreach and community engagement.

In 2011, an individual petition on Change.org asking Bank of America and its Chief Executive Officer Bryan Moynihan to drop its unexpected new $5 per-month banking fee for debit card customers attracted the support of 300,000 signatures. When President Barack Obama signed the petition and U.S. Senator Richard J. Durbin responded to Bank of America and the petition on Twitter, it prompted Congress to look at legislation for out-of-control banking fees. In 2012, various organizations, including Tumblr, Reddit, Twitter, and Fight for the Future organized a highly visible protest against the proposed Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA). This action involved 115,000 Web sites, with Wikipedia going dark for 24 hours, causing 3 million people to e-mail the U.S. Congress

to express their opposition to the bill. As a result, congressional leaders shelved the proposed legislation until finding a better solution to online piracy and protection of intellectual property.

Hashtag Politics

Smartphones and mobile technology help activists to access their social networks on the go. What's now being called "hashtag politics," according to Duncan Meisel, has changed the political landscape, giving grassroots activists from both political parties a new way to share their views and gain followers. A label called a hashtag, which combines a # symbol and a key word that connect posts from different users, is an established convention for organizing ideas on Twitter. Like a frame, a hashtag organizes and amplifies public conversations.

The role of the organizer practicing hashtag politics is to organize the conversation around a topic hashtag and then curate the conversation to draw more supporters. Every day, Twitter evaluated and weighed the sentiments of tweets mentioning both Barack Obama and Mitt Romney relative to every other message that passed through Twitter's systems. The system then calculated a score for both candidates. Tanya Kappo (@Nehiyawskwew) and her followers started the "#idlenomore" hashtag in support for the event Idle No More to address the Canadian First Nations people's objections to provisions in Bill C-45, which was seen as part of a broader agenda to impose legislation on aboriginal people without their consent. The hashtag went viral after her followers started tweeting about other indigenous issues. Soon National Chief Shawn Atleo and others called for a march to Parliament, which drew some serious media attention. Although the hashtag did not stop the bill, it showed aboriginal people that they can influence their leaders through grassroots social media campaigns.

Cost-Efficient Fund-Raising

Social media helps advocacy organizations to cut down on overhead and operating costs for organizing grassroots campaigns. It is also is reducing the need for both paid and volunteer staff. By looking into available resources within their own networks, grassroots campaigners can mobilize people, raise money, and promote programs in

Protesters gather against the proposed Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and the PROTECT IP Act (PIPA) in New York on January 18, 2012, as part of a series of organized events and protests. The grassroots effort had 115,000 Web sites and prompted 3 million citizens to e-mail their congressional representatives in opposition. The bills were removed from further voting two days later.

a more expedient manner. Traditionally, online fund-raising, describe Dick Armey and Matt Kibbe, can be done in the form of e-mail solicitations that direct people to a Web site, money bombs to raise a lot of money in the same day, static donation buttons on Web sites, and fund-raising campaigns for specific events or efforts.

However, social media may also provide independent platforms for like-minded people to connect and collaborate; they lay the foundation for massive, internationally connected grassroots movements. Social media consultant Laura "Pistachio" Britton used Twitter to raise $25,000 in a week, leveraging her contacts and her contacts' networks. Asking each of her Twitter followers—all 44,000 of them—to donate $2 each, Pistacho got enough response and enough public retweeting, or republishing, of her request to raise $25,000 for CharityWater.org. The Twestival, the largest global grassroots social media fund-raising initiative, took place in more than 200 cities in Europe, Asia, and America simultaneously, and raised $1.2 million in 14 months for 137 nonprofit organizations.

In societies with increased government control over political participation and traditional media, social media can be viewed as a "balancing force," according to Marco Skoric and colleagues, to the traditional media. The possibility for success increases when skilled, networked individuals create a "community of concern" around crowdsourcing platforms that emerge as bottom-up grassroots initiatives. As perceived government control of the traditional media drives citizens to generate more political content on social media, their political efficacy and self-confidence become stronger. Interestingly, such political attitudes and skills acquired online can later translate into active, real-life participation in political activities, such as election rallies.

It has become much more difficult for governments to block information and stifle collaboration. On the other hand, by enabling ordinary citizens to monitor data and directly contribute to the formation of policy, open source governance helps continuously improve transparency and state accountability to its citizens and correct poor performance. In 2009, when gambling machines were declared illegal in Russia, driving gambling underground, explain Josh Machleder and Gregory Asmolov, a student of the Saratov University of Technology created the platform www.gdecasino.ru to map illegal sites in the city. The founder then mobilized other users to map their own neighborhoods and cities. The map became the basis for activists to write complaints to the local police, leading to the closure of at least seven gambling dens. In March 2011, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev referred to www.gdecasino.ru to show the map of illegal gambling sites on his iPad to the Russian chief prosecutor as proof of the weaknesses of Russian law enforcement.

Crowdsourcing

In the past decade, crowdsourcing has been used to organize protests, report on poor government performance, track aid flows, or even find mayoral candidates. The organization Uncaucus in Rhode Island approached the mayoral election not only as an opportunity to elect a worthy candidate but to get many residents involved as a collective hiring manager. Their social media outreach made the election discussion public and accessible to a wide range of participants. Blow the Whistle, a campaign to expose a senator who manipulated congressional rules to thwart the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act, combines crowdsourcing with traditional grassroots political activism.

In an attempt to ferret out the anonymous senator who killed the bill, the campaigners published the contact information for all 87 active U.S. senators, and challenged listeners to contact representatives to ask point blank, "Did you kill this bill?" Due to e-mails from hundreds of participating listeners, 55 senators publicly stated that they were not responsible for the secret hold. After reconvening in January, the Senate voted 92–4 in favor of reforming the rules for secret holds, making it harder to use them to sabotage the legislative process. Ushahidi, a popular incident-reporting system that combines elements of Twitter and Google Maps, documented many incidents that escaped the mainstream media coverage in the aftermath of the disputed 2007 presidential elections in Kenya. Ushahidi has been deployed to monitor elections in Mexico and India and attacks on immigrants in South Africa and worked as a mutual aid coordination platform during unprecedented wildfires in

Russia. By providing visualizations and monitoring implementation of relief and recovery efforts, crowdsourcing proved to have a strong impact in developing countries, according to Maja Bott and Gregor Young, allowing for wide dissemination of weather and crop market price information (e.g., Mali, Uganda), crowdfunding microcredit (e.g., Kiva.org), and so on.

The attributes of the Web 2.0 era, such as digital transparency, increased Internet literacy, and real-time public engagement, have changed grassroots campaigning. More than ever before, grassroots campaigners have opportunities to give voice to the underresourced and powerless through low technological solutions. Small organizations and individuals are no longer dependent on resources once available only to governments and large corporations. Today's citizens can choose what news they want to receive and whose political agendas to propel forward though their own social networks. The best political advocacy organizations become members of online citizen networks; learn their cultures, languages, and needs; and utilize multimedia resources to drive civic discussions.

Sergei Samoilenko
George Mason University

See Also: Fund-Raising; Open Source Governance; Twitter.

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Campaigns, Organizing

Over the last decade, the use of social media has increased dramatically, and political candidates have taken notice. In 2008, Barack Obama became the first presidential candidate to employ a comprehensive social media strategy; the

then-Democratic presidential nominee used social media to raise record-breaking sums of money, organizing a nationwide group of volunteers and disseminating his campaign message. The 2012 election demonstrated that social media is now a crucial part of presidential campaigns, and increasingly, congressional campaigns. Although social media has not obviated the need for traditional campaign activities, such as television advertising and door-to-door canvassing, it has drastically changed the way that campaigns raise money, communicate their messages to voters, and mobilize voters prior to Election Day.

Evolution of Social Media in Campaigns

Although Obama is often credited with introducing social media into political campaigns, many aspects of his social media strategy were modeled on the efforts of Vermont Governor Howard Dean, who unsuccessfully campaigned for the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination. Key to Dean's meteoric, albeit temporary, ascendancy to front-runner status was his successful use of the Internet site Meetup.com; the site was designed to connect local individuals sharing common interests, in this case shared support of the Dean campaign. At the start of the campaign, in mid-2003, Dean had only a few hundred supporters on Meetup.com; by the end of his campaign in February 2004, the campaign could boast more than 600,000 supporters on the site.

In 2008, then-Illinois Senator Barack Obama employed a hybrid campaign strategy during his Democratic primary race against New York Senator and former First Lady Hillary Clinton as well as during his general election campaign against Arizona Senator John McCain. Specifically, Obama melded traditional campaign activities with social media activism; central to this effort was Obama's Web site, www.myBarackObama.com. The site was designed by Facebook cofounder Chris Hughes and allowed Obama supporters to donate money, access information about the candidate, and volunteer for phone banks and door-to-door canvassing.

Although McCain did eventually incorporate social media into his campaign, Obama vastly outpaced him in this regard. By Election Day, Obama had 844,927 friends on Myspace, compared to McCain's 219,404 friends. In addition, on Twitter, Obama had 118,107 followers, while McCain had only 4,942 followers. Although Obama's social media presence was not the sole factor for his eventual election victory, it was key to his ability to raise vast sums of money and mobilize young supporters.

By the time of the 2010 midterm elections, the number of Americans using social media had grown significantly. Overall, in this election, 22 percent of adults reported that they used social networking for political engagement. In addition, 11 percent of adults indicated that they followed a political candidate on Twitter or Facebook.

The demographics of social media users had begun to change as well; although younger individuals had dominated social media, in this election, older voters began using social media in greater numbers. Specifically, 33 percent of users above the age of 50 used social networking for political activity during this election. In comparison, in the 18 to 29 age group, 42 percent of users reported that they used social networking for political activity.

During this cycle, Republican congressional candidates adopted many of the approaches of the Obama campaign; social media was especially important for the Tea Party movement, which supported Republican candidates who adhered to their small government, antitax principles. FreedomWorks and American Majority, two umbrella organizations for the movement, hosted conferences to train Tea Party activists in online campaign techniques. These efforts paid off, and a Pew study found that, during this election cycle, Republicans were more likely than Democrats to use social media for campaign activities. Specifically, 40 percent of Republicans used social media for campaign activities, compared to 38 percent of Democrats.

Some commentators dubbed the 2012 presidential election the "social media election." Both Obama and his Republican opponent, former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, had a significant presence in social media, communicating with voters through Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Although Romney made social media a centerpiece of his campaign, hiring Zac Moffatt, cofounder of the digital adverting firm Target Victory as his social media director, the Obama campaign again proved to be more successful at

using new media. On Twitter, the Obama campaign averaged 29 tweets per day, while the Romney campaign averaged just one. In addition, the Obama campaign posted twice as many videos on YouTube as did the Romney campaign.

In the future, it is likely that social media will be an essential part of presidential and congressional campaigns. Voters are increasingly relying upon the Internet to gain political information; according to one survey, during the 2012 election, 82 percent of U.S. adults expected to receive most of their political news online. In accordance with this, Americans now expect elected officials to use these mediums as well; the same survey found that 62 percent of respondents expected political candidates to have a social media presence. Although using social media is not a guarantee of electoral success, candidates who fail to adapt to the new digital environment will be at a significant disadvantage.

Social Media and Fund-Raising

The clearest way that social media has changed campaign organizing is in the area of fund-raising; the advent of social media has led to a vast increase in online fund-raising.

Traditionally, campaigns have relied on a network of wealthy donors who were able to donate the maximum of $2,500 to a candidate, as permitted by federal law. In addition to large donations from individuals, candidates also received contributions from bundlers; here, prominent supporters collected donations from multiple individuals before bundling the contribution and donating it to the candidate. Another way campaigns raise money is through fund-raising events, for example, a dinner with the candidates or other party luminaries. Donors pay fees to attend the dinner; at the national level, the fee is often several thousand dollars per plate.

Although presidential and congressional candidates still engage in these traditional fund-raising activities, candidates have recently begun to solicit donations online, with many campaigns deriving a majority of their funding from online donations. In 2004, the Dean campaign was the first to demonstrate the value of small donations from a vast network of dedicated supporters. During his run for the Democratic nomination, Dean raised $20 million on the Internet; 44 percent of those donating online were first-time political donors. Moreover, donors to the Dean campaign were also individuals who had not previously volunteered for a political campaign.

In the 2008 election, Obama replicated this approach. Overall, his campaign raised a record-breaking $756 million; $500 million of this money was from online donations. In addition to soliciting individual donations, the myBarackObama.com Web site also allowed Obama supporters to set up their own individual fund-raising sites and request donations from friends and family. In total, more than 70,000 Obama supporters set up individual fund-raising pages. Like Dean supporters in 2004, donors to the Obama campaign tended to give small but frequent donations. Specifically, the average online donation for Obama was about $80, and 40 percent of Obama's online donations were less than $200.

Social media has not only vastly increased the sums of money raised by candidates but has also allowed campaigns to use technology and data mining to devise targeted fund-raising appeals. For example, during one part of the 2008 election, the Obama campaign tested several thousand unique fund-raising e-mails. In order to assess the effectiveness of each e-mail, the campaign would first send it to a subset of donors. Individual e-mails that proved most effective in soliciting donations would later be sent to the full list of potential donors. Overall, e-mail solicitations are far less costly than traditional mail solicitations, which cost approximately 20 cents for every dollar raised.

The ability of presidential candidates to raise vast sums of money online may have broad reverberations, ending the public financing of presidential campaigns. Pursuant to the Federal Election Campaign Act, the federal government provides an optional grant of money to each general election candidate to pay for valid expenses; in exchange for the grant, the candidate accepts a limit on overall campaign spending. From 1976 through 2004, all general election candidates accepted public financing. In the 2008 election, due in part to his ability to raise vast sums of money online, Obama declined the $84 million in public funding; he became the first presidential candidate to opt out of public financing for the general election. McCain, however, did accept

public financing; the Republican found himself at a significant disadvantage, with Obama outspending him by a margin of two to one. Subsequently, in the 2012 election, neither Obama nor Romney elected to accept public financing.

Fund-raising through social media is especially effective for underdog or insurgent candidates, who unlike presidential candidates, may lack party support or public visibility. For example, Ron Paul, a congressman from Texas, used online fund-raising to sustain his long-shot candidacy for the 2008 Republican presidential nomination. Specifically, Paul would request that his online supports detonate money bombs by rapidly raising large sums of money. In November 2007, despite single-digit support in national polls, Paul managed to raise $4.3 million in a single fund-raising drive. In December 2007, he set a fund-raising record by raising $6 million in one day.

Online fund-raising was also crucial in the January 2010 special election in Massachusetts to fill the U.S. Senate seat held by Ted Kennedy, who died in August 2009. In the race, Republican State Senator Scott Brown faced off against Democrat Martha Coakley, Massachusetts attorney general. Although Coakley was favored in the heavily Democratic state and enjoyed an initial fund-raising advantage, Brown was able to rapidly raise funds online. In a period of 18 days in January 2010, he raised $14 million in online donations; this included a single-day fund-raising drive that yielded more than $1 million. Brown went on to win the election, garnering 52 percent of the vote, compared to 47 percent of the vote for Coakley.

Social Media and Voter Outreach

Successful campaigns must translate fund-raising dollars into effective voter outreach, gaining the attention and support of voters. Here, campaigns seek to create favorable pictures of the candidates by disseminating both biographical information and policy positions. Reciprocally, a campaign seeks to create unfavorable images of the opponents, using opposition research to highlight unpopular policy positions or personal scandals. To accomplish these tasks, campaigns have typically devoted a large percent of the campaign budget to direct mail as well as television and radio advertising.

Social media has added a new layer to these outreach efforts, and the Internet has become a key destination for campaign advertising; candidates now post both Web videos and static ads with links to relevant Web sites. In 2012, both Obama and Romney employed digital advertising agencies to oversee their online efforts. In total, Obama spent $52 million on digital ads, while Romney spent $26.2 million. Some of the most popular destinations for digital ads were Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

These Web advertisements were often distinct from the candidates' television advertisements. For instance, when announcing his 2012 campaign theme, "Forward," Obama released a seven-minute Web-only ad that recounted the successes of his first term. Obama also used Web-based advertising to disseminate negative information about Romney. The campaign released a six-minute advertisement focusing on the plight of workers who were laid off after Romney's venture capital firm bought their employers. This was an expanded version of a two-minute television ad that the Obama campaign ran in swing states.

Online commercials can be produced and posted quickly and, in 2012, proved to be an effective way for the candidates to rebut their opponents. After the second presidential debate, the Romney campaign posted a Web advertisement that collected instances of Obama mocking Romney; this was juxtaposed with Obama stating that he intended to conduct a campaign based on issues, not personal attacks. Similarly, after the first presidential debate, widely judged to be a decisive victory for Romney, the Obama campaign released a video highlighting various misstatements by the Republican candidate.

Overall, Web-based ads have rapidly become a staple of campaign advertising; in 2012, there were six times more online ads than there were in the 2008 election. Despite the growth in online advertising, television still remains the dominant medium for campaign advertising, and only about 2 percent of campaign spending in the 2012 presidential election was devoted to online advertising.

Social media and technology have also impacted the way that campaigns undertake direct mailing operations. Increasingly, campaigns are abandoning generic direct mail communications and instead using data mining to develop mailers targeted at

specific demographic or ideological groups. In addition, these mailers often contain links to a candidate's Web site, highlighting areas of interest to that voter. The campaign can then gather data on how often these Web sites are accessed. Some mailers also contain quick response (QR) codes, which voters can access with smartphones.

Social Media and Voter Mobilization

In addition to the "air war," namely the effort to sway voters through television advertising, campaigns also rely on the "ground war," with members of the campaign contacting individual voters and encouraging them to turn out on Election Day. Campaigns employ two primary methods to encourage turnout: door-to door canvassing and phone banks. Voter mobilization is predicated upon personal communication between the campaign and voters, and campaigns are increasingly turning to social media sites to recruit volunteers to engage in these mobilization activities.

In 2008, the Obama campaign's "ground game" was vastly superior to that of his rival, with the Democrat boasting more offices in battleground states and disciplined teams of seasoned campaign professionals. A key component of that success, however, was Obama's army of unpaid campaign volunteers, many of whom were recruited through social media sites. Beginning in 2007, the campaign sent these volunteers to Camp Obama and, by late summer, had trained more than 1,000 individuals in get-out-the-vote (GOTV) techniques. As a result, the Obama team was able to begin voter mobilization efforts even before paid staff had arrived in many states.

Throughout his campaign, Obama continued to recruit volunteers through social media sites. One million Obama supporters signed up for e-mail alerts and were willing to participate in voter mobilization activities when contacted by the campaign. This permitted the Obama campaign to expand its focused GOTV efforts beyond the 72-hour model successfully used by Republicans in 2000 and 2004. Specifically, the Obama campaign conducted intense GOTV actives during the three months prior to the election.

The ability to recruit volunteers online had a discernible effect, with Obama outperforming McCain in voter contact. Nationwide, 26 percent of voters reported that they were contacted by the Obama campaign, compared to only 18 percent who reported being contacted by the McCain campaign. In many swing states, the gap was much larger. In Nevada, 50 percent of voters were contacted by the Obama campaign, compared to 29 percent who were contacted by the McCain campaign; in Colorado, the Obama campaign contacted 51 percent of voters, while the McCain campaign contacted 34 percent. Obama won both of these states in 2008; during the 2004 election, both of these states had gone to Republican George W. Bush.

Future of Social Media and Campaigns

Although it is impossible to assess the degree to which a well-crafted social media strategy improves a candidate's electoral prospects, the last two presidential elections demonstrate that it is now an essential part of any national campaign. Since the 2004 election, social media has proved to be a key tool for fund-raising, communication, and volunteer recruitment.

Social media clearly present many opportunities for candidates; it contains significant risks as well. As a bottom up medium of communication, individual social media users are empowered to create and upload content; this content can then go viral and dominate political discourse, drowning out official communication from any campaign. This was much in evidence in September 2012, when a video of Romney speaking at a private fund-raiser went viral. In the video, the Republican presidential candidate stated that 47 percent of the population supported Obama because they expected to receive government aid from his administration. The video, uploaded by an anonymous YouTube user, received 1.6 million views in a single day, and the subsequent scandal was covered heavily in television and print media. Earlier in the campaign, Obama had also experienced the downside of social media, when conservative bloggers seized on a line from a speech, in which the president seemed to suggest that small businesses owed their success to the government. The quote became a political meme, and the Romney campaign eventually incorporated it into stump speeches, making it a focus of the Republican convention in August.

As these examples demonstrate, social media is serving to democratize discourse in political

campaigns, diminishing the role of the news media and elected officials as authoritative sources of political information. Although political candidates have successfully harnessed social media as a campaign tool, its ultimate effect is to change the manner in which elected officials interact with voters. For instance, a recent study found that more than 90 percent of the members of Congress had Twitter accounts, catering to an electorate that is increasingly tech savvy. Although social media is unlikely to ever fully replace traditional campaigning, its usage will undoubtedly increase in future election cycles.

Kelly McHugh
Catherine Aquilina
Florida Southern College

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Opposition Videographer; Social Media Strategies and Tactics.

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Campaigns, Presidential (2000)

The 2000 presidential election in the United States will always be remembered for two reasons: First, the election's outcome was not actually decided until a month after the vote was held, and second, it paved the way for online involvement in national campaigns in the years to come.

In one of the most contentious presidential races ever, George W. Bush was declared the winner over Al Gore when a recount in Florida gave Bush the state by a mere 537 votes. While the election is memorable for its unprecedented postelection recounts and the involvement of the U.S. Supreme Court, it is also noteworthy for the multiple ways in which it laid the groundwork for subsequent shifts in the role played by social media as well as online political venues. Although presidential candidates had already proven that Web sites were of interest to some voters—both Republican and Democratic candidates had sites as early as the 1992 election—in 2000, the presidential campaigns boosted their online presence and included interactive elements to help recruit volunteers and donors.

By 2000, more Americans were going online, and about 104 million adults accessed the Internet looking for election information. Some researchers noted that the Internet seemed to be assuming a role similar to that played by talk radio because it gave people another platform through which to express their opinions. It also provided ways for Americans to have personal contact with presidential campaigns, which in the past had been reserved mainly for the party faithful.

Much of this was done through the respective campaigns' Web sites, which were more interactive than in previous campaigns. For instance, the Gore–Lieberman site offered a way for a visitor to the page to select a state and type in a list of volunteer activities he or she was willing to do. That information was then sent to officials in that state so that the volunteer could be assigned campaign duties. The Bush–Cheney Web site had a link to multimedia, which allowed visitors to see short video clips of the candidate talking about campaign issues.

Although campaigns during both the primaries and the general election recruited volunteers through their Web sites, they were also interested in raising money online. Candidate Bill Bradley asked the Federal Election Commission (FEC), which oversees federal elections, if federal candidates could process credit card and debit payments from donors. The FEC ruled that online credit card contributions to presidential candidates were

eligible for federal matching funds. This began the now-common process of soliciting contributions online through Web sites and social media outlets. Senator John McCain's campaign raised more than $6 million online during the 2000 election, setting a bar that would easily be shattered in the coming years. But, for a country in which (at that time) only 132 million people had online access, it was no small feat.

During the 2000 election, there was no Twitter or Facebook. However, there was America Online (AOL), which featured chat rooms, conference rooms, and auditoriums. These virtual rooms were places that members could go online to chat with other people, to play games, to debate topics, or just to share information. AOL actually began in 1988 as AppleLink, a joint project of Apple Computer and a company called Quantam Computer Services. The idea was to find a way to connect Apple II and Macintosh computers. The early chat rooms that were developed in this project could only hold 23 people at one time. The software was refined and enlarged, and it became a chat program called People Connection. It was later renamed America Online. In January 2000, Time Warner and AOL announced that they would be merging. The companies completed the merger and became AOL Time Warner in 2001, a deal that was destined to fall apart later in the decade.

By 2000, there were 29 million people subscribing to AOL. This was the height of the company's popularity, and it coincided with the presidential election. According to a Pew Internet and American Life report, about 30 percent of Americans said that they used commercial services such as America Online in 2000 as their primary source for election news. Younger people were more likely to visit chat rooms to discuss the election, while older voters were more likely to participate in online polls.

Studies have found that people who go online to participate in campaigns increase their political activation. In other words, if they spend time online discussing the campaign or election issues, they tend to be more active in political issues and in their communities. In 2000, AOL wanted to be the hub of online political participation. It had already been through the 1996 presidential and the 1998 midterm elections and noted that members were interested in political topics.

During the 2000 election, AOL debuted Election Guide 2000, an online election site for voters that provided local voter guides, virtual candidate debates, issue charts, and a Presidential Matchmaker feature that matched voters and candidates on certain issues. More than 20 million families visited the site, and 165,000 people registered to vote through the site. This endeavor, which was done in cooperation with CBS News, earned AOL an honorable mention in the 2000 James K. Batten Awards, which recognize excellence in civic journalism. The site featured rolling online chats with all of the presidential candidates and virtual debate halls in which a variety of federal, state, and local candidates could participate and speak to their potential voters.

AOL and the candidates were not the only organizations working to identify people with an interest in the election. It has been noted that virtual organizers in the 2000 election began to locate people with common interests and move them toward identifying with one particular candidate. This was made easier through online sites that not only provided information but also allowed for

George W. Bush in Concord, New Hampshire, signs paperwork to become a presidential candidate in the 2000 election. Bush and running mate Dick Cheney later released a Web site with links to videos of Bush speaking on campaign issues.

feedback and real-time chats. In this way, political activists began to build communities of people who shared common interests and were trained in how to organize and network online. President Bill Clinton's Summit for America's Future was an example of an organization that worked to train volunteers in how to organize groups of people and mobilize them for political action. It brought together a wide group of people to encourage volunteerism among Americans.

The seeds sown by political activists during the 2000 election led to the involvement of several online organizations during the 2004 campaign and grassroots support for organizations such as MoveOn.org. In 2000, MoveOn launched an Internet discussion forum that provided a way for members to give feedback to the organization. In 2004, MoveOn paid for the airing of several anti–George W. Bush ads and raised $750,000 for ads targeting Bush's military record.

Senator John McCain turned his attention to grassroots organizing early in his 2000 campaign. His campaign, as noted above, raised a significant amount of money through its Web site. The site provided ways for people to get involved in the campaign with the thought that involvement would lead to donations. After McCain won the New Hampshire primary, he raised $300,000 overnight through his Web site. There was so much traffic on the site that it became temporarily unavailable.

The McCain campaign made use of online chat rooms with donors and even disclosed information about how money would be spent. McCain was the first candidate to raise $1 million online in only 48 hours.

The 2000 presidential election paved the way for the more interactive, involvement-oriented online political campaigns that emerged in 2004 and especially in 2008, when then candidate Barack Obama raised $500 million online and declined to take any federal matching money for his campaign. Although the opportunities were more limited, Americans went online to listen, discuss, and learn about the candidates. They also registered their support through online volunteer efforts, donations, and discussions in chat rooms. Although the 2000 presidential election predated the existence of "social media" as they are known today, it established a new relationship between candidates and their public based on an increasingly dynamic, interactive approach to online media that opened the door to easy acceptance of social media's role in subsequent elections.

Melissa M. Smith
Mississippi University for Women

See Also: Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Virtual; Chat Rooms; MoveOn.org.

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The 2004 presidential campaign did not feature social media as it is known today. Facebook was still in its infancy, and Twitter did not even exist. The year did mark, however, a seminal moment in American politics for the influence of the Internet in campaigns and elections, both in terms of how candidates connected to voters and how voters interacted with one another. The Internet and its social dimensions also featured prominently in campaign strategy and were a leading factor in driving several important events during the campaigns. In short, the 2004 presidential campaign demonstrated the importance of the Internet for contemporary American electoral politics and

pointed in the direction of the growing influence social media would play in elections to come.

During the 2004 presidential campaign, three out of 10 Americans used the Internet to interact with the election. Among active Internet users, 52 percent used the Web to get news or information about the election. These numbers represented a sharp increase from previous election cycles. In 1996, only 4 percent of the American public turned to the Internet for election information, and in 2000, that number was 18 percent. Similarly, only 22 percent of Internet users used the Web in 1996, with that number climbing to 33 percent in 2000. Clearly, 2004 captured the growing influence of the Internet in informing American voters. The reasons for this increase are many but include growing familiarity and experience with using the Web, an increase in Web content and news in particular, and the increasing availability of broadband network connections making connecting to the Internet faster and more stable.

What is even more striking about 2004 is how Americans used the Internet to engage with the election. Among those who used the Web for election information, 34 million researched candidates to inform themselves about where the candidates stood on important issues. In addition, 32 million people received or sent jokes or comments through e-mail about the election. Another 18 million people reported taking part in online polls and surveys. Also, 16 million people visited Web sites run by various organizations to check on endorsements or ratings of candidates. Almost 6 million people joined chat groups to engage in political discussions and debate. Finally, 4 million people contributed money to candidates and campaigns online.

Surveys also captured the fact that the time voters spent on the Internet affected their political opinions and vote choices. Among voters receiving political news from the Internet, 52 percent reported that the information they were able to obtain online helped them to structure their vote choices. Another 27 percent said that online information influenced them to vote either for or against a certain candidate. Moreover, there was also evidence that online political information influenced political participation. Also, 23 percent of survey respondents reported that online political information positively impacted their decision to vote.

In terms of partisanship, Democratic voters appeared to be more active in obtaining online political information than Republicans. Supporters of John Kerry were more likely to send and receive e-mails about the election, track opinion polls about the candidates, research endorsements and ratings by interest groups, and participate in online polls and surveys. Kerry voters were also more likely to get involved in online discussions and debates, contribute money online, and believe that the Internet played an important part in shaping their vote preferences.

Attacks on Candidates

The Internet and social media, especially blogs, impacted the 2004 election in other ways. In every campaign, there are inevitable gaffes and attacks on candidates, but in 2004, the Internet gave added power to these events that, for periods of time, defined the campaigns and likely torpedoed the candidacy of one contender in the Democratic primary. After a subpar performance during the first debate, President George W. Bush was criticized by the mainstream media for appearing awkward, unprepared, and uncomfortable answering questions. Soon after, however, blog sites on the Internet reported that photographs from the debate allegedly showed a suspicious bulge inside of the president's jacket. Speculation soon ran rampant that Bush was wearing a radio receiver and that someone had been feeding him answers to the debate questions. This scenario supposedly explained a bizarre moment during the debate in which the president complained about being interrupted even though no one had been talking at the time. The Bush campaign, apparently unaware or unconcerned with what was being said on the Internet, was slow to respond to the allegations, and the suspicion trailed his campaign for several weeks.

The Internet played an even greater role in sabotaging the candidacy of Howard Dean, who was challenging John Kerry for the Democratic nomination. Dean had enjoyed an improbable rise as a potential candidate and looked well positioned to finish strong in the Iowa caucuses. Despite his momentum, Dean finished a disappointing third behind John Kerry and John Edwards. Undaunted

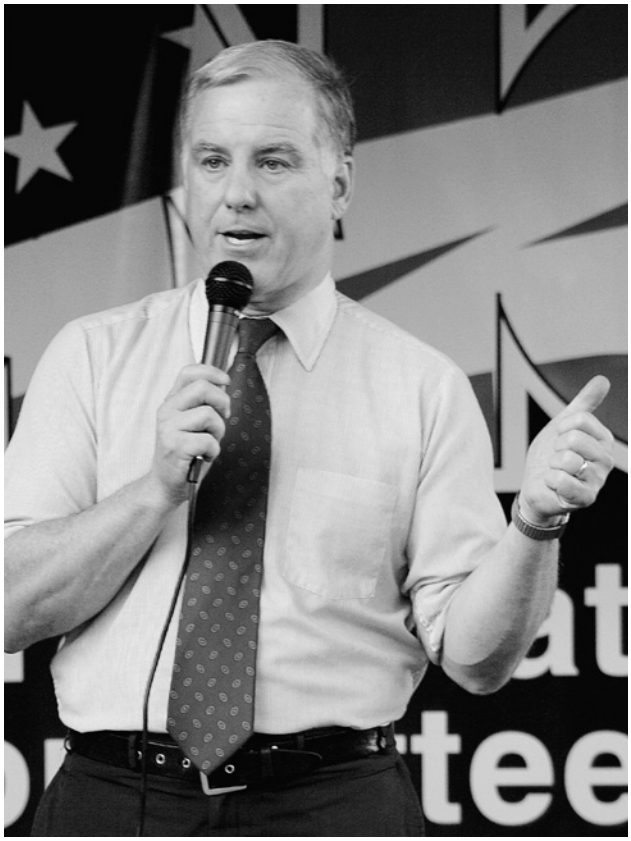
by the poor showing, Dean delivered a speech to supporters in which he intended to sustain their enthusiasm for his candidacy. While the exact cause of what came next is unclear, Dean appeared to finish his speech with a throaty scream. On the Internet, the event was quickly dubbed the "Dean Scream" and the "I Have a Scream" speech. Edited videos soon appeared on the Web attaching the scream to music soundtracks and mocking captioning. Blog sites regurgitated the story for days and helped create the impression that Dean was unhinged and lacking the temperament to be president. The event, and the Internet sensation that followed it, soon led to Dean withdrawing his candidacy.

During the general election contest, two other events were significantly influenced by social media and the Internet. During the fall campaign, questions were raised about whether President Bush had fulfilled his duty requirements while a member of the Air National Guard. As the story grew, CBS news ran a story supported by documents from the late Lt. Col. Jerry B. Killian, Bush's squadron commander. The documents claimed that Bush had received preferential treatment during his time in active service and that Killian had been encouraged to obscure the fact that Bush was not fulfilling his duties. After CBS ran the story, an Internet blogger, Harry MacDaugald, alleged that the documents used by CBS were fakes. His analysis of the documents purported to show that that were written with fonts and formatting styles that were not in existence when the memos were supposedly composed. Other bloggers took up the fake documents story until CBS was forced to conduct an internal investigation into the story. The news organization concluded that the documents could not be authenticated and admitted that they should not have been used.

Finally, John Kerry came under attack from a group calling itself the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth (SBVT). The group launched a series of attacks on Kerry's candidacy, calling into question his fitness to serve as president. Among the allegations made by the group, Kerry was accused of lying about atrocities committed by U.S. soldiers in Vietnam, embellishing his own service record, and accepting undeserved combat medals. When SBVT's allegations first surfaced, they were bolstered by bloggers and message boards that spread the group's attacks throughout the Internet. This speedy dissemination of the story helped contribute to almost one in three Americans believing that there was at least some truth to the allegations. In addition, like the Bush radio receiver story, the Kerry campaign was slow to respond to the attacks and was apparently unaware of how quickly the story was spreading across the Internet. Many analysts would later attribute this failure as a major factor in Kerry's election defeat.

Dean Campaign Innovations

The 2004 presidential campaign also demonstrated how social media and the Internet would play major roles in campaign activities in the future. Ironically, it was Howard Dean, a man whose candidacy was undone by social media, who demonstrated the potential for social media



Howard Dean speaking at a September 26, 2006, Democratic National Committee event. Dean's presidential run came to an end shortly after what became known as the "Dean Scream" or the "I Have a Scream" speech, after he hoarsely finished his speech with a loud "Yeah!" Video parodies appeared online.

to benefit political campaigns. One area where Dean clearly highlighted the potential for social media assistance was in fund-raising. When Dean began his campaign for the presidency, he possessed little cash, almost no staffers, no visible constituency, and a single campaign office in Vermont. Dean soon hired a campaign manager, Joe Trippi, who wanted to utilize the Internet to overcome these deficiencies. To fill the need for cash and resources, Dean and Trippi devised an innovative fund-raising strategy that defined short-term goals for donors to maximize motivation to contribute. The campaign focused on current news stories about the opposition candidates to build immediate momentum for fund-raising. The strategy was an extraordinary success. During the height of the primary season, Dean had increased his cash resources to $40 million, boasted a staff of more than 400 people, and had opened numerous campaign offices in 24 states.

Dean and Trippi utilized social media Web site MeetUp.com to bolster popular support for his candidacy. MeetUp.com assisted individuals in arranging get-togethers according to shared interests. Harnessing the Web site's networking potential, the Dean campaign soon built an Internet community of supporters numbering in the hundreds of thousands. The organization allowed the campaign to transmit important information to supporters, build its fund-raising base, and direct activists to spread the campaign's message to new voters in diverse areas. The social networking effort was so successful that members continued organizing even after the collapse of the campaign.

Another innovation employed by the Dean campaign was the use of blogging. The campaign began its Blog for America and eventually posted more than 2,900 entries while receiving more than 30,000 comments. The blog provided another opportunity for the campaign to direct the activities of campaign loyalists, gave Dean supporters a venue to network and socialize, and created a broad social network to draw ideas for campaign activities and messages. The blog also enhanced Dean's fund-raising opportunities and was credited as a key component in his fund-raising success. That being said, the blog was also frequently plagued by technological problems that frustrated both campaign staffers and visitors.

Given his early cash-flow problems, Dean had initially considered accepting public financing for his campaign. The problem with public financing, of course, was that it would place stringent limits on the amount of money the campaign could raise. As the fund-raising problems reversed themselves, Dean began to reconsider the public financing option. His concern, however, was that the decision could alienate supporters. To gauge this potential problem, the Dean campaign pioneered the use of the online referendum. Simply put, Dean put the public financing question before his supporters and allowed them to vote on how he should proceed. His supporters overwhelmingly endorsed forgoing the public option, which gave Dean the cover he needed to abandon his earlier decision. Dean supporters voting yes to rejecting public financing were then sent personal messages and requests for donations. The online referendum thus revealed itself to be a powerful tool for candidates to evaluate the support of their constituents and to provide legitimacy for controversial decisions.

Other Uses

The Kerry and Bush campaigns also relied on the Internet and social media to enhance their election efforts, but neither did so to the extent of the Dean campaign. Building on Dean's fund-raising success, Kerry, along with the Democratic National Committee, used the Internet to build a substantial campaign war chest. Internet fund-raising allowed the campaign to raise more than $122 million in contributions. Republicans harnessed the power of social media in other ways, focusing instead on voter mobilization. The Bush campaign combined the time-tested grassroots voter turnout strategy with an Internet-based organization strategy. Like the Dean campaign's use of MeetUp, the Bush campaign used the Internet to organize team-building sessions with supporters around the country. These sessions focused on tactics and strategy and even featured appearances by the first lady and the president. More than 30,000 such sessions would eventually take place, involving more than 350,000 people.

The 2004 presidential campaign was not a total victory for social media because many of its most powerful technologies were not yet in existence. Nevertheless, the election demonstrated the

growing influence of the Internet and social media in American elections and how candidates must be able to harness this technology to win the elections of the future.

Eric C. Sands
Kaitlyn E. Pettet
Berry College

See Also: Blogs; Campaigns, E-Mail; Campaigns, Presidential (2000); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Fund-Raising; Social Media Strategies and Tactics.

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Campaigns, Presidential (2008)

Social media in political campaigns came of age during the 2008 presidential election. The campaign of Barack Obama best embraced Web 2.0 tools to transform the notion of campaigning nationally and virtually. The 2008 election can be seen as the beginning of the Internet age in political campaigns. Social media were useful not only for facilitating the distribution of campaign messages, but they also provided utility as a mechanism for continuous and ongoing political engagement by citizens reached by particular messages.

Forty-seven-year-old first-term Illinois Senator Barack Obama defeated Senator John McCain of Arizona, who was from a previous generation, with physical disabilities from his time as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, and was said to have not even used a typewriter, let alone text messages. Obama's 365–173 electoral college win (53–46 percent in the popular vote) was fueled in part by a successful social media strategy.

Obama's campaign used the Internet to advertise, communicate, and organize. It also aired its positions and defended against attacks. There were close to 500 million blog postings about Obama from the start of the Democratic National Convention in August in Denver to Election Day. During the same period, there were around 150 million blog posts that mentioned McCain.

On Myspace, Obama had 844,927 friends compared to 219,404 for McCain. In the last two days of the campaign, Obama gained more than 10,000 new friends, while McCain gained around 964. Obama had about 200,000 Myspace friends in January 2008 when the primary campaign started. Obama's Twitter account had 118,107 followers, gaining 2,865 on November 3 and 4. McCain's Twitter account had 4,942 in total. Obama's campaign let followers know where he was every step of the campaign trail. It was updated multiple times a day with messages in the first person so that followers felt a personal connection to the candidate himself. It also included live video streams of his public appearances. Obama would occasionally personally type messages, which would be signed with his initials *bo* to authenticate.

It was well known that Obama was an avid BlackBerry user throughout his campaign. When he became president, his use of the personal and presidential BlackBerry devices had to be limited. Through Election Day, Obama's Facebook fan page had more than 2.5 million fans and many secondary groups with thousands of supporters. Students for Barack Obama was created in July 2007 to energize young voters, and campaign staffers eventually made it an official part of the campaign. By contrast, McCain had around 620,000 Facebook supporters. More than 5.4 million Facebook users clicked on an "I Voted" button to let their friends know they had performed their civic duty.

There were various applications for smartphones that allowed Obama supporters to share

quotes, speeches, and inspirational messages. A YouTube channel, "BarackObamadotcom," had more than 120,000 subscribers and 1,800 videos by election time. There were more than 18 million channel views for Obama compared to 2 million for McCain on YouTube. Two million people created profiles on his Web site My.BarackObama.com.

One explanation for the disparity in numbers is that the early users of social media more closely resemble the profile for Democratic voters than for Republicans, especially in terms of age. This was expected to change in subsequent campaigns as all candidates and consultants realized the importance of social media strategies.

Not only could candidates reach supporters through a variety of sources, but they could also tailor their messages on each social network. Candidates and campaigns used social media to try to connect with constituents. Companies use those same spaces to post ads and try to reach targeted groups of customers.

Obama Campaign

The Obama campaign revolutionized the use of social media sites for campaigning and fundraising purposes. It picked up where 2004 Democratic presidential hopeful and former Vermont Governor Howard Dean left off with online fundraising. Dean's campaign is credited with starting to systematically collect online donations during his unsuccessful 2004 run.

The Obama campaign took it to a new level when it had more than 3 million online donors making more than 6.5 million donations. The average online donation was $80, and 6 million of the donations were in increments of $100 or less. The average donor gave money more than once to the campaign. These figures allowed the Obama campaign to raise the most money of any campaign in history and from the most total donors. One result of Obama's phenomenal fundraising ability was that he declined matching public funds, becoming the first candidate to do that since the system was set up in 1976.

Obama raised online more than $100 million of the $150 million haul in September 2008. A large chunk of it came after Sarah Palin's acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention (RNC), where she disparaged Obama's background as a community organizer saying, "I guess a small-town mayor is sort of like a community organizer, except that you have actual responsibilities." The Obama campaign raised $10 million over the next 24 hours.

Obama easily exceeded his Democratic primary challengers online. His social media presence was stronger than Hillary Clinton's. Obama had more than 250,000 Facebook members during 2007 compared to 3,200 for Clinton. Meanwhile, Clinton faced resistance from a "Stop Hillary Clinton" Facebook site, while Obama enjoyed dozens of supportive groups.

In early 2007, Joe Rospars was hired to direct new-media efforts. Rospars had worked for Dean's 2004 campaign and for the Democratic National Committee. He was joined by Social Media Director Chris Hughes, a Facebook cofounder. They created a team of experts known as Triple O—Obama's online operation. They formed My.BarackObama.com (MyBO) to create groups, organize events, raise funds, and have supporters connect with one another. More than 2 million profiles were created by supporters, 200,000 offline events were planned, about 400,000 blog entries were posted, and more than 35,000 volunteer groups were created. At least 1,000 groups were created the day Obama announced his candidacy on February 10, 2007.

On MyBO, the campaign built a database with 13 million e-mail addresses, 6.5 million online donors, 2 million members of their social network, and tens of thousands of engaged activists. Obama raised more than $600 million and much of it was online. Supporters were encouraged to set up their own grassroots finance committees on MyBO. More than 70,000 people raised $30 million from their family and friends. Around 3 million phone calls were made in the final four days of the campaign by supporters using MyBO's virtual phone-banking system.

One key advantage for Obama was the use of the Internet to organize in caucus states. He won the main caucuses in his primary contest against Hillary Clinton among other Democratic challengers. Winning the Iowa caucus and then in other caucus states throughout the primary season propelled Obama to the Democratic nomination. The use of text messages to reach younger voters was a key component of Obama's strategy in Iowa.

Barack Obama's Facebook fan page had more than 2.5 million fans in 2008. Many secondary group Facebook pages were created and had thousands of followers, including "One Million Strong for Barack" and "Students for Barack Obama."

Team Obama used YouTube to post many ads that reached voters for free. It was estimated that the campaign's official materials were viewed for a total of 14.5 million hours online for free. It would take $47 million to buy that much time in broadcast television advertisements.

Kate Albright-Hanna ran Obama's video team. She left CNN to work on the campaign, led a team that shot more than 2,000 hours of footage from Obama campaign events, and uploaded 1,100 videos on Obama's YouTube channel. Obama's videos were viewed nearly 52 million times, compared to 9.5 million for McCain's online videos. The Obama campaign videos also had a "Contribute" button conveniently located on the channel that enabled supporters to donate to the campaign using Google Checkout.

Obama's campaign could reach different demographics through targeted social networking sites. It communicated with Baby Boomers on Eons.com, Latinos on MiGente.com, African Americans on BlackPlanet.com, and gays and lesbians on GLEE.com. Flickr and YouTube were used to spread the campaign's themes of hope and change. Digg, Eventful, Faithbase, MyBatanga, and AsianAve all had an Obama presence. Obama was dubbed the Social Networking King by the *Washington Post*. Facebook pages like "One Million Strong for Barack" and "Students for Barack Obama" met potential voters where they were already spending their time.

In September 2007, then-candidate Obama went on the business networking site LinkedIn to connect with white-collar voters. He asked a discussion question: "How can the next president help small business and entrepreneurs to survive?" It received 135 answers by the next morning. Obama and Republican candidate Rudy Giuliani were the first candidates to have profiles on LinkedIn. Obama was the first to have a LinkedIn group.

The Obama campaign collected voter contact information at its thousands of events by asking attendees to send a text message to 62262 (the numeral spells the word *Obama* on a phone). Sometimes, they were asked to send the word *HOPE* or to send their names, zip codes, and comments during debates. Scott Goldstein ran the text messaging operation. At a campaign event with Obama and Oprah Winfrey in Columbia, South Carolina, the crowd was asked to text "S.C." to 62262. In the following weeks, the people who responded were sent text messages asking them to make phone calls or volunteer to urge people to vote in the January 26 primary. Obama won the South Carolina primary by 28 points over Hillary Clinton. In exchange for some personal information, people were placed on the campaign mailing list. Those folks then got campaign updates and reminders. They were the first to learn through text message that Obama selected Delaware Senator Joe Biden as his running mate.

The night Obama accepted the Democratic nomination at Invesco Field in Denver, of the more than 75,000 people in the audience, more than 30,000 used phones to text and join the program. Supporters received an average of five to 20 text messages per month depending on their demographics and where they lived. They received three reminders on Election Day to go out and vote.

According to Obama 2008 Campaign Director David Plouffe, a goal of the campaign was to expand the size of the electorate by reaching

first-time voters among minorities and youths. They collected 13 million e-mail addresses, sent more than 7,000 differently targeted messages, and more than 1 billion total e-mails throughout the campaign to reach these voters. By comparison, Democratic nominee John Kerry's campaign had 3 million e-mail addresses in 2004, and Howard Dean's had 600,000.

When Obama was attacked for his relationship to Reverend Jeremiah Wright, who made controversial comments from the pulpit, he gave a speech on race relations in Philadelphia on March 18, 2008. The speech was eventually watched by more than 7 million people on YouTube.

Another role that changed in the 2008 campaign was that citizens could use the Internet to instantly fact-check statements by politicians and share their findings quickly and widely. One example was when vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin said she opposed the so-called bridge to nowhere in Alaska. But, when records showed that she previously supported it and the news spread around on social media sites, then the McCain campaign stopped saying it.

On the other hand, offhanded comments by candidates at seemingly friendly and private events can be recorded and cause trouble along the campaign trail. Obama made a comment at a San Francisco fund-raiser that some people in western Pennsylvania cling to their guns and religion and see immigrants as different from them. The audio was used by conservative commentators to stir up opposition to Obama and to show that he held disdain for heartland, blue-collar Americans. While Obama's Facebook page had musical and pop culture interests that appealed to the social media generation, complete with shorthand language, McCain's use of social media did not appeal to young or tech-savvy voters.

McCain Campaign

The McCain campaign had a modest online presence compared to the Obama campaign. McCain did not fully embrace the potential of social media in the way that Obama and his supporters did. McCain had a handful of staff members dedicated to social media efforts and hired an outside firm to do additional work. They created a networking site called McCainSpace, but it did not gain popularity. McCain's social network numbers were far surpassed on Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, and YouTube, as noted above, by the Obama campaign.

Vice presidential nominee and Alaska Governor Sarah Palin was a spirited user of social media. But, the campaign needed her to moderate her use so that she did not overshadow the Republican nominee. A rumor about Palin and her family emerged through social media and required the campaign to respond. The rumor was that Palin's daughter Bristol was actually the mother of Palin's 4-month-old baby. The McCain campaign needed to respond to correct the record that the 4-month old was indeed the governor's baby. In the meantime, it became known that Bristol, an unmarried teen, was pregnant.

Supporters Weigh In

One common perception of the major party campaigns is that Republicans tend to run top-down organizations with more closely controlled channels of information. Democrats are more comfortable ceding control to people outside of the formal party leadership hierarchy. This enables Democrats to be more open to outside involvement by supportive groups.

A comedy network called Barely Political created ObamaGirl and released several videos, in which Amber Lee Ettinger showed her enthusiastic support for Obama. One video released in June 2007, called "I Got a Crush on Obama," was viewed more than 10 million times before the campaign ended. It became a national sensation and gave a lighthearted look at the popular obsession with Obama. A sexily dressed Ettinger danced and gushed over the Illinois senator in a pop love song platform (the song was sung by Leah Kauffman). The video was named the number three meme of the decade by *Newsweek* and the top Web video of the decade by Webby Awards. Other videos included "Obama Girl vs. Giuliani Girl," "Super Obama Girl," and "Ralph Nader and Obama Girl." The videos were featured on all the major cable networks. Ettinger appeared on *Saturday Night Live* and was named the Hottest Girl on the Internet in 2008.

Another video unaffiliated with the campaign called "Yes We Can," complete with powerful music and lyrics established an online anthem for Obama. The song, performed by the musician

Will.i.am, was edited to appear like candidate Obama was performing with Will, who echoed words spoken by Obama in campaign speeches. Several celebrities made cameo appearances in the video. It became a theme and rallying cry for supporters; it went viral and was viewed by millions. The "Yes We Can" video captured the enthusiasm of the MTV generation and demonstrated the power of the Internet in helping a candidate appeal to diverse populations.

These and other campaign aids on social media led Obama critics and the McCain campaign to deride Obama for his celebrity status. The attacks only seemed to help reinforce Obama's credibility online and his popularity in social media. The celebrity ad boomeranged on McCain when one of the celebrities, Paris Hilton, made her own video in which she denounced McCain, while sitting in a bikini, and announced her own tongue-in-check run for president.

Obama had a chance meeting with Samuel "Joe" Wurzelbacher, "Joe the Plumber," on the campaign trail in Ohio. Obama said he wanted to "redistribute the wealth" in a polite disagreement with Wurzelbacher, and the comment was caught on camera and went viral. Joe the Plumber became a common name for a common person who might be harmed by Obama's planned economic policies. Joe the Plumber, who was not actually a licensed plumber, was mentioned in the first debate 23 times by McCain and Obama. From there, interest in Joe the Plumber and use of him as a campaign pawn by both sides intensified.

Social Media as Sources of Information

A Pew survey released in January 2008 showed that 24 percent of Americans said they regularly learned political information from the Internet. That was double the 13 percent who said the same thing at a comparable point in 2004 and three times the 9 percent reporting from 2000. This was especially noteworthy for young people. Forty-two percent of 18- to 29-year-olds said they regularly learned something about the campaign form the Internet, up from 20 percent in 2004. While the percentage of people learning something about the campaign was down slightly on local television news and nightly network news, it was at similar levels for cable news networks and daily newspapers between 2004 and 2008.

The main sources of Internet-based news information in 2008 were MSNBC.com (26 percent), CNN.com (23 percent), and Yahoo! News (22 percent), followed by Google News (9 percent) and Fox News (9 percent).

A survey conducted by Complete and released by Cisco found that 62 percent of respondents regularly used the Internet as a source of information during the 2008 campaign. Television was cited by 82 percent in the survey as a source of political news. The use of online videos was five times greater than in 2004, with around 30 percent of registered voters reporting that they viewed videos online to follow the 2008 elections, and 75 percent of those viewers finding that online videos helped them to follow news and events about the presidential race more closely.

One academic study in the *Journal of New Communications Research* found that the coverage of the main candidates in social media was more equal in volume compared to traditional media. They found that, from September 8 through November 3, Obama was mentioned 160,207 times in traditional media, followed by McCain at 143,611, Palin at 84,714, and Biden at 20,834. In social media sites, McCain was mentioned 275,780 times, followed by Obama at 271,400, Palin with 270,266, and Biden at 266,523. While there was parity in the number of mentions online, this does not provide a measure of whether the coverage was positive or negative or the context of the coverage.

The same study found the American economy was mentioned 204,258 times in traditional media. That far outpaced Iraq at 86,458, Afghanistan at 66,774, and Iran at 34,316, with Joe the Plumber at 8,176. In social media, Iraq was the most-mentioned topic at 280,473, then Iran at 130,015, Afghanistan at 125,650, Joe the Plumber at 46,178, and the American economy at 16,191.

Conclusion

Rather than engaging in retail politics and going door-to-door to meet voters, social media allow candidates to go directly to citizens at a time and place of their choosing and usually in a network where they feel comfortable communicating and sharing information.

The 2008 election has been referred to as the Facebook election. It was the first time that all

major congressional and presidential candidates used social networking sites to connect to voters. Social media sites also made connections with traditional media outlets to expand their reach. Facebook held joint efforts with ABC News for election coverage and political forums. YouTube teamed up with CNN to use video questions from citizens during one of the presidential debates.

While it is clear that candidates used social media to reach voters and rally supporters, what is less certain is what impact they had on the election results. Though the 2008 Obama campaign is heralded as a path breaker for its use of new media and social networks, there is no way to know how many votes that translated into on Election Day. There are several reasons why Obama won, including national fatigue with Republicans after eight years under George W. Bush, the record amount of money that Obama raised, and his change message that he pushed. Social media aided in political socialization efforts as well as in quick and relatively inexpensive communication and organization. Based on the experience of the 2008 campaign and with the rapidly changing pace of technology, it was expected that the impact of social media in the 2012 campaigns would be profound.

Sean D. Foreman
Barry University

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, 2012; Palin Phenomenon; Web 2.0.

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Campaigns, 2012

Social media were a common and important part of the 2012 presidential and congressional elections. By 2012 it was an expected part of the election process for campaigns to launch social media messages and to use their online presence as a way to influence voters and traditional and cable news coverage. President Barack Obama's re-election campaign set the hallmark for the use of social media in the campaign even as Republican challenger Mitt Romney's team did a competitive job in social networking. One of the reasons cited for Obama winning re-election is the changing electorate and Obama's ability to win with younger voters, and especially women, Hispanics, and Asian Americans. Each of these groups is an important social media user demographic cluster, and the Obama election strategy mirrored that technology use profile.

One of the most-visited sites, especially during the last few weeks of the campaign, was the *New York Times*–hosted blog fivethirtyeight.com by Nate Silver. A Nielsen study found that Hispanics had higher usage rates of mobile and social media than whites, and Hispanics and African Americans have adopted Twitter at faster rates than whites. More than 60 percent of African American, Asian American, and Hispanic women have smartphones, compared to 33 percent of white women. People were clearly connected and getting more information than ever about candidates and campaigns. It is unclear whether

that translated into votes or not. It certainly does allow the campaigns to reinforce their messages and give more reminders about voting at minimal cost. For example, in Virginia, the Obama campaign was texting volunteers to make sure voters stayed in line even after polls closed.

A comment by Romney was secretly captured on video at a fund-raiser in Boca Raton, Florida. Romney said, "There are 47 percent of the people who will vote for the president no matter what. All right, there are 47 percent who are with him, who are dependent upon government, who believe that they are victims, who believe the government has a responsibility to care for them, who believe that they are entitled to health care, to food, to housing, to you name it—that's an entitlement." The 47 percent comment was unearthed by *Mother Jones,* a liberal magazine, and went viral.

After the campaign, the country faced a so-called fiscal cliff as tax breaks were set to expire, and a debt ceiling limit vote was required. President Obama called on citizens to tweet members of Congress to urge them to act on the expiring tax cuts and debt ceiling.

In 2012, Obama had more than 1.7 million friends on Myspace. He had more than 29 million "likes" on Facebook, while Romney had nearly 8 million. On Instagram, Obama had 1.4 million followers, while Romney had 38,000 people with which to share campaign photos. For music aficionados, on Spotify, 14,654 subscribers could keep tabs on Obama's musical interests, while 402 knew Romney's favorite songs.

The YouTube channel BarackObamadotcom had more than 290,000 subscribers and more than 288 million video views in December 2012. Romney's YouTube channel had almost 29,000 followers and 33.6 million video views.

Pinterest sites by the candidate's wives generated attention around some of their favorite activities. Michelle Obama showed pictures from events around the White House and had 42,000 followers. Ann Romney had 12,000 followers interested in her recipes and family.

Obama had more than 20 million Twitter followers compared to 1.2 million for Romney.

Twitter

Twitter emerged as the real-time tool of choice for candidates and campaigns in 2012. It allowed for instant feedback, fact-checking, and conversation while events like conventions and debates were happening. Twitter, like many social networks, has the potential to bring both positive and negative attention to a statement or situation.

One of the highlights—or lowlights—of the instant communication tool was during the Republican National Convention (RNC). Legendary actor Clint Eastwood gave a speech prior to the introduction of nominee Mitt Romney. Eastwood, beloved for many tough-guy movie roles, spoke to an empty chair that he addressed as having President Obama seated in it.

Tweets were fast and furious during the actual presentation. Then, after Eastwood left the stage an Invisible Obama account was established on Twitter. It immediately had 6,000 followers. The hashtag #Eastwooding was prevalent on the site. Around 9:30 P.M., Obama tweeted a photo of himself in the Oval Office with the caption, "This seat's taken."

The following week, Obama's Democratic National Convention (DNC) speech witnessed record levels of Twitter activity. There were 4

After Clint Eastwood spoke to an empty chair during a speech at the Republican National Convention, President Barack Obama tweeted a photo of himself in the Oval Office to his more than 20 million Twitter followers. Obama's 2012 re-election campaign set a standard for using social media in political campaigning.

million tweets during the last day of the DNC, more than all three days combined of the RNC. In the moments after Obama's speech accepting renomination, there were more than 52,000 tweets per minute. There was no comprehensive report of how many tweets were positive or negative, but it is clear that the president generated online chatter.

The first presidential debate on October 3 between Obama and Romney had a memorable social media moment and surpassed the DNC as the most tweeted-about event in history. While describing what spending programs Romney would cut, he singled out the subsidy to the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). Romney said, "I like PBS. I love Big Bird." But, Romney said he would not borrow money from China to pay for it. Immediately, Big Bird was tweeted 17,000 times per minute, and PBS was in 10,000 tweets per minute. Big Bird became the fourth-most-searched term that night. The comment led to several fake Twitter addresses being created, and #SaveBigBird was a topic trending worldwide.

Other blog posts and Tumblr images from *Sesame Street* followed. There were more than 10.3 million tweets about the first debate, more than the 9.5 million from the DNC, and 4 million during the RNC, according to Twitter. As for perceptions of the results, 25 percent of relevant tweets said Obama looked "rusty," while 22 percent said that Romney was "on his game." The conventional wisdom nationally was that Romney had a better debate performance. Yet, the thoughts on the candidates' performances were not followed by changes in attitudes on social media about their policy positions. Romney gained respect for his debate performance but did not earn noticeable support for his campaign in return.

The vice presidential debate on October 11 between Joe Biden and Paul Ryan drew 4 million tweets. The most tweeted-about moment was when Biden sarcastically asked, "Oh, now you are Jack Kennedy?" after Ryan tried to use the former president as an example of when tax rates were lowered and economic growth increased. The reference to Jack (John F.) Kennedy immediately brought to mind the infamous line that Lloyd Bentsen used on then–Vice President Dan Quayle in a 1988 debate. There were 58,275 tweets per minute after Biden's Kennedy comment. A line by Ryan that the Obama administration was "caught with their hand in the cookie jar turning Medicare into a piggy bank for Obamacare" garnered 55,540 tweets per minute. The moderator, ABC News' Martha Raddatz, was also tweeted about her performance, and her Twitter following increased from 6,000 to more than 20,000 during the debate.

Obama (@barackobama) became the third person and the first politician to reach 10 million Twitter followers. (The first two were Lady Gaga and Justin Bieber.) Obama joined Twitter on March 5, 2007. It took four years, six months, and five days to reach the 10 million mark. Obama hosted a Twitter town hall meeting on July 6, 2011. It focused on education and economic issues that appeal to young people, such as student loan interest rates. Obama, who is known to be verbose, had trouble staying within the 140-character limit at times.

On Election Day, the Obama campaign promoted #VoteObama, and it was listed as the top worldwide trend. When clicked, the message read, "Election Day is here. Stand with Barack and confirm your voting location now: OFA.BO/k3Qny #VoteObama." The link sent people to a tool to help them figure out where to vote.

A picture of President Obama and his wife Michelle hugging after he won re-election became the most-tweeted photo of all time, with more than 500,000 retweets. One estimate showed that 90 percent of senators and House members had Twitter accounts as well as 42 governors and more than 35 world leaders. Democrats successfully took their message online, while Republicans appeared to rely more on television advertisements to reach mainstream voters.

Primaries

Early in the cycle, as around 10 contenders geared up to compete for the chance to challenge Obama, questions arose about the ability of Republican candidates to have successful social media strategies. Newt Gingrich had an early start on his competitors, having assembled a base of followers for his organizations American Solutions and Winning the Future. Gingrich, who announced his campaign on Twitter, had 1.3 million Twitter followers in late 2011, many times more than all of the rest of the Republican challengers combined.

A story broke that about 80 percent of his followers were fake either from inactive or dummy accounts, paid for by the Gingrich campaign.

Mitt Romney had about 1.15 million Facebook fans in late 2011, prior to the Republican primary and caucus season. Still, Romney's Klout score, a measure of online influence, was at 75, while Herman Cain's was at 80 and President Obama's was 88.

Herman Cain made a big splash as a Tea Party-supported candidate running for the Republican primary. A YouTube video with his chief of staff, Mark Block, went viral and gained attention for the campaign. Block spoke supportively about Cain, took a long drag from a cigarette, and blew smoke toward the camera. Cain, a former restaurant business executive, then appeared on the screen with a wide grin without saying a word. The video had 1.3 million views in less than a week and inspired several parodies. Cain's Twitter handle emphasized his personality @THEHermanCain.

Michele Bachmann, a Minnesota congresswoman and Tea Party favorite, took to social media to get her message out. In one Facebook comment, she jabbed one of her opponents: "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery; thank you Governor Perry for using my ideas for your tax plan." The posting generated 931 comments.

Governor Rick Perry of Texas became the object of online ridicule after a gaffe made in a Republican debate. Perry said he would abolish three federal cabinet departments and then could not remember the third one.

Digital citizens got a different glimpse of Romney in his online profile than what they might have seen in the debates and speeches. He listed "likes" for *Modern Family*, *American Idol*, *Star Wars*, waterskiing, and horseback riding with his wife.

Obama Campaign

The Obama campaign already had a massive amount of social media data and contacts from the 2008 campaign and from his first term in office. One goal was the win back people who had unsubscribed from the 2008 e-mail lists. Another was to microtarget voters based on their interests or personal appeals to their favorite celebrities. When the campaign offered a chance for donors to win dinner with George Clooney and President Obama, they found the people most likely to respond were females aged 40 to 49 on the West Coast. They sought someone with similar appeal on the East Coast, and rather than find a handsome, male movie star, they enlisted actress Sarah Jessica Parker. The fund-raising appeals were also varied to try to attack different demographics. Some were focused on Parker and her starring role in *Sex in the City*. Other messages pointed out that *Vogue* editor Anna Wintour would be present. Still others highlighted a private Mariah Carey concert after the dinner.

Other efforts to microtarget include the Obama campaign sending a fund-raising appeal to supporters but with several variations. One such mailing included at least six slight varieties in the same message, varying the amount of money asked for, the subject line, and the general appeal of the message.

The Obama campaign sliced the electorate into manageable pieces with very specialized interests. One constituency was dog lovers. The campaign ran pro-Obama Internet ads featuring Bo, the First Family's Portuguese Water Dog. The ads urged voters to "Bark for Barack" and to donate to the campaign. There were Pet Lovers for Obama pages on Facebook, Pinterest, and other social media sites with pictures of the president and Bo. Supporters were also encouraged to share pictures of themselves and their pets.

The campaign also had pet-themed products for sale on the Web site. Other goods targeted for segmented groups included Latinos, nurses, and young mothers, with a Babies for Obama outfit.

Obama for America and the Democratic Party released an iPhone app to allow campaign volunteers to find registered Democrats in their neighborhoods. Targeted addresses showed the names, ages, genders, and party affiliations of voters living there. While it raised some privacy concerns, the data was public information that is commonly used by campaigns. It is generally housed in campaign offices and passed out on paper. This app allowed volunteers to access the information without visiting campaign headquarters.

Romney Campaign

Romney's campaign did a good job of getting on various social media sites and trying to reach potential voters. Romney launched his presidential

bid in June 2011. The campaign claimed to have had 3.25 million visitors to MittRomney.com by January 2012.

The Romney campaign used a company called ShareThis to target people who spent time on the official Web site and to track them around the Internet. Users would then get links to learn more or to donate to the Romney campaign. The strategy was used to identify people who were interested in the Republican candidate, just like those used to find potential customers for a variety of consumer products.

Both parties and presidential campaigns used microtargeted ads based on Internet searches. Microsoft and Yahoo! sold information to campaigns to allow them to tailor ads. Google and Facebook representatives said that they were not using this political matching service.

One woman reported that, while she was listening to music on Pandora, an ad to assist the Romney campaign appeared on her iPhone screen. The ad said, "To help Mitt Romney become the next president, Romney for President, Inc. would like to use your e-mail address—tap OK to let Pandora share this info." It had boxes for "No Thanks" and "OK" on the screen. The woman, who was listening to a Garth Brooks song when the pop-up appeared, took a screen shot and posted it on Twitter with the comment "#fail." It was unclear if the woman received the ad because she lived in battleground state North Carolina or because of the type of music.

New Concerns

An issue that arose in this election was what could happen to voters who took pictures of their ballots and posted them on Instagram or another site. Many states have laws making it illegal to show one's marked ballot to someone else. State laws vary across the nation on election procedures and penalties for violations. Laws vary from potentially having these ballots invalidated and the votes not counting to fines and imprisonment or both.

One person made a video of what he or she described as an attempt to vote on a faulty machine. A user named "centralPAvote" showed how he or she tried to cast a vote for Obama, but the machine kept registering for Romney. The voter then told officials, who recalibrated the machine and fixed the error. The video gained more than 10 million views, several hundred thousand of them on Election Day. There were also video reports of machines making the opposite error in other states, when a voter tried to cast a vote for Romney but the machine read it as a vote for Obama. These individual, isolated instances fueled Internet stories that each side had officials trying to rig the vote in their favor. However, there were not widespread or systematic glitches.

Conclusion

The use of social media to promote one's candidacy was not enough. They also needed to be used to organize and encourage people to act. With the profound role of social media in the 2008 and 2012 campaigns, observers were left to imagine what new platforms would come to transform the political scene in 2016.

Sean D. Foreman
Barry University

See Also: Bachmann, Michele; Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Microtargeting, Ryan, Paul; Tea Party Movement.

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Campaigns, Virtual

Virtual campaigns are promotional and marketing campaigns based upon new information and communication technologies (ICTs). Campaigns can be understood as a series of communicative activities in a set time period arranged by defined

strategies based on the targeted audience. Technological innovations and changes in the media and political culture have led to a modernization of political electoral campaigning. Political actors around the world adopted a wide array of Internet-based communication tools and embarked on virtual campaigning strategies. From the U.S. general election in 1996, when both major and minor party presidential candidates had Web sites, to Howard Dean's innovative use of the Internet for fund-raising and mobilization in 2004 and Barack Obama's extensive and effective use of the Web in the U.S. general elections in 2008 and 2012, politicians have increasingly sought to capitalize on the opportunities offered by ICTs.

Postmodern Campaigning

Internet technology has permeated the political process as political actors in both developed and developing democracies exploit new communication tools and utilize social networking such as Facebook and Twitter to achieve more efficient campaigns. Pippa Norris characterized this phase of political campaigning as postmodern campaigning, and Jay Blumler and Dennis Kavanagh have termed the media environment of postmodern campaigning the "Third Age of Political Communication." Virtual campaigning can sometimes be the one and only communication tool, as was the case in Poland in 2011. As a result of new laws that prohibited the use of traditional methods of promotion (such as billboards or television advertisements), political parties in Poland had to focus on the Internet for their 2011 parliamentary electoral campaigns.

Nevertheless, virtual campaigns still share the same goals as traditional campaigns. One difference is that they can now exploit the multimedia capacities of the Web. Campaigns are fundamentally about contacting and communicating with voters and targeted audiences, mobilizing the electorate, gaining supporters, and promoting the candidate, the party, or the platform. The ultimate goal of any political campaign is to persuade the electorate to vote for a particular candidate and party. What makes the use of ICTs important in political campaigning is that it has changed the pattern of political communication with new methods for generating content, enabling interactivity, using sophisticated promotional tools and detailed and customized targeting of audience, and disengaging from mainstream media. However, it should be mentioned that virtual campaigning, in many cases, functions in conjunction with traditional campaigning.

Although the use of Internet technology in political campaigning is not new, its first uses were simplistic. Political Web sites were confined to candidates' biographies and speeches, campaign news, and position papers. The sites were not sophisticated and were less interactive. With advances in Web-based campaigning, political actors and their campaign consultants have novel and creative ways to contact and communicate with their public. E-mails, blogs, online chats, bulletin boards, newsgroups, interactive Web sites, instant messaging, and social networks have ensured interactivity, and in some cases have engaged participants in a synchronous exchange conversation environment.

Web message boards can be thought of as a hybrid between group e-mail lists and newsgroups. Similarly, with e-mail lists, Web message boards promote complicity and community building through interaction among the participants. Entry into this group of participants and viewing exchanges are determined by specific membership rules. Web message boards usually lend themselves to dynamic conversation on topics that involve relatively short responses.

The 2008 and 2012 U.S. presidential campaigns were examples of a creative and extensive use of new technologies such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Myspace, as well as Ning, Friendfeed, LinkedIn, and Google+. The Barack Obama campaign in 2008 created its own social networking site, My.BarackObama.com (MyBO), and the John McCain campaign followed with McCainSpace. Both MyBO and McCainSpace allowed individuals to create their own profiles, interact with others, donate funds, join groups, and arrange events. The Obama campaign took things even further and used the site to target voters and to organize its get-out-the-vote efforts.

Moreover, virtual campaigns can include the use of smartphone and mobile applications to create buzz. New tools include both iPhone and Android applications and short messaging service (SMS, or text). With a mobile app, one can have iconic placement on a person's phone and can

also create app alerts. Mobile applications run faster and create one-on-one messages directly to the user. Furthermore, iPhone and Android applications provide data on millions of voters and powerful analytics to campaign workers.

The dissemination and gathering of political information is crucially important in any political campaign. The ICTs allow users to find a lot of information in multiple ways. Political Web sites provide a variety of data and sources from the process of the political and electoral system to a calendar of campaign events, actions, and ways to participate. Furthermore, Web message boards, forums, chats, and social networking provide a communication platform for the exchange of ideas and information. This bottom-up interaction allows the participants to comment on the party's activities and provide suggestions. The opinions that are expressed in these communication activities along with the users' credentials that are registered in the candidates' sites are valuable data for the political actors.

Engaging Voters

In addition, virtual campaigns have also been very effective in mobilizing voters and enhancing people's engagement in campaigns. Being among the most popular politicians in Facebook, Barak Obama had registered 32,313,965 friends by Election Day in 2012. The Obama virtual campaigning strategy became a dominant mobilizing political force. Indicatively, the following are some interesting figures for Barack Obama's campaign as of his Election Day 2012: 22,112,160 Twitter followers of @barackobama, 2,304,851 Google+ followers, 2.2 million volunteers, and 382,000 blog posts using the phrase "Voting for Obama" between September 1 and November 4, 2012, according to Google search. Obama allowed and encouraged supporters to participate by posting videos, photos, and testimonials. Online structures in virtual campaigning enable individuals to mobilize other potential voters, participate in creating their own campaign material, and recruit users as campaign volunteers. By responding to followers in the social media, a candidate adds a human touch to the campaign and can more easily turn digital followers into real-world volunteers.

Web 2.0 also offered a very rich terrain for promotional campaigning. Modern Web sites have photo galleries, video clips that cover events and speeches (sometimes available through live streaming), Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds, and in some cases, online structures that invite voters to create their own campaign material. Applications, such as the RSS, provide users with real-time information.

They also offer visitors the opportunity to download campaign paraphernalia such as electronic bumper stickers, ringtones, buttons, desktop wallpapers, and graphics (e.g., party logos, or posters). Moreover, YouTube, Google's popular user-generated online video-sharing service, has seriously affected online campaigning. YouTube enables political campaigners to upload a practically unlimited amount of filmed materials easily, at no cost, and without third-party mediation. The site, due to its popularity, facilitates high rates of exposure. The broad and successful use of Web 2.0 applications by Barack Obama set the example for other politicians too. In the 2009 elections for the 18th Knesset (Israeli Parliament), 22 of the 33 parties that competed had channels on YouTube, while there was a total of nearly 1,000 videos uploaded by these parties.

Virtual campaigning has enriched the traditional fund-raising mechanisms of politics. Online structures encourage voters' financial contributions to parties or candidates. In addition to the most usual link "Donate," many Web sites provided alternative choices such as "Sponsor a Media Ad." Among the best-known and most successful examples of Internet-based fund-raising and grassroots organizing is Howard Dean's campaign for the 2004 U.S. Democratic presidential nomination. Dean pioneered in Web fund-raising by raising $27 million in total by online contributions during his campaign. His innovative use of Meetup.com in order to organize thousands of offline gatherings brought together nearly 200,000 supporters. The Obama campaign built on this tactic, and in the 2012 electoral campaign, he raised $504 million online.

Challenges

Undoubtedly, Internet-based technology has brought forth new challenges for the political communication terrain. The effects of ICTs on political campaigning are at the epicenter of an ongoing debate in political science. There are

three main schools of thought: cyber optimists, cyber skeptics, and the reinforcement theorists or cyber pessimists.

Cyber optimists, or mobilization theorists, constitute the optimistic strand in literature on computer-mediated communication. They support that ICTs empower democracy by fostering greater participation, encouraging political conversation, improving interactive information sharing, and reducing costs. Political communication online is fast, easy, and inexpensive. On the other hand, cyber skeptics believe that the Internet has been overestimated as a medium for activating the citizenry and that it only supplements traditional political communication tactics, from which it differs only slightly. Finally, reinforcement theorists or, cyber pessimists, doubt the Internet's potential to increase political participation and to provide a new repertoire of collective action. Their argument is highly influenced by their belief that the Internet aggravates de facto differences in political participation. For them, new technologies reinforce deeper divisions between the "info-rich" and the "info-poor."

Despite differing opinions on the impact of ICTs in political communication and politics, the infusion of new technologies in campaigning techniques is an indisputable fact. Virtual campaigning benefits such as being lower in cost, eliminating geographical boundaries, and allowing an independence of media interests, and new, sophisticated methods of promotion and communication have proved invaluable. Apart from political parties and politicians, virtual campaigns have been deployed by other nonstate actors like nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), ethnic communities, trade unions, lobby groups, interest groups, and protesters.

Nonstate and other civil society actors make use of the aforementioned campaigning tools to raise public awareness of and put pressure on particular policies or political decision makers. Along with these action campaigns, many solidarity campaigns exist in support of moral and social issues like social justice or human rights. These actors use the advantages of ICTs to enhance their campaigns and render them more effective. They can provide large amounts of information on their Web sites and can also create and encourage online participatory forms of interaction. Many Web campaigns with clearly defined demands have also included e-petitioning. E-petitioning is a very popular form of online political participation. Nonetheless, the role of e-petitioning in political and social Web campaigns has bolstered an ongoing discussion around its potentials and pitfalls. New technology can increase exposure to a wider audience and provide new methods for membership. The term *cyberactivism* is used to describe the use of advanced information and communication technologies for campaigns. Greenpeace, among other organizations, has used cyberactivism extensively, which has helped it revolutionize the way it runs its campaigns.

There are numerous examples of social groups that have used social media not only to organize but to make their voices heard. Social media and Facebook, in particular, have been instrumental in the creation, organization, and promotion of the Spanish movement Indignados, which protested against austerity measures. The same organizational and campaigning model built around network communication was adopted by similar movements like Occupy Wall Street and the Greek Indignant. Virtual campaign practices enable these movements to mobilize online and offline rallies, attract worldwide attention, and gain broader public support. The Internet environment is their battleground and ultimately their political weapon.

On the whole, virtual campaigns have heralded a new era in political campaigning by embracing ICTs. Internet-based communication tools are either used on their own or are embedded in traditional marketing strategies. Virtual campaigning has led to a much more sophisticated political marketing approach. Though there is much research to be done on their impact, efficiency, and drawbacks, virtual campaigns have established their ubiquitous presence. The two-way flow of communication, the control over content production, the low cost, and the extensive exposure are only some of the benefits that the new technologies offer users. The masterful utilization of these new technologies by U.S. politicians could not help but be noticed by political actors around the world.

Anastasia Veneti
University of Athens

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, 2012; Communication; Facebook; International Examples of Political Parties and Social Media; Obama for America iPhone Application; Web 2.0.

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Canada

Social media have become an increasing presence in the everyday lives of Canadians. Yet, in spite of an online presence consisting of Web sites and blogs, politicians and political parties have generally lagged behind in making use of social media. Overall, they still regard these Web sites as means of disseminating information rather than spaces where they could engage citizens in real discussions. Citizens have also relied on social media to respond to or resist existing political configurations. As several cases of unexpected citizen mobilization through Facebook and Twitter have gained notoriety, social media became increasingly imagined as crucial to making grassroots politics both visible and effective.

Politicians and Political Parties

In Canada, most politicians and political parties have an established presence on social media, although the type and frequency of use vary greatly. The political parties currently represented in the parliament (Bloc Québécois, the Conservative Party of Canada, the Green Party of Canada, the Liberal Party of Canada, and the New Democratic Party) have traditionally relied on Web sites and blogs to inform their constituencies. Political parties and politicians have gradually added Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, or YouTube accounts in an effort to be present in the new communication spaces inhabited by Canadians. During elections, the use of social media by politicians and political parties rises to prominence. While occasionally a politician's social media activity becomes newsworthy outside of election times, such stories tend to have a controversial component and, overall, receive less academic or journalistic attention.

A relatively recent phenomenon, the electoral use of social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter in Canada has been, to a great extent, encouraged by the enthusiasm surrounding the media coverage of Barack Obama's 2008 U.S. presidential campaign. Yet, the role of such sites during the Canadian federal elections held the same year remained limited: parties relied on the more established official Web sites and blogs. As parties and specific politicians started to experiment with Facebook or YouTube, the latter were mostly used in a static way, merely to present information on the electoral campaign or to announce specific news. Social networking profiles were rarely used to engage with voters, while politicians' profiles were rarely updated.

On the other hand, political parties relied on the use of online videos for electoral purposes, creating and posting content that occasionally became viral. Further studies on this use are warranted, as anecdotal evidence suggests that negative ads and attack videos were also the most widely seen and shared videos. For instance, the "Pooping Puffin" video circulated by the Conservative Party depicted a bird pooping on the shoulder of the Liberal Party leader; the video backfired, the Conservatives apologized, and subsequently removed

the video. Overall, the use of such videos remains a campaign strategy of praising leaders or attacking opponents, inviting little feedback or engagement from citizens.

For political communication scholar David Taras, social media made a proper debut in the context of Canadian electoral politics with the 2011 federal elections. These elections were marked by an unrestrained enthusiasm for the potential role of Facebook and Twitter (and to a lesser extent, YouTube and Flickr) in bringing politicians and voters closer. However, Taras remains skeptical, arguing that while the effectiveness of social media is difficult to assess, in all probability, electoral uses of social media remain the fiefdom of political junkies.

For example, Twitter can be understood as an online space where journalists, politicians, and interested citizens interact with each other. However, Taras suggests that in the context of the 2011 federal elections, this space was largely dominated by a small number of journalists and leading campaign tweeters, with the rest of the followers merely consuming the discussion. Furthermore, the number of Canadians active on Twitter remains rather low. Last, but not least, the different parties running in these elections have made strategic choices to invest in specific social media (e.g., the New Democrats used Facebook to share photos and promote upcoming events; both the New Democrats and the Green Party created an iPhone application providing updates about the campaign), but there does not seem to be a general consensus over what works or what should be included in the campaign strategy. In general, the use of social media was neither innovative nor sufficient by itself to explain the results of the elections.

Where the political use of social media during federal elections has so far been modeled after the broadcasting model of communication (i.e., one to many), the 2010 municipal elections in Calgary, Alberta, have been touted as the "right" way of using social media in electoral politics. Naheed Nenshi's reliance on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to connect to voters has been seen by journalists and political commentators as an important factor in his unexpected rise from a relatively unknown politician to Calgary's mayor. An independent candidate, Nenshi's insistence on answering the tweets and posts left by citizens on his social networking accounts, as well as his informal and funny YouTube self-presentations, were seen as succeeding in mobilizing previously apathetic constituencies, particularly youth. While these elections were indeed marked by a significantly high voter turnout, the latter cannot be explained simply by reference to social media use.

Nevertheless, the media coverage of these elections brought to light various aspects of social media use for electoral purposes. First, effective use of social media requires that politicians tap into the specific interactional dimension of these sites. Thus, politicians are expected to not simply use social media as a means of self-promotion or dissemination of campaign platforms, but rather as a means of entering into a dialogue with citizens. Second, by becoming part of this dialogue, politicians can no longer control their own representation; tweets will be retweeted, Facebook posts will be shared and, in the process, their message can be altered or reappropriated. However, in the absence of sufficient research on the electoral effectiveness of social media, it is impossible to assess the extent to which social media will indeed transform relations between citizens and politicians. More important, the direction of this transformation cannot be assumed as either empowering for citizens or necessarily leading to a more democratic political setting.

Citizens

To a great extent, Canadians have started using social media to engage with politics long before their politicians, political governments, or governments did. However, not all Canadians have Internet access or use social networking sites, although the adoption of the latter has grown across all age groups. Even when it comes to those Canadians who are online, the extent of use of social media for political purposes remains hard to assess, as seemingly innocuous actions such as liking a politician's Facebook status can constitute both an act of passive consumption of, or active engagement with, politics.

In the early 2000s, blogs were the most visible form of social media used for political discussions. Partisan blogs were often maintained by politically active citizens. These blogs were clustered into blogrolls (i.e., lists of blogs), based

on political affinities. Although such blogs did engage each other in discussions over platforms and issues, becoming a deliberative space within a democratic setting, this deliberation remained dominated by a few bloggers and segregated along ideological lines. Furthermore, the impact of such blogs on Canadians at large, or on elections, is not clear, as empirical studies are largely missing.

Canadian citizens with Internet access often engage in the creation and maintenance of an active civic culture by relying on social media. The political use of the latter varies greatly, from the creation of online content to disseminating existing political information or mobilizing citizens around particular issues. Many federal and provincial government agencies have now incorporated social media into their daily communication practices; in most cases, these profiles are controlled in a centralized manner by strategists and used to broadcast information. On rare occasions, governments try to consult citizens on local issues (with British Columbia and Alberta often touted as examples of successful government/citizen interaction). Citizens are also contributing to this dissemination-based use of social media: for instance, the popular hashtag #cdnpoli brings together tweets discussing Canadian politics, often recirculating official news. Yet, the extent to which these activities represent a dialogue between citizens, politicians, and governmental institutions, or affect the decision-making process, remains unclear.

Occasionally, citizens also use social media to engage with politics in innovative ways. In the 2011 federal elections, students orchestrated "vote mobs" (public gatherings where participants use makeup, clothes, or dancing to attract attention and encourage voting) and uploaded them on YouTube. During the same elections, a group of artists and citizens from Vancouver created and uploaded several YouTube videos mocking the Canadian prime minister and Conservative candidate, Stephen Harper. The videos, collected under the name "Shit Harper Did," went viral within hours. Such cases were quickly noticed by traditional media, who further amplified them.

Social media have also been used as both mobilization tools and as repositories of opinion and information challenging traditional media coverage and official governmental communication. Such initiatives can be driven by both individual Canadians and nonprofit organizations, and seek to spur debate, post information, and urge Canadians to act. In 2007, the Facebook group Fair Copyright for Canada drew attention to the proposed copyright reform, successfully delaying the introduction of new legislation as citizens petitioned their representatives and staged protests in public places. In 2010, Canadians Against Proroguing Parliament, another group born on Facebook, successfully mobilized protesters across Canada to oppose the prime minister's decision to temporarily suspend the parliament. More recently, a politically energized coalition of university students used social media to mount their own version of the "Arab Spring" style protest.

Such examples speak not only about the affordances opened up by social media in terms of re-engaging with politics and making it "fun," but also about the emergence of spaces where

The 36th mayor of the city of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, Naheed Nenshi in October 2010, eight days before the election. Nenshi's ability to connect with voters on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube was seen as an important factor in his rise from an unknown politician to Calgary's mayor.

the status quo can be both reproduced and challenged. Most mediatized cases of social media use by citizens and nonprofits for political purposes challenge the status quo. Yet, authorities are also using social media to monitor citizen activities. In the wake of the anti-G20 protests, police scrutinized social media for signs of civil disobedience, while in the aftermath of the 2011 Vancouver riots caused by the defeat of the local hockey team, police relied on social media to identify individuals engaged in the destruction of public and private property. Both examples signal the need for a careful evaluation of the political affordances opened up by social media, as these spaces become monitored by various actors, including the police, employers, and other citizens. Furthermore, it is not clear to what extent social media can also be appropriated by extremist or reactionary politics.

Yet, even with this caveat, the use of social media for political purposes largely speaks to an ongoing interest in and engagement with politics. It is not easy to assess the effectiveness of this engagement, or to assume that social media activities automatically transform into protests, petitions, or voting. However, against a prevailing view of citizen disengagement from politics, the political uses of social media bring to light an active Canadian civic culture. Yet, social media are neither the only spaces nor the only reasons for this culture.

Furthermore, social media open up new spaces where citizens can interact among themselves, or with politicians and official institutions. Such interactions may be issue-driven and short-lived; their effectiveness depends, to a great extent, on being replicated by a sufficient number of people. Yet, this interaction is archived and, to some extent, publicly available. This opens up different possibilities and worries, as both citizens and politicians could be monitored and held accountable on the basis of these archives.

Delia Dumitrica
University of Calgary

See Also: Blogs; Facebook; idlenomore.ca; Influence on Elections; Negative Campaigning; Political Parties; Quebec, Canada 2012 Student Protests; Twitter; YouTube.

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Candidate Image

Candidate image is a term often used in social science literature to describe the cognitive image a voter has of a candidate. This image is based upon a number of characteristics largely categorized as a candidate's position on issues and personal characteristics. Candidate image is an individual construct, in that each person has a different image of a particular candidate. However, these individual constructions can be examined in aggregate to better understand the overall image the voting public has of a particular candidate.

Understanding candidate image is important because research has found that voters make their voting decisions based on overall image of a candidate. In general, voters are more likely to vote for a candidate for whom they hold a positive image than one for whom they have a negative image. Because modern campaigns are candidate-focused, as opposed to party-focused, candidates must appeal directly to voters through many different types of campaign communication, which has traditionally included television advertisements, debates, and campaign Web sites. Social media is an increasingly important form of communication within a campaign and one in which candidates can further define their image with the public. The importance of social media in contributing toward candidate image is a relatively new area of study and one with many questions yet to be answered.

History and Research

Dan Nimmo and Robert Savage's book *Candidates and Their Images* (1976) is generally considered the first major work on candidate image. Nimmo and Savage claimed that voters, through interaction with a candidate's messages, form a cognitive image of a candidate during a campaign. Since that time, the concept of candidate image has been taken up by social scientists with the majority of studies being conducted in the fields of political science and communication. Candidate image is an important concept because it can influence a campaign in many ways. The concept has largely been studied to determine how candidate image emerges, the components of image, and how image affects voting behavior.

Several major conceptual approaches have emerged in the literature. One approach is founded in persuasion literature and sees image as something that is projected by the candidate in an effort to persuade voters. This approach places an emphasis on examining the messages sent to voters to understand what kind of image a candidate wishes to project. While it is true that candidates send messages to voters in a number of ways and that these messages do influence their overall image, voters do not simply accept all messages being sent to them. Therefore, another approach claims that candidate image is determined primarily by the voter and gives the candidate little room to influence the perceptions of the voter.

While both of these approaches help in understanding some of the primary contributing factors toward candidate image—messages from the candidate and the voter—they do not capture the dynamic relationship between candidates and voters. Thus, the most commonly used approach to studying candidate image combines these two factors and examines the interaction of the messages and voter perceptions to examine how the intent of the message is perceived, interpreted, and contributes toward candidate image. Much of the research on candidate image has taken this third, interaction approach. In other words, it is ultimately the composite image a voters holds that determines voting decisions rather than how that image lines up with the image a candidate has attempted to communicate to the voters, but the messages sent by candidates during a campaign can have a profound influence on overall candidate image.

To explain how candidate image emerges, most studies examine the candidate-voter interactions during a campaign. This approach to image assumes that voters form their own individual images of candidates; however, these images are formed in relation to messages and events in the campaign. A campaign provides voters with a myriad of messages about a candidate. Those messages serve to form a candidate's image—the composite perceptions of a candidate in the mind of a voter. Additionally, candidate images are formed incrementally over the course of a campaign. For these reasons, candidates are constantly sending messages to voters and should constantly monitor their public image and the other messages about themselves being sent to voters.

One type of message that candidates send to voters is their issue positions—the stance of a candidate on any given campaign issue. Studies have shown that voters do not separate candidate issue positions and candidate image. Instead, voters combine issue positions with image perceptions in an effort to create an overall candidate image that is partially based on issue positions. Thus, most candidates are careful and strategic in what information is given to the public on their issue stances. While scholars disagree regarding the importance of issue positions on candidate image, there is clear evidence that issue positions and candidate image are correlated. Those candidates whose issue positions are favorable for a voter are also those candidates with more favorable images for the voter.

Additional research has focused on how much emphasis is placed on issue positions versus image characteristics in overall voting choices, as well as how much an issue position contributes toward overall candidate image. Much of the research in this area was conducted in an age without social media. The emphasis of the research was on how candidates conveyed their messages through traditional media and the relative weight given to those messages by voters. New research has yet to fully take up the question of how social media changes the way candidates present their issue positions to voters and the relative weight given to issue positions compared to image characteristics via social media.

An important component of candidate image is its temporary nature. An examination of the research on candidate image shows there is a loose, common set of "ideal" candidate characteristics that is relatively stable across campaigns. What is not stable is the relative weight given to an individual characteristic in any given campaign. The voting public and the candidates set the agenda as to what issues and image characteristics are more salient for a candidate in a particular campaign. The candidates are then judged based on those salient characteristics.

Candidate image is not a static concept. It is constantly changing based on new information that a voter receives about a candidate. Campaigns can now take many months from start to voting day. During that time, many messages can influence a candidate's image. Most notably, major campaign events such as candidate debates can have a profound effect on the image a voter holds of a candidate. Several studies have examined the shift in candidate image surrounding events such as campaign debates and have found them to be influential in changing candidate image. Additionally, during the entirety of a campaign, many slow changes in candidate image can occur. The position of a candidate as an incumbent or challenger also has an influence on the candidate's image.

Components

Although candidate image has been examined by a number of scholars, the exact components of candidate image are still being debated. A number of studies have been conducted in efforts to determine the components of candidate image. Many of the studies have employed scales and asked respondents to rate candidates on a variety of characteristics. The characteristics of candidate image that are studied are many and varied. Some of the most commonly examined characteristics of candidate image are: credibility, trustworthiness, competence, composure, sociability, physical attractiveness, homophily, leadership, strength, honesty, intelligence, activeness, and experience. Early research defined image as focusing purely on a candidate's personality characteristics, appearance, and behavior. However, an increasing number of studies have found an association between candidate issue positions and candidate image perceptions. Recent research found that voters supported candidates who were consistent with their own ideologies and preferences in both issue stances and image characteristics. Thus, scholars studying the components of candidate image have also included an examination of how voters perceive a candidate's issue positions as similar to their own.

As stated previously, research directly attests to the claim that image has an effect on voting decisions. It is this effect on voting that indicates why image is an important part of any campaign. Several studies have examined various types of campaign communication to understand how they influence candidate image. It is important to understand the influence of the various types of campaign communication on candidate image and also examine how social media is changing the influential nature of these traditional types of campaign communication.

Campaign Communication

Political candidates in the past few decades have enjoyed the opportunity to reach the public through mass-mediated forms of campaign communication, such as television advertisements, campaign Web sites, televised debates, and, more recently, social media. Scholars have examined these forms of communication because of the important effects they may have on candidate image in the minds of voters and the general public.

Noted effects on candidate image and voting behavior have supported the importance of the television campaign ad to political candidates and their campaigns. Further, the public perceives television as a very credible source of information, historically indicating they are more likely to get their information about political candidates from television than from other media sources such as newspapers. As a result, television campaign advertisements play an important role in campaigns. The influence of the television advertisement is further seen with the appearance of these ads in the social media. The costly advertisements used to be seen by a limited public on television, but now can be seen at any time through the use of social media, which further extends the influence of this form of campaign communication.

Research on exposure to television ads typically indicates positive effects on assessments of candidate image, although negative effects have

also been noted. In terms of positive effects, campaign ads have been found to increase candidate name recognition as well as improve overall evaluations of candidate image following exposure to the ads. Exposure to political advertising has resulted in higher candidate ratings for characteristics such as intelligence, strength, dependability, honesty, and fairness. In terms of negative effects on candidate assessment or image, findings typically reflect that exposure to negative advertising produces negative image evaluations of an opponent. The positive and negative effects are both important findings because both indicate that viewing advertisements influences perceptions of candidate image and, in turn, candidate image assessments are considered an important predictor of voter decision making.

While research on campaign advertisements has suggested that ads are an institutionalized part of presidential campaigns, campaign debates have also been established as a foundational element of U.S. presidential campaigns. Findings indicate that image evaluations of candidates are strong determinants in candidate selection and that debates provide an opportunity for voters to assess and better understand the candidates' personalities and images. While research is not overwhelming, much of it indicates that voters are more likely to gain insight into candidate image rather than candidate issue positions during debate viewing. These findings indicate just how important debates can be to a presidential candidate's image due to the length of time that viewers are exposed to candidates in this type of campaign communication compared to other types. Increasingly these debates are shown on various social media sources in addition to being televised.

Recent U.S. presidential campaigns have seen voters interacting with candidates and others via social media during debates. The added importance of an additional medium through which a voter can experience a debate brings about new influences on candidate image. The previous model of debate watching on television in the privacy of one's home meant there were few outside influences on a person's perceptions of the debate while debate watching. Now, many voters watch debates via social media and/or while using social media such as Twitter and Facebook. As a result, multiple opinions on perceptions of a candidate can influence a person while watching a debate. In addition, those who do not watch a debate can still be influenced by the debate through the continual coverage of the event on social media. The information gathered about the debate through social media can contribute to the image a voter has of a candidate even when the voter was not exposed to the actual debate. This secondary exposure is an area that requires further study to determine the relative weight of the influence compared to that of primary exposure.

Since the 1996 U.S. presidential campaign—the first in which both candidates maintained campaign Web sites—the prevalence of Web sites as campaign tools has dramatically increased at all levels of politics. By 2000, candidates running for all levels of office in the United States had a campaign Web site. The initial value of a Web site is that it allows a candidate a forum in which to present an image and message that has not been reinterpreted by any other source. The Internet has become a widely used vehicle for candidate-controlled information that is available to voters at all times. Voters are increasingly turning to the Internet as a source of information about political contests and candidates. According to research conducted by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, in 2004, over 37 percent of the U.S. adult population used the Internet to get political information. That number dramatically increased in 2008 with 55 percent of the U.S. adult population going online to get involved or get information about the election. Even in the 2010 U.S. midterm election, 54 percent of adults went online to get information about the election. There is a clear upward trend in the use of the Internet to get political information.

Researchers have found it difficult to examine the effects of exposure to Web sites on voter evaluations of candidates' images due to the ever-changing nature of Web sites and the plethora of information available on one site. The same is true for social media sites where users are often saturated with an incredible amount of news, stories, opinions, photographs, and more during a short period of time. Regardless of this difficultly in measurement, it is clear that social media have become a primary means for candidates and their campaigns to communicate with voters.

When candidates first started using online platforms in their campaigns, they were typically used as conduits for sending messages and image concepts to voters. Today's online platforms provide for much more interactivity, thus increasing the potential for their influence on a candidate's image as the voter interacts with the content. Because social media allow for participation, information creation and sharing, and interaction with a community, the potential messages that compose a candidate's image are multiplied.

Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign was the first major U.S. campaign to make significant use of social media platforms. The campaign used Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, and YouTube, among others, to communicate with voters and create and mobilize communities of like-minded voters. As a result, almost all U.S. political candidates now have a presence on social media. Research has shown that voters are now just as likely to get their campaign news and information from online sources as they are from traditional campaign information sources, such as televised advertising and debates. Social media platforms are increasingly a significant part of the overall campaign strategy for candidates at all levels of office. The 24/7 availability of information and the sense of connectivity between candidate and voter via social media will continue to increase the importance of social media in the overall formation of candidate image.

Jenifer L. Lewis
Nazarbayev University

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Virtual; Candidates, Political Branding of; Debate; Facebook; FightTheSmears.com; Focus Groups; Online Smear Campaigns; Television and Social Media.

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Candidates, Political Branding of

In the past several decades, political candidates and politicians in the United States and in other countries have come to rely on insights and techniques from the discipline of brand management to improve their presentation and appeal to their constituencies. While television has been the dominant medium associated with political branding, in recent years the Internet and social media platforms have become increasingly important for the branding of political actors, and have brought new opportunities and new challenges to political branding practices.

As researcher Manuel Adolphsen notes, following the coverage of presidential races in the United States or of electoral races worldwide, one might get the impression that it is less a political contest and more a marketing competition, not unlike those between Nike and Adidas, Coca-Cola and Pepsi, or the various airlines. Many political experts and campaign teams advise political figures to employ strategies from brand management to create their particular and recognizable set of messages and emotions, their own brand, and to align their communication activities through various types of media outlets with the brand. Additionally, many journalists and bloggers describe the endeavors of political figures, especially during electoral seasons, by means of terms and concepts from management and marketing, particularly those related to branding. Today, branding is being used not only in the mediatization and sale of commercial products but also in the mediatization and sale of political beliefs. Branding is being used for launching and maintaining the images of presidential candidates and other political candidates, and for gaining and sustaining support for political actions and even wars.

A brand has been described by business scholars as the symbolic value of a given product or the perceived benefits gained by a consumer when purchasing the product. Such scholars discuss the brand differentiators that are aimed at making a specific product stand out among other similar merchandise and specify that such differentiators are not directly related to economic and functional value, but rather that they are social (pertaining to socialization or standing in society) and cultural (tapping into groups' and communities' customs and traditions). The brand is marked by the systematic association of products with lifestyles desired by consumers or the careful orchestration of sensorial and sensual aspects of the consumption context and situation. The brand, therefore, is related to how the product is showcased, frequently through a comprehensive media or multimedia effort, and what consumers perceive it to be after such an effort. Branding, as such, is viewed in business literature as any organizational activities focused on the creation and fostering of a distinct brand image in the consumers' minds and the public sphere. Branding includes the production and dissemination of value-laden narratives with emotional appeals and trust-building messages with do-good claims.

In the political arena, the brand is a political actor's public perception, and branding refers to the building and mediation of a coherent conceptual structure which links all aspects of a politician's presence and discourse, including physical appearance, psychological profile (including affective and intellectual, irrational and rational facets), and content and style of communication. Branding of political candidates during election campaigns and of politicians in office after the elections has been accomplished through value-based words, images, and gestures to connect with the public as well as through promises of action, change, or uprising to gain needed support. Such political branding practices have become powerful tools that enable aspiring politicians and elected officials to configure their identities to appeal to their target publics and the general public, and as such to encourage identification of citizens with their personas. Additionally, such practices have enabled political figures to counteract the images of other politicians and as such to hurt their political opponents.

Because of its strong impact on political life, branding has raised many evaluative questions. Some commentators have argued that political branding has positive consequences because traditional political communication leaves many people indifferent, whereas political candidates' and politicians' adherence to the rules of commercial branding helps facilitate a brand connection and thus empower the electorate and various constituencies. Other observers have contended that political branding has negative consequences either because branding might drive substance out of politics and replace it with glitz or because the over-reliance on branded communication in politics can easily shift toward manipulation of the public and thus cause injuries to democracy. However, claims have also been made that branding is neither inherently good nor inherently bad, but rather its worth depends on how political actors make use of it.

1980s and 1990s

In the 1980s and 1990s, coordinated political branding campaigns became a political reality first in the United States and, following U.S. examples, in other parts of the world. Such branding campaigns, at the time made up mostly of television

commercials, televised campaign speeches, and televised interviews, were aimed at showing what was unique about a candidate, what would make the respective candidate different from others, and what would make the specific candidate distinguishable for the public. In the 1980 presidential campaign, Ronald Reagan ran on a platform that both encouraged consumerism and employed consumerist appeals. The Reagan brand was built on the emotional narrative, which seemed consistent with the American dream, of the politician's rise from a humble background to fame, and was also built on promises of progress, prosperity, fiscal responsibility, and global democracy made to the American public and especially to the Baby Boomer generation.

In the 1992 presidential campaign, commercial branding experts helped position Bill Clinton as a candidate and then a president with a message that was direct, simple, moving, and reassuring. The Clinton brand also integrated an emotional narrative alluding to the American dream, but it linked to it promises of government support to those in need and of social justice.

Particularly noteworthy internationally was the rebranding in the mid-1990s, with inspiration from Clinton's branding campaign and with assistance from commercial branding experts, of Tony Blair and the British Labour Party. A television campaign set up by a consulting company specializing in branding helped transform Tony Blair's image from one of a youthful optimist with exceedingly idealist views to that of a mature politician capable of combining optimism with pragmatism. The campaign also helped reposition the Labour Party from a political force with a focus on the lower societal class to a "New Labour" with potential interest for the working and professional categories. The Labour Party's huge success in the 1997 elections and Blair's subsequent tenure as prime minister led to the widespread involvement of branding experts in politics not only in Great Britain but also in Germany, France, and other European countries. Tony Blair himself used branding again to reconnect with the British electorate in the subsequent electoral cycle.

2000s

Now established as useful in campaigns, political branding has slowly but steadily been adjusted into the first and the second decades of the third millennium to include not only televised but also new media activity of political figures. In 2000, the attempts of the Al Gore campaign to pursue Internet branding to mobilize the younger electorate remained ultimately unsuccessful. However, it is unclear whether this was due primarily to the novelty of the new media as a means for political communication or mostly to the greater branding capability of the George W. Bush campaign.

The Bush team had already used branding extensively in the 2000 Republican Party primaries to position the candidate as a folksy character, a compassionate conservative, and a believer in freedom, and to cast doubt on opponent John McCain's integrity, views, and plans. Bush went on to be dubbed "the ultimate brand" in the media for the simplicity and discipline of his campaigns and the skillful integration of values and emotions into his discourses, which worked to solidify the support of his base and to diminish public support for his challengers both in the presidential defense of the need for the Iraq War and when the incumbent president was facing Democratic Party presidential nominee John Kerry.

In 2004, the efforts of the Howard Dean campaign to add to the list of political branding tactics blogging, particularly blogging with reader response capacity, created many waves in the American political arena, yet the triumph of the Dean brand was short-lived, for various reasons that might range from the newness of blogging as a political practice to the differences in public perception of the candidate in new media environments as compared to traditional media environments to the lack of message discipline of the candidate.

After the innovative uses of blogging by the Howard Dean campaign team in 2004, and as social media continued to diversify and grow in popularity, political candidates for various offices at national and local levels in the United States started social media operations for political branding purposes. Meanwhile, political candidates, public officials, political parties, and activist groups in various other countries in the Americas and on other continents have found branding opportunities through social media.

In the 2008 Democratic Party primaries and presidential elections in the United States, political

communication experts noticed the seamlessness of Barack Obama's corporate identity and the promotion of his image in the same way as a consumer brand. With lessons learned from the Dean campaign, the Barrack Obama campaign built in 2008 an unprecedented political branding operation that integrated traditional media and social media, and replicated in 2012 the operation, although many doubted the repeat was possible.

The Obama image relied on previously utilized brand differentiators such as the narrative of the unlikely candidate, as well as on original ones such as the narrative of his community organizing experiences. It relied on simple key concepts like hope and solidarity, which some argued to be groundbreaking and others found to be inspired by social activists in the United States and internationally. It also relied on a now well-known refusal to use emotional appeals and to appear as a populist, instead enhancing likeability through coolness and candor. But what made the Obama brand truly unique in the 2008 and 2012 elections was the ability of the campaign not only to use social media platforms for mobilizing potential voters and interacting with them, for gaining political capital and doing fund-raising, but also to allow no discrepancy between approaches to the traditional media and to the social media, bridging the two in a coherent manner.

Additionally, scholars have found that the viability of the Obama campaign was enhanced by several unmatched social media practices in the political arena so far, including tapping into existing networks (of grassroots activists, of students) to amplify support, offering the right incentives (donation matching, dinner with Barrack Obama) to increase engagement, and always striving to personalize the social media experience. It is therefore no surprise that Obama-style cross-media and social-media branding is being emulated worldwide.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

See Also: Blog for America; Blogs; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Campaigns, Virtual; Facebook; Social Media, Adoption of; Twitter; Web 2.0.

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CAN-SPAM Act (2003)

The Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing (CAN-SPAM) Act of 2003, Public Law 108-198, was a U.S. law passed by the 108th Congress and signed by President George W. Bush on December 16, 2003. The law regulates unsolicited commercial e-mail and placed several limitations and penalties on such

messages. *Spam* is a broad term that refers to any unsolicited commercial e-mail message that is a nuisance to computer users. Spam e-mail frequently contains fraudulent or deceptive marketing content or unwanted sexual subject matter that offends recipients. The high volume of spam often requires Internet service and e-mail providers to upgrade systems to handle the high level of e-mail traffic. At the time of the act's passing, spam was viewed as a major problem and a threat to the viability of e-mail. Issues related to the CAN-SPAM Act are of interest to social media political strategists because advocates of unsolicited commercial e-mail argue that spam is a legitimate solicitation technique that is protected by the First Amendment.

The CAN-SPAM Act states that unsolicited commercial e-mail may be sent to recipients as long as the messages conform to several regulations. For instance, header information, such as originating domain name and originating e-mail address, may not be false or misleading. The subject heading of the e-mail must not be deceptive. A working return e-mail address or functioning opt-out mechanism must be included in the message to allow recipients to indicate that they do not wish to receive future commercial e-mails from the sender. Unsolicited messages may not be sent to a recipient who has opted out unless the recipient opts back in to receiving e-mail from the sender. The e-mail must be clearly and conspicuously identified as an advertisement or solicitation, and businesses may not knowingly promote themselves with false or misleading e-mails. Commercial e-mail containing sexually oriented material must include a warning label in the subject line.

Under the act, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), state attorneys general, and Internet service providers, but not individuals, may sue violators of these provisions. Violators are subject to statutory damages of up to $250 per e-mail, up to a maximum of $2 million, which may be tripled by the court to $6 million for serious, aggravated violations. Violators may be sentenced to up to three or five years in prison for knowingly committing fraud through e-mail, such as falsifying header information in multiple commercial e-mails or accessing a protected computer without authorization and using that computer to send commercial messages.

Many requirements of the act do not apply to commercial messages when the business and recipient have a pre-existing relationship, such as information regarding a subscription membership, or account, warranty, or product recall information; notifications of account balance; and e-mails about product updates or upgrades. The CAN-SPAM Act preempts state laws specifically related to spam e-mails.

When the CAN-SPAM Act was being considered, many antispam groups advocated that the legislation should go further. Some argued that commercial e-mail should be prohibited unless a recipient has opted in or given prior affirmative consent to receive the message, similar to an opt-in requirement adopted by the European Union. Others argued that a centralized list similar to the National Do Not Call registry should be created wherein consumers could place their names to opt out of all commercial e-mail. A do not e-mail list was not included in the CAN-SPAM Act, but the act did require the FTC to study the feasibility of such a registry. In its report, the FTC concluded that such a registry would not decrease spam without an effective authentication system and that an e-mail registry would raise serious security and privacy threats.

Many lawsuits and legal actions have been brought against spammers based on the CAN-SPAM Act. In 2004, the FTC filed a civil lawsuit against Phoenix Avatar, a Detroit-based spam operation, and charged the company with making deceptive claims about a diet patch sold via spam e-mails and not including a valid opt-out opportunity. Phoenix Avatar later settled with the FTC. In March 2006, the FTC obtained a $900,000 consent decree against Jumpstart Technologies, LLC for numerous alleged CAN-SPAM Act violations, including disguising its commercial e-mails as personal messages and misleading consumers as to the terms and conditions of its promotions.

The CAN-SPAM Act was intended to address unwanted commercial e-mail messages and does not apply to text or multimedia messages between cell phones (also called short message service, or SMS). Text messages sent between two cell phones or from one phone to many phones does not fall under the definition of spam in the CAN-SPAM Act; however, when messages are sent to e-mail addresses associated with a mobile device

or from an e-mail account, it does fall under the act. Mobile spam remains a concern, and several bills have been introduced that would change the statute to cover mobile spam.

Dan Schill
Southern Methodist University

See Also: Campaigns, E-Mail; Personalization; Viral Marketing.

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Cantor, Eric

Eric Cantor is Virginia's 7th Congressional District representative and has served in the House of Representatives since 2001. He is a member of the Republican Party and is, in many opinions, one of the most influential members of Congress. On January 3, 2011, Cantor was elected House majority leader, the second-most powerful position in the House of Representatives. Many analysts believe that he will one day be elected speaker of the House if the Republicans maintain their control over the chamber. During his tenure in Congress, Cantor has also become known as an innovator in his use of social media to make Congress more accessible to the public and to advance his partisan objectives. Cantor's partnership with his communications director, Matt Lira, has produced a number of social media initiatives that have the potential to change how Congress operates and how citizens interact with their government.

Cantor was born in Richmond, Virginia, the son of a schoolteacher and real estate agent. Cantor's father was involved in national politics and served as state treasurer for Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign. While attending George Washington University, Cantor interned for House Republican Tom Bliley of Virginia, where Cantor began his interest in politics. After earning a law degree from William & Mary Law School and a master's degree from Columbia University, Cantor's sights turned toward a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates.

Canter was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1992 and served for nearly a decade. During that time, Cantor served on a number of important committees, including the committees on Corporation Insurance and Banking, General Laws, Courts of Justice, and Claims. He also served on the committee on Science and Technology, where he began to take an interest in emerging trends such as the Internet.

On March 14, 2000, Cantor announced that he would seek a seat in the House of Representatives being vacated by Congressman Tom Bliley. Cantor had previously worked on Bliley's reelection campaigns, and Bliley quickly endorsed Cantor for the seat. With the assistance of Bliley's political organization and endorsement, Cantor was able to win the seat.

Cantor has served on a number of influential committees, including Financial Services, International Relations, and Ways and Means. Where Cantor has stood out the most, however, has been his rapid rise through the ranks of leadership. In just his second term of office, Cantor was appointed chief deputy Republican whip, the highest nonelected position in the Republican caucus. During his six years in the position, Cantor proved to be an effective leader and effective in organizing votes and helping control the Republican message. He has proved to be a tireless fundraiser, helping raise more than $30 million for the National Republican Campaign Committee. His hard work was rewarded in 2008, when he was unanimously elected Republican whip for the 111th Congress. This promotion was followed a year later with his election as House majority leader, placing him second in power to Speaker of the House John Boehner.

Cantor has been a leading conservative voice in the House of Representatives and has crossed swords with Democrats and Republicans alike. On the Republican side, Cantor became

disillusioned with a number of Republicans following the sweeping Republican victories in 1994. He believed that some Republican members had become too comfortable in Washington and had lost their reformist impulse. Others, he felt, had fallen too easily into the trap of pork spending to guarantee re-election. In some instances, Cantor has even supported challengers to these Republicans. On the Democratic side, Cantor has been a leading voice opposing President Barack Obama and congressional Democrats. He supports fiscal responsibility, reducing the size and spending of government, promoting growth, especially through small business, in the economy, and he has continued his war against pork-laden spending bills.

In promoting his principles and leading the Republican Party in the House, Cantor has reached out to social media as a vehicle for leadership and communication. Cantor was one of the first Republican House members to establish a heavy presence on Facebook, which he sees as being one of the key ways that constituents will interact with members of Congress in the future. Cantor was also quick to take advantage of other emerging platforms like Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Quora, and Digg. Cantor, in fact, has been so successful promoting social media applications to his party that the Republicans now lead the Democrats in social media use. Along with Lira, Cantor sees social media as a critical ingredient in the future success of conservatism and the party. Both men agree that the day is rapidly approaching that social media will be the dominant factor in electoral success.

Canter and Lira, however, have not been content to simply make use of existing social media but have attempted to innovate within the field as well. One project, called Citizen CoSponsor, is built on Facebook's Open Graph protocol. The application allows users to pick pieces of legislation that they are interested in, and the application will allow them to track the bill's progress. Users receive updates on the bill as it moves through the legislative process. The application also allows users access to the full text of the legislation. If a person supports the bill, there is also an option to click a button indicating support for the legislation, thus making the citizen a "cosponsor" of the bill.

Republican Majority Leader Eric Cantor speaking at the Values Voter Summit in Washington, D.C., on October 7, 2011. Many consider Cantor one of the most influential Congress members.

So far, Democratic reaction to the Citizen CoSponsor application has been mixed. The idea of allowing citizens greater ways of being informed about the legislative process is very appealing, and the potential exists for greater citizen engagement. At the same time, however, of the initial six bills available for tracking through the application, five were sponsored by Republicans, leading to Democratic complaints that the CoSponsor initiative is highly partisan rather than broadly inclusive. Cantor, in turn, has responded that the application is still in its early stages and that, as it expands, more Democratic legislation can certainly be included.

YouCut

Another innovative project initiated by Cantor was YouCut, which was created to support pledges made by Republicans to voters in 2010 to cut government spending. Each week the House is in session, voters can go to Cantor's Web site and select one of three government programs to cut. The proposal that garners the greatest number of

online votes is then introduced as a bill, and the public is able to track its progress on the Web site. Citizens are also given the option of proposing their own spending cuts to government programs, and thus far, the Web site has generated tens of thousands of suggestions. While not all the proposals are reasonable, some have drawn attention to clearly wasteful spending. One user, for example, discovered $800,000 that was being spent on a fantasy basketball league.

Democrats have largely dismissed YouCut as a partisan gimmick and have been reluctant to embrace its underlying principle of cutting government spending. Moreover, given that the Republicans do not control the Senate or the White House, there is little chance that any of the spending-cut bills will pass. Cantor, however, remains undaunted. While achieving significant government spending cuts is a long-term goal, the immediate objective of YouCut is to show citizens that legislators care about wasteful government spending at a time when the economy is putting such strain on taxpayers. Moreover, despite Democratic attacks that YouCut is partisan in nature, Cantor disagrees. Social media applications like YouCut, for Cantor, are nonpartisan because they are not fundamentally about promoting a partisan agenda. They are, he maintains, about making government more accountable and allowing it to work better.

Other Projects

Cantor also supports using technology to increase government transparency and allowing greater public participation in the legislative process. First, Cantor has pushed for changes in the way that the congressional record is made available to the public, in particular by allowing it to be read on portable electronic devices. Second, Cantor joined other Republicans in adopting the Standards for the Electronic Posting of House and Committee Documents and Data. Beginning on January 1, 2012, the clerk of the House will now be required to maintain a single Web site where the public can access House bills, amendments, and resolutions. All documents will be posted in XML or PDF formats. Video hearing and markups will also be formatted to be machine readable, allowing for easier transcription and publication. The goal of these changes is to allow greater citizen involvement and awareness of the legislative process and to facilitate citizens' participation in Congress.

Finally, Cantor and Lira have spearheaded a number of social media summits designed to make Congress more aware of the potential of social media to improve American politics. One of these events was a Hackathon held in December 2011. The Hackathon invited software developers, Capitol staffers, interest groups, and members of Congress to discuss how to use technology to increase government openness and transparency. Among the initiatives discussed at the Hackathon was how to improve grassroots information efforts through social media. Press releases, for example, tend to be one-way communications that do not allow citizens to respond to what they are being told. Social media as a vehicle for information communication allows a number of ways for citizens to not just receive information but also to offer feedback and suggestions for alternatives.

Other topics discussed included how to create more socially connected legislation using social media technologies like YouCut and Citizen CoSponsor. The goal is to create social media hubs where citizens can provide input about what the government is doing and what changes they would like to see. The Hackathon also focused on the need for Congress to become more literate in social media because of the opportunities that the technology offers representatives. Too often, members of Congress delegate social media interaction to staffers because they are uncomfortable or unfamiliar with its application. According to Cantor and others, this unwillingness to engage social media is a big mistake and represents a lost opportunity to engage with constituents in truly meaningful ways. Social media represents a meaningful way for citizens to become involved in government, and direct interaction with representatives is a critical way of making that interaction significant.

In short, Eric Cantor is probably one of the most forward-looking members of Congress in terms of understanding the role and impact of social media in American democracy. His tireless efforts to push his party and Congress to understand the benefits of social media are an important contribution to bringing government into the 21st century. While some critics may dismiss some of his efforts as

being motivated more by partisanship than principle, there is no question Cantor's leadership will continue to push the boundaries of what social media can bring to American government.

Eric C. Sands
Kaitlyn E. Pettet
Berry College

See Also: Crowdsourcing; Hoyer, Steny; McCarthy, Kevin; Ryan, Paul.

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Carnivore

Carnivore was a program created under the Bill Clinton administration to surreptitiously alert law enforcement of terrorist activity. Following the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York on September 11, 2001, and subsequent passage of the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) Act of 2001 ("Patriot Act"), the U.S. government gained new powers to attempt to prevent terrorism.

The Patriot Act allowed pen registers (a device used to record all numbers dialed from one phone line) to collect information transmitted over the Internet and between computer networks, extended the jurisdiction of all pen registers across the United States, required enforcement officials to file a court order to obtain the pen register, and finally, required the hosting Internet service provider (ISP) to provide the court the following information: the name of the officer who installed the surveillance program, the date the program was installed, and the configuration that the pen register was programmed to search. Project Carnivore had been moribund but was quickly activated after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. This program was an Internet surveillance program overseen by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI); it was designed to carry out surveillance of electronic communications, especially e-mail. The Carnivore program essentially "sniffs out" e-mails that are deemed suspicious by the FBI to look for possible cybercrimes, ones that have been committed or plans to commit cybercrimes.

In 1998, the FBI began to create a program known as Carnivore. The program was originally designed to sift through the contents of a suspect's e-mail, and when it was deemed necessary, to record that person's e-mail for future reference. Some Americans felt that this program was an invasion of their privacy. The FBI contends that Carnivore is a "sniffing" program; Carnivore sniffed through e-mails via the ISP, filtered the data, and searched for the information the Carnivore was programmed to seek. They say it was a confined search, that Carnivore processed the relevant data, and created an event file to show it complied with the court order that was required for the FBI to use Carnivore. By doing this, the FBI claims that the searches are not in violation of the Fourth Amendment. The FBI says that Carnivore did not violate the Fourth Amendment because it only searches for what the court order authorizes, thus not overstepping its boundaries. The FBI justifies its position by pointing to the rise in cybercrime and how the government has had to adapt to the times with advances in technology. The purpose of Carnivore was to ensure the safety and security of the American people. Some of the crimes that the FBI was targeting with the program were terrorism, information warfare, child pornography, and securities fraud.

Legal History

One of the first Supreme Court cases to deal with the issue of electronic monitoring was *Olmstead v. United States* (1928). In this case, the FBI placed a wiretap on the phone of Roy Olmstead, a suspected bootlegger, without judicial approval. The

Supreme Court held that telephone conversations did not receive protection under Fourth Amendment rights. Under the Supreme Court's approach to this case, the FBI did not need to obtain a warrant to seize evidence unless it physically trespassed to obtain the evidence. Even though the court ruled so, Justice Louis Brandeis dissented, saying that wiretapping was an invasion of privacy, thus violating the Fourth Amendment. Wiretapping, he claimed, allowed the FBI to listen in on conversations that might contain confidential information. He concluded that the government violated the Fourth Amendment when it used wiretaps without obtaining a warrant to do so.

Thirty-nine years later, the Supreme Court changed its original opinion in a different case that was brought before the court. In *Katz v. United States* (1967), the court overruled the Olmstead decision and changed its opinion to agree with Justice Brandeis's dissenting view. In *Katz*, the court held that the FBI was violating the Fourth Amendment rights of citizens in wiretapping without a warrant. The court ruled that recording oral conversations is protected under the Fourth Amendment. Essentially, evidence does not need to be physically seized for the Fourth Amendment to protect it, and a warrant is needed for law enforcement to use a wiretap on suspected criminals.

The following year, Congress passed the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968. The particular point of interest in this bill is Title III. The statute issued guidelines that the FBI must follow in order to obtain electronic information. It required a written application showing probable cause to be filed with a judge in the local jurisdiction. The judge must decide if the standard for probable cause has been met before he or she authorizes the wiretap or pen register. In 1986, under the Electronic Communications Privacy Act, Congress slightly amended Title III. This act still confirmed that a pen register receives less protection than a wiretap, but it established procedures by which law agencies could obtain pen registers.

The next major advance in government surveillance came in 1994 when Congress passed the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (CALEA). CALEA enacted the following procedures: when law enforcement asks, a provider of electronic service must help install wiretaps and pen registers; ISPs must make sure to allow only the government to use the device, which they are authorized by a court to do; and all networks must have the ability to accommodate electronic surveillance by 1998. All in all, there has been great progress in the government's ability to obtain and use wiretaps and pen registers. Government abuse of electronic surveillance is still possible, but many procedures have been enacted to ensure that it does not occur.

There have been several attempts to seize articles from third-party news organizations in the past. *Warden v. Hayden* (1967) held that search warrants could be issued to law enforcement to seize evidence in connection with crimes. Similarly, *Zurcher v. Stanford Daily* (1978) held that prosecutors could seize evidence from news organizations. In response to the *Zurcher* decision, the U.S. Congress passed the Privacy Protection Act (1980). The Privacy Protection Act's purpose is to protect the work of journalists from being seized unless they are suspected of a crime. This act protects the author's work as long as it is original and the author has the intention to publish it. The statute also protects such things as newspapers, books, and broadcasts. The information that the journalists are presenting is protected as long as they are not involved in a crime or cause a physical injury, or the person holding the materials committed a crime. As long as journalists are not involved in a crime, their information cannot be seized through the Carnivore program. However, if the FBI has suspicion that journalists are involved in a crime and their work needs to be seized, the FBI can obtain a search warrant from a magistrate and seize the evidence.

Concerns

Carnivore, as envisioned, raised the possibility that constitutional protections were in jeopardy. The Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects U.S. citizens from searches and seizures without due process. Many citizens and social groups feared that Carnivore, as it stood, breached the Fourth Amendment rights of the people of the United States. Before the Internet was first created, there was debate about whether the government could monitor the phone calls of suspected criminals.

The concern brought forth is that Carnivore breaches the Fourth Amendment; however, the FBI reiterates that it does not invade privacy because the Department of Justice cannot search and seize anything without a court order to do so, thus claiming that the due process test is met. When an e-mail is flagged and the conditions of the warrant are met, the date, time, origin, and destination of the e-mail are sent to the FBI. The FBI has called Carnivore a diagnostic tool that works through an Internet service provider; it separates only those e-mails under investigation and it does nothing with the rest.

When Carnivore was first implemented, multiple groups questioned its effectiveness and feared the intrusive agenda of government. Several of the parties who were not in favor of the program were privacy groups, Internet service providers, and House Majority Leader Richard Armey. They wondered how the Carnivore program met the requirements of a legal wiretap. Two major issues were brought up at the hearings held to discuss the program. The first issue was that many felt Carnivore should require a full Title III court order instead of just a pen register. The second issue in the hearings was whether the FBI had overstepped its boundaries in creating the Carnivore system. A U.S. appeals court decided that Carnivore was to be treated like any other wiretapping program and that it needed a court order before the program was used. Before the program ended however, it still only used a pen register instead of the full Title III court order.

The FBI officially ended the Carnivore program in 2005. Instead of continuing Carnivore, the FBI decided to use commercial software and asked ISPs to wiretap, and compensated them afterward. The FBI did not use the Carnivore program at all between 2002 and 2003. The reason given for why it abandoned Carnivore was that the software was too expensive to use. At the time, many experts believed that Carnivore was a far superior product than the commercial products. However, many advances were made with the commercial software, which is why the FBI decided to discontinue the program.

R. Bruce Anderson
Jon Klos
Florida Southern College

See Also: Federal Privacy Act; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Innovation and Technology; Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

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Catholic Church and Social Media

Although involved in communication to and interaction with the general public for centuries, the Catholic Church was not quick to embrace the use of social media. As an important tool that permits organizations to reach millions of followers quickly and inexpensively, however, church leaders are exploring social media as a means of communication, outreach, and interaction with the public. In utilizing social media, the Catholic Church has made use of both existing social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, and Web sites and other applications specifically developed to interact with the broader general public as well as the Catholic faithful. More attention is gradually being given to the effectiveness of various social media platforms as pressures to communicate with as many as possible is balanced with the results of those communications.

The Roman Catholic Church, with over 1.2 billion members, is the largest Christian

denomination globally. Among the oldest institutions in the world, religious or secular, the church is headquartered in Vatican City and uses a hierarchical model of governance led by a pope as well as various cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and other leaders who, per church teaching, are the apostolic successors to Christ. The Holy See represents the ecclesiastical and canonical authority of the church and refers to both its central administration and authority. Individual nations are divided into dioceses, which in turn are divided into parishes.

Each diocese is led by a bishop or archbishop, and there are nearly 2,800 dioceses globally. Nearly 1 million individuals belong to religious orders, serving as nuns, brothers, or priests. Some of those ordained report directly to bishops or other diocesan authorities, while others are members of separate religious orders, such as the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits), Carmelites, Dominicans, or Franciscans. These religious orders have their own governance structures, although ultimate authority over ordained members rests with the Holy See and the Roman Curia.

From its base of operations in Vatican City, the Holy See has long sponsored and operated a variety of media that are used to communicate with both the Catholic faithful and the outside world. Since 1861 the Holy See has published the daily newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* (The Roman Observer). *L'Osservatore Romano* is published daily in Italian, with weekly editions also appearing in English, French, German, Malayalam, Polish, Portuguese, and Spanish.

The newspaper presents coverage of the pope's activities, official documents of importance, and editorials by members of the Curia. Although considered the official newspaper of the church, *L'Osservatore Romano* does not possess the *Magisterium*, or teaching authority, of the Holy See unless an article or editorial is penned by a member of the Curia. Official documents are published monthly in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (Acts of the Apostolic See), a gazette devoted to encyclical letters, official decrees, and ecclesiastical appointments. The Holy See also operates Radio Vaticana (Radio Vatican), which broadcasts programming around the globe in 47 languages and which has operated since 1931. In 1983 Centro Televisivo Vaticano (Vatican Television Center) debuted, and it provides programming chiefly related to the pope and his activities and travels.

Social Media and the Holy See

In 1995, the Holy See launched the Vatican's Web site, which can be found at www.vatican.va and which provides information in eight languages, including Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, and Spanish. This Web site contains a variety of information about the pope, the Holy See, and the Vatican. Biographical information is included about the pope, as well as a calendar of his activities; a collection of encyclicals, letters, messages, and other messages and speeches; prayers; and apostolic exhortations and constitutions. Also included are photographs of the Vatican, various popes, and visitors to the Holy See. The Web site also provides links to information regarding this history of the Holy See, liturgical celebrations, various offices of the Roman Curia, and other miscellaneous information. As one might expect from a religious organization, the Holy See Web site also includes a variety of online reference materials, including the Catholic Church cathecism, the Bible, the Code of Canon Law, books, and documents related to the Second Vatican Council. Links to Roman basilicas and papal chapels are provided, as is a concordance to the liturgical year.

In December 2012 Pope Benedict XVI launched a Twitter account, using the account name Pontifex. Twitter is a social networking service that permits users to microblog by sending followers text-based messages of up to 140 characters in length. These messages, known as tweets, can be accessed through either the Internet or a variety of mobile devices.

In the three remaining months of his reign, Pope Benedict drew 3 million followers, and his successor, Pope Francis I, found his following had swelled to over 6 million when he took over the account. This compares with the 30 million followers of U.S. President Barack Obama or the 38 million of popular singer Justin Bieber. Although he was 85 years old when he first tweeted, Benedict was a strong proponent of using social media as a means of communicating with the Catholic faithful and others. During his reign, he became the first pope to maintain a Facebook page and a YouTube channel.

The Vatican desires to use social media to communicate the Catholic Church's message to a younger audience that is increasingly adept at using technology as a means to communicate. Certainly the social media accounts have permitted priests and others to employ a variety of audiovisual resources, including animated features, blogs, images, videos, and Web sites, in conjunction with traditional means to engage in dialogue, evangelize, and teach. Some have suggested, however, that the church's use of these applications has proven more successful in communicating with those who are already participants than with nonbelievers.

Opus Dei

The Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei (Opus Dei) is a conservative Catholic organization founded in 1928 that encourages its members to apply spirituality to their daily lives and to adhere to a strict regimen of prayer and ritual. Controversial, Opus Dei is embraced by those Catholics who desire a more traditional approach, including a "call to holiness," while the group is reviled by those who believe it to be misogynistic, secretive, and elitist. Opus Dei has made great use of social media, the Internet, YouTube, and other electronic means of communication in order to reach its members, advocate for certain issues, and provide information to the general public. Opus Dei's Web site, for example, contains a variety of articles, videos, podcasts, and other information organized around a variety of themes. These themes include information about Opus Dei, personal testimonies of members, social initiatives, multimedia presentations, links to other sites, and the like. In an effort to reach as many individuals as possible, the Opus Dei Web site can be accessed in 30 different languages. Opus Dei has also posted videos on YouTube, used Twitter, and established a distinct and commanding presence using social media.

Opus Dei's success with social media has not gone unnoticed. In 2012 the Vatican, reeling from a variety of communications missteps, hired Greg Burke to formulate its media strategy and to coordinate the Holy See's social media endeavors. Burke, a member of Opus Dei who holds a master's degree from the Columbia University School of Journalism, previously served as a journalist with *Time* magazine and as a correspondent with Fox News. The scope of Opus Dei's social media presence has been universal, with chapters in 66 nations around the globe, many of which have their own Web sites and social media accounts. Individuals and organizations that oppose the work and policies of Opus Dei have also used social media and the Internet to criticize the prelature, with a variety of sources of information critical of the group. Because Opus Dei embraced social media relatively early, however, it has been able to respond to these criticisms quickly and effectively.

Order-, Diocesan-, or Parish-Based Social Media

In addition to those social media sites and applications controlled by the Holy See and Opus Dei, a variety of Catholic religious orders, dioceses, and parishes use social media to communicate with their congregants and the general public. When initial attempts to give the church an electronic presence took place as early as the mid-1990s, most of these early efforts mirrored the content of diocesan newspapers and church bulletins already used save in electronic form. Such efforts seldom attracted new readers and, because those who attend Mass and other religious services tend to be older than the general population, the numbers of believers who could access such services were initially few. Despite this, many Catholic dioceses, parishes, schools, social organizations, and other groups worked to develop a Web presence, something that proved beneficial when the more interactive social media platforms known as Web 2.0 became increasingly prevalent and popular.

As social media applications became more interactive, and as a greater percentage of the population became wired, a variety of dioceses, churches, schools, religious orders, and other local Catholic organizations became users of social media. From providing reminders of upcoming social events to conducting outreach activities to reach new members, these groups used a variety of social media to make the public aware of these and other opportunities. As social media users tended to be younger than the traditional Catholic, this permitted these local organizations to reach a group of the laity who had been difficult to reach. Because the Catholic Church sees what

it offers to the public as more important than a "product" or "brand," those using social media found that they often needed focus on inspiration and movement building as ways to inspire and motivate those who engaged with it on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, or other platforms.

Independent Catholic-Oriented Social Media

A variety of uses of social media have developed through third parties who, while often Catholics themselves, are independent of church control. Examples include Catholic Online (www.catholic.org), a for-profit Web site that is owned by Californian Michael Galloway. Catholic Online provides a variety of services to users, including links to news updates concerning the church and its members, lists of saints and their biographies, free e-mail accounts, shopping, dating opportunities, and other assistance for those curious about Catholicism. With an attractive and engaging interface, Catholic Online appears similar to a variety of other social media choices. As a result, it attracts many users who are not otherwise familiar with or members of the church. Other independent Catholic social media sites that are controlled by laypeople and independent of church control include Independent Catholic News (www.indcatholicnews.com), Catholics United for the Faith (www.cuf.org), Our Sunday Visitor (www.osv.org), and the National Catholic Reporter (www.ncronline.org). Such sites, which often use a variety of social media, cost the church nothing and often have design elements and features that are attractive to the lay public. As a result, the independent sites attract a variety of users who are more varied than do the sites run by the church itself.

Such independent social media sites are not without their own controversy, however. For example, the owner of Catholic Online has been involved in various disputes with former employees. Disputes such as this bring a certain level of disgrace and disrepute upon the church even though it is not involved in any way in the actions of the owners of the sites. Such independent sites often confuse the lay public, offering viewpoints that are inconsistent with church teachings and doctrine. Even when the message of such independent social media sites aligns with that of the church, controversy can ensue. When Catholic Online posted comments on its Facebook page criticizing gay marriage, others who favored this attacked the account, causing it to be shut down for several hours. The often anonymous nature of the Internet often allows such attacks to go unchallenged, as it is difficult to ascertain who is behind them, much less to stop them.

Third-party-controlled social media sites also run the risk of affiliating the Catholic Church with products and services with which it does not wish to associate. A plethora of dating sites claim to be directed toward Catholics, for example. While most of these are harmless and provide a service of interest to many, a few such sites are written in a manner that others would find objectionable. Church authorities have, as a result, sometimes received complaints about Web sites, applications, and other social media over which they have no control. As such services continue to push the boundaries of good taste, such complaints will undoubtedly multiply.

Stephen T. Schroth
Jason A. Helfer
Knox College

See Also: Campaigns, Grassroots; Christian Right; Faith-Based Social Change; Latin America; Political Base; Twitter; Web 2.0;Youth Engagement.

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Cato Institute

The Cato Institute is a U.S.-based public policy research organization guided by the principles of individual liberty, limited government, free markets, and peace. Its scholars and analysts are actively involved in conducting research on various policy issues while working to remain independent and nonpartisan. Often labeled as a libertarian "think tank," the institute's engagement in the public sphere is highly influential, particularly on economic and social policies. The Cato Institute does not support any political party including the Libertarian Party, and its position on topics such as immigration reform, gay and lesbian rights, gun control, foreign policy, and government spending align it with both Republicans and Democrats on different issues. The Cato Institute is influential on public opinion and on policy makers through Internet and social media outreach.

The mission of the Cato Institute is to increase the public's understanding of public policies through the principles of limited government, free markets, individual liberty, and peace. The institute strives to provide clear and publicly accessible analyses of important public policy issues through a wide array of media. Its analysts appear as guests on television networks, make presentations at conferences and other speaking engagements, publish research reports and books, and write blogs and op-eds. Additionally the institute sponsors many of its own conferences such as the Annual Monetary Conference or the Conference on Health Care Reform, hosting notable scholars and specialists.

The Cato Institute's online presence is notable in its effort to influence the public's understanding of public policy issues. The institute maintains its own Web site in both English and Spanish, while also being responsible for other sites such as Downsizing the Federal Government, a proposal to cut the government's budget department by department; Libertarianism.org, promoting the ideas of libertarianism from classical to contemporary thinkers; and Policemisconduct.net, a project on reporting police misconduct nationwide. Additionally, *Cato Unbound* is a Web-only publication featuring a debate between four people with unlimited responses over a month. Other publications include *Cato Journal* and *Regulation*, both peer-reviewed, as well as *Cato's Letter, Cato Supreme Court Review,* and *Cato Policy Report*.

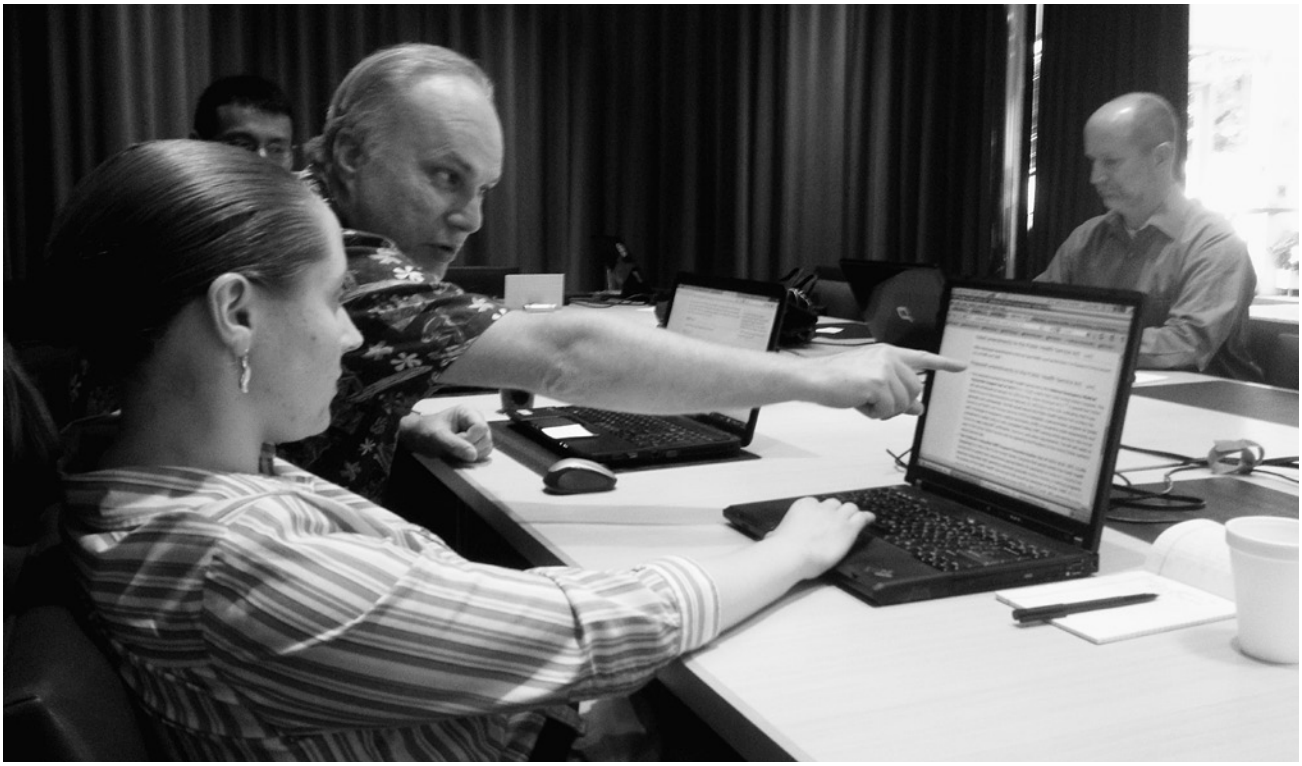
Social Media

The Cato Institute and many of its analysts and scholars are actively involved in social media, particularly in its use of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. While the institute mainly uses social media to promote its Web-based content and upcoming events, its analysts are quick to weigh in on Twitter about relevant debates and current events as they unfold.

In early 2012, the institute turned to the public through the Web for support against pending lawsuits that threatened to change control of the organization. Cato started a Web site and Facebook page called Save Cato when the legal dispute became more public to present its position and encourage others to support it through social media. The lawsuits were brought by Charles and David Koch, billionaire owners of Koch Industries and supporters of numerous conservative and libertarian special interest groups and think tanks. The Save Cato site pleaded with the public to join the institute in persuading the Koch brothers to drop what Cato labeled as a takeover attempt. The dispute concerned control of shareholder seats, with the Koch brothers claiming protection of their legal interests while Cato's position insisted its ability to remain independent was threatened. The lawsuits were finally dropped after an agreement was reached which the institute claims will allow its research to remain nonpartisan.

Background

Maintaining political independence allows the Cato Institute to declare itself as ideologically based rather than politically based. In addition to its resistance of more control by the Koch brothers, the institute also does not accept any government funding and instead receives its funding through private donations and book sales. Furthermore, the Cato Institute does not engage in



Participants at the Cato Institute–Wikimedia District of Columbia Legislative Data Meetup on June 8, 2013, at Cato Institute headquarters. The meetup provided an opportunity for WikiProject U.S. Federal Government Legislative Data participants in the Washington, D.C., area to discuss efforts to increase the amount of information about the U.S. government on Wikipedia.

any lobbying efforts or support any political candidates. Its scholars and analysts are known to be critical of both major parties at different times. Though often considered to have closer ties with elements of the Republican Party, there have been abundant criticisms of Republican office holders and the Cato Institute explicitly resists being tied to the conservative movement because conservatism connotes maintaining the status quo.

Founded in 1977 by Edward H. Crane and Charles Koch, the Cato Institute was named after a series of essays in 18th-century England known as Cato's Letters, Cato being a reference to Cato the Younger, the defender of republican institutions in Rome. The essays were written about a society free from excessive government power and were inspirational to many of the architects of the American Revolution. The Cato Institute believes that the principles of individual liberty, limited government, free markets, and peace are even more relevant and powerful today in an increasingly globalized world with unprecedented access to information. The institute remains committed to expanding civil society, where individuals make choices about their own lives, while reducing the political society, where someone else is able to make or greatly influence those choices.

Though societies of the world are becoming more complex, the Cato Institute maintains the position that the appropriate answer to such complexity is not more centralized control and planning but less. The institute claims that socialism and government planning are not appropriate solutions for the modern world because a concentration of planning only works in simple societies where it does less damage. Centralized planning is outdated and inhibits social progress, and the institute's attempts to influence both policy makers and the public through the use of decentralized social media platforms can be one example of how it follows its ideology.

Brett J. Craig
Nazarbayev University

See Also: FactCheck.org; Fiscal Cliff Crisis; Gun Control; London School of Economics Public Policy Group; Polarization, Political.

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Cause-Marketing Campaigns

Cause-marketing campaigns, also known as cause-related marketing campaigns, are marketing campaigns dealing primarily with social and charitable causes. Such campaigns are often the result of cooperative efforts between for-profit and nonprofit organizations. In cause marketing, organizations are partners and strive to achieve their mutually agreed-upon objectives.

Cause marketing is considered a win-win situation. For nonprofit organizations, these campaigns are important activities for promoting their causes through the financial support of a business and for reaching possible supporters through a company's customer base. For the for-profit organization, a cause-marketing campaign is an important strategy for improving customer relations, its own image, and its brand positioning as a social responsible company, increasing its ability to attract, motivate, and retain employees; appealing to investors and financial analysts; and even boosting sales.

Sue Adkins defines cause-related marketing as an activity in which an organization uses money, techniques, and strategies to support worthwhile causes at the same time as it builds its business. Although the distinction is not always so clear, cause marketing differs from philanthropy or corporate giving because the latter generally involves a money donation by a for-profit organization to a nonprofit one with no direct involvement of the for-profit organization in the cause, and the donation is tax deductible. By comparison, cause marketing is a marketing activity in which an organization with a product, service, or image to market builds a relationship with a cause for a mutual benefit.

Cause marketing can take many forms; for example, it can be associated with sales promotion techniques where a product purchase leads to a donation to a charity or a cause or with product licensing, endorsements, and certifications, like the case of the American Heart Association's stamp of approval on Cheerios, a breakfast cereal produced by the company General Mills, for its low-fat and low-cholesterol standards, but also through employee service programs or simply with the promotion of a common message. Gordon Liu and Wai-Wai Ko indicate as the most common cause-marketing implementation strategies sponsorship, transaction-based, joint promotion (for example through cooperation with regard to advertising efforts), and in-kind, nonfinancial corporate contributions. These four strategies represent four distinct ways of implementing cause-marketing campaigns. These are not mutually exclusive; an organization can employ different strategies for the same campaign.

Cause-marketing campaigns have been recently used for political causes, too, as a way to increase citizens' involvement. In the 2012 U.S. presidential elections, for example, the Kenneth Cole Foundation, a foundation created by the American fashion designer Kenneth Cole in association with Emory University and Rock the Vote, a nonpartisan American nonprofit organization whose mission is to engage and build the political power of young people, announced the launch of an innovative retail program that encourages voter registration. The program aimed to raise awareness about the importance of voting by allowing Kenneth Cole's custumers to register their votes in stores and online. Customers could also show their support for the cause by purchasing a limited-edition tote with the message "Rock the Vote (and the tote)."

Virgin America, an American airline company, was also a partner of Rock the Vote and engaged

in this cause by creating a specific campaign called Both Sides of the Aisle Win. Passengers on Virgin's Washington, D.C.-to-San Francisco flights could register to vote midflight by scanning a quick response (QR) code on the airplane's backseat screens. Another example of political-cause and cause-marketing campaigns is the Patagonia case. Patagonia, an outdoor clothing and gear company, embarked on a cause-marketing campaign in the summer of 2012 before the U.S. presidential election with its Vote the Environment campaign, in conjunction with nonprofit partners HeadCount and the left-leaning League of Conservation Voters. As with the Kenneth Cole Foundation and Virgin, the scope of this cause-marketing campaign was to motivate consumers to register to vote. However, in this case, Patagonia sponsored a specific political cause, environmentalism.

Although cause marketing was originally a marketing strategy that occurred offline, today it is more and more often conducted online, for example, with the establishment of online charity auctions. Organizations can create programs to help sellers and corporations donate a percentage of their sales to a nonprofit organization through the use of auctions.

History

It is believed that cause marketing is a practice that has been long employed by organizations to convey specific messages around their corporate identities and to link with the public and local communities. An example of early marketing activities associated with a cause is the case of William Hesketh Lever, an English business owner of a soap and cleaning product company—Sunlight—who introduced gift schemes in 1890 with the intent to donate a monetary prize to a charity on the basis of consumers' voting, which was possible only by purchasing Sunlight products first.

It was, however, only in more recent years that cause marketing became a thoughtful and planned strategy by organizations. Sue Adkins points to the early 1980s as the time for cause marketing's real beginning and American Express, an American multinational financial services corporation, as the pioneer of cause marketing. In 1981, American Express developed a cause-marketing campaign for donating funds to different nonprofit organizations as a part of the San Francisco Art Festival. For each purchase made by a customer with an American Express card, the company donated an amount of money to the cause. In 1983, the same company got engaged in another cause-marketing campaign, this time to support the restoration of the Statue of Liberty. The restoration of the Statue of Liberty was a successful initiative as the company was able to donate $1.7 million in three months. Sue Adkins reports that American Express engaged in more than 90 causes in 17 different countries in the years to come, clearly indicating that the company saw both a commercial and a social interest in developing specific cause-marketing campaigns.

After American Express, many other organizations decided to engage in different cause-marketing campaigns in order to boost profits, increase reputation, and improve brand positioning. According to the Cone 2010 Cause Evolution Study, which is a study exploring consumer attitudes and expectations of companies' support for social and environmental issues, cause marketing continues to grow among organizations, and consumers are expecting even more. The results of this study conducted by Cone Communications, a public relations and marketing agency, indicate that about 83 percent of Americans want more of the products, services, and retailers they use to support causes.

This indicates that consumers are extremely sensitive to an organization's commitment and involvement in social causes and may switch from one brand to another of a comparable product and price if the latter brand is associated with a "good cause." However, Philip Kotler and Nancy Lee underline that the organization's commitment in a cause has to be perceived by consumers as genuine to avoid consumers' rejecting claims of cause-marketing campaigns. Furthermore, the organization needs to clearly ponder which cause to support as some customers may have concerns about the charity the brand is associated with and may not want to purchase the product as a result. Overall, cause-marketing campaigns can be beneficial for organizations that have existing, long-term associations with a cause or charity and if the effort is perceived as an authentic, natural extension of the apparent commitment.

Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, 2012; Corporate Social Responsibility; Fund-Raising; Nonprofit Organizations; Special Interest Campaigns; Voter Apathy; Youth Engagement.

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Center for Communication and Civic Engagement

The Center for Communication and Civic Engagement (CCCE) at the University of Washington is dedicated to research and the creation of citizen resources that promote civic engagement and participation in local, national, and global affairs. In recognizing that new technologies have a critical impact on human communication, CCCE seeks to understand new challenges and opportunities for civic engagement through its operation of a number of projects. Projects include the organization of public events, reports, conferences, and curriculum that address the need to understand shifts in human communication by assessing the present state of the media and changing political climates.

The CCCE maintains an intellectual agenda that motivates and reinforces the range of diverse interests represented in CCCE activities. Its organizational philosophy recognizes two distinct views of social and political change. One perspective claims that civic life is declining as a result of decreased psychological importance and organizational coherence of traditional politics. A different school of thought suggests that political participation continues to thrive, however, it is represented in a new form; in response to changes in society, old patterns of civic life are being replaced to meet the needs of contemporary personal lifestyles. In line with the latter view, the CCCE believes that new concepts and methods are required to study these emerging representations of politics and citizenship. In particular, new research should be designed "to identify new patterns of communication and civic engagement in order to understand the way in which they fit with more traditional political communication forms, and to compare those patterns across different societies."

As defined in its intellectual agenda, CCCE research addresses five broad areas of interests. First, it seeks to "reassess traditional media and citizen information needs" by considering the decline of traditional media gatekeeping and the rise of emerging news networks and communication channels. Second, it attempts to understand "the rise of 'lifestyle' politics," a concept that suggests that traditional political appeals are being replaced with consumer-based value appeals that address quality-of-life concerns, such as those related to the environment and personal rights. Third, the work of the CCCE addresses "the decline of common political experiences," thus recognizing that the Internet has allowed traditional forms of political engagement to be replaced by virtual

communities that enable individuals and activists to act on a global level. The fourth area covers questions about "the changing politics of digital media and the Internet," which primarily involves the investigation of issues surrounding Internet-based issue advocacy campaigns. And finally, the fifth area in CCCE's intellectual agenda seeks to understand "global activism and large-scale public networks" by examining the characteristics of global cause networks.

Projects

The interest areas outlined above are explored in an extensive index of CCCE projects. For example, the organization has created multiple "Learning Communities" whose participants include students, faculty, and practitioners who work on projects that link the University of Washington to community organizations. Becoming Citizens is one Learning Community that allows University of Washington students to intern at local schools and community centers, where they facilitate civic engagement projects. In Spring 2012, 12 Becoming Citizens interns met with students once a week in various community sites and taught civic engagement skills to students using digital media. They assisted students in creating short videos about prevalent civic issues such as youth violence, healthy living, and the environment.

Another CCCE project, Developing Technologies for Public Engagement and Deliberation, aims to introduce civic technologies into actual political contexts in an effort to improve public deliberation in online communication forums. With support from a $730,000 three-year grant from the National Science Foundation, this project is led by an interdisciplinary group of scholars from the University of Washington, which include Lance Bennett, Alan Borning, and Travis Kriplean. This research team implements several online platforms that are designed to achieve measurable improvements in various areas of political behavior. Additionally, communicative outcomes produced by the project's interactive online platforms enable public officials to gain insight into the needs and opinions of citizens.

The CCCE is also dedicated to tracking and studying activist and issue campaigns. According to its Web site, the CCCE is particularly interested in individual campaigns that "redefine the boundaries of traditional politics and communication." Specific campaigns that have been identified for analysis have included the Nike Anti-Sweatshop campaign and the World Trade Organization campaign. The CCCE considers citizens' activities surrounding these campaigns with an emphasis on monitoring the role of the Internet in shaping the course of these campaigns. In its research, the CCCE refrains from advocating a particular position, instead focusing on providing an understanding of how it works.

The CCCE has hosted several conferences, workshops, and speakers on the University of Washington campus. For example, in January 2009, the center hosted a media-election workshop to discuss the roles of traditional media and new media during the 2008 electoral campaigns. In May 2000, the CCCE hosted the two-day Communicating Civic Engagement in Europe and the United States conference, which featured an array of participants from universities throughout the world.

Directors and staff, as well as faculty and students across the University of Washington, support the coordination of CCCE research, learning, and outreach activities. While the center is housed in the department of communication, it is cosponsored by the political science department and scholars are represented from a range of academic disciplines including political science, geography, computer science and engineering, and information science. The CCCE's organizational model has been praised for its capacity to effectively integrate higher education resources with community organizations. Using an academic institution as the center's hub, this organization has built public services that increase community participation in civic activities.

The CCCE recognizes the historical significance of new technologies in changing the ways that humans participate in public affairs, and it is dedicated to understanding new challenges and opportunities for civic engagement.

Stephanie E. Bor
University of Utah

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Education, Issues in; Engagement Features; Open Data; Youth Engagement.

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Center for Democracy and Technology

The Center for Democracy and Technology (CDT), based in Washington, D.C., is a nonprofit public policy organization. The CDT works to influence technological policy innovation with the overarching goal of keeping the Internet open, innovative, and free. The CDT was instrumental in shaping early Internet legislation and has advocated for policy and protections as the Internet has evolved.

The CDT believes that the unique, open, decentralized, and user-controlled nature of the Internet and its ability to foster opportunities for innovation, democratic participation, and human development must be preserved. The CDT focuses on enhancing freedom of expression by fighting for the rights of individuals to freely and openly communicate, publish, and access online information. It opposes any level of governmental censorship that threatens, or perceives to threaten, the free flow of information online. The CDT believes that the key to appropriate Internet usage lies not within governmental control, but rather within technological tools that allow individuals to engage with the Internet in the manner best suited to them personally. It also promotes the idea that online privacy is best protected via a mixture of laws, corporate policy, and technological tools that give individuals control over their personal information. The CDT advocates for limiting governmental surveillance protocols and calls for stronger legal standards protecting personal information in digital environments.

Research and Analysis

The CDT provides research and analysis, in the form of reports, papers, and commentary, on a wide variety of issues related to Internet freedoms and governance. It also produces policy posts, in-depth analysis on current technological policy issues, testimonies, and other reports from CDT experts. The CDT monitors various issues of technological concern in order to provide the public with timely and reputable information.

A primary area of research and analysis for the CDT is information and policies related to free expression. While broad in nature, the CDT focuses its analysis most specifically on issues of online child safety, intermediary liability (a section of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 that provides broad immunity for online service providers with respect to material posted by third parties), Internet neutrality (standardized technological protocols that enable Internet innovators to distribute content and services without seeking permission), the Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule (COPPA), and international free expression, which focuses on deterring unilateral global legislation that may serve to threaten the Internet's vitality and freedoms.

Consumer and health privacy are another area of concern for the CDT. The organization provides information related to consumer privacy on issues of behavioral advertising (consumer profiles created by compiling detailed information about an Internet user's online activities), spyware (programs on computers that open security holes for users), identity management, baseline privacy law (basic privacy protections that apply across the life cycle of consumers' data), and data security. Related to health privacy, CDT provides information on consent, the 1996 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA), privacy enforcement, and state privacy protections.

The CDT also provides research and analysis on issues of digital copyright and Internet openness and standards. Regarding digital copyright, the CDT provides information on graduated response policies (policies that call on Internet service providers to take action against subscribers

The Center for Democracy and Technology believes in the freedom to communicate, publish, and access online information and opposes governmental censorship that threatens, or perceives to threaten, the free flow of online information.

suspected of online copyright infringement), secondary liability (policies that hold service providers liable for infringement committed by users), digital rights management, and international copyright. On Internet openness and standards, CDT has compiled research on Internet governance, technical standards, and neutrality.

Aligning with one of the organization's core beliefs, the CDT provides substantial research and analysis on governmental security and surveillance. Information related to this issue includes information on the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) of 1986, which specifies standards for government monitoring of Internet communication and cell phone conversations; the PATRIOT Act, which provided expanded provisions for government surveillance in the United States and to access records about individuals, including citizens; cybersecurity; and terrorism information sharing (the development of domestic intelligence gathering that the CDT theorizes endanger freedom of expression, privacy, and other civil liberties).

Initiatives

A primary initiative for the CDT is leadership and advocacy that assists in shaping the direction of governmental policy and industry practices. Through ongoing working groups, the CDT brings together companies, trade associations, public interest groups, technologists, and academics to facilitate communication and seek collaborative opportunities. These working groups focus on issues such as government privacy and security issues, consumer privacy, and free expression. CDT also collaborates with a range of Internet stakeholders and is committed to fostering dialogue that produces implementable discussions on how to best protect and preserve the nature of the Internet. The CDT collaborated with companies and advocates to successfully argue for First Amendment protections for Internet communication before the U.S. Supreme Court. It also worked with Congress to pass legislation shielding Internet service providers (ISPs) from liability related to user-generated content and created the Anti-Spyware Coalition, credited with improving trust and security on the Internet. The CDT is also credited with helping shape new health policy protections and supporting the development of innovative technology vital to better health care.

Conclusion

The Center for Democracy and Technology is concerned with building consensus-driven coalitions among Internet stakeholders with the central focus of finding practical and balanced solutions to contemporary policy challenges in the evolving Internet environment. Through research, analysis, and involvement in various policy and legislative initiatives, the CDT consistently works toward its goal of keeping the Internet open, innovative, and free.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Cyberculture; Digital Government; Digital Revolution; Innovation and Technology; Privacy.

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Center for Information Technology and Society

The Center for Information Technology and Society (CITS), at the University of California, Santa Barbara, was founded in 1999, on the 30th anniversary of the birth of the Internet. The center functions as a unit within the University of California (U.C.), Santa Barbara's Institute for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Research. The center is composed of faculty from 13 university departments, with diverse disciplinary backgrounds, who study similar phenomena related to technology and society. The overarching goal of the CITS is to forward research related to contemporary information technology across engineering sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. Through formal events, public presentations, informal meetings, and a graduate degree emphasis, CITS forwards its mission to apply the knowledge gained from multidisciplinary endeavors to understand the multitude of ways that information technologies are developed, used, and impact contemporary society.

Core Beliefs and Activities

Funded by private gifts, the university, and research grants, the CITS hosts monthly lectures, conferences, workshops, and speakers, and supports a variety of working groups.

The CITS examines the technological developments that are stimulating complex social innovations and profoundly altering the ways that people live, work, and interact. Additionally, CITS research looks at how individuals repurpose and reconfigure technologies as they adopt and adapt to these technologies. A central belief of the CITS is that multidisciplinary research efforts are vital to increase the collective knowledge and understanding of technologically moderated cultural transitions and social innovations. It is through interdisciplinary engagement that the CITS works to not only research, but also create technology, and parse out the social understandings that may be embedded in new technological innovations. Additionally, through both investigating and creating technology, the CITS connects technology with humanity by producing research that explains how people use, adopt, adapt, and create technologies in order to participate in society.

The CITS engages in three primary types of activities: research, education, and connecting people. The primary focus of the center is research. Research teams are composed of internationally recognized scholars who investigate the dynamic, technologically driven environments pervasive in contemporary organizations and society, how society and social groups are affected by technology, and how social dynamics impact technological innovation and diffusion. The CITS also focuses on refining and teaching the skills involved with developing the next generation of researchers, inventors, educators, policy makers, and citizens. Through educational initiatives, such as a Ph.D. emphasis in technology and society, and the involvement of undergraduate and graduate students in their research, the CITS teaches the skills involved in understanding trends and evolutions in technological and sociological environments.

An emphasis on interdisciplinary training and intensive faculty involvement prepares students for a variety of future careers related to research, teaching, policy making, and the technology industry. Finally, the center focuses on connecting people. Through public lectures, conferences, media outreach, multimedia content on its Web site, and a quarterly newsletter, the CITS engages various academic units within U.C. Santa Barbara, other academic institutions, the industry, policy makers, and the public in a broad and vital conversation about the multifaceted dynamics of information technology and society.

To promote and share the research of the CITS, the center hosts a variety of public events and speaker series aimed at connecting on-campus and off-campus audiences in conversation about the role of technology in contemporary life. These presentations center around a wide variety of topics, such as the relationship between

the mind, brain, and virtual reality, communication and consumption, the history and use of air war and drones, the digital divide, and conversation roundtables with faculty and graduate students. Presentations sponsored by the center are archived on its Web site and available for viewing by the public. The CITS also hosts workshops, such as the Santa Barbara Forum on Digital Transitions and the Santa Barbara Social Innovation Design Charrette on Digital Advocacy, that bring academics and practitioners together for collaboration.

Research Initiatives

The CITS conducts worldwide investigations of information technologies and their impact on all aspects of human existence. The center is composed of a diverse team of over a dozen researchers who, in addition to conducting research, also organize public forums and facilitate partnerships with the technological industry and the public sector. In addition, CITS faculty work to improve technological engineering through the incorporation of social insight into the process of technological innovation. The center's research initiatives are diverse and range from explorations of social computing, to the use of technology in classrooms, to how technology is used in organizing community events. The research examines many aspects of contemporary social and cultural transitions, but focuses most specifically on the distinct areas of civic engagement and the transformation of community, global cultures, and learning and information literacy.

The center's research on civic engagement and community focuses on social collaboration and dynamic communities. It examines the ways in which the structures of communities have been and will always be inextricably tied to technology. This research realizes that human engagement is moderated by the technologies of the Industrial Revolution and their immediate successors. CITS research on global cultures focuses on multidisciplinary methods for visualizing social and cultural differences and disparities created by global communication technologies. Finally, the center's research on technology in education examines the adoption, application, and most effective use of instructional technology in a variety of educational environments.

Conclusion

The Center for Information Technology and Society is dedicated to exploring the cultural transitions and social innovations associated with technology. Through research, activities, and educational opportunities, the CITS works to produce insight into the relationship between technology and society.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Cyberculture; Digital Revolution; E-Democracy; Innovation and Technology.

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Center for Innovative Media

The Center for Innovative Media (CIM) at George Washington University (GWU) aims to spark and inspire debate across different media platforms. The center's flagship projects to date include the Public Affairs Project, the Documentary Center, Conversation Series, and Face the Facts. Each project utilizes social media to begin dialogue surrounding innovative ideas addressing global challenges.

The Center for Innovative Media is part of the School of Media and Public Affairs of the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences at GWU, a coeducational private university in Washington,

D.C. GWU has been ranked one of the top 10 most politically active college campuses in the country. The programs offered through the School of Media and Public Affairs reflect this title. The school offers an interdisciplinary program of media, public affairs, and politics that focuses on the changing political landscape in the digital age.

Flagship Projects and the Influence of Social Media

Planet Forward, a project with the Public Affairs Project, is a social network in and of itself where global issues such as sustainability, climate change, and green energy are discussed and evaluated. The platform goes beyond engaging with students at GWU to include citizens, scientists, experts, and business leaders with opportunities to discuss issues and, ideally, find solutions.

As a platform hosting user-generated content, Planet Forward allows users to submit their comments and suggestions on a number of climate-related topics, such as water conservation, nuclear energy, geothermal energy, solar power, science, business factors, campus sustainability, hydroelectric power, recycling, public transportation, and natural gas. Each of the landing pages for the different topics features a clickable call-to-action button to allow users to submit their ideas and sentiments. Planet Forward tips the traditional top-down format of media by allowing for contributors to start the conversations and compete to find the best ideas.

Also housed in the Public Affairs Project is the Center for Innovative Media's Conversation Series, which offers GWU students a unique look at the Washington political and national media landscape with compelling dialogues with leading journalists and policy analysts. Students are no longer viewers of a conversation but participants as they have the option to submit questions via Twitter live during conversations. Frank Sesno, director of the center's Public Affairs Project and former CNN bureau chief, hosts the live conversations. Guests on the Conversation Series have included Hillary Rodham Clinton, Tom Ridge, Walter Mondale, Chuck Todd, Ted Turner, and Dee Dee Myers.

Deemed one of the top 10 documentary programs in the country, the Documentary Center, directed by filmmaking Emmy Award–winning Nina Gilden Seavey, has been in existence for more than 20 years. The center offers courses in the theory and practice of documentary films and international fellowships and exhibits work from new and established directors and producers.

The program has six primary goals: to teach documentary filmmaking principles and methods; produce high-quality films for national and international audiences; host symposia, seminars, and screenings that foster dialogue about the state of documentary films both past and future; encourage the production of documentary films by global emerging filmmakers; consult with independent filmmakers, traditional broadcast outlets, and emerging outlets on the distribution of films; and forge a community of new and established filmmakers at home and abroad.

The center's global presence makes it a forceful figure in the world of public affairs. Similar to other projects sponsored by the CIM, it casts aside traditional roles and allows new filmmakers, seasoned producers, and independent developers to discuss films and the state and purpose of documentaries.

Other CIM research conducted by its associate director Kerric Harvey explores the theoretical implications and policy usefulness of new media storytelling formats when they are imported to online and virtual environments, especially as innovative techniques for conflict mediation both within and across troubled cultures and communities. The Halloween 24-Picture Day Project used the video capture function of everyday cell phone cameras as the basis for an interactive ethnography, in which male and female experiment participants were able to explore the same city, on the same night, from the perspective of highly contrasting perspectives about urban safety.

During the watershed 2010 midterm election, the Twitter Election Day Drama and Poetry Project explored ways in which Twitter—one of the fastest growing types of social media—might be used ethnographically within the political sphere. An original radio program emerging from this experiment was produced at GWV's Global Media Institute and enjoyed six broadcasts on XM Public Radio (Sirius) and the Federal News Network throughout December 2011.

To date, the latest initiative by the CIM is Face the Facts USA, which aims to cut through the

confusing political rhetoric and provide truthful facts to allow for knowledgeable and accurate discussions. The project seeks to not only provide accurate information but also facts that are compelling, memorable, and creative. The primary criteria for facts are that they must be relevant and provocative. All facts are developed from a research team with the CIM, screened by veteran editors, and verified by professional fact-checkers.

Face the Facts USA utilizes social media to engage university students and citizens to have conversations. This user-generated site allows viewers to host a Face the Facts Discussion, which is a 90-minute conversation with friends, colleagues, or community members about a big issue facing the United States. Face the Facts USA goes beyond traditional fact-checking sites to seek out viewer input and choose topics that are compelling and meaningful to those in the United States.

Marion Jeanette Herbert
Independent Scholar

See Also: Interactive Documentary; Pioneers in Social Media and Politics; Twitter.

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Center for International Media Assistance

The Center for International Media Assistance (CIMA) is an initiative by the National Endowment for Democracy, a U.S. nonprofit organization that promotes democracy. The center works to support efforts of independent journalists and media and their effectiveness in developing countries around the world. In addition to assembling work groups, research reports, and events, the CIMA distributes a comprehensive list of digital media information and maintains a bibliographic database of international media assistance resources. Ultimately, the CIMA believes that independent media is critical in the world today and works to promote and maintain its presence.

In 2008, the center's first report became the first of its kind to examine the field of media development. *Empowering Independent Media: U.S. Efforts to Foster Free and Independent Media Around the World* spearheaded the organization's mission and provided an in-depth, analytical look at U.S. international media development efforts.

The organization differentiates between media development and media for development. According to the CIMA, media development seeks to develop the media sector in a country as an end in itself, while media for development uses the media to convey specific messages on issues, including health care, poverty reduction, the environment, and governing. The organization affirms that both are needed to achieve balance within the field and be sustainable. For countries that are struggling economically and politically, the CIMA believes that media assistance is crucial in spurring a revival and placing accountability on those in charge.

Developing Countries

At home and around the globe, social media has changed how traditional journalists gather information and has empowered individuals to join the conversation. This is particularly powerful in developing countries seeking to gain truth and promote justice. The CIMA believes digital media is changing the media landscape in a number of ways.

In many ways, social media is placing power in the hands of the powerless. Citizen journalists have emerged as the population of users worldwide accessing the Internet and cell phones has increased. Ordinary citizens can create blogs, which many turn to instead of traditional news coverage for breaking coverage or opinion articles. Blogs are enormously popular worldwide with the CIMA reporting 113 million blogs worldwide in 2012—with only 36 percent in English. More

important, there is no longer a gatekeeper of what media are distributed. Users can share and connect with each other and completely bypass traditional outlets.

Many activities, such as violence or corruption, would often go unreported if it weren't for the democratization of media and citizens owning cell phones and capturing scenes and posting to Twitter or Facebook. It is not that social media necessarily influence or command the public to act, but it acts as a means for information to spread faster and thus organize acts. For instance, many credit Twitter and Facebook for the swift organization of protesters during the 2009 Iranian elections. Many news outlets turned to these outlets to gather information. Similar results occurred in 2011 when word spread on Twitter and Facebook that protests were scheduled for January 25 in Egypt. The social media tools offered a means of organization and provided courage to many citizens that perhaps would not dare risk death or imprisonment without knowing others were alongside them.

Noteworthy Reports

The CIMA has crafted many reports documenting the role of social and digital media in developing countries. *Digital Media in Conflict-Prone Societies*, released in October 2009, examines how social media bridges the information void that so often exists in areas of conflict or war. Political unrest makes access to these regions difficult for traditional journalists, although those who live in those countries can share their experiences in vivid manners. Not only is the decimation of information quicker, but the report notes that digital media tools can foster peace and build communication systems that foster healthy dialogues and nonviolent political solutions.

Social media is significant in developing countries not just from a citizen journalist standpoint, however. It also serves as an equalizing factor. *Bigger Cities, Smaller Screens: Urbanization, Mobile Phones, and Digital Media Trends in Africa* examines how a farmer in Africa can access the same information via his or her cell phone as a man on Wall Street in New York. The convergence of African urbanization and technological change is a major driving force within the country as a means of information.

The CIMA hopes that its advocacy efforts will not only allow for the continued growth of media in developing countries, but that awareness will be raised to the necessity of media assistance for political and economic stability in all countries.

Marion Jeanette Herbert
Independent Scholar

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Blogs; Citizen Journalism; Egypt; Facebook; Iran; Twitter.

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Center for Internet Studies

The Yale Center for Internet Studies (YCIS) began with the goal of understanding the effects of the Internet on society and the influence of society on the Internet. The YCIS was founded in 1998 by codirectors David Gelernter and Robert Dunne, computer science professors at Yale University. While housed in the Department of Computer Science, the YCIS was an interdisciplinary center that included perspectives from social science, humanities, business, and law. Building on Yale's strength in public policy, the center especially sought an understanding of public policy as it relates to the Internet. From its beginnings until the mid-2000s the YCIS hosted research fellows and sponsored colloquiums and roundtables

covering such Internet studies topics as the Digital Millenium Copyright Act and e-commerce. In its efforts, the YCIS collaborated with other universities and technology companies such as Sun Microsystems, IBM, and Mirror Worlds Technologies. The YCIS is currently inactive.

The Center for Internet Studies grew out of the strong interest Yale students had in Gelernter and Dunne's Internet-related courses in the late 1990s. By 2001 Internet studies had emerged as an area of study at U.S. universities, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. In 2001 Brandeis University offered the first Internet studies undergraduate major. A few years previously, Georgetown University began a master's degree program in Internet studies. Also, the Association of Internet Researchers was founded in 1999 and the Oxford Internet Institute in 2001.

In this milieu, Gelernter and Dunne established the YCIS. Dunn, a popular professor at Yale, taught courses on the Internet and law. The courses covered such topics as constitutional rights on the electronic frontier, censorship, and privacy. Dunne codirected the center and taught his courses until his untimely death in 2008. A textbook based on his course was finished and posthumously published in 2009 as *Computers and Law*. As an attorney, Dunne also served as legal counsel to then new Internet companies, including Mirror Worlds Technologies, a company that sponsored the YCIS and was cofounded by Gelernter.

The *New York Times* called Gelernter a "rock star" of the computing world. Bill Joy, the founder of Sun Microsystems, referred to him as a computer science visionary. Gelernter's 1991 book *Mirror Worlds* foretold the World Wide Web, search engines, and aspects of social media. In 1993, in response to the book, Ted Kaczynski, also known as the Unabomber, sent Gelernter a mail bomb that severely burned Gelernter and caused permanent damage to his right eye and right hand. Kaczyncki opposed technological advances and the ill effects he saw that they brought on society.

In the mid-1990s, along with a Yale Ph.D. student, Eric Freeman, Gelernter used concepts from his book to develop a new paradigm of computing. Instead of the space-oriented desktop metaphor of personal computing, they proposed "a time-ordered stream of documents that functions as a diary of your electronic life; every document you create and every document other people send you is stored in your lifestream." Aspects of time-oriented streams can be seen in today's social media, for example, in blogs, Rich Site Summary (RSS) feeds, Twitter, and especially Facebook's Timeline. In the late 1990s Gelernter and Freeman commercialized their lifestream work and founded Mirror Worlds Technologies, which sold a livestream type of software called Scopeware to businesses. However, due to poor sales in 2004 the company ceased operations. Gelernter continues to be a strong proponent of the lifestream approach to computing. At the time of this writing, Gelernter and Freeman were working with Lifestreams Technologies Corporation, which is developing a browser-based app (see Lifestreams.com).

William Hart
Norfolk State University

See Also: Oxford Internet Institute; Social Networking Web Sites.

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Center for Responsive Politics (OpenSecrets.org)

Money being sourced into the political arena can lead to some voices being heard louder than others as donors attempt to influence voters, elected

officials, and legislation. With Americans more concerned than ever about the transparency of their government, the Center for Responsive Politics, a social media outlet, has altered mainstream political agendas when reports on the OpenSecrets Blog broke national news, such as stories on health care reform and political donations to National Football League teams.

The center, headquartered in Washington, D.C., provides a comprehensive unbiased resource on federal campaign contributions and lobbying data, mainly through its Web site www.OpenSecrets.org. The analyses that are generated shed light on money spent to influence both federal elections and the policies that have an impact on Americans. Their nonpartisan goal is to advocate for a transparent and responsive government.

The Center for Responsive Politics was founded in 1983 by U.S. Senators Frank Church (D-ID) and Hugh Scott (R-PA). Before widespread use of the Internet, the center revolutionized the world of politics by publishing books that reported the spending patterns of interest groups and major industries, including the patterns of political action committee spending. This momentous task had never before been undertaken by any other organization.

OpenSecrets.org, launched in 1996, is a clearinghouse for data and analyses on political dollars, such as outside spending, federal lobbying monies, federal earmarks, and personal finances of elected officials. The Web site has received many awards, including the 2011 Online Journalism Award as well as several Webby Awards. Along with several full-time researchers, it employs reporters, office personnel, outreach staff, and interns that work to accomplish its mission. The organization is overseen by a board of directors, which includes financial moguls, professors, attorneys, and advocates.

The bulk data sets, provided at no charge by the center, are frequently used by journalists and academics. OpenSecrets.org is often cited by major news corporations, such as CNN, the *New York Times*, and National Public Radio. The center offers workshops on how to conduct computer-assisted research, how to responsibly report data, and how to best use OpenSecrets.org. Organizations such as the *Wall Street Journal*, the National Press Foundation, and the Society of Professional Journalists have taken advantage of this training.

Researchers using the center's databases can identify which political candidates are receiving money from interest groups, such as tracking the patterns of tobacco company contributions over the past 10 years. For each interest group, a contribution breakdown by type and political party that dates back to the 1990 election cycle is provided. Also available is a list of companies by industry that have provided the most combined political support through their employees and political action committees. Other data available include special interest group and lobbyist spending. Donations to and campaign contributions from political action committees are detailed. Committees with foreign connections are identified. Advocacy group spending is revealed. Candidate spending on elections, including those who have dropped out, is profiled. Financial profiles, investments, and personal finances of politicians are overviewed, including an identification of the most wealthy members of Congress. Users can even learn which public relations firms have signed former White House employees and which interest groups are hiring former members of Congress to lobby on their behalf.

The center also follows giving that is not mandated to be registered. For example, researchers provide reports that break down the spending by politically active nonprofits. The center also identifies trends, such as how the earmarks for federal funding for organizations, companies, projects, and groups are linked to political budgets. The financial support of these congressional earmarks is also identified. Additionally, political party fund-raising is overviewed, individual and soft money contributors are listed, and the most expensive races and campaign contribution limits are identified. A local feature provides profiles by city, by zip code, and graphically for the lay researcher.

The center earns income through custom research services and licensing data for commercial use to provide capital to operate and to support legislation that advocates for continued governmental transparency. The center also receives outside funding through a combination of grants from foundations and individual donations. No contributions are accepted from businesses, labor

unions, or trade associations. Its most sizable charitable donations are received from the Ford Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the Open Society Foundations, the Rita Allen Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the Ham Rove Memorial Fund of Coastal Community Foundation of Stephen Colbert. In December 2011, the total assets of the center were reported on its Internal Revenue Service form 990 as $1,802,834.

Through education and outreach, a free and accessible database, research and analysis, and a custom research service, the Center for Responsive Politics allows users to explore the connections between money and politics. The center is positioned to continue to be one of the premier social media outlets in revolutionizing politics for years to come.

Kristen L. Majocha
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown

See Also: Data.gov; Influence on Elections; Lobbyists; Special Interest Campaigns; Tranparency.

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Center for Social Media

The Center for Social Media at the School of Communication at American University in Washington, D.C., was founded in 2001. Through partnerships with many organizations, such as the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture, Filmmakers Collaborative, the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), the American Civil Liberties Union, Filmmakers for Conservation, and Centers for Environmental Filmmaking, the Center for Social Media produces research and hosts public events exploring the fast-changing environment of public media.

Initiatives

A primary goal of the center is to investigate and set standards for socially engaged media-making. Through its work, it helps create codes of best practices for many forms of media and incubates media strategies. The center focuses on encouraging a public media environment that supports civil society and democracy and promotes ways to use media as creative tools for public knowledge and action. While a great deal of the center's work focuses on the evolution of documentary films and video in a digital era, it also maintains a Web site that serves as an information clearinghouse for filmmakers, activists, and scholars.

The center's Web site provides information and best practices on fair use and free speech for documentarians, media practitioners, and educators. This information is designed to help individuals better interpret and apply fair use under U.S. copyright law and to understand how and when it is legal to use copyrighted material in media projects. This information also serves as a useful tool for media criticism and freedom of expression. In collaboration with the Washington College of Law, the information on the Web site provides tools for media creators, teachers, and researchers to better practice their fair use rights. The center also provides teaching materials, codes of best practices, documents, and online videos to help individuals best enact the fair use doctrine.

In addition, the center provides users a wealth of information regarding best practices for multiple types of media education and production. Information is provided regarding effective application of OpenCourseWare (OCW) for academic and research libraries. The OCW movement is part of a larger open educational resources (OER) movement that strives to provide high-quality digital education tools and resources freely and openly to anyone with Internet access. The information provided by the center assists educators in making course material available as widely as possible to public-access users.

The center also provides information on best practices for media literacy education and journalism (both practical and theoretical). A media literacy guide identifies principles that adhere to

contemporary community consensus regarding acceptable practices for use of copyrighted materials whenever and however they occur. Drawing upon interviews from practicing and former journalists, the center produced a report for journalists and educators detailing the ways in which journalists should encounter copyright issues and how these issues can affect the practice of journalism as a field. The report provides examples about the cost of not understanding proper copyright implementation in daily journalistic practices and provides suggestions for avoiding unnecessary mistakes. The information is also geared toward assisting journalists in asserting proper journalistic principles when making fair use decisions.

Focusing on one of the center's primary areas of expertise, the Web site also offers substantial information for filmmakers and online video producers regarding the best practices in the making of online video and the application and interpretation of fair use in this process. The center has also coordinated with documentary filmmakers and professional associations to produce a clear and precise statement of fair and reasonable approaches to fair use.

The center also provides reports on various topics, such as ethical challenges in documentary filmmaking, practices for sustainable filmmaking, the evolution of public engagement, understanding documentary audiences, creating truly public media, digital storytelling, socially engaging public access projects, and policy guides for independent filmmakers.

Events and Documentaries

In addition to providing media creators, practitioners, and educators with a wealth of free information through its Web site, the center also hosts conferences, film screenings, and other public events. The center's Media that Matters conference shares with participants cutting-edge practices designed to assist established and aspiring filmmakers, nonprofit organizations, funders, and students. Workshops at this conference include media entrepreneurship and understanding and applying fair use, and also offer participants the opportunity to showcase current projects for presentations and critique at group strategy sessions.

At the center's Repurposing and Rights: A Non-Profit Summit conference, public broadcasters, librarians, archivists, scholars, lawyers, and new media experts convened to discuss the repurposing of audiovisual elements in a digital era. Topics included problems with third-party rights, the challenges and opportunities of digital rights management (access control technologies that are used by hardware manufacturers, publishers, copyright holders, and individuals with the intent to limit the use of digital content and devices after sale), and use of contracts.

The Web site also provides the public with access to timely documentaries on issues of social concern and importance. These documentaries cover a variety of topics, such as terrorism, homophobia and gay rights, the role of U.S. women in military combat, and preventing sexual violence. The Web site also provides video focus group interviews with established documentary filmmakers.

Conclusion

The Center for Social Media showcases and analyzes media for public knowledge and action. The center aims to help media creators, practitioners, students, and educators understand the best practices for engaging with media in their fields. Through research, resource material, film screenings, conferences, and other events, supports its mission to investigate, showcase and set standards for socially engaged media-making.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Cyberculture; Digital Revolution; Documentaries, Social Media, and Social Change; Innovation and Technology; Television and Social Media.

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Center on Public Diplomacy

The Center on Public Diplomacy (CPD) is located in the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles, California. The CPD is dedicated to advancing the study and practice of public diplomacy through the organization of programs and events that focus on teaching, training, and research development. The CPD is frequently acknowledged in international publications and was honored with the prestigious U.S. Department of State's Benjamin Franklin Award for Public Diplomacy in 2008.

The CPD was established in 2003 as a partnership between the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism and the School of International Relations at USC. As pronounced in its mission statement, the CPD "seeks to advance and enrich the study and practice of global public diplomacy through its research and publication programs, professional training and public events." This mission is reflected in the organization's five-year strategic plan that was established in January 2011. The plan highlights the following five strategic objectives: (1) to strengthen public diplomacy scholarship, (2) to increase midcareer training programs, (3) to enhance outreach efforts to develop international networks, (4) to design an organizational structure and facility to support CPD initiatives, and (5) to expand the CPD's funding base. Increasingly, even the most basic public diplomacy skill set includes the ability to work deftly, comfortably, and strategically with social and online media, a situation that mirrors changes in the practice of "traditional diplomacy" as implemented by Hillary Clinton's social media-intensive update of State Department activities.

A diverse range of individuals including an advisory board, staff, student interns, research fellows, and contributing scholars support the operation of CPD projects. Additionally, more than 40 USC University Fellows are involved with the center from a variety of academic disciplines including communication, engineering, cinema, religion, and medicine. Professor Philip Seib served as the director of the center from 2009 to 2013. During his leadership, Seib helped strengthen the CPD's relations with the U.S. Department of State, as well as other think tanks, institutes of higher education, and foreign ministries throughout the world. In 2013, Jay Wang, associate professor of public relations at the USC Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism, became the new CPD director.

As part of their dedication to advancing scholarship, the CPD has developed programs and publications that support public diplomacy research initiatives. For example, in 2009 a competitive international research fellows program was established. This program provides opportunities for six nonresident fellows to conduct research in their distinct areas of specialization. More specifically, each fellowship is designated for two years and provides recipients with a stipend and student assistants to support his or her given research agenda. Fellows are expected to present their research in public forums at USC, and to publish in the center's various publication outlets. In addition to the Research Fellows program, the CPD also hosts visiting scholars from around the world, which include one U.S. Public Diplomat in Residence, and a Canada-U.S. Fulbright Visiting Research Chair in Public Diplomacy. The CPD publication program supports individual and collective research through its production of the CPD blog, books and reports, book reviews, a magazine, an e-newsletter, and a monthly online

The Center on Public Diplomacy's 2008 Summer Institute in Advanced Public Diplomacy was an immersive, intensive two-week course designed to combine traditional classroom instruction with collaborative hands-on exercises.

review *PDiN Monitor*. It also publishes *CPD Perspectives on Public Diplomacy,* which is a series of papers that showcase critical thinking about the study and practice of public diplomacy.

CPD has hosted several conferences that confront significant issues and themes in international diplomacy. Its first conference, The Public Diplomacy and World Public Opinion Forum, was held in Washington, D.C., in April 2006. This event allowed practitioners, politicians, public opinion pollsters, and academics to collaborate to develop informed recommendations for improving public opinion research. Since this time, multiple conferences have been organized on the USC campus to discuss critical issues surrounding public diplomacy in international affairs and conflicts. Conference themes have addressed global events such as the peace process in Northern Ireland, American military and public diplomacy in Africa, and the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Additionally, distinct forums have been organized to address the topics of science, faith, water, and media in relation to public diplomacy. For example, in March 2013 CPD hosted a conference on international broadcasting in the social media era. This meeting allowed practitioners, policy makers, broadcasters, and social media experts to engage in panels and conversations that examined the role of transforming media venues in relation to the design and implementation of public diplomacy programs.

The CPD is also dedicated to supporting continuing education for midcareer public diplomacy professionals. Since 2005, the center has offered a Summer Institute in Public Diplomacy. This annual two-week intensive training program offers professionals opportunities to collaborate with international colleagues from various backgrounds, and to study strategies for improving their country or organization's image and impact in the world. Distinguished public diplomacy experts facilitate courses covering a range of topics including cultural diplomacy, influence and credibility, and soft power and public diplomacy. Participants also learn critical tools for advancing their effectiveness in crisis communication, digital diplomacy, international exchanges, nation branding, public opinion, and strategic communication.

The CPD also features a Master of Public Diplomacy program (MPD) that is offered in partnership with the USC College of Letters, Arts and Sciences' School of International Relations. The MPD degree is designed to provide students with public diplomacy training for careers in public service, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), and corporate business. Students accepted to this program complete a number of required courses on historical and comparative approaches to public diplomacy, global issues and public diplomacy, and a practicum in public diplomacy research. Curricular objectives for the MPD program emphasize the role of nonstate actors, global public opinion, international news, and international communication as they relate to public diplomacy processes.

Since its inception, the CPD has become internationally recognized as a productive leader in the field of public diplomacy scholarship. With support from academic, corporate, government, and public policy circles, the CPD exists as a central organization for practitioners and leaders to collaborate and contribute to the advancement of public diplomacy research and practice.

Stephanie E. Bor
University of Utah

See Also: Clinton, Hillary; Digital Diplomacy; Education, Issues in; Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication; International Social Media and Politics; Polling; Social Media, Definition and Classes of.

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Chaffetz, Jason

First elected to public office in 2008, Jason Chaffetz is the U.S. representative for the 3rd Congressional District of Utah. He is a conservative

Republican and has formally identified as such since 1990, the year he met Ronald Reagan. Chaffetz first served in politics in 2004 as campaign manager and later chief of staff for Jon Huntsman who became Utah's governor in 2005.

In late 2005, Chaffetz reentered the private sector to manage his corporate communications and marketing business, Maxtera Utah. From then until 2008, Chaffetz was a Utah Valley University trustee, the chairman for the Adjutant General Review Board of Utah's National Guard, and a member and later president of the Planning Commission of Highland City, Utah.

2008 Election

On January 1, 2007, Chaffetz publicly announced that he would be investigating the possibility of running for Congress in 2008. His principle Republican opponent would be Chris Cannon, a six-term veteran of Congress. He officially entered the Republican primary race on October 1, 2007, as did David Leavitt. Also on the first of October, Leavitt's campaign announced that it had already generated $100,000 of funding for his bid for Cannon's seat, more than twice what Chaffetz had raised up to that point. Leavitt was a family legacy in local politics as the brother of Michael Leavitt; Michael was a cabinet member of the Bush administration and a three-term governor of Utah. By March 2008, a Utah poll indicated that Chaffetz enjoyed only 4 percent support in the race.

In March 2008, almost 1,200 delegates were elected in Chaffetz's 3rd District. Chaffetz announced to the delegates by mailer that his plan for his campaign was going to be radically different than the traditional money-centered variety. Instead, Chaffetz committed to running for office without a campaign office, paid staff, or polling. His goal was to spend approximately $70 to $80 per delegate for the campaign in its entirety. Chaffetz reasoned that a candidate's spending on the election was likely to reflect how he or she would perform in office and set out to show his fiscal conservatism as an asset.

Chaffetz promulgated a campaign based on far-right values and held more conservative positions than Cannon. Opponent David Leavitt, representing the opinion of many in his party, indicated to the press that Chaffetz had no chance to win the Republican nomination based on his lack of resources and formal campaign infrastructure. However, Chaffetz achieved a major upset victory in the June 2008 primary, defeating Cannon with 60 percent of the vote.

Chaffetz's victory was surprising for many reasons. Cannon had the endorsements of President George W. Bush, U.S. Senators Orrin Hatch and Bob Bennett, and the vast majority of all Utah Republican officials. Furthermore, Cannon spent in approximately six times what Chaffetz did in the campaign. Chaffetz took a hard stance against requesting earmarks based on his fiscal conservatism, and this position caused some controversy during the race. In the November election, Chaffetz won 66 percent of the vote.

First Term in Office

As the 2009 congressional term began, Chaffetz announced publicly that he would not have an apartment in Washington, D.C. Instead, he would sleep in a cot in the closet of his office, and his family would remain in Utah. This was a demonstration of both his loyalty to and allegiance with Utah and his fiscal philosophy. Chaffetz argued further that he wanted to be a living example of how Congress ought to function and that his peers could and should similarly cut their budgets on behalf of their constituents. Chaffetz also began the tradition of Cotside Chats on his Web site in the style of Franklin Roosevelt's Fireside Chats.

Upon Barack Obama's receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, Chaffetz criticized the award as meaningless.

In late 2009, Chaffetz and his fellow Congressman Jim Matheson cosponsored a bill designed to prevent the import of nuclear waste into the United States. This position was opposed by Utah's two senators, Bennett and Hatch. Also in late 2009, Chaffetz promulgated legislation restricting the use of full-body scanning technology in American airports to cases in which metal screenings indicated that more screening was necessary. Chaffetz was critical of the increase in troops sent to Afghanistan by President Obama; his criticism arose from his perception of a lack of policy and exit strategy for the Afghanistan conflict.

Latter Elections and Terms

Video footage of Chaffetz critiquing President Obama's progress and choices at a January 2010

meeting garnered extensive coverage in the media and went viral online. There is little doubt that one reason the video went viral was the social media network maintained by Chaffetz. Later in 2010, Chaffetz ran against Democrat Karen Hyer and several third-party candidates and won with 72 percent of the vote. He was endorsed by the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

In 2011, Chaffetz sponsored the ultimately unsuccessful Cut, Cap, and Balance Act of 2011, also known as HR 2560. The act would have cut discretionary spending for the fiscal year 2012 to $31 billion below that of 2011. HR 2560 also appropriated only $126.5 billion for war. Overall, the act was designed to reduce federal spending to 21.7 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) by 2013 and 19.9 percent by 2021.

Chaffetz revealed a proposal for Social Security reform in late 2011. The proposal included seven elements including the calculation of yearly cost of living increases (COLAs) with the use of a chained consumer price index for workers (CPI-W). It also increased the standard age of retirement and added means testing for beneficiaries in high-income brackets. The overall purpose of the reforms proposed would be to continue growth of the Social Security program but slow that growth to avoid insolvency and excessive debt.

Chaffetz was a strong supporter of Mitt Romney during the 2012 presidential campaign and followed Romney's opponent, Newt Gingrich, during the primaries in order to voice his support.

In September 2012, the United States diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya, was attacked by armed intruders. Several Americans were killed in this attack. Chaffetz sat on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee that reviewed the U.S. government's reactions to this attack and was vocal in his criticism of the White House's and State Department's management of the crisis. His committee released more than 100 pages of internal State Department documents concerned with the Libya attack to the public, which included names of Libyan activists who worked with the United States. Chaffetz maintained that the information released was not classified and therefore was eligible for release.

Chaffetz promised at the outset of his term to refuse to vote on resolutions that he calls trivial. An example would be a resolution to congratulate a winning sports team. Chaffetz believes that such matters are not important enough to take up the time of members of the House.

Social Media Use

One of the primary strategies Chaffetz employed during his campaign was to make his social media presence strong. Chaffetz managed his social media accounts himself and used them frequently; as of December 2012, all of his Facebook posts and tweets were all composed by him personally. His use of social media made Chaffetz more appealing to a younger voting bloc, as did his appearance on *The Colbert Report* in January 2009. There, he was featured in the "Better Know a District" segment and consented to a leg-wrestling match with host Stephen Colbert, which he lost.

Upon taking office, Chaffetz attributed his success to strong principles and policies alongside determination and strategic use of social media. Chaffetz called keeping abreast of technical trends

Representative Jason Chaffetz returns his safety equipment after observing the demolition of an unsafe building in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on March 29, 2011, after the January 2010 earthquake.

paramount and discussed his social media use, describing his success as the "worst nightmare" of Congress. According to Chaffetz, this was true because his win proved that campaigns could be successful without excessive spending, and this reality was a threat to officials running more traditional campaigns.

Chaffetz also sees attention to social media and technical trends as his means of distinguishing his work from that of his peers.

Chaffetz is very active on Twitter and Facebook and also has a YouTube channel featuring a large amount of content. His philosophy on using these social media outlets is that they allow outreach and connection to voters and the people whom he represents. Chaffetz has stated that it is important to him to ensure that his constituents can reach him directly and refuses to erect bureaucratic strata around himself.

Chaffetz chooses to post and tweet personally on Facebook and Twitter, respectively. His public rejection of outsourcing these tasks has distinguished him from most of his peers, increased his appeal to younger voters, and broadened his reach for election purposes. His use of social media also makes him abundantly accessible to constituents. Chaffetz has stated that he believes his constituents can relate to him as a person based on his social media presence.

Chaffetz argues that politicians who do not utilize social media in this way are living in the 20th century and eschewing opportunities to interact with their constituencies. He states that there is no excuse to underutilize this free form of communication for politicians.

Various social media sentiment or popularity indexes have data for Jason Chaffetz. As of December 2012, Poleet reported that Chaffetz had approximately 32,000 followers on Twitter and a Klout score of 81. According to Klout, such a score indicates a high level of influence in the social media realm and is calculated using things like number and quality of social media interactions. Some experts argue that social media did not have as much impact in the 2012 election cycle as it did in the 2008 cycle, in part because mainstream politicians learned to do things like flood the Internet with their own content at the right times so that dissenting content would be drowned and remain unheard.

One key difference in the way that Jason Chaffetz uses social media, however, is that he uses his own voice and is active himself on his pages. This is apparent to his followers and opponents alike, and it means several things. Ultimately, followers are more motivated to interact on his pages knowing that they will actually be interacting with him. Also, when his content is reposted, retweeted or otherwise shared, it is content that originates with him. Because his content is not just curated from other sources, his reach is more meaningful.

A 2012 Pew research study showed that younger groups of social media users are far more likely to use social media platforms as tools for civic engagement. These users are also somewhat more likely to identify as liberal or Democratic. This means that a politician like Jason Chaffetz has a real opportunity to fill a space that is mostly vacant: conservative politicians appealing to a younger constituency through the strategic use of social media. This is apparently an opportunity that Chaffetz plans to continue to capitalize upon.

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

See Also: Bachmann, Michele; Cantor, Eric; Ryan, Paul.

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Change.gov

Change.gov was a Web site created by the office of the president-elect, Barack Obama, "to lay out the agenda and priorities for the Obama Administration." The site was operational November 5, 2008, to January 20, 2009. Information was provided on this Web site to keep the transition process transparent. It has been repeatedly noted that President Barack Obama won the presidency because of his use of social media and social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. His use of these tools did not end after Election Day on November 4, 2008, but continued throughout the transition. Change.gov was a transitional site that was used to continue President-Elect Obama's digital presence and keep his millions of online followers engaged in the process.

The U.S. General Services Administration manages presidential transitions (the time between election day and the inauguration of the president-elect) as outlined by the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 (P.L. 88-277), 1998 (P.L. 100-398), and 2000 (P.L. 106-293). Before 2008, much of the transition occurred behind closed doors with prominent appointments to cabinet positions announced via news media—television, radio, or newspapers. Change.gov marked the first time that citizens were not only kept abreast of the transition, but also invited to become involved in the transition in an effort for government transparency. The campaign of 2008 was a campaign of firsts. The first African American president was elected. He used social media and Web 2.0 tools during the campaign to raise funds, organize grassroots communities, and mobilize an unprecedented number of young voters. He was the first president to select a chief technology officer to the cabinet, signifying plans to continue using technology in government.

Overview of the Site

The goal of social media and Web 2.0 tools is to provide a mechanism for collaboration and conversation that builds a community without limits or restrictions of location and time. Change.gov utilized this by allowing users to ask questions of the newly elected administration. Change.gov featured a Newsroom with a blog and a press room where ideas were shared and questions answered; a Learn section with information about the transition, the administration, and inauguration and biographical information about the president-elect and vice president-elect; and an Agenda section that featured major policy issues—the same issues that were presented during the campaign. To continue the encouragement of public involvement, the site also featured an area for citizens to share their Story and Vision as well as submit their ideas to the president via the Citizen's Briefing Book. It also featured links to America Serves, which asked

Americans to serve as volunteers in their communities by signing up on the site, and Jobs, where applicants could submit their personal information as a first step in applying for a position. By the end of December, only two months after the election, the site had received over 140,000 job applicants, and by Inauguration Day had received 400,000. The site provided a link to USAjobs, a government site for federal employment, which received an additional half-million visits (from 2.3 million weekly visits in summer 2008 to 2.8 million during the time Change.gov was active). Your Seat at the Table allowed citizens to see the groups meeting with the transition team. In keeping with the sharing quality that is common of most social media tools, Change.gov changed its traditional copyright notice to include a Creative Commons license that allowed users to share and repost the content.

YouTube Presidency

Another first with Change.gov was the medium used to deliver the weekly presidential address. Then-President-Elect Obama delivered the usual radio address and used YouTube and other video platforms as well to post a video of the address on the transition Web site. As of August 2012, his first address (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zd8f9Zqap6U) on November 15, 2008, was viewed 1,082,502 times on YouTube. YouTube was also used to generate discussion and answer questions posed by citizens. Another feature of Change.gov was Join the Discussion. The policy team shared videos and requested feedback from citizens. This may have appealed to users as it had the same structure as a Facebook post with threaded comments. Another feature of the Web site was Open for Questions. Press Secretary Robert Gibbs responded to the most popular questions via a video post using YouTube and other video platforms.

Controversy and the Numbers

Open for Questions asked citizens to submit questions to the administration. The most popular questions would be answered and would be determined by the number of votes garnered. One question was if the administration would investigate the "gravest crimes" of the George W. Bush administration. Initially, it was ignored and later it was erroneously posted that the question had been previously answered. This response was featured on other Web sites and noted by political commentators. As a result, President-Elect Obama was asked this question during an interview with George Stephanopoulos of ABC's *This Week*. This controversy shows how social media can referee open government. The transcript of that question and the rest of the interview were posted on Change.gov.

The numbers during the transition show that interest from the public continued after the presidential election. Transitional sites such as Change.gov have been visited by 15 percent of all Americans, including 10 percent of John McCain–Sarah Palin voters. About 27 percent of Obama voters went online to either participate in the transitional process or learn more about the transition. More than 4,000 users participated in the health care discussion on Change.gov. During the first round of open questions on Change.gov's Open for Questions, 20,000 users submitted 10,000 questions and 1,000,000 votes. The second round of open questions generated 76,031 questions from 103,512 users with 4,713,083 votes.

Conclusion

Change.gov showed that despite security and legal issues, social media can be used to promote government transparency and a more democratic form of government through citizen participation. Change.gov was a Web site used to keep citizens apprised of developments of the transition and involved in that transition. The site and its premise set a precedent that will likely continue. Because social media happens in real time, it must be noted that the transitional site of Change.gov ended at 12:01 P.M. on Inauguration Day—a minute after Obama became the presiding president. It was replaced by President Obama's WhiteHouse.gov.

La Loria Konata
Georgia State University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaigns, 2012; Innovation and Technology; International Online Communities; International Unrest and Revolution.

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Change.org

Change.org is an online advocacy platform that encourages citizen petitioning and digital activism through grassroots campaign initiatives. Ben Rattray launched the Web site in 2007 with support from two other Stanford University students. The initial function of the Web site provided an avenue for support of social causes or charities through online petitions and pledges. Although this idea still exists at the core function of the site, the creators of Change.org found it necessary to differentiate it from other online petitioning and pledging platforms. In 2008, the site was redesigned to focus on online petitioning through personal narratives.

The introduction of petitioning through personal narrative became a turning point in the site's political history. Change.org founders encouraged bloggers to paint human stories for the social justice petitions they sponsored. This new form of advocacy drew increased Internet attention and raised Change.org's position in search engine results and popular culture writ large. In 2012, Rattray made *Time* magazine's top 100 most influential people of the year.

Several successful advocacy initiatives contributed to Change.org's increased attention, broader social significance, and political success. In 2011, South African activist Ndumie Funda birthed a petition asking the South African government to declare "corrective rape," the raping of lesbians as a way to "return" them to heterosexual normalcy, a hate crime. Funda's personal story of the death of her partner, who was a victim of the crime, drew 170,000 signatures for her petition and helped influence the South African government to create a task force to review the issue.

In April 2012, the mother of Trayvon Martin, a Florida boy shot in "self-defense" by neighborhood watch volunteer George Zimmerman, created a petition requesting justice be brought to her son's death. This petition encouraged the Florida 4th District State Attorney's office to investigate Trayvon's death and prosecute Zimmerman for murder. Martin's mother also contacted mainstream U.S. media outlets, which helped fuel the coverage of the case and brought national attention to her petition. Change.org's traffic grew from an average of 4 million visitors in December 2011 to more than 11 million hits during the time span of the Trayvon Martin case.

Once a petition like Funda's or Martin's gains traction, Change.org campaign directors further an issue's reach by joining it to similar causes, distributing information about the petition via mass e-mails, and highlighting chosen issues on

the Change.org Facebook and Twitter pages. Change.org also provides tools to citizen petitioners. Online tutorials on attracting media attention, building a social media conversation, and fostering an offline social presence all help inform Change.org's petitioners learn how to use the platform as a means for broader political change.

This business model of providing activist tools and linking advocacy to personal narratives continues to allow citizens avenues for agitation against powerful state and corporate entities. In addition to Funda and Martin, Molly Katchpole successfully stopped the implementation of $5 debit service fees from Bank of America and prompted similar actions against U.S. banking policies by her fellow citizens. Bettina Siegel intervened in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy on school food options by raising concerns about the "pink slime" in USDA beef. School districts may now choose beef for lunches that are slime free. Both women's petitions gained national media prominence.

For its successes, Change.org is not without controversy. Although the site's address is an .org, which connotes the nonprofit status it started under in 2007, in 2009, Change.org became a for-profit business as a Certified B Corporation. This status has brought public scrutiny with accusations that the .org phrasing of the site's name intentionally misleads users. The site's mission statement states that, although it is a for-profit business, the profits are used to help build the Change.org business and expand its reach for creating social justice.

Online advocacy tools, like Change.org, have been heralded by scholars as the future of democratic participation and simultaneously criticized as a passive invitation to social change. Skeptics fear that online petitioning tools erode civic impulses toward offline political action with slacktivist and armchair activist outlets. However, new research on political advocacy and social media suggests that online petitioning platforms are neither revolutionary paths to participatory democracy nor lazy citizenship. Instead, online petitioning, and Change.org in particular, should be viewed as necessary game adapters to activism in the new media environment. At present, Change.org provides an interactive, multimedia platform that allows ordinary people to take their political advocacy to mass audiences. The continuing challenge for Change.org will be in figuring and refiguring how to keep citizens' voices powerfully centered in the media spotlight.

Cindy Vincent
Lisa Foster
University of Oklahoma

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Bottom-Up Campaigns; *MoveOn Effect, The*; MoveOn.org.

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Chartered Institute of Public Relations Social Media Guidelines

The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) is a London-based, professional organization that offers various grades of membership to all public relations practitioners in the United Kingdom (UK). With approximately 9,200 members, CIPR is led by a governing body of roughly 50 members who are directly elected by the membership. At the core, CIPR aims to enhance the reputation and understanding of the public relations profession.

The CIPR developed a social media best practice guidance document, which first debuted in February 2007. Two years later, the document was revised to incorporate changes in legislation and new developments in measurement and evaluation. In April 2011, yet another revision and update was released online to include core principles as well as best practices and legal issues to consider when developing and implementing social media campaigns.

In May 2010, CIPR launched a social media advisory panel (CIPRsm) that included 15 of the UK's foremost social media thinkers. The panel was created to develop and advance the CIPR social media best practice guide. The group was led by Rob Brown, an account executive at Staniforth, and evaluated issues pertaining to best practices in social media.

The panel did its best to remain transparent and inclusive. It established a wiki where CIPR members and supporters could view minutes from the meetings and offer input into the development of the guidelines. Members from both the panel and the CIPR general membership were encouraged to collaborate and contribute to the working document.

In April 2011, the committee and the organization published the most recent version of the social media guidelines. Although the organization has members from across the globe, the document was designed specifically to help guide those with communication campaigns that include social media in the UK.

The CIPRsm panel advised those who worked with international campaigns to consult the guidelines and legal considerations for each respective country in which target audiences would be engaged in social media. Although the document was first released in 2011, the CIPRsm panel recommended that the document be continually reviewed, updated, and further developed to keep up with the real-time changes that occur naturally in the social media sphere.

As social media platforms change and grow, maintaining a common definition of social media was important to the panel. To that end, the CIPRsm advanced its definition of social media.

> Social media is the term commonly given to Internet and mobile-based channels and tools that allow users to interact with each other and share opinions and content. As the name implies, social media involves the building of communities or networks and encouraging participation and engagement.

Integrity, competence, and confidentiality are the three core principles of the code of conduct for all members of the CIPR. Because social media is a key and growing component of public relations practice, the panel provides readers with an outline of best practices and those practices to avoid, highlighting how these core principles play into social media activity.

The list of 10 best practices include engage in conversation; ensure brand is consistent across networks and platforms; disclose relationships when endorsing an organization, client, or customer; be honest about who manages social media channels; outline the content approval process from the offset; be transparent when updating information; correct errors openly and in a timely manner; add a views-are-my-own disclaimer; be up front about conflicts of interest and paid-for opportunities; and be respectful. The panel also outlined five practices to avoid, including do not forget that a social media presence becomes part of a brand legacy; do not make an audience feel uncomfortable; do not bring a company into disrepute; do not reveal company- or client-sensitive information or intellectual property; and do not be fake.

A large portion of the guidelines outline legal issues that should be taken into consideration when incorporating social media into public relations practice. The CIPRsm panel clearly points out that the guidelines do not constitute legal advice but are instead issues to consider in an era of rapid development in British law.

The best practice guide points to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) Code of Practice digital remit emphasizing the importance of marketing messages online through social media. Intellectual property is also discussed within the guidelines. The law of confidence in the UK requires that a duty of confidentiality be established. This important issue cannot be overlooked when posting information to any social media channel.

The guidelines also suggest that public relations practitioners should strongly consider distributing

and using Creative Commons licensed content where possible and appropriate. Copyrights, trademarks, and design rights are also covered within the guidelines. Defamation through social media outlets is identified, and examples are provided.

With such a wide range of issues to guide an organization's social media use, the CIPRsm document discusses recommendations for employers in setting up social media policies.

The final section of the social media best practice guide places attention and focus on social media measurement. While social media measurement is important, an industry-wide standard has not yet been established. After the initial meeting of the CIPR's social media panel, it was decided that another group, known as the social media measurement group, would be established and tasked with deciding issues such as quantification of influence, engagement and conversation quality, and best practice approaches to social media campaigns evaluation. Philip Sheldrake, who is also a member of the social media panel, leads the group of nine who are developing these industry-wide standards.

With a copyright date of October 2012, CIPR released a book *Share This: The Social Media Handbook for PR Professionals*. This practical handbook, written by numerous public relations practitioners from a variety of sectors, addresses a diversity of social media tools and techniques taking place in the media and its professions by the CIPR social media panel. The 26-chapter book is split into eight topic areas that can be referenced as an easy-to-read guide for all working in the public relations industry.

Alisa Agozzino
Ohio Northern University

See Also: Social Media, Adoption of; Social Media, Definition and Classes of; Wikis and Collaborative Project Web Sites.

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Chat Rooms

Online chat rooms provide Internet users virtual meeting places that allow for conversation and interaction between people that might not otherwise be able to communicate with each other. Internet relay chat (IRC), the form of interaction in chat rooms, is conducted semisynchronously in real time, where comments posted appear almost instantly for other users to view and respond to. IRC is a much more real-time mode of computer-mediated communication than listserv messages, bulletin boards, and e-mail. Posts to IRC conversations are generally quite short, usually one or two lines, allowing the IRC interaction to be similar to multiparticipant face-to-face conversation. Chat rooms have been widely used for political discussion and are one of the early developments in social media.

The first online chat-based system, called Talkmatic, was developed in 1974 by Doug Brown and David R. Woolley on the Programmed Logic for Automated Teaching Operations (PLATO) System at the University of Illinois. The first online chat system that was available to the public was called CBSimulator, and was released by CompuServe. Since these early chat-based systems, chat rooms have emerged as one of the primary means for real-time communicative interaction on the Internet.

Chat rooms also allow Internet users to interact online in multiuser virtual environments (MUVEs). There has been an increase in the use of voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) in MUVEs, but the interaction within these environments has remained primarily Internet relay chat. Users are either signed in to a fully text-based online

platform or appear as avatars (visual representations of individuals in the world) in the virtual environment along with communicative fields, such as a text box, where they can post comments and track the discussion of other users. Text boxes displaying Internet relay chat have been successful tools for allowing communicative interaction as they are able to support multiple users contributing comments and are thus called chat rooms. Much like instant messaging, IRC allows users to select set usernames that appear before each comment they post, allowing multiple users to comment and maintain conversational interaction. In addition to IRC interaction being semisynchronous, it is also persistent. Because face-to-face interaction is generally ephemeral, it is very difficult to refer back to previous parts of a conversation for reference, something that is possible in chat rooms. The persistence of these interactions allows for the storage of all data as chatlogs, which can in turn be used for analyses of the users' interactions or referred back to as artifacts of past interactions. However, the nature of chatlogs as dynamic, nonthreaded interactions introduces some hurdles. It can be difficult for users to follow more than a few conversations, and there is frequently conversational leakage, where different users cross their conversations in the same chat room interaction.

Communication and information technologies present many benefits, such as the speed of information access and the ability to communicate with people regardless of geographical location, but these benefits are paired with some substantive drawbacks. One of the pitfalls of online interaction, such as conversations in chat rooms, is that the anonymity of the individuals can lead to a less-than-civil discourse (also called flaming), which does happen in political chat rooms. As a result, many chat rooms have moderators that can remove inappropriate comments or block users that violate the norms of the chat room community. An additional drawback of chat room interaction is that people are able to seek out discourse with other users that agree with their views, such as political viewpoints, and thus not be confronted with the opposing viewpoints that are often present in physical community forums. Bruce Bimber points out that this form of selective exposure can happen across the spectrum of communication technologies, but that these same technologies also pose the opportunity to allow users to access a wide variety of viewpoints. As such, the use of chat rooms for people to engage in effective political discourse is similar to that of face-to-face interaction; people need to take responsibility for their communicative interactions and information exposure.

Devan Rosen
Ithaca College

See Also: Communication; Content Communities; Flaming; Internet Forums; Second Life.

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China

In terms of the raw number of people connected to the Web, China has the world's largest population of netizens. In 2012, it reached 513 million, namely twice the number of Internet users in the United States. Chinese citizens are increasingly connected to social media Web sites like Sina Weibo (China's Twitter), Tencent, or the Renren Network (China's Facebook), and approximately 50 percent of them have more than one social profile. By 2011, Weibo users were estimated at 249 million, while active Tencent and Renren Network members reached 711 million and 160 million, respectively. With more than 25 million

messages posted each day on Weibo, microblogging has become a crucial means of information diffusion in Chinese society. The rapid expansion of Internet use in China was accompanied by hopes in the West that online networks would facilitate demands for regime change and that the Internet would provide opportunities for the freedom of speech and political liberalization. Yet, the Internet's expansion has affected the governance of nondemocratic polities in both liberal and nonliberal ways. While new social media have created virtual communities that play a supervisory role in the political system and stimulate online and outdoor collective action, the democratic potential of these networks has also been tightly circumscribed by the Chinese government for purposes of regime survival. New information communication technologies (ICTs), including social media networks, have been used as channels for more effective censorship and thought work and as instruments for the anticipation and the prevention of disruptive social or political protests.

After Google stated in a 2010 blog entry that it would stop censoring its Chinese search engine and operate "within the law, if at all" and may close its Chinese offices, devastated citizens brought offerings of flowers, candles, and notes to Google headquarters in Beijing. Security guards intervened, saying it was an "illegal flower tribute," and removed all traces of the tribute.

Social Media, the Diffusion of Opinions, and Collective Action

University students, retired officials, urban intellectuals, lawyers, the migrant population, peasants—netizens across social classes in China—now commonly use online networks as means to express their opinions and interact with other fellow citizens. In some cases, new social media have given rise to various forms of formal and informal online collective action, or what Susan L. Shirk refers to as "self-organized communities." Netizens have hosted and supported campaign Web sites around questions pertaining to food safety, property and homeowners' rights, gender equality, environmental protection, and labor conditions. Bulletin board systems also have facilitated the diffusion of online signature petitions around some of these matters. Campaign Web sites and petitions in turn have helped diffuse public frustrations about the government's inability to keep up with popular demands.

Social forums have not only constituted vehicles for the expression of opinions but also have contributed to the logistical organization of outdoor collective protests. The Internet indeed helps activists bypass state-imposed obstacles to large-scale gatherings insofar as messages can be spread quickly and reach out to a significantly wide audience before being censored. A report by the China Labour Bulletin found that, throughout the Nanhai Honda strike in Zhongshan, Guangdong, in 2010, workers created a chat room on Tencent to post details about the gathering, like protesters' meeting locations. Similarly, information access on the Internet has enabled mobilizers to draw upon examples of successful protests as sources of inspiration to determine the content of their claims. Prior to their strike, workers at the Honda transmission plant saw in online news that their company had granted workers at other plants a monthly income raise of 500 yuan (or $73). Based on these reports, they asked for a similar increase.

As outdoor mobilization unfolds, online forums constitute spaces for the interpretation of contentious events among netizens and the channeling of opinions about the legitimacy of popular claims and government response to protests. When environmental protesters in Qidong, Jiangsu, destroyed local government infrastructure and

stripped the mayor in July 2012, Weibo became the center of debates over how far protesters should go in having their claims heard and what boundaries citizens should not cross in the polity. Interpretations of contentious events usually generate significant flows of reactions. An earlier protest against a molybdenum–copper project in Shifang, Sichuan, in July 2012 triggered more than 5 million posts on Weibo within three days.

Online social media networks have pushed the Chinese government toward greater information transparency. While forums diffuse stories often neglected by China's state-run newspapers and television channels, including unwelcome speeches by foreign politicians, they also constrain the latter to break contentious daily news in a context of increasing competition among traditional and commercial media. Xinhua News Service and the *People's Daily,* traditionally at the service of China's Central Propaganda Department, now break sensitive stories about citizen protests and local government power abuses. Some cases have helped improve government awareness with respect to bad local governance and prompted Beijing to rectify corrupt practices. To that extent, greater transparency on the part of online state-run media can help contain resentment among disgruntled citizens.

Yet, that scandals and social conflicts are now being exposed nationally could constitute a double-edged sword for the government. On the one hand, more transparent news coverage facilitates the coordination of online petitions and boycotts and helps promote greater consciousness among netizens with respect to their right to information and expression. On the other hand, the online state-run media choose to break sensitive incidents at the earliest moment possible to remain the dominant voice setting the agenda and orienting public opinion against counterhegemonic rhetorics expressed in social media networks.

Containing Online Debates Through Censorship and Propaganda

The Internet is not immune to state control and regulation. Because new social media worldwide have fostered the diffusion of opinions and facilitated collective action, they have also reinforced government vigilance on the Internet in a wide range of nondemocratic countries for regime-preservation purposes. In this context, Beijing has succeeded in developing one of the world's most-advanced Internet control regimes.

To protect its image in cyberspace, the Chinese government has relied upon Internet technology and social media users to contain online debates and orient discussions toward apolitical topics. Under the Great Firewall of China (GFW), key word filtering is built into instant messaging services and online messaging software. Terms like "Falun Gong," "Tian'anmen Square," and "gathering" get noticed, and warnings are sent accordingly to relevant local public security bureaus. Internet service providers hire hundreds of thousands of employees whose task is to screen and censor online conversations and blog posts. According to Freedom House, the size of the Internet police may have reached approximately 40,000 in recent years. In 2010, it was estimated that about 350 million videos, articles, and photographs had been removed by censors.

The censorship system has also been agile at targeting posts in politically contentious areas of China more proactively. A study conducted by Carnegie Mellon University revealed that, among 57 million posts on Weibo between June and September 2011, the deletion rate was higher in minority areas characterized by ethnic conflict like Tibet (53 percent) than in cities like Beijing (12 percent). Finally, the regime has recruited ordinary citizens to bolster progovernment opinions online and discredit oppositional views. They are called the 50 Cent Party (*wu mao dang*) for the amount they are remunerated per posted comment.

The authorities have also used social media to discourage and anticipate online or outdoor mobilization. Since 2010, the government has enforced mandatory real-name registration procedures requiring that all network and blog users register with their citizen identity card number. This measure has facilitated the government's ability to identify potential "troublemakers" on the Internet while also discouraging many formerly anonymous bloggers from posting politically compromising or subversive comments. Furthermore, the severe sanctions imposed upon bloggers who dare speak against the government also aim to deter other citizens from engaging in similar forms of activism. In April 2011, retired

official Fang Hong was sent to a labor camp for one year for having posted a tweet that criticized Chongqing Party Secretary Bo Xilai's crackdown on organized crime and mocked Wang Lijun, then city police chief.

Beyond the deterring effects of regulations pertaining to online identity registration and repression of popular activism, social media have helped the authorities avert collective action on the Internet and outdoors. Web site owners are commonly asked by the Public Security Bureau to shut down forums they fear could become sites of contestation. Similarly, in February 2011, the Jasmine Revolution did not materialize as the government was able to identify preemptively through online monitoring the various meeting points where protests were to take place across the country and mobilize enough police forces to stop them. In cases where the government was unable to anticipate localized resistance, it may still prevent the latter from having spillover effects in other localities. In July 2009, the Xinjiang government forcibly shut down Internet access for several months across the autonomous region to ensure violent ethnic riots between Uyghurs and Han Chinese in Urumqi would not spread to other localities. Generally, to this day, protests in China have consisted of series of isolated contentious events rather than a set of social movements.

Implications of the Internet Monitoring Regime

The state's control of the Internet has impacted the nature of citizen participation in online forums in two ways. First, a large proportion of discussions among netizens remains devoid of all political content and mostly relates to mainstream popular culture. Tweets on Weibo are generally linked to funny jokes, fashion images, and movies. As such, they tend to differ significantly from those on Twitter, where the content of discussions is often related to global events. Second, instances of online activism in China remain for the most part moderate and symbolic. Moreover, Chinese citizens assert their rights toward the market more than they question regime legitimacy.

Yet, Chinese citizens increasingly take advantage of institutional loopholes in the Internet monitoring regime to defy online government control. The Internet regulation system was designed to remove content that openly attacks regime interests or interpretations of China's history viewed as compromising the image of the Chinese Communist Party (i.e., alternative understandings of Tibet and Xinjiang's history). As such, more subtle political criticisms by netizens may not be systematically targeted by Internet censors. Increasingly aware of the content that is likely to be removed or tolerated, Chinese netizens play on words and have developed coded language couched in metaphors to express their resentment with respect to Internet policing and government corruption. This, for instance, translates into political satires and cartoons about local government officials' laziness and police zeal, generally referred to as *egao,* or evil joking.

Regime legitimacy and the likelihood of social unrest are intimately linked to the Chinese government's ability to keep up with citizens' demands and needs. However, two obstacles are likely to arise in the process of gauging public opinion accurately. First, the hiring of netizens to post progovernment comments on blogs and social media networks makes more challenging the task of assessing how unpopular certain political decisions or policies are. Second, a significant number of public servants at various levels of the Chinese bureaucracy remain unfamiliar with Weibo and other social media applications. Being regularly updated on the latest popular concerns in different localities will require relevant departments at the central, provincial, and local levels to follow closely Weibo tweets for policy design and reform-related purposes. This in turn will require more effective coordination and information sharing among all government levels.

Marie-Eve Reny
University of Chicago

See Also: Blogs; Campaigns, Organizing; Internet Forums; Internet Gathering; Human Rights; News Media; Transparency.

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Christian Right

Students of the Christian Right have made particular reference to its impulse to expand the public sphere with new discourses and modes of participation (including the virtual world) as a democratic virtue. Individuals and groups based in the United States constitute the bulk of what is known as the Christian Right movement, but similar ideological discourses may be identified elsewhere. The history, influence and evolution of the Christian Right have been predominantly researched with reference to U.S. politics.

The core of the message conveyed by the American Christian Right is analogous to the "jeremiad," a religious prophetic genre historically employed in connection with a call for social and political engagement. There is, first of all, a reconstruction of a "golden age" when Christianity was deep-rooted in cultural and public life. The narratives vary according to each group, but most refer to the "Founding Fathers," the American Revolution, and the U.S. Constitution as the key elements of the American "golden age." The second feature of the message is the notion of a widespread moral and social decline that can be historically located. Some allude to the 1960s, others to earlier episodes. The central claim is that "big government" (including welfare programs), soft national defense (especially during and after the Cold War), and "cultural leftism" (secularization in particular) have undermined the prosperity and character of the nation.

Finally, there is also a call for recovery and restoration in parallel with a protest against the secularization of the political sphere. This prophetic call for the restoration of America often includes a spiritual discourse of personal conversion—being "born again"—and putting faith into practice to transform society in a "bottom-up" or grassroots fashion. There is a sense that good and evil are easily identifiable in political life and should be as clearly outlined as possible within the context of a "culture war" between right and left. There is also a top-down strategy of accessing governmental power to enact social change via "Christian" or "biblical" legislation.

A possible explanation for the recent political rise of figures associated with the Christian Right (such as Sarah Palin) is the broad alliance between evangelicals and mainstream neoconservatives. Church historians and critics point out the evangelical movement's lack of an overarching political philosophy. Its propensity to forge alliances and adapt to other political movements

is a general trend, and the current alliance with neoconservatism represents a recent development after the Ronald Reagan era. The Christian Right, however, is theologically diverse. While most of the movement in America subscribes to various branches of evangelicalism (e.g., televangelists Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson), groups and leaders with Roman Catholic background (such as Paul Weyrich, one of the founders of the Heritage Foundation) and traditional Protestants (such as D. James Kennedy, founder of the Coral Ridge Ministries and Center for Reclaiming America for Christ) should not be overlooked.

Themes

Millennialism is a recurring element in the political theology of the movement and arguably a crucial way of differentiating its subgroups and inner tensions. The Christian Right's jeremiad is often combined with a perception of eschatological urgency embedded in some variation of premillennial theology, the belief that Jesus Christ will return after a great tribulation and persecution of the church to establish a millennium of prosperity and peace. The dispensational variety of this view of history adds a prominent political role for Israel in the eschatological era—a belief that strongly influences the foreign policy agenda of most of the Christian Right. Francis Schaeffer, author of a *Christian Manifesto* in the 1980s defending a cultural strategy for contemporary Christians, was a nondispensational premillennialist influence on the movement. Tim LaHaye (American Coalition for Traditional Values), popular writer and pastor, is a key intellectual in the dispensationalist group.

A postmillennial minority believes that the tribulation refers to the early church. The optimistic task for Christian politics today is to establish a Christian millennium of prosperity and peace via conversions and widespread application of a biblical worldview to social, political, scientific, and cultural life. While the outline of a jeremiad narrative also applies to this latter group, there is a deliberate attempt to differentiate its theology and view of history from the majority view of evangelicalism and the Christian Right. Members of the Christian Reconstruction movement, such as the late Calvinist theologian R. J. Rushdoony (founder of the Chalcedon Foundation), are often associated with this view.

Social Media

Eschatology informs organizations of the Christian Right in their engagement with social media. The American Values group, led by Gary Bauer, has three categories of news on its main Web site: "pro-life," "traditional marriage," and "pro-Israel." The Christian Worldview Network's page includes a "worldview times" section, including headlines applying Bible prophecy to current events. Bridges for Peace, a group with many offices worldwide, hosts online a number of radio talks and videos about Israel. "We invite you to join us in a practical expression of this desire to bless Israel," says Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Rebecca Brimmer on its Web site, "by . . . fulfilling biblical prophecy through the vital and important work of Bridges for Peace." Sometimes, however, there is also an attempt to justify the pro-Israel stance with secular arguments that speak to a broader neoconservative audience. One of the key campaigns of the Christian Coalition of America is called "Stand with Israel." In a YouTube interview with Senator Lindsey Graham, the coalition invites readers to join it, explaining the policy in terms of democratic peace and freedom of worship in the Middle East.

Postmillennial groups also shape their social media strategy under the influence of their eschatological narrative, often voicing disagreement with Israel-centered interpretations of prophecy. Moreover, the millennium of peace and prosperity requires a biblical strategy putting faith in action. Economic historian Gary North, one of the pioneers of the Christian Reconstruction movement, has written a multivolume verse-by-verse "Economic Commentary on the Bible" and made it fully available for free online. He also wrote a "Biblical Blueprints" series that was republished online. Rushdoony's Chalcedon Foundation currently offers an extensive audio and video library, as well as a number of digital educational resources on applied Christianity under the "Research" section. American Vision, led by Gary DeMar, is a "Christian Worldview Ministry" particularly proud of its social media engagement, defining itself as an "Internet leader for disseminating information and distributing educational resources that build a comprehensive Biblical worldview, motivating Christians to engage and reclaim our culture for Christ." Its

call for bottom-up action and "Reconstructionist" theology is reflected in the motto "Exercising Servanthood Dominion" and the key project, "Restoring America One County at a Time." The project's blog classifies local news according to each topic on the policy agenda and geographical location.

International Groups

The label Christian Right has also been applied to religious-political groups outside the United States. In countries with a balanced multiparty structure, the movement has attained a clearer political expression. In Canada, for example, Stephen Harper, a member of the Alliance Church and leader of the Conservative Party, became the prime minister in 2006. The direct influence of Christian Right figures such as evangelical lobbyist Charles McVety (Canada Family Action) in the Harper administration is debatable. However, the complex historical formation of the Conservative Party can be traced back to Christian right-wing politicians (e.g., Preston Manning) and organizations (such as the Reform movement). While a number of groups with an active and significant presence in social media draw upon the U.S. agenda and cognate organizations (such as Focus on the Family Canada), the differences should not be neglected. For one thing, the Canadian Christian Right has strong historical links with the Social Credit movement and tends to qualify its views on capitalism, unlike its U.S. counterpart.

Another relevant case is that of the Netherlands, where religious groups and political activism are institutionally correlated in newspapers, political parties, and nonprofits. A key group representing the Christian Right in this case is the Reformed Political Party (SGP), assisted by the Guido de Brès Foundation (a policy research institute) and the *Reformatorisch Dagblad* daily newspaper. The group of Calvinistic churches supporting the movement in the Netherlands is very suspicious of indiscriminate use of television, but the Internet engagement of these organizations (including Twitter and Web sites) seems to operate at a professional level. In the United Kingdom, the direct influence via political parties (such as the Scottish Christian Party) is practically negligible, with much of the effort being concentrated on institutes and lobby organizations. The nondenominational evangelical Christian Institute, led by Colin Hart, has a strong journalism department and campaigns mixing social media in various formats, newsletters, and print publications. Christian Concern maintains another relevant media program, with an emphasis on Christianity in legal and political life.

The Dutch and British cases differ from the United States in terms of setting. An acute concern with secularization is a central theme, perhaps because the presence of national churches in both countries leads to additional political friction with both mainstream conservatives and the so-called cultural left. European supranational politics is another factor that differentiates these two cases from the American context.

Mainstream Neoconservatism, Education, and Alternative Views

The recent literature on the Christian Right debates the extent to which the movement has been reinforced, or even partly co-opted by mainstream neoconservatism, particularly in the United States. This would at least in part account for a widespread perception of the movement's influence in the political process, especially in key issue-areas where both ideologies greatly overlap, such as foreign policy, education, and family-related policy. Media consumption often reflects this overlap, especially in terms of television and radio. The use of the #tcot (after the Top Conservatives on the Twitter Web site) hashtag is another indicator of the overlap between mainstream neoconservatism and the Christian Right.

There are, of course, groups and organizations that distance themselves from secular manifestations of conservatism and the mainstream media. This procedure may accompany a discourse of mistrust and counterhegemony, often visible in the social media. Some interpret this move in light of the Christian Right's concern for reshaping education in a way that better reflects its worldview and historical narrative. This effort predates the Internet and remains parallel to it, requiring no aggressive social media presence, as it seems to have already branded itself to its constituency (e.g., Liberty and Bob Jones Universities). A newer genre, exemplified by virtual homeschooling curricula and other distance courses, appears

in a number of platforms, especially digital video and Webinars. These are frequently offered not by the higher education institutions, but by nonprofits associated with the Christian Right. A key concern, in continuity with the jeremiad narrative readapted for the movement by figures like David Barton and Peter Marshall, is historical revisionism portraying America's national identity as that of a "Christian nation."

Critics have ascribed the Christian Right's suspicion of widely accepted views on history and natural science to anti-intellectualism. However, the movement's interest in public intellectuals, educational institutions, and nonprofits, as well as the grassroots development of a social media presence focused on the production and dissemination of alternative knowledge, begs for a more nuanced reading of the phenomenon. Communication theorists have attempted to reinterpret it in light of the postmodern condition of epistemological suspicion. Empirical research on popular mistrust of mainstream accounts of climate change, public health, and creationism has suggested the notion of "*I*-pistemology," or "the self as origin of all truth," as a plausible way of framing social media activity on a more individual basis. Although individual experience and judgment are emphasized in the intensification of the use of these new platforms, the traditional roles of science, democracy, and institutionalized knowledge are not fundamentally questioned. The use of social media is employed rather as a "corrective" way of presenting an alternative story while at the same time avoiding the gatekeeping practices of the traditional platforms.

Conclusion

Overall, the Christian Right's engagement with the social media is relatively modest at the grassroots level, with the bulk of the effort being concentrated at the top organizations able to raise funds for national campaigns. Working together, though, both grassroots and well-articulated groups have shown great effectiveness in isolated cases. In 2013, the social media campaign to call the public's attention to the abortion-related Kermit Gosnell case attained considerable success in terms of awareness and mobilization. Another instance is the rise of Tea Party activism in recent years. The relevance of the social media presence of the Christian Right in similar isolated cases is hard to measure, but it should not be neglected.

Lucas G. Freire
University of Exeter

See Also: Bachmann, Michele; Catholic Church and Social Media; Faith-Based Social Change; Palin Phenomenon; Tea Party Movement.

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Citizen Journalism

The proliferation of communication technologies and new media has transformed contemporary journalism by harnessing the power of audiences and citizens to participate in news reporting and dissemination, leading to the rise of citizen journalism. Citizen journalism reverses the traditional relationship between audience as consumer and reporters as producers of news. J. Rosen's

definition of this type of journalism captures such reversal: "When the people formerly known as the audience employ the press tools they have in their possession to inform one another, that's citizen journalism." The new concept strives to democratize news practices by putting community interests ahead of corporate interests with an undiluted emphasis on audience participation. This entry focuses on two fundamental implications of citizen journalism: first, how citizen journalism transforms the traditional news production, consumption, and dissemination processes; and second, how these tools foster more participatory and democratic political and media cultures.

Citizen journalism has subverted the traditional journalistic paradigm in which news is exclusively produced by professional journalists and massively disseminated by organizations to reach audiences who are less likely to be involved in the earlier processes. New media offer several ways to transcend this rigid model of news production, dissemination, and consumption. Steve Outing of The Poynter Institute suggests 11 layers in which news organizations can wield the power of the Internet to embrace citizen journalism practices. These 11 layers range from innovations that are easy to implement, such as "opening up to public comments," to the most radical innovations, such as "wiki journalism: where the readers are editors." Mainstream news organizations have already used the Web to encourage public comments sections in which readers "react to, criticize, praise or add to what's published by professional journalists." Wiki journalism moves beyond simple user comments to permit anyone to compose, post, or edit any news story that has been posted on the Web site. The goal is to produce well-crafted, balanced, and credible news coverage via harnessing the power of crowdsourcing and mobilizing smart mobs to utilize group effort and intelligence in the news production and consumption processes. The blending of these processes has fostered produsage, a hybrid form of journalism that entails simultaneous production and usage.

With the proliferation of new social media tools, like blogs, citizens challenge the gatekeeping and agenda-setting powers of mainstream media. As a form of citizen media, blogging erases traditional barriers associated with news gathering and publishing. Any citizen with access to a computer can become an instant reporter on his or her community without the overseeing control of editors and publishers. Bloggers have had a palpable influence on mainstream media, as can be gleaned from the resignation of CBS's news anchor, Dan Rather, in 2004 after bloggers proved that the documents CBS relied on to claim that George W. Bush evaded military service were in fact forgeries. Among other blogs, Freerepublic.com and the DrudgeReport.com publicized the forgeries in the CBS investigation, forcing other mainstream media to cover the issue and eventually leading to CBS's humble apology. In politics, the Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott resigned in 2007 after his controversial comments praising the efforts of segregationist Strom Thurmond. Lott's comments became political and media fodder largely due to the work of bloggers from TalkingPointsMemo.com and Instapundit.com. Spurning the gatekeeping role of editors, the new citizen reporters and bloggers have become gatewatchers who filter mainstream news by highlighting, promoting, and debating issues central to their communities.

The participatory emphasis underlying the citizen journalism model is based on a vision of an inclusive public sphere in which audiences become active political agents and the democratic process becomes more representative of diverse views in society. The inclusive vision in which marginalized political voices are aired and heard is central to South Korea's OhmyNews, which remains one of the best known, if not the first, organized effort to consciously set up a citizen journalism outfit. C. H. Bentley describes OhmyNews' founder, Oh Yeon-ho, as a "new Martin Luther in this Digital Reformation" for his bold vision of a modern journalism in which "every citizen is a reporter." The OhmyNews citizen journalism model relies on an army of thousands of citizen reporters who write news stories that are edited by a few professional journalists in what might be termed as a professional–amateur (pro–am) collaboration. Evidence of the potency of such pro–am collaboration was witnessed in the coverage of important events including the southeast Asia tsunami in 2004 and the London terrorist bombing in 2005.

While the above examples demonstrate citizen journalism's ability to challenge corporate mainstream media's narratives, social media have sharpened citizen reporters' tools and exponentially

augmented the scale of user-generated content. As violent confrontations between police and street demonstrators followed the contested 2009 elections in Iran, Iranian citizens flooded Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube with dramatic footage and video evidence that highlighted the regime's heavy-handed tactics. The breathtaking speed at which dissidents' stories were updated and the accompanying social media attention ensured that the opposition's narrative drove the news agenda worldwide. A YouTube executive, N. Newman, asserted their site's role as a vital citizen reporting platform by claiming that "Iranian citizens are having their voices heard, their faces seen and their story gets told around the world without filtering." In sum, citizen reporters have transformed journalism from a lecture-like communication practice into a participatory, critical, and discursive conversation.

Aziz Douai
University of Ontario

See Also: Blogs; Crowdsourcing; MIT Center for Civic Media; *Myth of Digital Democracy*; OhmyNews.

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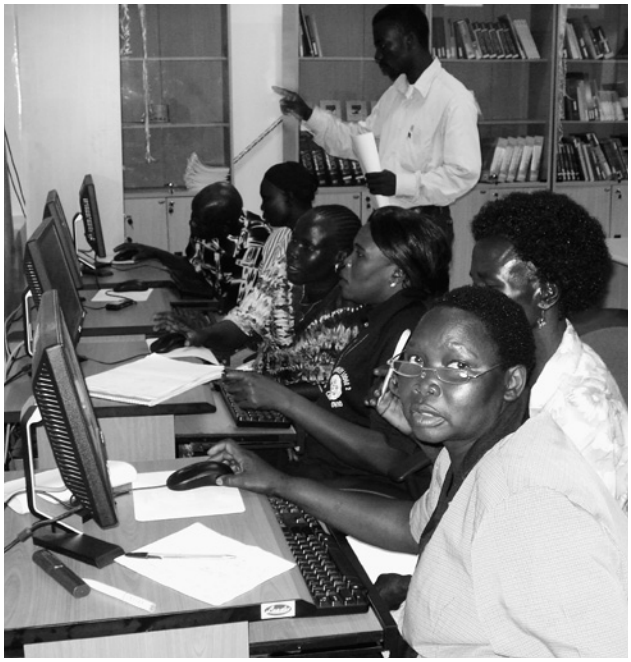
Civil Rights

In American English, the term *civil rights* refers to individual rights defined within the Bill of Rights, several amendments to the U.S. Constitution (Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Nineteenth), and election rights within the Voting Rights Act. Within civil law systems, the very same rights are described with the term *civic rights* (*Burgerrechte*, *droits civiques*), which refers to rights granted by states exclusively to their citizens, shaping the mutual relationship between the individual and the state. In the United States, those rights may also be described with the term *civil liberties*. The most important civil rights include voting rights, right to labor, right to education,



Hospital staff participate in computer and Internet skills training at the Juba Teaching Hospital Health Information Resource Center in Juba, Sudan, in 2009. The right to Internet access may be recognized as a civil right in some legal systems even though it is not an element of the universal human rights law.

and right to diplomatic protection. Concurrently, states are obliged under numerous international law treaties to grant human rights, including civil and political rights, to individuals in their jurisdictions. In this context, the term *civil rights* covers a certain category of human rights as referred to in the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). In civil law systems, those rights are described with the notion of civil rights (*bürgerliche Rechte*, *droits civils*). Next to civil rights, political and economic rights may be identified as separate but complementary groups. Jointly, they form the universal catalog of human rights. Social media strongly influences the perception of civil rights, urging the need for their uniform application.

According to author Robert G. McCloskey, the subject of civil rights is the liberties of a person as a person and not primarily as an economic animal. In American English, civil rights are rarely referred to as civic rights, although they reflect the idea of civic rights (*Burgerrechte*, *droits civiques*) in civil law countries. This is a category consisting primarily of individual liberties guaranteed by a state to its citizens within acts of national law. While human rights are recognized globally, based on a system of international treaties, civil rights are guaranteed by national constitutions and other acts of national laws. Unlike human rights, which are thought of as originating from the innate dignity of the human person, civil rights are considered legal rights and therefore granted to an individual by a state. Civil rights so perceived cover the right to free speech and religion in the shape defined by national acts of law, the right to vote, the right to education, or the right to obtain diplomatic protection from state authorities while abroad. Civil rights are only generally mentioned in international law treaties as they primarily originate from national laws.

For example, they are briefly mentioned in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (EU). Since 2009, the charter is perceived as part of law of the EU as per the Lisbon Treaty, in which a direct reference thereto was made. It defines particular political, social, and economic rights of EU citizens that are to be considered by EU bodies when drafting and exercising acts of EU law. Chapter V of the charter, devoted entirely to citizens' rights, includes every EU citizen's right to vote and to stand as a candidate at elections to the European Parliament as well as at municipal elections. It also grants every person within the jurisdiction of EU states the right to good administration, that is, for their affairs to be handled impartially, fairly, and within a reasonable time by the institutions and bodies of the EU. Furthermore civic rights in the EU include each individual's right to have the community make good for any damage caused by its institutions or by its servants in the performance of their duties. Every EU citizen holds the right of access to documents of the European Parliament, Council, and Commission and to refer to the Ombudsman of the Union cases of maladministration in the activities of the EU institutions or bodies. Active participation in social and political affairs may also be exercised through the right to petition. Freedom of movement and of residence as well as the right to diplomatic and consular protection in the territory of a third country is granted to every citizen of the EU.

The catalog of civil rights guaranteed by national constitutions to a large extent repeats

certain globally recognized human rights, emphasizing their recognition in national legislation and detailing their execution. The interrelation between civil rights and human rights is very close. Although civil rights originate from national acts of law, in large part they reflect human rights named in international treaties. For example, the right to life, considered a basic human right, is granted by numerous human rights treaties and repeated in acts of national laws, first and foremost in constitutions.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Although states are obliged to respect and protect human life in general, their particular obligations toward individuals originate from acts of national law. Similarly, the human rights law system endows citizens with a right to participation in political life, as enshrined within Article 25 ICCPR; however, details of the execution of that right and limits of its application are defined in national acts of law.

There are also those rights that are granted solely by national laws, while their international status as human rights has not yet been confirmed.

The right to Internet access may serve as a good example of depicting the practical difference between civil rights as an element of the human rights system and civil rights covering only rights recognized by an individual state. While some states, like Brazil or Norway, recognize the right to Internet access within their national acts of law, the global debate on the existence of the human right to Internet access as an emanation of the right to access information continues. Therefore, the right to Internet access may be recognized as a civil right in some national legal systems, while it is not an element of the universal human rights law.

The term *civic rights* can also be used to describe a category of human rights included in the ICCPR, an international treaty fundamental to existing human rights law next to economic, social, and cultural rights defined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights acknowledged by the United Nations (UN) on December 16, 1966.

In this context, civil rights are a category of human rights law, constituting an international obligation of states toward any and all individuals within their jurisdictions.

Among the civil rights named in the ICCPR, numerous basic human rights have been identified. The rights to physical integrity, including the right to life, freedom from torture, and cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment as well as a general prohibition of slavery are named in Articles 6, 7, and 8 of the covenant. The inherent right to life is granted in Article 6 to each individual and requires states to take active measures to grant that right effective legal protection. It is considered a supreme right, which suffers no derogations and is to be understood broadly. Among civil rights, the right to individual liberty and security of person also are named. Following the common law habeas corpus doctrine, Article 9 of the ICCPR prohibits arbitrary arrest and detention. Any deprivation of liberty may only be conveyed as an exception to that rule and based on a provision of law in accordance with procedural minimal standards, provided for in Articles 9 and 10 of the ICCPR.

Individual liberty is often interpreted as not only the freedom to convey certain action within the limits set by law protecting the rights and freedoms of others but also as freedom from any intrusions. It constitutes an obligation of any third party, that is, state authorities and private individuals alike, to refrain from imposing any limitations upon individual freedom unless such intrusions have been provided for by law.

Among civil rights, the ICCPR includes a principle of procedural fairness and the protection of the rights of the accused in its Articles 14 and 15. Those rights include the right to a fair trial, presumption of innocence, and the right of an appeal to a court of higher instance. It also includes the principle *lex retro non agit*, disallowing any criminal proceeding to be initiated upon an act of law that was not in force at the time when the act subject to responsibility was being committed.

Among civil rights, individual liberties such as the freedom of movement, religion, thought, speech, assembly, and association are named in Articles 12 through 22 of the ICCPR. It grants each individual the right of privacy, including protection against unlawful attacks to individual honor and reputation. The following articles of

the ICCPR mandate individuals with the right to marry and every child with the right to acquire a nationality.

Article 19 of the ICCPR grants each individual the freedom of speech fundamental to all social media. The individual right to freedom of opinion and expression is composed of three complementary rights: freedom to hold opinions and the liberty to receive information and to impart it, regardless of frontiers. Confines for exercising these complementary rights are defined in Article 29, paragraph 2, which subjects their implementation to such limitations as are determined by law and introduced for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others. Restrictions may also be set up in order to meet the just requirements of morality, public order, and the general welfare in a democratic society.

The imminent trait of the human rights system is that it is based on a fundamental rule of nondiscrimination. Therefore, human rights named in the ICCPR are to be applied to every human being. Only Article 25 of the ICCPR, granting the right to participation in political activities, restricts its application to citizens of state parties, obliging them to grant to every citizen the right and the opportunity to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives, to vote and to be elected, and to have access to the public service in his or her country. ICCPR introduces a system of international protection of rights granted therein. The UN Human Rights Committee was established to monitor the introduction and execution of those rights within national legal systems. It is a treaty-based, high-level group of experts who examine state reports by ICCPR parties. Although the committee is entitled to settle disputes between state parties, its quasi-judicial character remains disputed, just as its actual effect on the introduction of effective civil rights protection mechanisms. Its political character causes criticism for representing nondemocratic states and reluctance to refer to numerous long-lasting human rights violations.

Changes Brought by Social Media

Social media brought a dramatic change to the way civil rights are perceived and exercised. The transboundary character of the network changed the way communities arise and operate. Particularly young people engage in online communications more willingly and frequently than they participate in real-life local elections or other forms of participatory democracy, which allows exercise of civil rights offline. This globalization of the perception of civil rights resulted in the need for unification of standards provided in national laws for universal civil rights enshrined in the human rights system. People gathering in online communities wish to be granted equal protection of the right guaranteed to them by international law treaties.

A good example of that challenge is posed by the right to assembly. It is recognized as a civil right granted to individuals by states of their citizenship or residence according to Article 25 of the ICCPR. Thanks to the impact of social media, this civil right gained a new dimension with the outburst of the Arab Spring in late 2010, originating from and strongly shaped by virtual assemblies. Groups of individuals were exercising their right to public gathering online, discussing crucial political issues on social platforms while communicating and planning real-life gatherings in cyberspace. The right to assembly transformed into the right to virtual assembly. Also, the 2012 Occupy Wall Street movement contributed to raising the awareness of social media's impact on exercising civil rights while channeling social disapproval for the economic crisis and aiming at protecting social and economic rights.

Another example of a civil right significant in social media and subject to different interpretations by national authorities is the right to privacy, enshrined in Article 17 of the ICCPR. Privacy may not be subject to arbitrary or unlawful interference. This prohibition is perceived differently by individual national authorities. While in Europe the right to privacy is recognized as a human right with state authorities obliged not only to refrain from interference with individual privacy but also to actively prevent any interruption thereof by third parties, in the United States the right to privacy is not enshrined in any federal act of law and often recognized as the effect of free market powers.

Hans Shattle argues that the contemporary sense of community and group identity may serve as the basis for civil rights development, although

those groups currently are primarily shaped by technology and social media. According to Hans Shattle, the notions of allegiance, belonging, and loyalty are shared nowadays regardless of historically established communities guarded by laws across national and political jurisdictions, while advocacy networks function based on shared goals and principles. Citizenship has given place to a shared cause, uniting individuals within online communities and requiring a uniform application of globally recognized civil rights.

Joanna Kulesza
University of Lodz

See Also: Human Rights; International Social Media and Politics; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights.

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Clickable Calls to Action

A call to action, by definition, urges a reader, listener, viewer, or respondent to react and take immediate action upon hearing a message. In the digital era, calls to action have been leveraged on Web sites to allow viewers to instantly, with the click of a button, respond to a message. The button may be a graphic or text that is created to capture the viewer's attention. The goal of the clickable call to action is to retain the viewer and urge them down a conversation funnel, which is a term used to track consumers and their page views and clicks. Ultimately, it provides a focus to a Web site, a way to measure a site's success, and a direction for a site's users.

While for marketing strategies the goal may be to drive sales, in the political arena the goal is often to generate votes or donations and galvanize support for a cause. Many consider an ad or Web site without a clickable call to action a failure or a missed opportunity because the viewer is no longer engaged. It is considered a best practice for those in political office or nonprofits to create emotionally hard-hitting videos or content that is wrapped up in a button to compel the viewer to take action.

Best Practices

There are measurable ways to create a successful call to action campaign. A site should have a small number of distinct actions but not too many so as to overwhelm or lose the interest of the viewer. It is important, as well, to use active and urgent language to coerce the viewer to take action. Some buzzwords include donate, subscribe, register, buy, and call. Placing a deadline on a call to action or suggesting that supplies are limited creates a sense of urgency. The visuals of a clickable button are equally as important in retaining a viewer's attention. This includes where the button is placed on the Web site and the colors, fonts, shapes, text, and visual effects of the button.

Not all calls to action are hosted on a party's Web site. Many calls to action are hosted on a platform that can redirect traffic back to a site. For instance, YouTube's Clickable Call to Action now allows users to drive traffic from their videos to external uniform resource locators (URLs) of their choice with a semitransparent ad that appears over the video.

Google offers a wide range of applications for nonprofit organizations to promote their causes. Google for Nonprofits offers a wide array of products and applications that are either discounted or free for nonprofit organizations. It allows nonprofits to not only broaden their constituent bases but also to use applications to save time and money while connecting with other nonprofits to learn about their best practices. Using these tools to publicize a campaign or cause is crucial to drive traffic to the call to action button.

Clickable Successes

In the 2008 presidential election, President Barack Obama became one of first politicians to

effectively use social media to spread awareness for his campaign for office and galvanize voters. His methods were no different than candidates of years past, such as John F. Kennedy, who utilized television. In Kennedy's case, however, the call to action was less immediate as it was asking for a vote on Election Day or a check to support his campaign. Through social media, President Obama was able to drive voters to his Web site, www.barackobama.com, where they could immediately see a clickable call to action button with the words, "Quick Donate $5." The verbiage on the button indicated that a donation of just $5 was significant and the action would not take much of their time. Once clicking on the button and continuing down the conversation funnel, the Web site's host could not only track additional information on the viewers but ideally encourage them to donate more money. Many calls to action offer incentives. At one point, President Obama's campaign page offered a free T-shirt to those who donated $30 or more.

President Obama carried his social media strategies from 2008 into his 2012 campaign, when he was re-elected after a strong presence on YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media outlets.

In 2012, a video, "Kony2012," created by Invisible Children, Inc., went viral on YouTube. The video was released on March 5, 2012, and portrayed a Ugandan militia leader indicted on war crimes, Joseph Kony, who was arrested before the end of 2012. The film had more than 94 million views on YouTube by October 2012. At the end of the video, a stop clock ran out of time and text appeared telling the viewer that the time had come to take action. It laid out three ways in which viewers could help the cause: Sign the pledge to support the cause, purchase the bracelet and action kit, and sign up to donate a few dollars per month. The film then directed viewers to Kony2012.com and the Invisible Children Web site, where clickable calls to action were abundant in asking for pledges and offering merchandise. The film was so successful that it resulted in a resolution by the U.S. Senate and contributed to the decision to send troops by the African Union.

Other recent compelling campaigns that have led to greater awareness include videos from Feeding America, Amnesty International, Habitat for Humanity, and Water.org.

Marion Jeanette Herbert
Independent Scholar

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Click-Through Rate; Clicktivism.

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Click-Through Rate

A click-through rate (CTR) is defined as a ratio of clicks received divided by the number of impressions of an online ad or link. Both ads and links appearing on social media can be rated for effectiveness by CTR. Usually, it is expressed as a percentage. For instance, if a link is displayed 1,000 times and results in 12 clicks, the CTR is 1.2 percent. CTR is used as a measure of the effectiveness of both online ad placement as well as content link placements. It is somewhat analogous to a response rate in traditional advertising, although generally traditional advertising response rates require a more concerted effort from the respondent. In recent elections, CTR has taken on new importance as calls for social action and campaign

donations can be linked to highly effective CTR for online advertising spending and social media campaigns.

Factors Impacting Click-Through Rate

There are a variety of factors that can impact the CTR of a placement. Effective targeting, so that the viewer of the content is most likely to be interested in the target subject, is perhaps the largest predictor of ultimate CTR. For example, an ad for a political candidate is likely to have a higher CTR on a Web site with content about that candidate's political party than on a Web site focused on linguistics. Similarly, the channel used for display can impact the CTR. An ad for a candidate that is displayed in a search channel, when a user has specifically searched for "how to contribute to a political campaign" versus an ad displayed on a general election news Web site is likely to have a higher CTR as searches have been shown to have higher CTR overall for similarly themed content. Platforms also have been shown to have different levels of CTR, with mobile platforms having a higher CTR than desktop computers.

Content and design elements have also been linked to CTR. Research has shown that incentives, emotional appeals, interactivity, color, animation, and placement position all have an impact on ultimate CTR. These content and design elements have also been shown to have differing impacts for consumer-focused versus business-focused ads. Personal referral mechanisms, where a user is sent a link by a friend, have also been found to be directly linked to increased CTR. Another factor impacting CTR rates is click fraud. Click fraud is defined as clicks that are generated by fraudulent means. With the widespread accessibility of revenue from online advertising, click fraud has become a large factor, constantly being battled by large advertising clearinghouses such as Google, Bing, and Facebook.

Impact of Click-Through Rates on Advertising Costs and Revenue

CTR can influence the cost for online advertisers and the revenue for online publishers who accept ad or link placements. Online advertisers generally have three methods of paying a publisher for the display of an ad or link. The most basic, cost per impression (CPM), charges a fixed rate per 1,000 displays. A high expected CTR can directly increase the CPM as the advertiser expects a higher average number of clicks per display. CPM can also be high even with a low CTR when the advertiser's goal is branding to the target demographic of the publisher's users. The more direct cost per click (CPC) method charges a fixed rate per click. Here, the CTR most directly impacts the likelihood that a publisher will continue to choose to display an ad or link. If the CTR is too low, then the publisher is likely to prefer a higher CTR unit so that they can generate more advertising revenue. However, both the CPM and CPC methods provide no guaranteed direct linkage to revenue for the advertiser and are subjected to reduction in value with the spread of click fraud. The last method of cost per action (CPA) was created as a reaction by advertisers to less-than-expected value per click. In this method, the advertiser pays a fixed rate per action generated by a click from the publisher's content. The most common action is a completed sale. CPA is analogous to a commission in a more traditional sales setting. This method serves as a regulator of the quality of a click and reduces the direct importance of CTR as a measure of effectiveness. In CPA relationships, CTR is used as a diagnostic tool to identify potential barriers between a click and ultimate action.

Marc-David L. Seidel
University of British Columbia

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Campaign Strategy; Google AdWords/AdSense in Campaign Strategy; Proxy Measurement; Search Engine Optimization.

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Clicktivism

Also known as slacktivism, clicktivism is a portmanteau, or combination of terms describing activism that is conducted via the Internet. Critics complain that online activism is inadequate and may even harm the social and political causes people are attempting to support by conferring a false sense of accomplishment that forestalls more effective engagement. Despite clicktivism's negative connotations, in particular the perception that Internet-based activism is lazy and ineffective, in the 2000s, social media increasingly became a valued site for political organization. Social media networks like Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook in particular are key sites for recruitment and messaging for a variety of organizations from political campaigns to activist groups.

In the United States, Internet-based boycotts of companies that have been accused of supporting discriminatory media content have resulted in advertisers discontinuing their sponsorship of several popular, formerly desirable radio and television programs, including the *Glenn Beck* show.

In one of the most high-profile examples of online activism, during the 2012 American presidential campaign influential conservative talk show host Rush Limbaugh drew rapid and widespread criticism for his comments characterizing Georgetown law student Sandra Fluke as a "slut" and a "prostitute" in response to her congressional testimony in support of health care coverage for contraception.

Clicktivism has also enabled international causes to spread quickly across national borders as with "Kony 2012," a viral video that was seen by tens of millions of viewers worldwide and helped raise awareness of efforts to arrest Lord's Resistance Army leader Joseph Kony for war crimes involving children in his native Uganda and other African countries.

Outcomes

The Rush Limbaugh–Sandra Fluke incident was a particularly conspicuous example of successful online activism. When Limbaugh labeled Sandra Fluke a "slut" and "prostitute" on his talk show, he triggered a backlash that outstripped prior controversies. Though he is no stranger to dispute (by most analyses, his popularity relies upon it), the swiftness and strength of the response came as a surprise in this case. News of the incident spread quickly through feminist social media networks and resulted in at least 12 advertisers and two radio stations withdrawing their support from the Rush Limbaugh show despite its status as the most listened-to talk show in the United States.

In another indication of the influence of this activism, the confrontation between old media and citizen-fueled social media also brought about a very rare apology from the venerable and usually fearless broadcaster. This outcome differs conspicuously from other Limbaugh-related disputes, which have often ended in even the most powerful critics apologizing to him.

Carole V. Bell
Northeastern University

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Artists and Social Media in Politics; Musicians and Social Media in Politics.

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Clinton, Hillary

Hillary Rodham Clinton has engaged in several major national roles in her life, including 67th U.S. secretary of state (2009–13), U.S. senator (D-NY, 2001–09), First Lady (1993–2001), and 2008 presidential candidate. Although she employed social media (including announcing her run) during the campaign, the Barack Obama campaign's innovative use of the Internet for fundraising and audience targeting overshadowed her efforts. She is being touted as a leading potential candidate for the 2016 presidential race, with the "Ready for Hillary PAC" (launched in February 2013) reaching over 50,000 Facebook fans and having over 100,000 e-mails in its database in two months, 43 months before the November 2016 election. In a life known for extensive public service and inventiveness in her use of power, Clinton's mark on diplomacy will perhaps be best remembered by her extensive use and promotion of social networking technology, combined by record-setting travel.

A 1969 Wellesley College graduate, Hillary Clinton served as senior class president and was active in student politics; she graduated in 1973 from Yale Law School, where she met future husband Bill Clinton. She served on the presidential impeachment inquiry staff, advising the House Judiciary Committee during the Watergate affair; following that, she became a faculty member at the University of Arkansas Law School. She married Bill Clinton on October 11, 1975, and in 1978, he was elected Arkansas governor, with Hillary Clinton serving as First Lady (1979–81 and 1983–92). Clinton also served as the First Lady of the United States from 1993 to 2001, during her husband Bill Clinton's time in the White House.

President Barack Obama nominated Hillary Clinton for secretary of state (the third woman and sole former First Lady to serve in this position), and she was confirmed on January 21, 2009. Her term was marked by strong advocacy for human rights, especially for women and children. She was one of the most-traveled secretaries of state, reported by the U.S. State Department as having logged 956,733 miles over 379 days on the road, visiting 110 countries. Although diplomacy typically has been considered a "boots-on-the-ground" position, Clinton recognized that the human connections could be enhanced and advanced via social media.

Social Media

As secretary of state, one of Clinton's most notable initiatives was to greatly enhance the use of social media and other new technologies as a means of fostering dialogue between people worldwide, as well as a way to increase foreign policy initiatives. This occurred both within the Department of State as well as with international partners intent on expanding Internet freedom. Clinton encouraged ambassadors to expand their Twitter and Facebook presences in order to increase responsiveness and to help catalyze participation. The State Department now boasts its own Twitter feed in 11 languages, 192 other Twitter feeds, and 288 Facebook accounts, and diplomats in the foreign service institute must be trained in the uses of social media. As secretary of state, Clinton had almost 13 million Facebook fans, 2 million Twitter followers, and 16 million video views with around 27,000 subscribers. These innovations have significantly impacted foreign policy and reimaged power relationships; in the past diplomats would have used overnight flash messages, and now news spreads through multiple connection technologies.

Clinton's 21st-Century Statecraft initiative involved the use of social media tools to achieve foreign policy goals. She tripled funding for computer training and surveillance-evading software for dissidents. Clinton first learned of the 2010 uprisings now known as Arab Spring from Twitter. Her perspective is that employing technology will enhance U.S. advocacy for the disenfranchised.

Examples include using text messages to raise money for the Haitian earthquake survivors and sending a delegation of women technology leaders to Africa to discuss how social media can serve as a platform for people in underdeveloped countries. She also established divisions within the State Department to answer violent anti American extremism on the Internet with rapid response Twitter or video feeds. With her 21st-Century Statecraft platform, Clinton has championed technology as means to engage people in a less traditional diplomatic way, while enhancing the State Department's engagement with publics and issues worldwide.

This revolutionizing turn to the diplomatic use of technology has been articulated in a number of addresses. In remarks at the Barnard College commencement on May 18, 2009, Clinton reminded graduates that the social networking tools such as Twitter or Facebook that they commonly use can be employed to fight human trafficking or child marriage, decry unfair treatment of journalists, or call for group actions. Social media were tools for democratizing diplomacy, and she announced the formation of the Virtual Student Foreign Service, designed to facilitate diplomatic engagement through social media. E-interns assist various agencies to conduct digital diplomacy, such as developing public relations campaigns using social media sites, creating means of gathering and analyzing media coverage of issues, researching information technology-based interventions, writing articles for the various State Department Facebook pages on issues, and surveying social media efforts by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), diplomatic posts, and others.

On January 21, 2010, in remarks on Internet freedom at the Washington, D.C., Newseum, Clinton gave what was termed a historic speech on Internet policy and global online freedom. Clinton described the spread of information networks as creating a new nervous system for the planet, but she cautioned about the threats to online freedom through government censorship and other virtual walls. In a follow-up speech at George Washington University on February 15, 2011, Clinton reminded the audience that the Internet is now the world's town square, classroom, and marketplace, where people shape and are shaped by what happens there. She called on people worldwide to

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton delivered a speech titled "Internet Rights and Wrongs: Choices and Challenges in a Networked World" at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., on February 15, 2011. Clinton called the Internet "the 'public space' of the future—a vital, global town square in which everyone shares an equal interest."

protect the freedoms of expression, association, and assembly in the online context, calling these three freedoms "the freedom to connect." These digital rights provide people a platform to present ideas and innovation, as well as establish connections and the possibility for economic growth. At a conference on Internet Freedom at the Hague on December 8, 2011, on the eve of Human Rights Day, Clinton spoke of creating an international digital defenders partnership to combat restrictions on human rights on the Internet.

Clinton has repeatedly described 21st-Century Statecraft as the use of Internet tools to achieve foreign policy goals, advocating for Internet freedom through a number of programs, initiatives, grants, and forums. Among those were State Department stands taken on behalf of online activists and journalists who have been imprisoned; international forums on Internet freedom and governance tied into human rights issues; establishing the Office of the Coordinator for Cyber Issues; and supporting U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) executing a program to establish digital safety capacity-building to local media and organizations around the world. Secretary Clinton's 21st-Century Statecraft initiatives connected private and civic sectors with foreign policy by joining resources and partners together for innovative diplomatic work via new technologies.

One example is the GSMA mWomen Program, described as a public-private partnership led by the Global Women's Initiative that aims to close the global mobile phone adoption gender gap. Civil Society 2.0 joins the technical capacity of civil society organizations with tech-savvy groups and individuals to help raise digital literacy, enhance NGO communication networks, and amplify the impact of civil society movements. There have also been several Tech@State conferences on topics ranging from using technology during disasters to developing apps for specific needs, such as mobile money.

As secretary of state, Clinton engaged in a number of "Global Town Halls," which employed social media and IP video conferencing technology. Her last such chat occurred on February 4, 2013, at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., where she answered questions from college students worldwide. Secretary Clinton took questions through voiceover Internet protocol (VoIP) technology, e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, and Sina Weibo (the Chinese Twitter). She noted that technology has become a big part of diplomacy, which was demonstrated through her ability to speak to students in six countries.

Conclusion

Hillary Clinton embraced social media as a way to conduct foreign policy in an interdependent world that demands and expects greater interconnectedness. She is a champion of technological innovations and initiatives, and she aggressively developed the State Department's use of technology to add dimension to its policies and agendas. As a result of her efforts, American diplomacy that typically had been a formal process of staid interactions between trained actors has been enlarged to include the public. This coincides with Clinton's public service history of focusing on engaging people to engender change, especially for the under-represented.

Beth M. Waggenspack
Virginia Tech

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Digital Diplomacy; Nongovernmental Organizations; Twitter Diplomacy; USAID Impact Blog.

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Cloud Computing

Cloud computing is a term that describes the use of a network of remote servers to perform functions that were traditionally run from localized computers. Rather than using one's own computing hardware and software to run programs, store information, or develop content, these files and services are held elsewhere and accessed via the Internet from massive off-site data servers. Cloud computing services are often accessed via personal computers or, increasingly, through the use of mobile phones and tablets with either a dedicated software platform or a Web-based user interface.

The primary advantage in operating within a cloud infrastructure is that it is often desirable to outsource data management, software licensing, and server ownership and maintenance to other third-party firms that operate on an economy of scale and expertise rather than perform all tasks in-house. Individual users and consumers who use cloud-based software or storage often are drawn to the ease, reliability, and stability of these "anywhere, anytime" services and the platforms with which they are provided.

However, cloud computing requires that the user have a great deal of trust in the remote management system as the cloud-based entity maintains hold of a great deal of potentially private or personally sensitive information. Furthermore, cloud-based servers must have strong encryption and security protections and procedures in order to protect such content. As such, the legal and ethical use of client data (particularly across international borders) has drawn increased attention from political and privacy advocates, alike. This would be especially important in situations involving personal and potentially sensitive information, such as medical records, legal documents, and political preferences, actions, and affiliations.

Examples of cloud computing include Apple's iCloud storage services, Google's cloud platform (including Docs, Calendar, Spreadsheets, and Drive storage system), or DropBox, as well as Amazon's Web Service, Microsoft's SkyDrive, and IBM's PrivateCloud, or EMC's Atmos.

The term *cloud computing* is a metaphor referencing the abstract and amorphous nature of a decentralized computer network that mirrors the network structure of the Internet, only on a smaller scale. With the rise of computer networks, broadband Internet access, and in particular the mobility turn of the 2000s with the rise of the mobile data grid, it was realized that it could be advantageous to users to access their content or services on their devices while storing their content or software elsewhere. This was true not only in terms of bypassing the finite limitations of hard drive storage but also by providing services to mobile clients that could not otherwise be possible with a relatively static, centrally localized network. The concept of the cloud would be embraced as a forward-looking technology by many citizens and digital firms alike, as land broadband and mobile data speeds continued to increase data transmission speed.

Privacy Issues and Security Concerns

Perhaps the most troubling concept of the cloud is the privacy of users' stored content and communication. Privacy advocates have argued that most end-user license agreements (EULAs) effectively allow cloud service providers to access one's content at any time for any reason, a clearly troubling notion to those who argue for digital privacy protections. There have also been several cases where

cloud-based storage has been hacked by outside individuals, either on an individual scale or en masse, and users' personal data, stored content, and communication have been compromised. Despite strong encryption and security practices, cloud-based systems are under constant attack from hackers or other parties that wish to access private and sometimes sensitive information.

Even more troubling to privacy advocates is government surveillance of cloud-based communication and content. Under the USA PATRIOT Act, government agencies can monitor users' online communication and content by requesting access to user data, which in most cases does not require a warrant.

Cloud-based file storage services have also come under fire as distributors of intellectual property through nonlegal means because virtual file storage can also serve as a distribution network for music, video, software, or other commonly shared material. Most notably, this was the case that led to the 2012 shutdown of MegaUpload.com by the U.S. Department of Justice for distributing illegal content, which resulted in the seizure of all user data contained in the company's 25-petabyte server matrix.

The cloud appears to be the future of computing. As mobile networks increase in both speed and coverage, and as more electronic devices appear that can share similar files (such as documents, music, video, and such), a network-based storage that is accessible anywhere will appeal to consumers, and corporations will increasingly use this strategy for many of the same reasons. The biggest threat to the future of cloud computing appears to be the security and privacy question, along with the ability to roll out faster infrastructure to appease data-hungry consumers.

Doug Tewksbury
Niagara University

See Also: Data Mining; Privacy; Social Computing and Social Information Processing; Social Media, Definitions and Classes of; Topology of Social Networks.

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Cloud Computing and Citizen Privacy

Cloud computing is a technology of the information technology (IT) sector that became publicly available in the first decade of the 21st century. Cloud computing is the current innovation of the global IT sector and is swiftly developing into the service offering of choice in business as well as government. In general, cloud computing offers three types of services: software as a service (Saas), infrastructure as a service (IaaS), and platform as a service (PaaS). SaaS is a software delivery model with its data centrally located and accessed by clients with a web browser. IaaS is associated with computer hardware or infrastructure with service that is associated with a platform virtualization environment; and finally, PaaS deploys software applications to support the systems and cycles of Web applications available online.

All of these service models are promoted or deployed with public clouds, hybrid clouds, private clouds, and community clouds. Even Facebook can be considered a cloud computing service. Although users may appear to "own" their personal Facebook page, the site, along with its unique hardware and software, is owned by Facebook. There are significant concerns regarding cloud service providers (CSP) in the area of privacy and security, however. Moreover, given the efficacy issues regarding cloud as more public sector entities rely on these services it is important to briefly review the evolution of cloud computing, its economic impact, and its challenges in government and voter privacy.

In addition to scalability and reliability in government and privacy, the need for securing data in the cloud is a paramount concern. For example, the 2.0 phase of social media and the Internet has

created an incredible urgency related to information, collaboration, and creativity; however, the issue of security conflicts and its attendant vulnerabilities remains a barrier. Currently many security experts believe that the cloud model creates an opportunity for illegal activity in relation to hackers, identity theft, and/or creative production. Therefore this leads to a widely held perception that SaaS applications and cloud computing services are less trustworthy than locally controlled networks within an organization.

Drawbacks

The security drawback for cloud computing is the issue of having to share files with a third party. Because it can be accessed from any personal computer with Internet connection, viruses can infect the data files. Another issue is control over saved data if security is not up to standards of IT governance and files lost cannot be retrieved.

Growth and Future Trends

Cloud computing will continue to contribute not only to business innovation in regard to e-commerce but also within the education field in relation to management and the passing and sharing of knowledge. For example, individuals that use Google Docs to send data and receive messages are already performing an aspect of cloud computing. However, security concerns may lead to a move to some type of centralized data control institution whereby a legal authority can engage in identity management.

Reynaldo Anderson
Harris-Stowe University
Kandace Harris
Clark Atlanta University

See Also: Cloud Computing; Cloud Protesting; Electronic Voting; Voter Privacy.

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Cloud Protesting

Social media and mobile technology have changed the way people organize, mobilize, and protest. Organizing has become easier and quicker, and protest tends to be fluid, temporary, and elusive. Organizational patterns have transformed, with individuals and networked collective action becoming prominent at the expense of traditional movement organizations. The narrative of the action is no longer centralized and controlled by social movement organizations, but any activist can contribute by producing, selecting, and diffusing material like tweets, pictures, and videos.

Cloud protesting indicates a type of social organizing for collective action that has individuals (and their needs, identities, and bodies) at its core. Cloud protesting is fostered by social media platforms and mobile devices. The notion was developed by S. Milan as a theoretical concept to illustrate how social media politics change organized collective action. Examples of cloud protesting include the worldwide Occupy Wall Street mobilizations and Anonymous, a digital activism network.

Cloud computing is the delivery over the Internet of customized services such as software. Services are stored "in the cloud," where users can access them on demand. The sharing of products and infrastructure result in cost reductions for the end users. Applying the computing metaphor to collective action, the cloud takes on two meanings. On the one hand, the cloud is an imagined digital space, where participants store, share, and enjoy soft resources crucial to collective action, such as collective identities and narratives. On the other hand, the cloud is a metaphor for a specific way of connecting individuals in an instance

of collective action, which appears to be heavily influenced by the modes of interaction typical of social media.

In times of social media, the cloud, made of blogs, social networking, microblogging, and digital storytelling platforms, is the main place where conversations and exchanges about politically oriented collective action take place. This digital space is to be intended in the guise of a symbolic place between mobile devices and social media platforms, similarly to B. Sterling's definition of cyberspace as the "place between the phones" where a telephone conversation appears to occur. A set of vital ingredients enabling mobilization coexists in the cloud: identities, meanings, slogans, protest practices, and expertise. They emerge and are negotiated both in online and offline settings but are brought to life, exchanged, and stored in the cloud. At the same time, the cloud is a metaphor for social media-specific ways of creating meaningful connections among individuals and speaks to the individualization observed in contemporary collective action.

From the Organization to the Cloud

One can distinguish three main types of groupings that have supported politically motivated collective action in the West from the 1960s onward: the social movement organization (1960s–1990s), the network (1990s–mid-2000s), and the cloud (from mid-2000s onward). In the first phase, identity- or issue-based organizations such as student, church, antiwar, or women's groups provided leadership, managing crucial resources like funding and monopolizing the cultural and normative production of the movement. In the 1990s, informal networks and affinity groups took central stage, also thanks to the horizontal and participatory possibilities offered by the Internet. These informal networks, which coexisted with traditional organizations, embodied multiple and flexible identities and horizontal leadership. The movement's cultural and normative production was no longer monopolized by large-scale organizations, but the different nodes would voice their claims and build their narratives in a number of Web sites and online, self-organized platforms.

The new wave of protest that spread across the world in 2010 and 2011 inaugurated the phase of cloud protesting characterized by networked individuals rather than traditional organizations. The Arab Spring brought thousands of people to the streets in north Africa; the Spanish movement of the Indignados (literally, the outraged) and antiausterity protests like the worldwide Occupy spurred a new wave of mobilization; fluid networks like Anonymous mobilized online. Contrary to earlier mobilizations, activists privileged a way of converging that focused on, and highly valued, individual needs, preferences, and contributions. The private and subjective experience of individuals became central to the collective dimension because participants shared via social media not the actual action but the experience of the action, filtered through their own perspectives.

The prominence of individual over group engagement influences the way activists experience collective identity, that is to say the process through which people give meaning to their experiences and develop emotional attachment to their fellows, according to F. Polletta and J. Jasper. Typically, when the action is the expression of a group of people acting together, the group gives meaning to the individual. In cloud protesting, on the contrary, taking action is the sum of individual, and not group, performances. Rather than a unifying group narrative, the resulting collective identity is the sum of the shared meanings that have survived the exercise of pooling together individual experiences.

Tailoring Participation to Collective Action

Social media and mobile devices influence collective action in four ways. First, social media enables an unprecedented speed in protest organization and diffusion. Second, social media have the ability to broaden participation because rallies and sit-ins unfold on these same platforms as much as they take place in real life—even if one might question the quality and perseverance of such participation. Third, social media influence the tactics adopted by activists in what might be called the politics of visibility. Action becomes functional to its visibility, and in turn, the visibility afforded by social media becomes the measure of the success of a movement's tactics. Fourth, and most important, social media enable the creation of a customizable narrative and a tailored collective identity that virtually fit all. On the one hand,

through social media protesters actively participate in the first person to building a collective identity, and on the other, social media give voice and visibility to personalized yet universal narratives, whereby everyone participates in building the collective plot.

The cloud gives a presence and a multifaceted shape to immaterial resources like identities and narratives in an array of digital objects, such as tweets, links, photographs, and videos, which render those meanings tangible. Rather than being managed and imposed by social movement organizations, resources are in the cloud to be enjoyed by participants in a pick-and-choose fashion. By taking part in the protests and making them visible via microblogging platforms, each participant defines him- or herself, and by extension the mobilization, by means of posts, pictures, and short videos. He or she selects other similar material posted on the Web by fellow coprotesters and passes on (e.g., retweets) what he or she believes is exciting and appropriate to the collective representation of "who we are."

In addition, anyone can easily identify with the network of individuals engaged in the protests as the collective identity is built on minimum common denominators and ephemeral slogans rather than ideological strongholds. The personalized yet universal narratives of the protest emerge thanks to social media originating a hashtag-style collective narrative. Such a narrative is flexible, real time, and crowd controlled. It connects individual stories into a broader context that gives them meaning. In turn, it scores very low in organizational control. In other words, the cloud leaves little room for classical social movement organizations: the loose collective actor identified by the cloud becomes the group, providing a slack sense of belonging and virtually no responsibility over fellow activists.

Like in cloud computing, the cloud reduces the costs of mobilization for collective actors by offering resources that can be accessed via social media and enjoyed independently by individual activists. Not only does cloud protesting represent a new type of social mobilization that has brought individuals and their individualized media to the forefront of dissent, in a fashion that concretizes the notion of the Internet and its contiguous technologies moving beyond their original functionality as communication devices and into an independent "social presence"; it also is an indication of a new awareness for the role of digital technology not just as a tool for networking and organizing, but as the backbone of a movement's' cultural and normative production.

Stefania Milan
Tilburg University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Cloud Computing.

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Cloud Tiger Media

Cloud Tiger Media, Inc., owns and operates Upworthy, a viral aggregator that delivers curated daily picks via Pinterest, Facebook, Twitter, and e-mail newsletters. With the financial backing of Chris Hughes, the cofounder of Facebook, Cloud Tiger Media was founded on March 26, 2012, by Peter Koechley, the former managing editor of the online satirical news site *The Onion*, and Eli Pariser, president of online campaign network MoveOn. Eli Pariser is now Upworthy's chief

executive officer. The aim of the news aggregation site, Upworthy, is to spread progressive content virally through the Internet.

Upworthy describes itself as mission-driven. Curators sift through the clutter of videos, blogs, and pictures available online, and highlight content that will make citizens more aware of larger social issues. According to its mission statement, the company's goal is not to appear unbiased, but rather to bring attention to progressive social issues. It describes itself as pro-gay marriage, and antichild poverty.

Upworthy works with causes to build traffic and to connect them to an audience, in return for a referral fee. While Upworthy's content curators do create some stories, most of their time is spent searching through visual sites such as YouTube. Unlike traditional news outlets, which emphasize timely current events, Upworthy focuses on content that is of high interest to its audience. Upworthy focuses on online content that is visual and sharable. Reposting or sharing Upworthy content allows audience members to shape and define their own public identity. At the same time, reposting and sharing Upworthy content connects new audiences with the organization's progressive content.

Upworthy describes its audience as the "*Daily Show* generation." As such, the curators spend much of their time curating a clickable headline that is humorous, tongue-in-cheek, and sarcastic. When Upworthy's curators find content, they come up with a list of headlines. They then use a platform, SimpleReach, which tracks every social action around Upworthy's content and correlates those actions with site engagement. With the help of SimpleReach, Upworthy can discover which headline is most effective in generating clicks. For example, in October 2012, Upworthy published a map of gay rights around the world with the headline "Hey Look, It's a Map of Inequality!" One of Upworthy's most-viewed videos in 2012 was of a local Wisconsin news anchor defending her weight to an online bully. Another was an ad from an Australian organization defending gay marriage titled "If This Video Makes You Uncomfortable, Then You Make Me Uncomfortable."

Once a user clicks on a headline, he or she is directed to Upworthy.com. The header on the page, "Things that matter. Pass 'em on," reflects Upworthy's progressive mission. It also positions itself as having an informal, friendly relationship with the user. Once users click on the content they wish to view, the site further invites users to identify with the organization's progressive stance. Before users can view any content, they are met with a window that states "I support equality for all. I believe everyone should be treated equally, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation." The user is given the opportunity to either click "I agree" or "I disagree." If the users click "I disagree," they go directly to the content. If the users click "I agree," they are met with another window that again states, "I support equality for all." In addition, this window solicits users to enter their e-mail with "We've got tons of great content that we think you'll love. Check out our daily email, The Upworthiest, and find out!" After submitting an e-mail address, the user clicks a button that states, "I'm in!" At this point the user also can close out of the window to access the content.

At the time of writing, Upworthy does not display advertising. While mission-driven, Upworthy is a business, and as a business it makes money by creating leads and traffic to nonprofits. Upworthy acknowledges in its Web page, "About Us," that it often faces moral decisions about who to work with. While it promises to work only with organizations that are creating positive social change, it also states that Upworthy almost never completely agrees with everything a group does. For example, while Upworthy would support, and agree that a religious group that provides food for low-income people is positive, it may disagree with that group's stance on gay marriage.

As traditional media outlets, such as newspapers and radio, are becoming less effective in raising awareness of public-interest stories, those companies that focus on the distribution of social media, such as Upworthy, are becoming more effective.

One year after its inception, Upworthy became the fastest-growing media company in the world, growing from zero to 10.4 million readers. According to Facebook metrics, Upworthy had approximately 1.2 million followers, and about 65 percent of the U.S. population has a friend who likes Upworthy in the spring of 2013.

Molly Swiger
Baldwin Wallace University

See Also: Aggregation; Change.org; *Daily Show, The*; Facebook; Going Viral; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights; Moveon.org; *Onion, The*; Pinterest; Social Media; Twitter; YouTube.

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CNN Effect

The term *CNN effect* arose after the Cable News Network's (CNN) saturation coverage of several key events during the tail end of the Cold War era—especially the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre and the collapse of communism in Europe—which were followed in the 1990s by similar 24-hour coverage of the Gulf War and crises in Somalia. Whereas traditionally Americans would have had to wait for the evening news or the publication of a daily newspaper the following day, the CNN effect allowed them to remain up-to-date every minute of the day with immediate coverage.

As a result of the real-time reporting, some observers started to believe that decisions related to foreign policy in the United States were being made in response to what CNN was reporting. Historically, the media had always had some influence on decision making in the United States, but what citizens were witnessing appeared to be a different phenomenon. The CNN effect was faster and deeper than what had previously been observed. The American public was seemingly receiving information at the same speed as decision makers in Washington, D.C. While the term was originally inspired by CNN, it has since been applied to many forms of modern media and networks.

Given the prevalence of the CNN effect, it is not surprising that academics have taken to studying the actual impact of its emergence. Steven Livingston wrote the seminal paper on the topic, "Clarifying the CNN Effect." Livingston's central argument is that the media functions in one of three ways: agenda setting, impeding, or accelerating. In the agenda-setting role, the media helps tell people what policies to pay attention to. With impeding, they move toward raising efforts to block a policy moving toward acceptance. And with accelerating, the media helps push an issue through the policy process in an expedited manner. Constant coverage on a particular piece of news may lead to political attention being paid to it, and sometimes forces the matter, requiring politicians to address issues because of the resulting public interest.

Whether this is good for government depends on whether one is a citizen or a politician. For politicians, the CNN effect is troublesome because there is less time for reflection, analysis, and intelligence gathering. While transparency increases, accuracy may in fact decrease in the initial stages. For example, on September 11, 2001, CNN initially reported that a small Cessna plane had accidentally collided with the World Trade Center before more information became available. Decisions must be made much more quickly with the presence of constant news.

If speed truly is the key to determining whether the CNN effect is valid, then recent trends in social media suggest that it is transforming into a more generalized social media effect. While CNN was able to bring the public information quickly in the mid-1990s, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media sites have quickly become the go-to place for immediate news coverage. Recent political events have borne this out. During the raid on Osama bin Laden's hideout in May 2011, an unknowing Pakistani was live-tweeting the American attack based on the noises he was hearing from his apartment. Likewise, if the Arab Spring had occurred in 1995, CNN would have been able to provide timely updates, but it would not have been able to present the quantity of detailed information that individuals experiencing the protests firsthand were able to share. And without those firsthand accounts, some

CNN staffers prepare for a CNN/YouTube Republican presidential debate in November 2007. During the debates, candidates faced some of the thousands of voter questions sent in via YouTube.

could question how responsive outside forces would have been. The actions of countries like China, North Korea, and Pakistan, with their varying degrees of government-enforced censorship of the Internet and social media, shows an acknowledgment of the potential power of social media in enacting change. It was easy to monitor state-controlled media, but with the emergence of social media, it has become more difficult to censor what the world learns about a particular situation.

The most recent example of the new CNN effect occurred with the Boston Marathon bombings in April 2013. While television news networks and traditional media were quick to make information available to the general public, social media sites were exploding with frequent updates, questions, pictures, and video. As would be expected, law enforcement officials at all levels have begun monitoring such sites to attempt to garner any relevant clues regarding cause or motive. While social media did not directly lead to the capture of anyone involved, there was a healthy, public deliberation occurring and ultimately a platform through which Americans could rally around one another in the wake of the attacks.

All of the above is not to say that the CNN effect is a net positive. At a minimum, it is known that the CNN Effect has changed from being merely about alleged claims of media dictating foreign policy decisions in the United States. There is a cost associated when citizen journalists are able to take to a large audience at no cost, and instantaneously. For politicians, strategic planning and the days of collecting all available information prior to being asked to make a statement are gone. If a public official responds by telling a reporter that he or she is still collecting information or is unsure of making any comments at the time, social media will likely explode with claims of incompetence or ineffectiveness. In the age of immediate information, Americans have largely come to expect immediate, accurate answers and that can prove to be as problematic as it is helpful.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Al Jazeera Effect; Amplification; Citizen Journalism; Facebook; Social Media, Definition and Classes of; Twitter.

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Coattail Effect

The coattail effect describes the ability of popular political candidates to attract electoral support for other candidates of the same party. Much of the discussion of coattail effects examines the tendency of presidential candidates to help their party's down-ballot contestants (i.e., congressional candidates) earn electoral victory. For this reason, the

coattail effect is sometimes studied as part of the larger body of research on presidential–congressional voting. Still, the notion of coattail effects is just as applicable to other levels of government.

For instance, a popular gubernatorial candidate may influence the outcome of state legislative races in favor of his or her own party. At any level of government, an exceptionally popular candidate who helps a considerable number of candidates from his or her party achieve election may be said to have very long coattails. For instance, U.S. presidential candidate Ronald Reagan is often credited with helping Republican candidates for Senate unseat 12 incumbent Democrats during the 1980 election season. The ability to generate a strong coattail effect is generally regarded as a political achievement for a presidential candidate, in part because it helps ensure support for a president's legislative agenda. However, the idea of coattail riding may have negative connotations when it implies that a down-ballot candidate did not earn victory on his or her own merits. In addition to being the subject of scholarly inquiry, the concept of electoral coattails is also a topic of discussion among journalists and political analysts in news media.

Identifying the Coattail Effect

The simplest measure for identifying the presence or absence of a coattail effect is to compare the number of votes earned by a presidential candidate to the number of votes earned by his or her party's congressional candidates in the same year. A presidential candidate who earns more votes than the rest of his or her party is said to have helped his or her party by way of the coattail effect, whereas a presidential candidate who earns fewer votes than his or her congressional counterparts is regarded as having failed to cultivate a coattail effect. Importantly, the work of numerous political scientists, most notably Warren E. Miller of the University of Michigan, has produced much more nuanced equations for accurately calculating coattail effects. In fact, it has been proposed that a presidential candidate who substantially outperforms congressional candidates of his or her own party has apparently low pulling power and, therefore, little or no coattail effect. Ultimately, because of the multitude of variables that influence the outcome of presidential and congressional elections, the coattail effect is difficult to identify with scientific precision.

Several factors other than a high-profile candidate's popularity could influence the likelihood of apparent coattail effects. Specifically, party identification, attitudes toward specific presidential candidates, and a host of forces unique to each individual, lower-level election may determine if and when citizens' congressional voting decisions are influenced by their presidential voting decisions. Incumbency is another important variable in the coattail effect phenomenon. Traditionally, the effects of a presidential candidate's endorsement of lower-level candidates have been regarded as an issue altogether separate from coattail effects. So, while coattail effects and endorsement effects are sometimes examined together, true coattail effects do not depend on a party's congressional candidate having been directly endorsed by that party's presidential candidate.

The coattail effect is more likely to occur in years that feature a presidential election. This is because presidential candidates are among the most well-known leaders of political parties and because presidential elections attract more voters to the polls than midterm elections. The physical layout or appearance of a ballot can influence coattail effects as well. In the early days of political parties, coattail effects were particularly common because all of a political party's candidates were listed in a single column—sometimes on a single piece of paper. Thus, it was easy and common for voters to cast a straight-party ticket rather than cast a split-ticket vote. In fact, the coattail effect was once so strong that it was entirely common for U.S. presidents to begin their terms with majorities in both houses of Congress.

The presence of strong third-party candidates for president can also complicate the nature of the coattail effect. In such elections, it is not unusual for a party's down-ballot candidates to receive more votes than that party's presidential candidate. The 1948 U.S. presidential election between Harry Truman (Democratic), Thomas Dewey (Republican), Strom Thurmond (States' Rights Democratic), and Henry Wallace (Progressive) is a prominent example of this occurrence. Regardless of whether a third-party presidential candidate is involved, a presidential election year in which a party's congressional candidates garner more votes than their presidential candidate is sometimes noted for exhibiting a reverse

coattail effect. The notion of a negative coattail effect refers to the tendency of unpopular presidential candidates to negatively influence the electoral fortunes of other members of the same party. For instance, U.S. presidential candidate Barry Goldwater is sometimes said to have been such a weak Republican candidate for president in 1964 that many voters were discouraged from voting for Republican candidates farther down the ballot.

In Singapore, the advent of Group Representation Constituencies has encouraged a form of coattail effects in the election of members of parliament. The system requires candidates to run as part of three- to six-person slates, each of which is required to include a member of a minority community. The most popular candidate on each of these slates is often credited with helping lesser-known candidates on the same slate get elected. New Zealand's mixed-member proportional electoral system, which sometimes encourages major party representatives to endorse members of minor parties, may also increase the likelihood of some form of coattail voting.

Mark J. Glantz
St. Norbert College

See Also: Political Base; Political Parties; Voter Turnout.

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Coburn, Tom

Tom Coburn is currently a Republican U.S. senator from Oklahoma. Before serving in the Senate, he served three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. Coburn is considered one of the staunchest conservatives (both economic and social) in the Senate. He is probably best known for his criticism of government waste and pork barrel spending. He is such a critic of government programs and spending that he is frequently referred to as "Dr. No." Despite his conservative reputation, Coburn has sought to work across party lines on tax and debt issues—most notably as part of the "Gang of Six." His conservative stances on abortion, taxes, and spending reflect the views of the majority of his voting constituents.

Thomas Allen Coburn was born in Casper, Wyoming, in 1948. He attended the University of Oklahoma, where he received his undergraduate degree, and Oklahoma State University, where he received his medical degree. For much of his career, Coburn was a doctor.

In 1994, Coburn was elected to the U.S House of Representatives from Oklahoma. Like many other Republican challengers, he endorsed Newt Gingrich's Contract with America—a series of popular conservative proposals that Gingrich promised to bring to the House floor for a vote if Republicans gained control of the House of Representatives. Once elected to the House, Coburn supported the Contract with America, including a balanced budget amendment, welfare reform, tax cuts, and term limits. However, Coburn soon became disillusioned with Gingrich, feeling that he was selling out conservative principles that he had promised to promote in the Contract with America. Gingrich was too moderate for the conservative Coburn. Coburn was easily re-elected in 1996 and 1998. Coburn declined to run for re-election in 2000, keeping a campaign promise not to run for more than three terms.

In 2004, Coburn was elected to the Senate seat vacated by the retiring U.S. senator from Oklahoma, Don Nickles. In the Senate, he became known for his fierce opposition to government waste and spending—even if it displeased his fellow Republicans. For example, Coburn offended his fellow Republican Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska when he opposed the Bridge to Nowhere. Throughout his Senate career, he sought to ban earmarks as well as make public which senators requested them. On social issues, Coburn opposed abortion in all instances as well as gay marriage. He was easily re-elected in 2010.

Despite his reputation as a conservative, Coburn forged friendships across party lines, most notably with the young freshman senator from Illinois, Barack Obama. The unlikely duo sponsored legislation cracking down on government waste. Despite their vast philosophical differences, the men remain friends to this day.

In recent times, Coburn has worked across party lines with the "Gang of Six" to solve debt and tax issues. For example, in 2011 he worked with the "Gang of Six" to forge a compromise that would lead to Congress raising the debt ceiling (though their compromise was not adopted).

More recently, Coburn signaled that he would support raising some taxes in order to avert the so-called fiscal cliff. This stance ran contrary to his party, which insisted that it would not raise rates (though it would consider closing rates in order to raise revenue). While Coburn primarily wants to cut spending, he considers it unrealistic to rule out raising taxes. Coburn has also disagreed with his party on defense spending. While supporting a strong national defense, Coburn is more willing to cut defense spending—especially in areas where he perceives waste and fraud. According to the publication *National Journal*, Coburn on average votes with Republicans in Congress 85 percent of the time.

Coburn is perceived as a principled conservative and man of integrity. Even his critics grudgingly respect his adherence to principle. However, his reputation as a man of integrity was challenged as a result of the fallout over Nevada Republican Senator John Ensign's extramarital affair. Ensign resigned from office after it was revealed that he sought to keep the affair quiet by offering bribes. An investigation revealed that Coburn knew about Ensign's affair and was aware of negotiations to silence Ensign's mistress's family through bribes. In 2011, the Senate Ethics Committee reprimanded Coburn for his conduct in the matter.

Coburn serves on a number of high profile committees including Finance, Judiciary, and Homeland Security and Government Affairs. Undoubtedly, Coburn will play a major role in negotiations over taxes and the debt for years to come.

Jason Roberts
Quincy College

See Also: Fiscal Cliff Crisis; Grassley, Chuck; McConnell, Mitch; Spending and Debt, Government.

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CODEPINK

CODEPINK is a self-described women's movement for peace. Formed in 2002, CODEPINK focuses on challenging U.S.-led and funded military action across the globe. Its goal is to encourage the reallocation of resources spent for militarism to the funding of humanitarian issues, such as education, health care, and the environment. The organization is of special interest to a study of social media and politics because of its use of digital platforms to develop, organize, and mobilize its membership, leading to widespread recognition of its actions within the political public sphere.

Background

CODEPINK's membership includes a decentralized collection of mostly U.S.-based chapters, with

international chapters in Canada, Germany, and Japan. While the group accepts male members, the membership is primarily composed of women.

The group entered the public sphere on November 17, 2002, when founders Media Benjamin, Jodie Evans, Diane Wilson, and Starhawk began a four-month vigil at the White House in protest of military action in Iraq. With approximately 100 other women, CODEPINK maintained an all-day presence outside the gates of the White House lawn to bring attention to its call for peace.

The name of the organization rearticulates the terrorist color-coded system, developed by the George W. Bush administration in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States. In this system, Code Red signifies the top level of alert for a terrorist crisis. Alternatively, CODEPINK signifies the highest level of alert for a humanitarian crisis. Furthermore, the color pink connects with the traditional gendered identity marker of femininity, thus connecting with the group's identity as a women's movement. The group's discourse is characterized by themes associated with liberal feminism, invoking assumptions about the "innate" nature of women as more caring and nurturing.

The group generated national attention by staging protests such as mock funerals and rallies designed to garner news media attention and by making appearances in high-profile congressional hearings, inaugural ceremonies, and political party conventions. A key element to its success in creating awareness is its use of digital media.

Digital Media

The group's use of digital technology, including a Web site, discussion boards, text messages, and e-mail newsletters, is a vital component to its growth and success, particularly as it relates to its ability to organize and mobilize its constituency. The organization's primary Web site, www.codepinkalert.org, has been the center in its overall strategy for organization, mobilization, and publicity. The site serves as a clearinghouse of resources that local chapters and individuals can use to stage protests, write letters to newspapers or representatives, and take other collective actions.

Moreover, the Web site is an important tool of organizational cohesion because it allows for issue clarification. The About Us section provides a summary of the group's beliefs. The news sections provide access to published news reports that illustrate how these beliefs are incorporated in the broader public sphere. Discussion areas and links to social networking accounts permit a decentralized membership to negotiate these issues in interactive forums.

The Act Locally section of the Web site provides various items to organize and mobilize collective action both online and offline. This section includes online petitions, a calendar of events, and informational resources. Of particular note is the Action Toolkit. Within this section, members find "jumping off points to assist your own creativity in being audacious, informed, and visible for peace." The toolbox allows members to download the PDF file for "How to Organize a Local CODE PINK Chapter," obtain talking

A CODEPINK member takes part in a four-month, all-day vigil in front of the White House, beginning November 7, 2002. The vigil inspired others, from private citizens to nongovernmental organizations, to stand with the group for peace.

points for media protests, and view pointers for staging a protest. For example, "Guidelines for Organizing a Protest" suggests ways for finding a location, getting permits, writing press releases, and sending e-mail alerts. These guidelines encourage protests not just in metropolitan cities, such as New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C., but also in smaller towns and cities. Significantly, the Action Toolkit has strategic implications for generating mainstream offline publicity.

In addition to the Web site, e-mail newsletters serve an important function for coordinating and mobilizing action. End users can sign up for newsletters that provide information and updates about upcoming opportunities for action. All of these newsletters are connected back to the main Web site as well as the various social networking sites used by the organization.

The organization also uses a collection of social media to remain connected to members and other organizations with similar or sympathetic viewpoints. It has a section on its Web site dedicated to Pink Allies. It also contributes guest articles and blog posts on other organization's Web sites, thus expanding the reach of its message beyond a potentially narrow or niche audience.

In addition to these resources that permit a one-to-many or many-to-many communication pattern, CODEPINK has also expertly used one-to-one digital media resources to coordinate their actions. When attending national media events, such as a congressional hearing, CODEPINK members have used text messaging as a way to provide instructions to the group member inside the hearing. For example, CODEPINK member Midge Potts attended the congressional hearings regarding the Valerie Plame Wilson affair and was able to situate herself on the camera screen, wearing a bright pink shirt that read, "Impeach Bush Now." Thanks to text messages from her fellow CODEPINK members watching the live broadcast, she positioned herself in the camera's view despite a full audience.

Implications of Digital Media Use

For activist organizations, CODEPINK's use of digital media has significant practical implications. The group has been able to use these media outlets as a way to create group cohesion, despite a decentralized organizational structure, to offer members a specialized forum for interaction, to coordinate group action, and to obtain publicity in a broader public sphere. From a theoretical standpoint, the group's actions have important implications for the role of digital technology in allowing diverse groups to enter the discourse in the broader public sphere.

Maria Anne Simone
Rowan University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Human Rights; Identity Politics.

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Cognitive Surplus

Cognitive surplus is a concept used to capture the "surplus" or extra productive labor time that people have in the new media age. Proposed by Clay Shirky, the term *cognitive surplus* refers to the amounts of time freed up through digital and online technologies. Shirky argues that people spend this surplus time engaging in a wide range of creative production online.

Using the example of LOL Cats, Shirky explains that most people spend their extra time on the Internet doing benign activities like creating and circulating captioned pictures of cats. He contrasts this to collaborative and crowdsourced projects like Ushahidi that aggregate individuals' contributions to create useful, real-world tools aimed at solving real-world problems.

Comparing these uses of surplus time and labor, Shirky provokes people to consider all that they might accomplish together if they could harness our collective cognitive skills through collaborative online projects. What if, for every time someone created a LOL Cat image, they instead generated data, transcribed a document, or translated a text aimed at utilizing and generating civic virtues?

Shirky's take on cognitive surplus has its critics. One recurring objection relates to how Shirky elevates people's active involvement in online activities (however mundane) above any kind of passive consumption of television (however intellectually rich). His argument that creative online connection always trumps television watching draws criticism from those who see television viewing as a more dynamic and, quite often, social process. His view also raises questions from people who are critical of a "making is connecting" position that fails to account for the many ways in which social media and collaborative online forums are also used for antihumanitarian purposes (such as by neo-Nazi groups).

Contra Shirky, there are also those who disagree with the idea that people should convert their leisure time into free labor time—even if such work is being done for civic projects. This view draws attention to larger questions of waged work under capitalism, emphasizing the ways in which crowdsourcing creativity can reinforce a culture in which private companies profit and people's creative labor remains undervalued and unrewarded in the workforce.

Since Shirky first made his proposal, users and uses of social media have proliferated. While LOL Cats are still common across the web, Internet memes now picture a range of figures from Feminist Ryan Gosling to Willy Wonka, as web users create communities through sharing parody, political critique, statistics and worldviews—in addition to captioned cat photos. At the same time, crowdsourced and collaborative digital platforms have also proliferated, as Internet users co-construct everything from weather and traffic reports to localized aid relief.

The debate over whether or not the masses can be harnessed into more social-justice-oriented projects remains unresolved. But as discussions continue, Shirky's conception of cognitive surplus offers a terminology through which to think about the time produced in, and by, people's digitally connected lives.

Anna Feigenbaum
Bournemouth University

See Also: Crowdsourcing; Public Intellectual; Social Media, Strategies and Tactics.

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Colbert Report, The

As one of the original "reporters" and cowriters on *The Daily Show,* Stephen Colbert developed a persona that parodied ultraconservative television journalists and political pundits. When Jon Stewart joined *The Daily Show,* Colbert's character became a foil for Stewart's liberal perspective. In an attempt to keep Colbert with Comedy Central after Steve Carell, another of *The Daily Show*'s popular reporters, left to pursue films, Colbert received his own show, *The Colbert Report* (with both Ts silent), on October 17, 2005. Airing Monday through Thursday, *The Colbert Report* utilized some of Colbert's more popular segments including "The Word," which parodied Bill O'Reilly's "Talking Points." The similarities include captioning, although Colbert's often mock what the actor is saying. Colbert's show focuses on his conservative, egotistical persona rather than a standard evening news format. It thus becomes a satire of both news and talk show programming. *The Colbert Report* has been nominated for seven Emmy Awards, and Colbert's coined term *truthiness* was named 2006 Word of the Year by Merriam-Webster.

The Colbert Report heavily utilizes social media through the show's Web site, Google+, Facebook, Twitter, and "The Word" app for the iPad. In fact, Colbert was awarded the first-ever Golden Tweet Award for the most retweeted tweet in 2010 for his comment about the Gulf oil spill. Colbert tweeted, "In honor of oil-soaked birds, 'tweets' are now 'gurgles.'" The tweet was retweeted more than 44,000 times. Prior to 2010, however, Colbert learned the power of the Internet in August 2006, when he created a green-screen challenge as a result of a "Better Know a District" segment that featured Colbert wielding a light saber in front of a green screen. Fans, on their own, edited the footage and posted their results online, mostly on YouTube. The popularity of the videos resulted in Colbert issuing the formal challenge to create the best video from the August 10 footage. George Lucas appeared on the show on October 11 to showcase his own entry. Two other green-screen challenges were issued later based on footage from a music video and John McCain.

Not only does Colbert use social media to rally his Colbert Nation, but he also mocks sponsorship and social media campaigns as in his parody of Nissan's Leaf Wave campaign or his "Hail to the Cheese: Stephen Colbert's Nacho Cheese Doritos 2008 Presidential Campaign Coverage." But, as is often the case, Nissan and Doritos benefited from Colbert's teasing as seen in an increase in national media coverage as well as increases in Twitter followers and "likes" on Facebook. Such an increase in popularity after an appearance on the show has been called the "Colbert Bump." Perhaps this is why he was approached by Wheat Thins in February 2012 for a "sponsortunity" (a word coined by the actor to satirize overt sponsorship of newscasts). Colbert read on air from a corporate branding memo he was sent by Wheat Thins, the sponsor of the show, and he devoted the middle third of his February 23 program to making fun of what the memo contained. He ended by placing 17 Wheat Thins in his mouth at one time, which was against the advice of the memo. Sponsors are willing to risk Colbert's insults in order to receive the Bump.

Colbert has attempted (facetiously) to enter into the realm of real-world politics. In 2007, he attempted to be placed on the Democratic presidential ballot in his home state of South Carolina. He held a rally at the National Mall, March to Keep Fear Alive, on October 30, 2010; the same day Jon Stewart held his Rally to Restore Sanity. Both marches had their own Web sites, Facebook pages, and Twitter accounts. Attendance at the event reached more than 200,000, while 4 million streamed the event live over the Internet.

Neither politicians nor the media are safe from Colbert's humor. On September 5, 2012, Colbert introduced the Internet Numbo-Tron 3000, which turns out random integers without providing any supporting information, as a way to mock the media's extensive discussion of Michelle Obama's record tweet numbers. Perhaps most significant in terms of Colbert's use of social media is the star's successful creation of a SuperPac, Americans for a Better Tomorrow, Tomorrow. Colbert's SuperPac has raised more than $1 million through online donations. The influence of the SuperPac can be seen in its receiving a Peabody Award in April 2012 for its parodying of the political money system and the corresponding Supreme Court decision.

Influence of *The Colbert Report* and the Colbert Nation

Colbert's influence on social media, in spite of his "fear" of technology, can also be seen in the many naming "awards" he has won (although many were invalidated) through social media write-in campaigns he encourages on air: a bridge in Hungary, the mascot of the Saginaw Spirit, and a *Time* 100 online poll. NASA was forced to deal with the strength of the Colbert Nation when fans voted to name the new International Space Station module after Colbert. NASA instead named a treadmill C.O.L.B.E.R.T. (Combined Operational Load Bearing External Resistance Treadmill). Sweden, however, has been able to keep Colbert from running its Twitter account (@Sweden), which is controlled by a different Swedish citizen each week. He had wanted to make tweets using the hashtag #artificialswedener. Such mobilization is a demonstration of Colbert's influence over the 18- to 35-year-old demographic.

Colbert has experienced the downside of social media for celebrities. On February 17, 2012, fans took to the Internet in concern when Colbert missed two tapings (after the audience was

already seated). Colbert also stopped updating his Facebook and Twitter feeds. In 24 hours, Colbert became one of the top Google searches. Fans feared that the show had been cancelled, but the reality was that the super-private Colbert, unlike his publicity-seeking TV alter ego, was spending time with his ailing mother out of the spotlight.

Pamela C. O'Brien
Bowie State University

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Advertising and Marketing; *Daily Show, The*.

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ColorofChange.org

ColorofChange.org is a grassroots political action organization founded by California activists James Rucker and Van Jones in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which devastated New Orleans in 2005. The organization's stated goals are threefold: to make government more responsive to the concerns of African Americans, to amplify and strengthen their political voices, and to bring about political and social change. The organization took advantage of a perceived vacuum in black political leadership to take on a variety of issues. It focuses on concerns such as racial disparities in education, the criminal justice system, and in health care, as well as the growing gaps in economic resources, voter intimidation, police brutality, and media accountability.

Sometimes called a black MoveOn.org, Color of Change draws its influences from that digital activist group, which has nearly 7 million members. MoveOn.org was founded in 1998 during the President Bill Clinton sex scandal, when the group circulated a petition to censure the president and move on. The response to that effort helped launch the organization, which has served as a model for the political efforts of similar groups nationally and internationally. Color of Change has been called a civil rights movement for the social media age that seeks to move beyond traditional methods of organizing.

Color of Change is often contrasted with the historic civil rights organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP has about 250,000 dues-paying members, while the Color of Change reports 800,000 mostly middle-class, online members, ages 35 to 55, about half of whom are white. Its members pay no dues but contributed about $250,000 through online donations and tripled its membership during a three-month period in 2007 to pay the legal fees of the defendants in Jena Six, a civil rights case in Louisiana.

In fact, NAACP President Ben Jealous has said organizations like the Color of Change are replacing the black press's historic role in "publicizing injustices and rallying public sentiment." Although Color of Change has been critical of the NAACP for its perceived failure to attract and encourage political advocacy among younger African Americans, the two groups worked together to coordinate efforts in the Jena Six case, in which six black teenage boys were charged with attempted murder in a schoolyard fight with a white boy. A protest of 20,000 people in the small town of Jena, Louisiana, demonstrated the Color of Change's ability to mobilize people around a cause using new technology. And, the grassroots actions put pressure on the governor and the district attorney to subsequently reduce the charges against the teens to a misdemeanor.

The organization has been involved in other events, including raising more than $10,000 in an Internet campaign to help Donna Edwards's best

incumbent Representative Albert Wynn. Color of Change has also been cited in the grassroots effort to force conservative commentator Glenn Beck off the air after its members undertook an e-mail writing campaign to pressure advertisers to drop his television show. Not all of its efforts are successful, however. The organization was not able to influence the outcome in the case of Troy Davis, a black Georgia man executed for a murder that supporters said he did not commit.

Still, Color of Change appears to have tapped into a narrowing of the digital divide as access to cell phones fill the technology gap between haves and have-nots. Significantly, in the past decade, the number of blacks or Latinos who use the Internet has nearly doubled from 11 percent to 21 percent.

The organization has been successful in engaging younger African American voters, a group that is more likely to use mobile technology, according to the Pew Center for the People and the Press. Pew reported that about 36 percent of African Americans used their cell phones to participate in the 2010 midterm elections, by far the largest group of youthful voters as compared to white and Hispanic voters. In addition, the Pew Internet and Family Life Project has found that minority Internet users are more than twice as likely to use social media tools such as Twitter as are white Internet users.

As more African Americans access the digital realm, Color of Change joins a coalition of bloggers, black radio hosts, and activists known as the Afrosphere, a group focused on black political, cultural, and economic self-determination that is not often reported in mainstream media. However, the organization's political strategy is not only online; it uses a multipronged effort that includes nationally coordinated events, ad placements in TV and print outlets, and coordination with affinity groups to magnify its impact. Online efforts include the use of social media, e-mail lists, and phone calls to accumulate data about members, which allows it to better track the interests of members and to target receptive audiences. As a result, the organization has learned what issues will mobilize its constituents.

Ingrid Sturgis
Howard University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaigns, Grassroots; Civil Rights; MoveOn.org.

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Committee to Protect Journalists

With the expressed purpose of protecting freedom of expression and democracy, the New York–based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has championed the cause of journalists worldwide

for more than 30 years through its research and advocacy. According to CPJ's Web site, hundreds of journalists are killed, imprisoned, or harassed each year. CPJ is proactive when journalists are attacked, censored, or otherwise impeded in their work. These efforts include publishing letters to prominent parties stating the group's position on issues impacting freedom of the press; alerts when journalists are adversely impacted as a result of their work; data on journalists killed, imprisoned, or exiled; an annual "Impunity Index" identifying cases where parties guilty of killing or otherwise impeding journalists are not held accountable; a "Journalist Security Guide" to help journalists better protect themselves; and an annual report, "Attacks on the Press," detailing instances of press hindrance worldwide. Its annual International Press Freedom Awards honor brave journalists who do their jobs in spite of the dangers they face.

CPJ works with governments, nongovernmental organizations, and other entities to combat freedom of the press violations, with major campaigns against impunity—CPJ states that an average of more than 30 journalists are killed each year, with the perpetrators usually going unpunished—and against criminal prosecution of journalists in instances of alleged slander and libel. The group actively engages social media—including Facebook, Twitter, and Google+—to empower journalists and others concerned with the protection of the free flow of information. CPJ's social media sites are available regionally, including in Asia, Africa, and the Americas, and are available in several languages.

Formation and Funding

Formed in 1981 by a group of U.S. correspondents concerned about the dangers facing their colleagues in other areas of the world, CPJ launched its first advocacy campaign in 1982 when three British journalists were detained in Argentina while covering the Falklands War. A letter from CPJ Honorary Chairman Walter Cronkite was instrumental to their release.

Funded by foundations, corporations, and individuals, CPJ's staff of 27 currently includes regional specialists; a network of representatives worldwide, including Mexico City, London, Nigeria, Nairobi, Bogota, Brussels, and Bangkok; and an Internet advocacy coordinator based in San Francisco. Its 35-member governing board includes noted journalists from around the world.

Attacks on the Press

According to its flagship publication, "Attacks on the Press," released in February 2013, 70 journalists were killed as a result of doing their jobs in 2012—a 43 percent increase over the year before—and 35 journalists had disappeared. Additionally, the report stated 235 journalists were imprisoned in 2012—53 more than the year before and the highest number since the report was started in 1990. Syria was identified as the deadliest country for journalists, with 28 killed there in 2012, followed by Somalia with 12. And, for the first time, the report also included a "Risk List" of countries where press freedoms are increasingly being threatened. The list includes Syria, Brazil, Somalia, Pakistan, Russia, Turkey, and Ecuador. Syria, Turkey, Ethiopia, Vietnam, and Iran were cited in the report for imprisoning journalists, and a trend of increased cyberattacks on individual journalists and news organizations was also noted. Additionally, the report identified increases in governmental intolerance to dissent, as well as repressive legislation. In its recent press conference at the United Nations announcing its latest "Attacks on the Press" report, CPJ stated that many of the journalists imprisoned or killed in 2012 were "citizen journalists," who are becoming increasingly important to news organizations throughout the world for their first-person reporting. Other major sections of the report include the areas of religion, law, security, censorship, and technology. CPJ plans additional events throughout the world promoting the report.

Recent alerts published on the group's Web site include "Pro-Kurdish Reporter Sentenced to Jail in Turkey"; "Journalist, Family, Attacked with Acid in India"; "In Mali, a Journalist Stabbed for his Critical Reporting"; and "Letter Bomb Sent to Home of Colombian Journalist."

CPJ's monitoring of journalists' security is updated regularly through its Journalist Security Blog, including editors, publishers, writers, producers, photographers, technicians, camera operators, and directors of news organizations in its definition of "journalists." Abductions, attacks, threats, killings, censorings, expulsion,

harassment, imprisonment, vanishings, and legal actions against journalists are monitored. Journalists can contact CPJ for help when covering the news, traveling on assignment, or in an emergency. As well, the organization's Journalist Assistance Program aids journalists in serious situations resulting from their work, such as when they are physically assaulted and need medical care, when they have specific needs while imprisoned, and when they need to go into exile or hiding to escape threats.

The organization recently reported that a record number of journalists were killed in the Iraq War—at least 150, as well as 54 media support workers in Iraq between March 2003 and December 2011. Most of the journalists were murdered in targeted assassinations resulting from their reporting.

In other recent activities, CPJ Executive Director Joel Simon wrote a letter to British Prime Minister David Cameron warning Great Britain against plans for a Royal Charter system of press regulation. As well, the group was instrumental in the approval of new Mexican legislation that will put in place a constitutional amendment giving the federal Mexican government greater jurisdiction in prosecuting crimes against freedom of the press.

In 2012, CPJ honored four journalists who persevered in their work despite dangers: documentary filmmaker Dhondup Wangchen of Tibet, currently imprisoned in China; Ferghana News reporter Azimjon Askarov, currently serving a life sentence in Kyrgyzstan; Mari Konig of Brazil's *Gazeta do Povo*, who was attacked and threatened following his reporting of corruption and human rights violations; and Mae Azango of Liberia, who was forced into hiding as a result of her reporting on female genital mutilation. Additionally, Alan Rusbridger, editor of the *Guardian*, was recognized for his dedication to freedom-of-the press issues. The awards dinner raised $1.6 million in support of CPJ's work.

Chandra D. Clark
Florida State University

See Also: Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; National Freedom of Information Coalition; National Press Club; 100Reporters Whistleblower Alley; Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press; Reporters Without Borders.

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Communication

Communication is used in a broad sense to include formal, informal, verbal, nonverbal, print, individual, collective, face-to-face, and virtual forms. The main objective here is to discuss the impact of communication technologies on the transformation of social and political relations, as well as the impact of social and political relations on the way communication technologies are used. Diffusion of information through various forms of communication may foster political participation, dialogues, civic engagement, and political education. Recent research has documented the growing importance of communication technologies and Internet media as uncensored platforms for sustaining freedom of expression as well as for disseminating their users' political views and activities.

Studies of contemporary political transformation consistently make reference to new patterns of communication among key actors. Communication is viewed as a networking or exchange of ideas between two or more individuals or groups with an aim to achieve better mutual understanding concerning certain issues. With regard to political participation, traditional coffee houses, cultural clubs or societies, and political salons have been effective means of communication allowing individuals to engage in social and political movements. However, communication is not simply the device by which individuals know each other but also a powerful tool through which individuals control each other.

As Manuel Castells argues, the transformation of communication, caused by the explosion in wireless communication in the 1990s as well as by technological convergence between Internet wireless communication and multiple applications in the 2000s, has resulted in the empowerment of communicative capacity worldwide penetrating both public and private spheres of people. Citizens have become increasingly empowered to participate actively in political domains.

The one-way communication of radio, television, and print media provide information to an audience but cannot solicit immediate feedback. In contrast, the two-way communications of the Internet and cybernetwork encourage political engagement and allow for mutual feedback. Cybercommunication or social networking refers to a type of online community that depends on a computer-based simulated circulatory milieu through which the participants or users interact with one another. This type of interaction and immediate social reaction to new phenomena tend to create special kinds of written visual contacts of a global form.

Communication Technologies

Communication technologies and social networks including the Internet, Google, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, e-mail, mobile phone, texting (short messaging service, or SMS), forums, and blogging, to mention a few, are used not only as means to maintain social connectivity but also as mobilizing tools to express social and political demands, such as social justice, freedom, and democracy, among other civil rights. For example, in many countries, the Internet has contributed to a more active, critical, and politicized citizenry, where citizens are no longer passive receivers of state-oriented media. Put differently, politically oriented and mediated communications do not merely express people's political ideologies but also generate, establish, and proliferate their political ideologies in public zones.

The rise of online and cybercommunication has significantly impacted the practices of political leaders as well as the content and fashion of political communication. Politicians seeking to be effective and influential aspire to develop skills in various and multiple domains. The most important skill, however, is the ability to communicate. Communication implies eliminating contradictory elements that might exist between individuals or groups. Successful political actors are those who are able to achieve their goals and resolve political and social problems through dialogue, effective communication, and compromise.

Communication is a process that involves sending messages or symbols in such a way as to help the receiver understand the meaning the sender or communicator intends to make. Good communication might lead to effective persuasion in which communicators try to convince other people to adopt a certain view or change their attitudes or behaviors regarding an issue by the transmission of a message through free choice. For example, electoral competition between more or less united or consolidated political parties is the main framework in which much political communication and persuasion take place. News is designed in order to persuade or tell narratives that are appealing and make sense to audiences, rather than in order to deliver the most comprehensive information possible.

Communication technologies play critical roles in the presidential, parliament, or party election processes through both offline and online political campaigning. A well-known example of using smart communication for political purposes is Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign. By using interactive Web 2.0 tools and social networking technologies, Obama's presidential election campaign changed the strategies by which politicians recruit volunteers, defend against critical attacks, and communicate with supporters. The campaign manipulated YouTube for free advertising. Because of their friendly and uninterrupted features, YouTube videos were more effective in the campaign than television ads.

The manipulation of the Internet in organizing Obama's supporters did not only save time and money but also helped people repeatedly and enthusiastically listen to his speeches. In addition to text messages, Obama supporters used a social networking site, created with the help of a Facebook cofounder, through which they were able to log in and find lists of people they could call. Such a communicative strategy shows a strong tendency toward more personalized and professionalized styles of campaigning.

Online, grassroots cybercirculation is characterized by nonhierarchical communication that draws on the various interactive applications of electronic communication. One of these applications is blogging. A blog, typically created by a single or anonymous person, is a personal Web site that contains news or information in the form of diary. Bloggers manage political communications in a more autonomous way. This means that a blog allows the user substantial freedom to partake in political activities criticizing oppressive regimes and calling for social reform or revolution. Recent uprisings have demonstrated that activists in different countries shared their experiences through e-communication including blogs. For instance, Arab and Muslim blogs have become crucial aspects of global or transnational communication due to the accessibility and sociable connectivity through which individuals or users can form a resisting force against the dominant power of the ruling elite.

Electronic communications and social media actively contribute to creating their own social role as privileged channels of democratic politics. In other words, the role of cyber- and mediated communication is crucial in facilitating democratic transition. This is clearly shown in the impact of new communication technologies on political movements and democratic transitions in the Middle East.

Communication and the Arab Spring

In traditional societies such as Arab or Middle East countries, there is an acute juxtaposition of various forms of communication including, for example, the local and global, indigenous and imported, traditional and modern, oral and written, and idealistic and pragmatic. However, there has been a recent preference for applying new communication technologies. Such new communication technologies and social networks have been effective tools in the unprecedented phenomenon of the Arab Spring bringing down authoritarian regimes and political dictators in several Arab countries including, for example, Egypt and Tunisia. The Arab Spring shows how online and offline communication played central roles not only in mobilizing people to engage in political revolts but also in shaping political movements. Also, during the Arab Spring, people in other countries collaborated with Egyptian and Tunisian protesters through online communication tools to produce and share information about the revolutionary movements.

In the Middle East, both males and females of younger generations, constituting more than 65 percent of the overall population in the region, are active users of communication technologies. Young people between 15 and 29 years old make up around 70 percent of Facebook users in the Arab region. The Arab young generations have expressed pride in their ability to combine both local culture and modern, global ways of life. They use both Arabic and English in their offline and online communication. They also tend to participate in risky activities and uprisings more than the older generation. Change has become the key word used by the young generation with reference to changing old-fashioned and corrupt political systems.

According to *Arab Social Media Report,* coauthored by Fadi Salim and colleagues, the percentage of female users is lower than male users. Globally, the gender breakdown of social media usage, represented in Facebook for example, reflects real-world demographics, with the number of male and female Facebook users being roughly equal. This trend, however, is not applicable to the Arab region, where only a third of Facebook users are women. However, the number of female users is steadily increasing; it reached 33.5 percent in 2011 compared to 32 percent in 2010. Through utilizing cybercommunication and social networks, women have become active participants in new forms of leadership. However, this statement does not negate the fact that Arab women are not merely cyberactivists but also active participants on the ground, partaking in and organizing political rallies and protests.

During the January 25 Egyptian revolution, a female activist in Cairo stated that political activists used Facebook to schedule the protests, Twitter to coordinate the activities, and YouTube to disseminate the news worldwide. The participation of Arab women in the social and political transformations taking place across the Middle East has played an instrumental role in challenging stereotypes about Middle Eastern women as oppressed and submissive. Women have played leading roles comparable to men in organizing and participating in political and social movements in Egypt, Tunisia,

and Yemen. They have participated in transforming the political landscapes in their countries.

Merlyna Lim argues that mediated communication or social media have been an integral part of political activism of Egyptians for years, with 54 out of 70 recorded street protests from 2004 to 2011 substantially involving online activism. Social movements, especially protests, can also be understood as networks of people brought together by a common goal or interest. Social movements as social networks can also be comprehended in terms of an initial core made of densely known groups with stronger ties that mobilize weakly linked individuals, thus transforming messages of discontent into a mass movement.

Communication technologies such as mobile phones and the Internet facilitate the cooperation of the users and free them from the government's exploitative and misleading media. During the corrupt and repressive regime of Hosni Mubarak, in which emergency (martial) law was applied and street protests were considered illegal, therefore to be crushed by police brutality, cybercommunication and blogs flourished and increased as alternative means for opposing the Egyptian regime. Similarly, in Tunisia, forms of social media, including blogs, commented on the corrupt and illegal practices of Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali's family and government.

In Egypt, the government or state-run online network, a top-down communication, was used by the Mubarak regime for providing people with false information about economic and political conditions. Egyptian political activists, including members of the Muslim Brotherhood, have used various forms of communication including the Internet, forums, and blogs to express their political views challenging government media during Mubarak's oppressive regime. The Internet has facilitated change in the balance of power and levels of freedom among actors because it is more resistant to state control and censorship than most traditional forms of mass media. Younger bloggers, some of whom are sons and daughters of imprisoned political activists, including the Muslim Brotherhood, were active in resisting the oppressive regime through electronic communication and the Internet. During the January 25, 2011, revolution, when Mubarak's government

Crowds of young people turn out for a demonstration calling for political change in Morocco on June 9, 2011. During the Arab Spring, protesters from other Arabic countries were able to communicate with Egyptian and Tunisian protesters through online social media and other communication tools to collaborate and share information about the revolutionary demonstrations.

temporarily shut down the Internet, the reaction of the protesters intensified in such a way that they attracted regional and global attention, thus garnering support for their plea for increasingly democratic rule.

el-Sayed el-Aswad
United Arab Emirates University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Cyber-Jihad; News Media; Social Worlds.

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Conflict Resolution, Social Media and

According to Richard Kahn and Douglas Kellner, the global Internet has created "the base and basis for an unparalleled worldwide anti-war/pro-peace and social justice movement during a time of terrorism, war, and intense political struggle." Internet activism has become a tool of outparties in conflict, groups of people or sectors of society who are feeling marginalized, disempowered, or treated unjustly. More than being a tool for organizing people with like-minded social sensibilities, ultimately, these new technologies have become new ways of declaring and registering conflict with in-groups or ideas, be they autocratic regimes, despotic rulers, or unpopular governmental policies. In some ways, as Joss Hands indirectly reminds readers, dissent, resistance, and rebellion in a digital culture is simply a new technological manifestation of activism against a prevailing authority's domination and exploitation.

Social media therefore becomes revolutionary as simply a new variation of "the scream" against oppression, as defined by John Holloway. The scream is two-dimensional: It is a scream of rage; more important, it carries within it "a projection of possible otherness," therefore the hope of change. Leah Lievrouw echoes this sentiment by implying that the roots of alternative and activist new media lie also in the fact that they are decrying the present and insisting on the creation of a different future.

As mechanisms of protest and insurgency, social media can therefore potentially play a role in far-reaching social and political reforms and, therefore, have become part of the way in which social and political conflicts are ultimately managed, resolved, or transformed due to the structural social and political changes. There is, however, still very little agreement about exactly under which circumstances the Internet and its ever-growing range of concomitant technological tools become agents of change in social conflict, although some degree of empirical testing is beginning to explore theory in this area.

A recent study by the U.S. Institute of Peace, subtitled "New Media and Contentious Politics," concluded that, while new media such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube have played major roles in episodes of contentious politics as activist tools in replacing authoritarian regimes and in promoting freedom and democracy, "policy makers and scholars know very little about whether and how new media effect contentious politics."

There is, however, some agreement that alternative and activist new media are inexpensive and powerful tools for challenging mainstream or popular culture, let alone political elites. Note, for example, this all-encompassing perspective by Leah Lievrouw:

> Web sites, mobile phones, digital photography, video and audio, blogs, wikis, file sharing systems, social media and open source software all permit social groups with diverse interests to build and sustain communities, gain visibility and voice, present alternative and marginal views, produce and share their own do-it-yourself (DIY) information sources, and resist, talk back, or otherwise confront dominant media culture, politics and power.

These objectives are mainly achieved in how new media technologies assist people in assessing information and each other.

Leah Lievrouw concludes that "mobilization is a core concept across social movement theories" and that new media share this in the way that "people convert their collective concerns into collective action to bring about change." Moreover, she cautions, in the words of Lauren Langman, that "these new kinds of Internet-based social movements, cyberactivism are fundamentally new and require new kinds of theorization," and notes, moreover, that various scholars caution that "even the most tech-savvy contemporary movements do not rely solely on the Internet and new digital technologies, but use a mix of mass media and new media systems and techniques to communicate with their participants and with the wider public."

The power of social media appears to lie in the extent to which they play roles in out-group formation, albeit electronically or in person at designated places of protest (such as Tahrir Square in Egypt during the so-called Arab Awakening), and also to the degree that these forms of oppositional communication empower out-groups to use their newly found voices to interact with powerful in groups in insisting on social and systemic change. To invoke a simple Hegelian model of conflict analysis, in confronting the political structures of their day, social media actors put forward a new antithesis to the thesis or prevailing power of the day.

In many ways, there is nothing new to this structural representation of social conflict; what is different here is the way that the conflict is enjoined, or made active, in that social media allows for a more economical and faster form of conflict declaration and, therefore, an escalated form of out-party activism (meaning those who want a change in the status quo).

New communication tools simply speed up the disseminating process of protest by creating, distributing, receiving, and consuming content in ways that have not been technologically possible before. The utility and impact of these technological innovations as novel and very hard-to-control antithetical forces that recruit and enlist others randomly became more fully realized during the various Arab protests since December 2010. However, the basic and universal conflict dialectic is still at work here. James Laue and Gerald Cormick frame conflict commonly as a social phenomenon that arises "when existing power arrangements are seen as non-legitimate and resource allocation as inadequate." Moreover, that

> . . . crisis occurs when the holders of power (in-parties) being challenged by subordinate groups (out-parties) define the situation as serious enough to take new and unusual action to avoid or minimize what they perceive to be severe costs.

One could therefore argue that the social media and resultant in-person protests were in pursuit of basic human needs that James Laue and Gerald Cormick define as freedom, justice, and empowerment or self-determination. In a number of cases during the Arab revolts, notably in Tunisia and Egypt, the social and political public spheres in those countries were transformed. In that sense, social media actors, however indirectly, became initiators of an indirect negotiation process in an attempt to ultimately resolve or transform the prevailing political system.

In the process, social media activism became the most successful example to date of the potential, and one could argue far from fully realized potential, of the interventionist nature of these new information technologies. This claim can be made in spite of the inability of cyberactivists to

fully translate their online and in some cases resultant in-person protests into recognizably changed or new political systems, with Egypt as the most notable case in point. In spite of the fact that the Hosni Mubarak regime came to an end because of the crisis that occurred during the Arab revolt in which social media played a transformative role, these same activists recently took to the streets again two years after these events because of their disillusionment over the seemingly autocratic tendency of the newly instated President Mohamed Morsi and the political struggles for power that are still occurring in that country. At best, the social media awakening in Egypt has thus far contributed to a rethinking or internal restructuring of how the country is managed without necessarily leading to transformative political change that will satisfy these activists.

In spite of formulating new agendas and the discussion of once-forbidden topics, social media's usage is not necessarily effective and, some would argue, simply ineffective in creating or leading directly to new social and political systems. This apparent inability to directly impact the resolution and transformation of social and political change lies at least in part in the fact that social media activism is not as a rule represented by organized and leader-driven entities. While creating a dialectic for discussion or pressure for change, social media essentially represents a leaderless out-group phenomenon, and often only represents a relatively youthful, educated, and economically sound part of the society. There is, however, some preliminary support for the idea that the social media may be useful as a platform for affective and/or artistic expressions of political attitude. Experiments in using social media to create virtual versions of political satire, theater, and poetry suggest that, in some cases, they may be a valuable vehicle for archiving public sentiment collected through creative ethnographic methods.

Without ultimately being able to lay claim to having contributed to system change and to rectifying social injustices, social media activism can be written off as mostly having nuisance value for oppressive regimes, but will ultimately be controlled by censorship and by legal and security devices to minimize the role these technologies can play in fomenting the need for structural change addressing the deep-rooted sources of conflict that exist in many societies. However, the social media revolution is a part of much larger technological and societal changes in a brave, new, digital world. In that sense, the social media revolution is not utopian and will most probably only revert back to more social and less activist roles in societies where the necessary structural changes have occurred. Barring that, social media activism will become a standard part of social life and out-group formation.

Johannes Botes
University of Baltimore

See Also: Arab Spring; Egypt; Tunisia.

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Constituencies, Social Media Influence on

A constituency describes those individuals represented by an individual chosen or appointed to act on their behalf. Constituencies can be various in type, kind, and composition. For example, the director of a food program in a city serves a specific constituency within a set border. Its enabling statute or initial legislation parameters for operation are included as well as its base of operation, target constituency, and enforcement powers. The director of the food program is either appointed or chosen within a merit system by application and interview. Once selection occurs, the director becomes acquainted with the powers inherent in the position and a job description listing the major tasks and duties.

Traditionally, representatives are identified from a constituency and determined to be the best fit for representing that constituency through some form of vote or application process. Of course, with social media, how one defines and describes the concept of a constituent is a moving target. What could once be counted on as solid support around one or more ideas, social media has redefined to be the first step in the proving ground toward operationalization.

Serving Constituencies

Depending on where one is, constituencies can be limited by law to a certain group that is allowed to participate in government, or constituencies can be pools of individuals with equal access to government. Thus, the definition of constituencies can be region-specific and state- or country-specific. A user can visit a blog or discussion forum on a Web site that is housed in another country, express views, link Web sites and video, and then be told by citizens in that country that what happens in "our" country is none of the user's business. Social media groups then can limit the constituency themselves, be it international constituencies or even city or state constituencies. In the past few years, there has seemingly been a global push in some areas by individuals in those areas to become more inclusive in the governing process. In early 2011, in Egypt and Tunisia, social media provided daily updates on the progress of individuals calling for a new constitution, greater access to government, and better representation as well the desire for individual freedoms.

Current ways to serve constituents vary from state to state and from country to country. One of the most common ways being used to provide constituency service is through communication options available on Web sites. A majority of agencies, departments, and politicians use Web sites to solicit ideas and feedback from their constituents. Constituency services used to be conducted face to face and through mail, conventions, town hall visits, and the like. Social media has changed the nature and description of constituency service due to the fact that posts and updates to social media sites may require immediate responses or immediate posts that encourage followers to ask for responses or clarifications.

Social Media and Reform

Social media has built a virtual society along the lines of inclusiveness, expansion, immediacy, and a lack of concrete institutions. In doing so, it has reconditioned the constituent and the services it requires. Prior services that have gone unquestioned and accepted now see demands from constituencies for immediate reform often through the means of social media. Ombudsman services or constituency services have become redesigned to capture the needs of those using social media, especially when those individuals are able to tell their friends and followers that their questions have gone unanswered. Neglecting a constituent who uses social media multiplies the chances for negative feedback from other constituents who may be supporters of the politician or representative. It also intensifies the response from other people regarding the neglect. Furthermore, the archive function inherent in the Internet can be a reminder of each instance that a representative was inactive and unavailable.

The costs to use social media for updates, posts, blogs, discussion forums, and the like are relatively inexpensive. This differs from the high costs of mail, travel, personal appearances, and speechwriters in order to reach the constituency in the system in place and practiced prior to the Information Age. The ease of devices and the availability of affordable equipment and desktop and mobile applications smoothly deliver services

to constituents in a few hours what it used to take a small army to do in weeks. Politicians as well as constituents have expressed a need for money-saving efforts to produce results. For individuals seeking it, Internet connection, iPhones, Androids, as well as other mobile devices are accessible through the purchase of particular equipment and usually a monthly fee. Social media operates on the virtual structures built into these devices and is enhanced by mobile applications. Constituents own this equipment and use the virtual structures for a number of things. The politician or representative does not have to create or invent these structures or this equipment. What he or she needs to do is get involved in the virtual groups that already exist or within the existing structures create groups of their own. Users of social media are alerted to the creation of a group formed by a politician or representative in a number of ways, and they can decide to join that group. Some who join may be constituents, some are not constituents, and others are just interested and may be from anywhere on the globe.

Increased Visibility

Adult usage and registration on social media sites has increased tremendously, with one in eight people being on Facebook in the current environment and with more than 30 percent of adults on some type of social media overall. If one tried to contact someone in Tahrir Square in Egypt during the 2011 uprising, or someone in Occupy Wall Street in New York or Occupy L.A. (Los Angeles) during those tent city occupations, surely social media would have been the most efficient source. A new constituency was created during those protests, and the world took note. If politicians showed up during the protests, their appearances and words were tweeted in real time to the world. If they held up any signs, shook hands with someone, or sat in on a teach-in, the photos of these exchanges were texted, tweeted, and uploaded to numerous Facebook and YouTube accounts.

Appearances like these have changed the relationship of representatives to their constituencies. In the case of Tahrir Square and the protests against then President Hosni Mubarak, the lack of appearances by politicians was viewed as a negative, and accusations went out that any politician not with the citizens in Tahrir Square had to be against the citizens. During the tent city occupation of cities in the U.S. Occupy Movement, politicians visited a host of cities, including New York, Atlanta, and Los Angeles, often tweeting messages to constituents while there. Although no specific legislation was passed as a result of the Occupy Movement, portions of the issues the occupiers requested were passed in separate forms in several pieces of legislation. There is no doubt that the attention given to the events in Tahrir Square, Occupy Wall Street, and occupy events around the world called attention to income inequality, social inequality, and education loan and mortgage debt.

The new constituency through social media has forced the redesign of bureaucratic structures. Social media by its inherent foundation calls for the destruction of generally accepted bureaucratic structures. Traditional structures were rigid and hierarchical and operated through chains of command. The chain of command was how things got done, how communication was transferred, and how rewards were given. Social media allows anyone with a fast thumb to become the most important person in the group and thereby the one to follow. In the protests of Tahrir Square as well as in the Occupy Movement it was not uncommon to hear that social media leaders one came to recognize were first-time leaders due in large part to their Twitter or Facebook followings. From these cases, the new constituency can be seen as a subset of a subset of a constituency.

The original constituency expanded to a larger constituency because of the growth of social media. Social media generates group after group after group because of the invitation to friend as well as the dissemination of photos and videos that are being constantly uploaded and updated. It is this expanse of support and linking of constituents to other indirect constituents that has authors of social media asserting that constituency services can no longer be defined or performed as they have in the past. The political element that used to run through an issue causing a representative to do something about it is no longer completely definable. Social media keeps defining it with every new friend and every new group. Thus, constituency services have become harder to accomplish as the services that were once essential and expected are redesigned

in real time due to the contributions of others in other groups.

Social media creates overlapping issues and overlapping constituents. What that means is that, if a powerful group of constituents leans one way on an issue but through social media is outnumbered or absorbed by another group of constituents, then issues and constituencies can be lost or eliminated. What social media has not been able to do as yet is to distinguish between the overlapping issues and constituency issues. Online petitions do not provide a mechanism for distinguishing a particular constituency, and therefore, the issue being promoted or debated is represented by a mesh of voices. Where once these voices were housed in a single choir or constituency, social media allows all voice types and levels to make music together. It is often up to the politician to find the soprano, tenor, and bass voices that are indeed his or her choir of constituents and try to provide services to them to their satisfaction. The old norms and traditions of constituency services will not hold the attention of today's constituents as long as it used to and should be considered for revision.

Needs for the Future

In order for some level of effective constituency services to be achieved, politicians will need to use social media to recruit individuals who can lend their expertise to the social media aspect of constituency services. Other elements are always being added to social media options. A user knows the new options and their uses. Some even help design new uses from the interaction they encounter between other users of social media. Politicians hoping to deliver previous levels of constituency services will need to employ individuals to adopt and adapt to constituent demands. Once the Internet looked like a tool that would be more of a research professional instrument with few envisioning the use expected today. Social media, like the Internet, is here to stay. It has taken on a life of its own, although it is not yet truly out of diapers. Just when constituents had gotten used to e-mail and text messages, Facebook, Twitter, Rich Site Summary, sometimes called Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds, Flickr, and other social media options were born and instantly used while forming new and expanded constituencies.

Constituency services are not the only area of constituency that is impacted by social media. The operationalization and implementation of policy is also impacted. Depending on the level of social media, the degree of policy creation and implementation can fluctuate. While social media instantly captures the rural citizens' views and opinions on policy, these views may still be just that—views. While social media can crown new kings and queens of opinion, it can also highlight the disconnection of the constituent from policy. Social media does not make one instantly brilliant if that person does not know where to look for information. Thus, social media can continue to disseminate erroneous information and ideas and, if influential enough, can be translated into policy. Erroneous policy in implementation is enraging due to the practice of the legislation that, at some level, fails to meet the needs of a constituency. The constituency cannot be reached or satisfied because, in this case, too much reliance on social media created a theoretical nightmare in the form of a new but inappropriate law. The submission by the politician to the severity of social media and the perpetual nature of friending, posting, and updating creates a confusion of who the politician really works for and who the politician really represents. Social pressure is not absent in social media, and while the virtual aspect of social media is romantic and lofty, that is not to assume that the motives of users are as well.

Social media aids in the goal of citizen participation. It aids the representative in knowing within seconds the immediate opinions of constituents. In this way, citizens reduce the distraction that status has on disconnecting citizens from policy creation. Rich or poor can view Webinars, and rich or poor can tweet their opinions about policy. Automation produces a level of equality, and social media harnesses those automation gains in one place to be used for virtual social gathering. This is not to say that self-interest does not enter into the debate, into the tweet, or into the Facebook post. This happens all of the time no matter the venue used. What social media does is allow individuals in relative anonymity to voice their disapproval and state the disadvantages self-interest has on the issue. Not surprisingly, constituents of representatives have voiced their disapproval at instances of self-interest that

their representatives have introduced, including meaningless photo ops updated for no real reason besides self-interest. Politicians can assess the limits of their self-interests in the arena of social media and get the quickest response from their constituents than previously waiting for letters or e-mails expressing disapproval.

When social media assists in highlighting popular and unpopular policy, the concept of effectiveness becomes harder to achieve and define. What social media allows for in the grouping of people around an idea, it disallows in common measures of effectiveness, making reporting difficult and challenging, to say the least. With an expanded constituency, the politician cannot rely on the usual measurements. With an expanded constituency, one can only guess if support for a particular policy under certain conditions will be perceived as a failure by the members of the expanded constituency.

Webinars that tout the good things the politician or representative has accomplished is one way. Moreover, the real constituents that are mixed in with the expanded constituency also use different measures to determine a politician's effectiveness due to their exposure to social media. Social media will assist in regulating the effectiveness of a policy or the services a politician provides by presenting the results to the group and feedback on those results regarding what could have been done better in order to increase the output for the constituency group. In this case, social media serves as a constant check on policy from policy creation to policy implementation. A representative faces the added pressure of external voices making noise in social media sites about policy implementation errors they heard about on Facebook or Twitter. While this external group is not affected by the errors within their own lives beyond hearing about it on social media sites, they still wield great influence and, many times, are able to manipulate representatives and politicians that they neither know nor vote for. It is often unfair that these representatives have to adjust to constituencies they do not represent and may not be able to see.

Another way that representatives and politicians use social media is through fund-raising. An advertisement on a social media site like YouTube can run through the life of a campaign and generate funds from constituents as well as well-wishers and supporters. In the past few years, a YouTube search for, say, "Redemption Song" by Bob Marley may very well be preceded by a video ad for a congressional or presidential candidate. These ads come armed with easy ways to send donations for the candidate by PayPal or credit card on a protected (https) Web site.

The cost of the campaign ad or video may be significant, but what it can do that other ads may not be able to do is basically cover most areas or Web sites people visit regularly, thus giving it greater visibility. Campaign signs in yards and on highways have diminished over the years and are mostly seen in high-traffic areas where constituents may drive or at televised conventions that constituents may watch. Where else may a constituent receive information? The Internet, of course—not just any area on the Internet but those areas like YouTube, Wikipedia, Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn—in other words, in virtual high-traffic areas. Placing ads in these areas will get noticed and may even be commented on by a spontaneous group in one of the social media sites discussing and examining the language, target audience, or color scheme.

Conclusion

For some time to come, social media will struggle to present a common core of characteristics from specific groups for effective narratives. In this case, redefinition and redesign will work in harmony with developments in social media. Hopefully, constituencies will move in tandem as well, and representatives will figure out how to effectively reach them. A representative using social media to communicate using cost-effective means continues the economic goals of revenue reallocation. Social media does not limit this practice, and in the future, the structures now being developed will deliver even more cost-effective methods and approaches for constituency services. Representatives should not feel threatened by the changes coming as fast as the speed of light as they relate to social media but should notice how social media is yet another opportunity to lessen the gap between people and institutions. The former mode of communication and service delivery is unsustainable in the current environment. Social media has moved policy creation and

policy implementation into the living rooms of every local and international constituency.

Lisa Saye
Independent Scholar

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Digital; Evolution of Social Media; Networks, Political; Voter Demographics.

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Content Communities

One of the driving forces behind the acceptance and rise of social media are content communities. These are sites that allow users to upload and share various kinds of media. Content communities exist for various reasons; some are cooperatives for developing open source software, others are used to display and distribute original art, and still others are just to share interesting links and Web sites. Of course, the use of these content communities often goes beyond just sharing and takes on political dimensions. According to Alexa.com, two of the 10 most-visited sites in the world are content communities: YouTube and Wikipedia.

Content community sites are typically populated by user-generated content. Users are generally required to set up accounts and thereafter can begin uploading and sharing their own content. These communities house a wide variety of content, including software, videos, visual art, and of course, textual documents. The goals of content communities are quite varied. Some communities, like YouTube and Pinterest, were created to share original content of a wide nature. Other communities have a more defined purpose, as in the case of Wikipedia, which is an open source encyclopedia consisting of entries written and edited by users.

As in any network, the larger a network, the more benefits there are to all members. This understanding drives many participants to remain responsible and active participants in their chosen content communities. There are various reasons why people participate in content communities, even ones like Wikipedia where there is no recognition for individual contributors. Some of the reasons for participation include creative expression, connecting with people with similar interests, and sharing personal opinions.

Both individuals and organizations have been quick to grasp the potential for political impact through these content communities. Individuals use these communities to express and aggregate political opinions. Politicians and political parties also strive to create and maintain a presence on some of the most popular sites such as YouTube, Tumblr, and Pinterest. Nonprofits and activist groups also have been quick to tap into the power of these communities, especially as they offer low-cost avenues to reach large numbers of people.

Perhaps the most well-known and influential of all content communities is the site YouTube. In the sense that a picture is worth 1,000 words, YouTube often has been the source of groundbreaking videos. The popularity of the Web site lies not only in the great number of users but also in its innovative interface and ease of use. YouTube was one of the first Web sites to allow video content to be uploaded by users. More compelling was the fact that it offered an intuitive interface that anybody could use to convert and upload videos from a wide variety of sources. Nowadays, individuals can upload videos to YouTube directly from smartphones. In addition, there has been little or no censorship, although YouTube does have a set of basic guidelines, including a statement of what it considers to be unacceptable content. These features have allowed YouTube to outlast its competitors as well as become a force in global politics. The main ways people use this site are to (1) upload videos of events that are not being covered by media; (2) provide footage from

areas where the international press does not have access; and (3) act as a platform for politicians to air their views.

Other sites such as Tumblr and Pinterest are increasingly being used by citizens, politicians, and advocacy groups to voice their opinions and share messages. Both sites were extensively used by both the Republican and Democratic Party candidates in the 2012 elections.

In addition to providing public platforms for political ideas and opinions, another function that content communities are playing is that they are allowing audiences to bypass the agenda setting and framing functions of the mass media. Instead of relying on the mass media for an understanding of what is important news, audiences can now turn to Web sites such as Digg and StumbleUpon to collaborate with other users to define what is the most important and significant news for themselves.

Saman Talib
Humber College

See Also: Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Delicious.com; International Online Communities; Reddit; StumbleUpon; Tumblr; YouTube.

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Contractfrom America.org

ContractfromAmerica.org is a Web site devoted to promoting conservative, small-government ideals associated with the popular Tea Party movement. Ryan Heckler, a Tea Party activist from Houston, conceptualized the idea for the Web site, which served to collect the beliefs of Tea Party activists in order to create a document cataloging their most important principles. The Web site emphasizes the grassroots nature of the Tea Party movement because it solicited ideas from anyone who visited the site and then put them up for a vote to narrow down what these activists believe to be their most important values. The interactive nature of this Web site highlights the importance of social media as a democratic tool with the ability to bring together regular people from across the nation to express their specific beliefs to one another. However, critics of the Tea Party movement question the supposedly democratic nature of endeavors like the Contract from America Web site. They argue that, rather than being built from the bottom up, Tea Party activities are actually being directed by large, self-interested organizations.

The Contract From America Web site was introduced on September 1, 2009. Between this date and January 2010, the Web site reports that "hundreds of thousands of freedom-loving Americans" submitted their ideas for consideration. Then, "grassroots leaders across the nation" completed surveys that narrowed these ideas down to the 22 most important. Finally, individual Web site visitors further narrowed down these 22 ideas to 10 by voting. On April 15, 2010, as Tax Day Tea Party events were being held across the nation, the contract was revealed. In its final form, the contract highlighted three overarching principles: individual liberty, limited government, and economic freedom. Then, it listed the 10 voter-determined principles: protect

the Constitution; reject cap and trade; demand a balanced budget; enact fundamental tax reform; restore fiscal responsibility and constitutionally limited government in Washington; end runaway government spending; defund, repeal, and replace government-run health care; pass an all-of-the-above energy policy; stop the pork; and stop the tax hikes. Three hundred candidates and elected officials signed the document in order to show their support for these principles. Sixty-seven of the signers who were candidates in the 2010 midterm elections went on to win their elections, including Jim DeMint, Marco Rubio, Michele Bachmann, and Rand Paul.

While this Web site claims to have provided a grassroots experience, not all agree that this is the case. For instance, although the Web site claims to be a bottom-up call for ideas from nonpolitical conservatives, the Web site also advertises sponsorship from large organizations like FreedomWorks, Newt Gingrich's American Solutions for Winning the Future, and a Libertarian think tank named The Heartland Institute. Such organizations have been accused of astroturfing the Tea Party movement. In other words, critics of Web sites like ContractfromAmerica.org accuse these organizations of using their funds to manufacture the false appearance of the Tea Party as a grassroots movement that organically developed from people who wanted to work outside of the system. For instance, although the Web site visitors contributed their own ideas, Dick Armey, the chairman of FreedomWorks during the contract's development, also had a heavy hand in drafting the results. The Web site also explicitly thanks many of these organizations and describes them as invaluable to the process of creating the contract.

ContractfromAmerica.org was key in establishing concrete objectives for the Tea Party movement. If one wanted to run as a Tea Party-backed candidate in 2010, he or she established his or her loyalty to the movement by signing the contract associated with the Web site. The Web site continues to urge donations to support conservative candidates by allowing one to give money directly on ContractfromAmerica.org. The site keeps visitors updated on current issues of concern by publishing blog posts on its main page and also encourages them to stay connected to the site through other forms of social media by including links to their Facebook pages and Twitter accounts. Despite its use of social media tools, the Web site and the Tea Party at large continue to receive the criticism that they are not really a bottom-up movement. These critics question how a Web site that relies on contributions and direction from already-established organizations can advertise itself as truly being a grassroots movement. This has larger implications for social media in general as it struggles between the need for organization and individual expression.

Meredith Neville-Shepard
University of Kansas
Ryan Neville-Shepard
Indiana University–Purdue University, Columbus

See Also: Astroturfing; Campaigns, Bottom-Up; Campaigns, Grassroots; DeMint, Jim; E-Democracy; Taxes; Tea Party Movement; Townhall.com.

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Cornyn, John

John Cornyn III is the senior U.S. senator from Texas and the current chair of the Republican National Senatorial Committee. He is also one of the first senators to adopt Facebook and Twitter and has pioneered the use of new social media and technologies in Congress.

John Cornyn was born into a military family in Houston, Texas, in 1952. He is the second of the three children of Dr. John and Gale Cornyn. He

U.S. Senator John Cornyn records selected passages of an 1844 letter from Republic of Texas President Sam Houston to former U.S. President Andrew Jackson. The senator's July 2012 recording was part of the Texas State Library and Archives Commissions Voices of Texas History project.

graduated from high school while his family was living in Japan, earning his varsity athletic letters in wrestling and track and field. After attending Trinity University in San Antonio, majoring in journalism, Cornyn went into real estate. The mid-1970s national recession caused him to rethink his plans and attend St. Mary's School of Law, also in San Antonio, where he served as president of the student bar association and as an editor on the law journal.

Political Career

Cornyn ran a successful private law practice when local Republican leaders approached him to run for state district court judge in San Antonio. He won election to this partisan office in 1985. Governor Bill Clemens, the first Republican governor in Texas since Reconstruction, appointed Cornyn the presiding judge overseeing judicial administration in 22 south Texas counties. This was an unusual promotion for so new a trial court judge.

On December 6, 1987, CBS's *60 Minutes* television news program featured a story about the Texas Supreme Court titled "Is Justice for Sale?" The program uncovered evidence implicating two members of the Texas State Supreme Court in a scandal tying campaign contributions to court decisions. Cornyn decided to run for the court in 1990. His campaign stressed judicial integrity. He earned a master's of law degree from the University of Virginia during his eight years on the court.

A later series of scandals, in this case involving then-Texas Attorney General Dan Morales's ties to five lawyers who had successfully sued the tobacco industry, forced Morales's resignation. Morales was convicted and sentenced to prison for falsifying documents in order to secure part of the tobacco settlement money.

Cornyn ran successfully for this office, becoming Texas's first Republican attorney general since Reconstruction. The Texas attorney general is the state's chief law enforcement official. He or she is responsible for a variety of duties including enforcing child support decisions, consumer protection, and some criminal prosecutions. The attorney general is also the official legal representative for more than 300 state agencies.

Attorney General Cornyn focused on cyberbullying, cybersexual predators, and identity theft during his three years in office. He established the Texas Internet Bureau, a state agency charged with investigating the illegal use of the Internet. Cornyn's crusade against these Internet crimes would continue once he was elected to the U.S. Senate.

Career in the Senate

Cornyn was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 2002. He became only the fourth Republican to represent Texas in the Senate since the late 1800s. Senator Cornyn secured appointment to three of the Senate's most prestigious and powerful committees: the Armed Services, the Judiciary, and the Budget Committees. He continues to serve on these committees and the Senate Finance Committee, perhaps the most powerful committee in the Senate. He easily won re-election to the Senate in 2008.

Cornyn's legislative agenda has been to support transparency in government, a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and the promotion of high-technology industries in the United States. He is the member of several Senate caucuses such as the Senate Republican High Tech Task Force and is chair of the Senate Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Caucus.

Continuing his crusade against cyber child pornography, Senator Cornyn joined his successor, Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott, in an effort to pass legislation at the national and state levels to prosecute cyber child pornographers. He sponsored the Stopping Adults Facilitating the Exploitation of Today's Youth (SAFETY) Act of 2009, which would make facilitation of online child pornography by either the content provider or the Internet or e-mail provider a federal crime. It also increased penalties for sexually exploiting a child. The senator's concerns about "murderabilia," goods federal or state prison inmates sell over the Internet that are associated with their crimes, caused Cornyn to introduce the Stop the Sale of Murderabilia to Protect the Dignity of Crime Victims Act of 2007.

Cornyn opposed the Stop Online Piracy Act of 2011, one of several attempts to punish online theft of intellectual property. While acknowledging that such piracy was theft, he was concerned that the bill would chill the freedom of speech.

Cornyn's Senate voting record demonstrates both his willingness to work with members from the other party and his dedication to Republican values. He voted for the Bush administration's Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 and the Obama administration's economic stimulus act in 2009. Senators Cornyn and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) were jointly awarded the Bi-Partisan Leadership Award in 2005 by the Project on Government Oversight. This private watchdog organization celebrated the two senators' efforts to prevent exceptions to the Freedom of Information Act from being buried in legislation.

On the other hand, Cornyn opposed Democratic proposals such as President Barack Obama's health care proposal. He threatened to force the Senate to vote on the nomination of Priscilla Owens to the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2005 by challenging the constitutionality of a Democratic filibuster. Democratic senators had prevented 10 federal court nominations by President George W. Bush from coming to a vote on the floor. Cornyn's threat prompted seven Republican and seven Democratic senators to agree not to filibuster any nominees unless there was an extraordinary reason, avoiding what could have been a dramatic challenge to the Senate's unlimited debate rule. According to the Web site OpenCongress, Cornyn ranked 11th among the 47 Senate Republicans in consistently voting with other Republicans during 2011 and 2012.

Cornyn rose to be the vice chair of the Senate Republican Conference in 2006 and became the chair of the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) in 2006. The NRSC is responsible for identifying, recruiting, and providing financial and other support for Republican candidates for the U.S. Senate. Cornyn was unanimously reelected to the chairmanship in 2012.

Pioneering Social Media in the Senate

Cornyn was elected to the Senate before the rise of social media and networking. Facebook, for example, did not debut until 2004. He has become, however, one of the most fervent champions of these new technologies in today's Senate. He was an early adopter of social networking, and he helped orchestrate the Republican gains in the Senate during the 2010 congressional campaign through traditional and social media techniques.

Cornyn's Facebook page became active in 2008. He has more than 27,000 "likes" on his Facebook page and close to 42,000 Twitter followers, making him one of the most popular politicians in social media. In 2012, Cornyn had more Facebook "likes," more tweets, and the second-largest number of subscribers to his YouTube channel, trailing only Congressman Ron Paul (R-TX). He averages 10 posts per day on both his Facebook and Twitter accounts. Unlike letters, phone calls, and e-mails that are filtered by his staff, constituents can contact Cornyn directly through his Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Cornyn's Senate office possesses one of the most effective social media operations in Congress. The senator was the first Republican senator and one of the first elected officials of either party to participate in a live town hall meeting on Facebook. Facebook invited Cornyn to participate in a discussion about the ways in which social media connect constituents with their representatives in Congress.

Cornyn has urged other Republican senators to use social media and social networking not only as ways to campaign but also as ways to engage their constituents and to communicate directly with the public. Every Republican senator now has a paid social media expert on staff. Forty-one

of the 47 Republicans in the Senate in 2012 regularly tweet.

Cornyn represents the second-most populous state in the union, a state of enormous racial, linguistic, and cultural diversity. Senators like him may be prompted to adopt innovative technologies such as Facebook and Twitter to reach out to this broad constituency, a problem the House of Representative members who represent more homogenous districts may not face. At the time of this writing in 2012, there are important differences in senatorial usage of social media, however. Republican senators had an 11-point advantage over Democrats in Twitter usage. Both Republican and Democratic senators were more likely to adopt Twitter than their party colleagues in the House.

Social media does offer new versions of old campaign tactics. Ads on YouTube and on campaign Web sites have made virtual campaigns faster and cheaper. Rapid-response tweets, texts, and e-mails can challenge alleged misstatements or point out gaffes committed by political opponents. Social networking sites can link friends to common campaign Web sites so that they can make political contributions. An effective ad can go viral on YouTube, gathering thousands of viewers in a few hours. As chairman of the NRSC, Cornyn is especially proud of committee's spoof of President Barack Obama's announcement to run for re-election. The spoof drew more YouTube viewers than did the president's actual announcement. Even online virtual worlds such as Second Life have been enlisted to promote candidates and policies. Second Life participants have used their digital personas, called avatars, to press political causes and beliefs through Second Life's electronic community.

Members of Congress regularly use Twitter to report on their daily activities, to link to news articles about themselves, and to engage in other self-promotional activities. They use Twitter as a new medium to share information that they already share through mediated media such as television, the printed press, radio, and directed communications including postal letters, pamphlets, e-mail, Web sites, and public appearances. YouTube's CitizenTube reported that almost 90 percent of Republican and 75 percent of Democratic House members of Congress had their own YouTube channels to communicate with constituents in 2010. Republican channels drew far more viewers than did Democratic channels.

Conclusion

There are dangers in overestimating social media and networking impact on members of Congress. While 89 percent of members of Congress were on Facebook and Twitter in 2012, compared to only 20 percent in 2009, few do more than use social media to push their talking points. Congressional staffers surveyed by the Congressional Management Foundation thought that constituent visits to the home and Washington offices have more influence on members than any interest group or other form of contact. E-mail and postal mail had equal impact. The use of social media and networking to generate enthusiasm among supporters, raise money, and communicate ideas has not replaced traditional ways of getting out the vote, but their importance is growing.

While the new social media outlets are assuming the roles once fulfilled by traditional print and televised news organizations, they are not replacing traditional forms of politicking, such as hand shaking, baby kissing, marching in parades, speaking at luncheons, attending town halls, or receiving and sending personal notes to followers. But social media extends and multiplies the impact of other congressional actions. The floor speech, once confined to the printed page of the *Congressional Record*, the official published journal of the House and the Senate, or to the broadcast of C-SPAN, is now often replayed on a member's Facebook, YouTube, or linked Twitter sites, giving the member far more exposure than before.

It is unclear how much John Cornyn's leadership on social media and networking has affected the Senate and American politics. He has demonstrated to his Senate colleagues the new technologies' potential. But, social media is only part of a system of complementary and conflicting pressures on senators and their followers.

Timothy J. O'Neill
Southwestern University

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, Virtual; OpenCongress.org.

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Corporate Social Responsibility

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is understood in many ways. According to some approaches, CSR is connected with economic development and providing help for those in need. For some people CSR is linked mainly with ecological issues and protecting flora and fauna, stressing its focus on nature. For others, CSR is related to creating company image in the eyes of stakeholders, and it involves the implementation of public relations knowledge and methods. In most definitions, CSR is understood through the prism of meeting the interests and needs of broadly understood stakeholders, taking into account the environment they are part of and simultaneously aiming at achieving profits. In other words, CSR-oriented companies want to find the balance between people, planet, and profit. Moreover, the scope of interest also varies across CSR definitions by taking into account geographical factors.

For some specialists, CSR is connected with taking care of the local community and local environment, whereas others draw one's attention to the panlocal or even global scope of CSR activities. There are various approaches to CSR itself, stressing its legal, social, or economic character. CSR can be also more communication-oriented and focus on proper relations with stakeholders or, in other words, with the corporate environment and sustainable development of the company itself. This approach also covers the linguistic layer of communication, concentrating on the role of selected language devices and their roles in increasing or decreasing the effectiveness of CSR communication. Apart from the mentioned term, the following concepts are also used in the discussion of CSR: corporate citizenship, strategic philanthropy, corporate social responsiveness, latterly good governance, environmentalism and corporate sustainability. Other terms that encompass the CSR ideas concentrate more on the image of the company (e.g., business reputation, company identity).

Although the first ideas resembling CSR can be traced back to ancient times, it is the 21st century that has witnessed the rapid development of this domain. There are various reasons for the popularity of CSR in the performance of modern organizations. One of them is the growing competition between companies and other legal entities to attract the attention of stakeholders. Very often, the organizations offer similar products or services, and the social aspect of their activities must be stressed to make people interested in them. Moreover, the issue of network society, with lattices and grids underlying the relations between people and organizations, is important in shaping the interdependencies at both the individual and group levels.

Narrowing this issue to the topic of CSR, the activities of individuals determine organizations and vice versa. The other notion is the abundance of risks that many organizations are exposed to—economic, political, and social types. The same situation concerns individuals who seek companies that pay attention not only to the business activity itself but also to other factors determining the life of stakeholders at the micro- and macrolevels. The other reason for the popularity of CSR nowadays is the development of technology and

communication possibilities that determine the information flow between individuals and organizations. Moreover, the appearance of social media can be said to stimulate interest in CSR. Because individuals not only have immediate access to information related to organizational performance, but they also can participate in the discussion on a company's successes and failures, organizational communicators must provide possibilities for free and efficient discussion. The shift from passive observers to active creators of public discussion that describe the positions of modern stakeholders in the social media has also stimulated the interest of organizations in promoting CSR issues. Although CSR is becoming more and more popular in the performance of modern companies, in many organizations such policies are used only when some failures appear as the instrument of crisis management. CSR should be the focus of organizations not only in the moments of change, when maintaining the interest of stakeholders is crucial, but also on an everyday basis, and to be effective it should constitute the core of standard organizational activities. The other reasons for the popularity of online communication in organizational communication are its potential large scope and low cost.

As far as strategies of CSR communication are concerned, the following types can be enumerated: informing strategy, interacting strategy, and process strategy. The informing strategy involves a one-way communication process and covers aspects that should be communicated to broadly understood stakeholders. The interaction strategy, on the other hand, involves a two-way communicative process. Thus, it relies on stakeholders' active participation and better perceptions of stakeholders' needs and expectations. The process of going from one strategy to another is linked with effective strategic management.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Social Media

With the increasing role of social media in people's lives, it is not surprising that they also determine CSR. The popularity of social media in communicating CSR is determined by the following reasons: Due to the popularity of social media, organizations are given the chance to communicate with a vast number of stakeholders at any time it is required. The other reasons for its popularity in organizations are its large scope and low cost. It also should be stated that virtual contact is relatively cheap in comparison with standard methods of interaction. In the traditional mode of communication, it is the organization that controls the information flow and has to bear, in most cases, the costs related to meetings, telephone calls, and correspondence. Online interaction does not offer the company the position of the main content creator, but it allows the organization to conduct communication quickly and cheaply. It should also be remembered that social media do not only enhance the communication between organizations and their stakeholders, but they can also influence the image of the company in a negative way by disclosing information about corporate failures and irresponsible behavior very quickly.

Openness and honesty are crucial as companies cannot hide certain facts. Moreover, the stakeholders can participate in CSR discourse on organizations without the participation of the organization itself because social media facilitate communication at both intergroup and intragroup levels of organization. Thus, the way communication is handled has also changed. Modern CSR communication involving social media should concentrate on helping stakeholders in CSR issues and enhancing their participation in CSR dialogue. However, the organizations that opt for social media communication should remember to update them constantly.

There should be people in the organization selected for reading the posts and responding to the questions on a daily basis. Another important notion related to CSR communication in online settings is the respect for all participants. All stakeholders should be treated in the same way, having equal rights to participate in the ongoing discussion. Moreover, the organization should select linguistic tools that will be understood by all participants. One option is to select metaphors that rely on well-known domains in disseminating knowledge on CSR issues. Another important issue is the language level of communication itself, represented, for example, in respecting the linguistic identity of the online users who should have the option to read information in their native tongues. In the case of international companies, it is often required to run Web sites and social

media tools in many languages to meet the linguistic needs of stakeholders.

Social media often lead to the creation of online social networks that are unregulated, and they stimulate effective discussion among participants and knowledge exchange in related settings. There are also various reasons why online social networks are popular among users. First of all, they do not demand regular contact because a person can decide when he or she wants to enter the network. The mentioned freedom is especially visible in asynchronous online networks; people may enter the social media when it is needed and comfortable for them. There are no restrictions as far as the timing for joining the discussion is concerned because they do not have to respond immediately, but they have time to search for data and post comments.

This is especially important for those who are not fluent in the language used in the information flow as they can check the words or phrases they do not understand. These features are important in the discussion of CSR because the participants are given time to provide answers and, what is more, they can discuss CSR themes when it is convenient for them. Taking into account the diffusion of information in online media, the social networks in virtual settings can be discussed by using the terms *homophily* and *heterophily*. Homophilous online networks encompass individuals sharing certain features or attitudes in common. Consequently, the participants using social media can have similar ages, educations, professions, and attitudes to technology.

In this case, individuals select the networks because of user similarity. Moreover, homophily in online media is often related to similar backgrounds, genders, hobbies, or localities. Both individuals and organizations involved in the CSR discourse rely on common features in conducting effective dialogues. Thus, knowledge creation and dissemination take place among similar individuals or entities.

The contradictory type of network is called a heterophilous online network. Heterophilous online networks rely on users who have different backgrounds, knowledge, skills, or positions in the group or community. Thus, people rely on these networks if they want to obtain data they do not possess or if they want to discuss some CSR aspects with specialists with different backgrounds and diversified knowledge. This type of online network may stimulate the discussion of CSR among people of diversified backgrounds and, consequently, show future paths of interest, investigation, and implementation. Social media can also restrict the access to information on CSR. Moreover, some individuals may prefer standard forms of communicating CSR issues because there can be stakeholders not familiar with the Internet and its online tools. Thus, the role of an organization is to take into account different communicative needs of stakeholders to allow them the possibility to express their views in the way they want and are able.

However, it should be stated that, in many cases, social media seem to be more effective than the standard forms of communicating CSR. First, people do not have to disclose their true identities. In this case, they are more likely to share their doubts, comments, and even criticism as they can express them anonymously. Second, social media offer tools that can be used only temporarily or as an addition to the regular Web site. The example can be darksites that are created in a moment of crisis to deal with novel and unexpected negative instances. To add, hatesites can be created by those not satisfied with the performance (also in the ethical sense) of the organization.

Another form of CSR communication is a blog, or an Internet diary of the CSR stakeholder. Apart from personal comments and ideas, the blogger can provide links to sources of information on CSR as well as offer some discussion between his or her posts. Facebook is another popular form of CSR social media communication. According to various studies, the popularity of Facebook is very high, as high as 90 percent in the United States. This tool offers immediate posting that is important in CSR discussion of novel or sudden issues. Many CSR stakeholders also tweet and post their comments and suggestions regarding sustainable responsibility on Twitter.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Politics

The relationship between CSR and politics is related to corporate performance. The growing role of politics in modern organizations is also

connected with the change of companies' position in the modern reality. The shift from passive receivers to active creators of activity, especially in the sphere of citizenship rights and public goods, has resulted in more company responsibility toward people and the environment. Because companies do not exist in a vacuum, even the stakeholders not directly involved in CSR policy are influenced by CSR statements. For example, the owners of small firms have to observe the changes taking place in other organizations and respond to them in the way they run their companies. Moreover, the political situation in a country shapes the CSR policies of companies.

For example, economic crisis often leads to reducing staff, lowering salaries, or cutting additional benefits in companies. Moreover, politics shapes the relation between governments and organizations and also determines the role of stakeholders in community life. Companies interested in following CSR policies impose some rules or regulations before they are introduced by governments. Additionally, if a government does not obey regulations regarding safety at work, environmental policies, and so on, companies may not observe them either. Thus, politics is often mirrored in company performance.

Taking the regional dimension of a companies' performance, the issue of politics should be taken into account by companies when they want to adapt to local conditions. There are various ways the notion of CSR and politics is researched in modern literature. One of the possibilities is to show how the political power present in a given territory enhances or hinders the interest of stakeholders in CSR policies. One such study was conducted to determine the relation between CSR and political beliefs in the United States and how the popularity of one party in given states shapes CSR attitudes. It should also be stated that the attitude to CSR in companies depends on the type of political system. For example, in market socialism, the boundary between business and politics is not strict, and companies participate in distributive equity. In a property-owning democracy, there are institutional mechanisms eliminating the excessiveness of economic power in politics. In welfare-state capitalism, it is important to eliminate power imbalances in business and public domains. In liberal equality, the imbalances in economic life determine the political sphere. In classical liberalism, there is the need to set boundaries between business and politics. In libertarian laissez-faire, the boundaries between politics and business are completely unfixed. There are no coercive systems that aim at controlling socioeconomic imbalances and their subsequent presence as political inequalities.

Corporate Social Responsibility, Politics, and Social Media

The relation between CSR, politics, and social media is represented in many ways. First, the topic of organizational performance, including its CSR communication in online settings, is a topic of interest for those directly or not directly involved in politics. Both politicians and broadly understood stakeholders are interested in how the company deals with CSR issues and how its attitude determines politics on a more macro scale. As social media constitute an important tool in the dialogue between individuals and politicians, CSR is also a topic of discussion among interested parties.

Modern organizations use online communication tools to present their CSR policies and strategies, taking into account the political grounding of CSR parties. Moreover, taking into account the speed of information creation and publication in the case of social media, with tools such as social networking sites, blogs, content communities, and virtual worlds, companies can respond very quickly to the changing political reality and adjust their CSR policies to meet the needs of broadly understood stakeholders. Taking political actors into consideration, social media foster their discussions with the public, allow them to notice reactions to their policies very quickly, as well as answer questions.

It should be mentioned, however, that the power of social media also demands constant updates of these communication tools because online communication requires the online participation of all involved interlocutors. Moreover, in the case of politics, there exists the possibility of contradictory opinions and ideas as people show interest in various political parties. Consequently, the online social media focused on discussing CSR issues from the political perspective should respect the rules of free discussion and

respect all participating users, regardless of their political beliefs.

Magdalena Bielenia-Grajewska
University of Gdansk and SISSA, Italy

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Communication; Constituencies, Social Media Influence on; Content Communities; YouTube.

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Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons

China, Egypt, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Syria: this is just a partial list of countries that have banned or restricted access to the Internet and social media for political reasons. The list, however, is always changing as some countries utilize temporary bans on certain sites while others permanently restrict access to all social media that is not government controlled. But why would countries want to restrict their citizens' access to the wealth of information available on the Internet? The answer to this question is complex and involves issues of culture, economics, and politics.

Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony illustrates the concept that the dominant or ruling group must control access to cultural information and ideology by subordinate groups in order to stay in power. Such control allows these ideological views to be accepted without hesitation or challenge. They become an accepted status quo. While the threat or reality of coercion is one way in which this can occur, more often than not continued domination is done through the careful control of processes related to human agency, ideological consensus, and economic domination. Advertising, public relations, and mass media are all key tools for ideological control. Social media, however, makes such control far more difficult, especially in times of rising political and economic strife, because it is challenging for a government or dominant entity to control the information being disseminated via the Internet.

Before looking at the current state of social media restrictions and censorship, it is important to discuss the roles media and journalism have historically played in propaganda. There is a prevailing belief that all conflicts are fought on two

fronts: the battlefield and the minds of the populace. The result has been the increasingly organized use of propaganda not just during times of war, but whenever there is a cause that needs to be advanced. In times of war, the military prizes the value of controlling information and the media, because there is concern that if journalists are given unrestricted access to an area of conflict they will report stories that could either endanger lives or that could be negative to the dominant group. If either of these two occurs there could be a negative impact on public opinion, which might then call into question the reality created by the dominant group and threaten the continuation of the status quo.

Ways of controlling the media by the military or other dominant groups have differed greatly over time, ranging from embedded journalists, planting stories, controlled daily briefings, and outright bans. Before the 20th century, information about battles came from field officers and were not impartial reports, but government propaganda. This led in World War I and II to government-created agencies that worked to steer journalists away from areas that showed destruction and human devastation. Journalists have also been asked to not show certain images or videos if they are perceived to be a threat to the stability of public opinion. Such maneuvering strategies were designed to increase a sense of distance between the public at home and the battlefield. As the Vietnam War suggests, uncensored coverage of a conflict can lead to significant antiwar sentiment. In Vietnam, the government's attempt to control information given to journalists backfired as the media, especially television, decided that they were not satisfied with reporting distorted facts. The result was a shift in media coverage to the antiwar protests at home, which gave these movements greater visibility and credibility.

Control of parachute journalists, journalists sent to cover a conflict but who have little knowledge of the region or terrain, is relatively straightforward in times of war. While such control is a threat to freedom of speech and the ability of the media to expose corruption, the need for the media to work cooperatively with the government in order to have access to information allows the military to encourage a certain level of journalistic self-censorship. Citizen journalists who report through social media are outside of that system, and their stories can effectively remove the sense of distance between the public and the conflict. Their real-time images and stories make the conflict "real," and the volume of voices lends legitimacy to the reports and carries the stories into the mainstream media, where they feed the demands of a 24-hour news cycle. The way to attempt control is through banning the technology citizens use to disseminate information. With social media it is also more difficult for those in power to hide when they are controlling the flow of information, and the control is more transparent to the outside world. In addition, there are often ways to work around the technological bans, thus resulting

When the Turkish Information and Communication Technologies Authority introduced filters that Turkish Internet users would have to choose from before browsing the Internet, thousands of Turks gathered in some 40 cities and towns around the country on May 15, 2011, to join marches organized on Facebook against state Internet censorship.

in negative publicity to the group attempting to restrict access to social media without stopping the flow of information.

One downside of reporting through social media where fact is mixed with propaganda is that it is extremely difficult to tell what is the truth. As there are virtually no filters on who can post information or alter existing content, and social media activists may not subscribe to the same journalism ethics, social media users have to be diligent in their interpretation of what is fact versus fiction. But citizen journalists or activists are essential in bringing a conflict into the home, as they can go where mainstream journalists cannot, and they understand the culture and landscape far better, while not being limited by deadlines and corporate policy. In addition, social media allows those at home to become direct participants in the stories by responding with posts and tweets of their own. Social media posts also have the appearance of being genuine and not impacted by the government or corporations, which can give the stories and videos greater weight in the eyes of the readers. Perhaps most significantly, social media stories can go "viral" and spread around the world through reposts, links, and retweets.

Arab Spring

All of these factors are evident in the most recent examples of countries attempting to ban social media for political purposes. In spring 2011, social media chronicled the uprisings that have come to be referred to as the Arab Spring. Beginning in Tunisia and moving to Egypt, Syria, and other countries in the Middle East and north Africa, social media was used as an effective tool to mobilize protests and draw world attention. During the revolutions, the governments attempted to shut down the Internet in order to hinder the ability of protesters to organize and disseminate information.

The most significant impact of the Internet ban was the inability of protesters to use social media as a call for help. During the ban, protesters resorted to old-fashioned methods of communication, such as holding handmade signs with instructions for where to meet, or they found ways around the Internet blocks. Speak2Tweet was developed by Google, Twitter, and SayNow during the Egyptian uprising to allow anyone to call an international phone number and have their message translated into a tweet. By the time the bans occurred, the uprisings had already gathered considerable strength and repressing speech on social media had limited impact; the bans were thus short-lived.

Effects of Bans

Outside of China, which will be discussed below, the greatest restrictions on social media occur in the Middle East and north Africa, especially in countries that are predominately Muslim and/or countries that are communist or have "representative democracies." It is also common to see temporary bans on certain social media or Internet sites as permanent bans are extremely difficult to enforce. Iran has been engaged in Internet censorship since 2005; during the Arab Spring, it banned Google.

However, there are approximately 150,000 Iranian users of Facebook. Saudi Arabia, without explanation, banned access to Facebook in November 2010, but the ban was lifted shortly thereafter with no word as to why. The Saudi government has also threatened to ban Skype and other instant messaging applications. Bangladesh, in May 2010, attempted to ban access to Facebook after satirical images of Muhammad appeared on the site. The ban was not successful and lasted only a week. In Pakistan, there are continued attempts to ban information that is anti-Islamic or a threat to internal security. In Syria, citizens can be jailed for looking at political content on the Internet or using Twitter. Government permission is also required to create a Web site. Facebook and YouTube had been officially banned since 2007, but those restrictions were lifted in 2011.

Another challenge of banning social media is attempting to ban something that does not reside within the country. In April 2013, the Indian government came under fire for its possible attempt to regulate the Internet. But as the government indicated, it is difficult to create regulation when the servers do not reside within the country. Regulation is often tied to the location of the servers. And that is the problem that many countries face. Even countries that do ban social media cannot do so fully as the nature of technology is such that there are many ways around the bans.

China

China has had the most success in terms of restricting its citizens' access to social media even though it is a country with extremely high Internet use, with 540 million users. Strict restrictions were put in place in 2009 when Uighur activists attempted to use Facebook to organize independence protests in the Xinjiang region. There are still about 700,000 users of Facebook in China even though Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are banned permanently, and others, such as LinkedIn or the application Dropbox, are banned occasionally. The Chinese government tries to direct its citizens to its Twitter-like weibos. While Chinese citizens do not have access to many foreign Web sites, including the *New York Times* and *Bloomberg*, foreign companies can request a presence on the weibos where they are subject to censorship by the government.

The Chinese government claims that the reason they have to restrict Internet access is to prevent rumors and stop the distribution of inappropriate material. However, Chinese citizens can purchase illegal drugs and firearms on Web sites that are not shut down by the government. It is evident that the government is concerned with the ability of its citizens to gain access to differing ideological perspectives on human rights, which create a direct threat to the stability of the government.

Circumventing Bans

For all of the attempted bans, there are even more ways for technologically savvy individuals to get around them. If there is any Internet access it is possible to go beyond a country's firewalls and access banned sites through virtual private networks or VPNs. VPNs also serve to keep the browser history of users private. In September 2012, the Chinese government took steps to restrict access to VPNs through new software, but this also limits the ability of foreign corporations to access their own internal networks. This could be a threat to the country's financial growth as VPNs allow foreign companies to prevent the government and other companies from seeing their communications while also providing transactional safeguards. These new regulations issued by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress also require social media users to provide their real names to service providers, while retaining their online pseudonyms. The regulations also place greater responsibility on service providers to delete forbidden posts and then report them to the government where violators could be jailed. The restrictions come after multiple sexual and financial scandals were exposed by Internet users, which resulted in the resignation or dismissal of 10 local government officials. The new regulations are the strongest to date in China and could be an indicator of more to come based on recent changes in leadership in the Communist Party.

Since the majority of social media users are young, the new restrictions could backfire on the Chinese government. As seen in the Arab Spring, it is the youth who are very familiar with social media who can mobilize a social movement or revolution. It is important to remember that it is people who drive protests through technology rather than technology driving the protests. Social media users have proven themselves to be extremely proficient in finding work-arounds to government Internet controls, which could serve as a threat to hegemonic control. That is exactly what governments fear, but the decision to ban social media rather than find a way to control its counterhegemonic messages is shortsighted. When people are prevented from getting what they want, even if it is access to YouTube, backlash often follows.

Pamela C. O'Brien
Bowie State University

See Also: Arab Spring; China; Citizen Journalism; Egypt; International Unrest and Revolution; Iran; Monarchies, Social Media, and Politics; Speak2Tweet; Syria; Weibo.

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Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding, in contrast with the traditional fund-raising model of obtaining financial backing from a few large investors, is fund-raising by collecting a large number of small donations. While not unique to the Internet era, the method has been transformed by the possibility of using Web-based services to reach out to potential small funders, including through e-mail solicitation, dedicated software platforms, and Web site donation buttons. Crowdfunding is used to generate start-up or operating capital for a wide variety of enterprises ranging from art or commercial production to journalism, disaster relief, or political campaigns. While crowdfunding is important for the decentralization of project capitalization in general, it also occupies an interesting role in the modern debate over campaign finance. Crowdfunding as a campaign fund-raising technique received a jumpstart in 1999, when the Federal Election Commission ruled that online credit card donations were eligible for matching federal funds.

Exploring the theoretical underpinnings of crowdfunding, legal scholar Yochai Benkler described how drastically lowered information costs are leading to a "networked information economy," in which large-scale cooperation replaces old market forms. In this new economic mode, "commons-based peer production" describes the process whereby large collections of individuals, motivated by social and individual impulses, collaborate on a common product. More normatively, Lawrence Lessig extended his own argument regarding the need to liberate media products to common public ownership in order to also embrace the benefits of political crowdfunding. Lessig argues that large amounts of special-interest-group money have corrupted the American political system and claims that one solution would be to refund $50 to all voters in order to allow them to use that money to serve as the sole source of campaign funding.

Both of these perspectives are rooted in the theory of self-organizing social structures, an organizational approach that received substantial attention at the turn of the 21st century. Howard Rheingold's identification of the smart-mob detailed the way that groups of individuals could physically self-organize—for protest, art, or entertainment—using mobile personal technology like short messaging service (SMS) messaging. The scholarly turn to lauding the self-organizing, information-generating capacity of leaderless crowds stands in rather stark contrast to the suspicion of mass behavior expressed by sociological scholars in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Gustave Le Bon developed the concept of crowd psychology, identifying the fundamental expression of crowd-driven phenomena as irresponsibility and impetuousness. In a similar vein, Charles Mackay documented the tendency of crowd-sourced ideas to take on fantastical, delusionary dimensions that lead to concrete consequences like the creation of economic bubbles.

As the notion of crowdfunding is tied to the concept of collective investment rather than the purchase of a finished product, crowdfunders more closely occupy the position of shareholders or collaborators than customers. This notion of the crowdfunder as investor was given greater legitimacy in the United States by the April 2012 JOBS Act, a law that loosens requirements on small investors in start-up companies. Recent growth in crowdfunding volume is exponential: In 2012, crowdfunding research firm Massolution estimated $2.8 billion would be raised through crowdfunding worldwide, up from $1.47 billion in 2011 and $854 million in 2010. Large platforms like Kickstarter (www.kickstarter.com) and Indiegogo (www.indiegogo.com) provided concrete examples of the model's success in a large variety of project areas, while platforms like Kiva (www.kiva.org) and the Lending Club (www.lendingclub.com) have popularized crowdfunding as an avenue for

providing both humanitarian microloans in the developing world and larger loans in developed nations.

While crowdfunding is now used more broadly, it has for decades been an aspect of state and national elections in the form of public financing. Public financing models require candidates who accept public financing to raise money in small increments from many donors in exchange for receiving matching public funds, which are also crowdsourced through a voluntary checkoff box on income tax forms.

Although Bill Bradley, Howard Dean, and John McCain have all used crowdfunding to support their respective bids for the White House, in 2008, Barack Obama was the first major-party presidential candidate since 1976 to reject public financing and turn to purely private financing, which he achieved in substantial part through small, Internet-based donations. Michael Malbin of the Campaign Finance Institute argues that Obama was able to do that because the 2004 election showed that the Internet could indeed effectively raise large sums through small donations. In this way, while Internet-enabled crowdfunding may not have eliminated the role of large donors in campaign financing; ironically, it may have helped render public financing obsolete.

Emily Shaw
Thomas College

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Crowdsourcing.

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Crowdsourcing

The term *crowdsourcing* is an amalgamation of the word *crowd*, those who participate in the activity, with the word *outsourcing*, a procurement practice and means to outsource an activity to the crowd, as defined by Jeff Howe in 2006. In this initial meaning, crowdsourcing refers the process of outsourcing a task (e.g., cocreation, user innovation, or repetitive, small tasks) to a group of individuals, the crowd, which can be nonexperts acting as volunteers or experts in that specific field.

Although crowdsourcing can occur in offline as well as in online environments, it is now seen mainly as an online activity. The problem to be addressed or the tasks to be developed are distributed to an unknown group of individuals. The contribution given by the crowd (e.g., solution of a problem, suggestion, or recommendation) is owned by the entity responsible for the call, the crowdsourcer. It is somehow related to the notion of the wisdom of the crowd, explored a few years before by James Surowiecki, with open source principles applied in the software industry as well. Compared to outsourcing, the main difference is the fact that, in this case, it is a well-defined and paid individual or entity that takes the task, while in crowdsourcing, the task is addressed by an undefined and usually large group of individuals, who often participate on a voluntary basis.

Since 2006, the term has been applied to describe many and diverse kinds of Internet-based, collaborative activities and seems to change every time new applications and tasks are outsourced to an undefined group of individuals. It has been used, for example, in knowledge production, in problem solving, in microtasks, in user studies, in software development, in different businesses activities, in content production (e.g., encyclopedias, photography, user-generated news sites, etc.), in the assessment of graphical perception and visualization design, in geographic data collection for disaster response, or in urban planning issues. In common seems to be the idea that a group of diverse individuals will produce more accurate decisions than individuals or even experts acting alone.

This dispersion in the use of the term *crowdsourcing* leads various authors to propose

different definitions for crowdsourcing, considering the particular issue he or she is addressing. Confronted with this diversity of meanings and definitions, Enrique Estellés-Arolas and Fernando González-Ladrón-de-Guevara proposed an integrated definition of crowdsourcing: Crowdsourcing is a type of participative, online activity in which an individual, an institution, a nonprofit organization, or a company proposes to a group of individuals of varying knowledge, heterogeneity, and number, via a flexible open call, the voluntary undertaking of a task.

The undertaking of the task, of variable complexity and modularity, and in which the crowd should participate bringing their work, money, knowledge and experience, always entails mutual benefit. The user will receive the satisfaction of a given type of need, be it economic, social recognition, self-esteem, or the development of individual skills, while the crowdsourcers will obtain and utilize to their advantage what the user has brought to the venture, whose form will depend on the type of activity undertaken.

With such a diverse range of applications, the strengths and weaknesses of crowdsourcing varies from case to case and depends on the role assigned to the crowd in each particular process. For the entity or person responsible for the call, crowdsourcing facilitates data collection and evaluation of specific issues, helps solve problems otherwise more difficult to address internally in the organization, is a cheaper and faster way to deliver some specific tasks, and avoids expensive or complex infrastructures. It can also make it easier to develop new products and services and to experiment and implement new ideas by accessing talent dispersed in the crowd, and it can generate better results.

Nonetheless, crowdsourcing is a process not exempt of difficulties and weaknesses, given the nature of the role played by the crowd. Crowdsourcing can be seen as an exploitation of unpaid labor (e.g., the unethical use of an unpaid or cheaper and socially unprotected labor force) and have a number of other limitations in part associated with issues of trust and reliability, along with the fact that it is difficult to apply in highly complex tasks.

Crowdsourcing may also produce faulty results as a consequence of the lack of statistical representativeness of the crowd. This is in part a consequence of the fact that small but powerful groups of more active participants may easily misrepresent the crowd perspective, influencing the results toward the interests of specific social groups or individuals.

These circumstances challenge the widely held view about the representativeness and accurate decisions that crowdsourcing produces, an issue of particular relevance in crowdsourcing used within public policy decision-making processes, as is the case when it is applied to replace or to complement the formal practices of citizen participation in urban planning.

In part, this kind of risk can be minimized if new tools for transparency are used (e.g., if a summary of all user contributions is made public, which will easily reveal the existence of any social or geographic bias). The value and the material compensation for the work provided by the crowd and the ethical consequences of wages paid to the crowd are important social and ethical issues that anyone considering to apply crowdsourcing must consider, as well as those willing to take part in it.

As results from the above definitions, there are different types of crowdsourcing. It can be employed to accomplish a task, to find solutions for problems, and to gather information. It can be used to cast a vote on a particular issue, idea, or proposal; for creative work; and for raising funds for a specific initiative. In paid crowdsourcing, which is becoming increasingly common in for-profit activities, the crowd receives compensation for their participation in the process, while in nonpaid crowdsourcing, particularly suited for the accomplishment of public policy objectives, a variety of incentives can be used instead.

Crowdsourcing can be designed, after due consideration of its advantages and ethical limitations, for use in public policies. As Darin Brabham argues, the crowdsourcing model developed in the business field is an appropriate model for citizen participation in the urban planning process, not only to gather information but also to explore creative solutions for practical urban problems or for urban design proposals.

Carlos Nunes Silva
University of Lisbon

See Also: Digital Citizen; Internet Gathering; Open Source Governance; Open Source Politics; Web 2.0.

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Cultivation

Cultivation is a prominent theory in mass communication research that describes a process whereby viewers' perception of the real world and the media world merge and blur together. This cultivation effect is the result of cumulative exposure to large amounts of media over long periods of time. Generally speaking, media do not directly shape viewers' opinions but rather provide perceived facts upon which viewers form opinions. These shifts are small but pervasive and impact the whole of viewers' worldviews.

Cultivation theory emerged from research started in the 1960s at the University of Pennsylvania by George Gerbner and the Cultural Indicators Project. Cultivation theory posits that heavy consumers of media (and television in particular) develop views of the world similar to what they see in the media. Cultivation theory argues that television is different and more powerful than earlier media for several reasons. Television distributes consistent audiovisual stories across demographics, providing audiences with a unified vision of the television world, despite the varying characteristics, backgrounds, and experiences of its viewers. This has a mainstreaming effect that homogenizes public opinion. Diverse publics become similar in outlook because they consume the same media messages over time. This has the overall tendency to maintain and propagate the status quo while reinforcing faith in dominant social and political powers.

Television is also a unique medium because many viewers receive very large amounts of exposure, often from very early ages. Because of this, television is understood to be a centralized system of storytelling that replaces prior institutions and individuals in socializing viewers from infancy on. The problem is that the symbolic televisual world may have very little in common with objective social reality.

Over the course of its history, cultivation has been particularly concerned with the impact of television violence because violence was determined to be the primary message of television narratives, both as fiction and news. Heavier viewers may suffer from what theorists call the Mean World Syndrome, whereby they judge the world to be more dangerous and individuals to be less

altruistic than they actually are. Resonance occurs when the everyday life experiences of viewers reflect or resemble these televised worlds. For instance, viewers who live in neighborhoods where violence is more common are likely to receive a double dose of the cultivation effect and have the violent worldview of television reinforced.

While violent content has been a source of particular interest, cultivation studies have also measured media's impact in other areas, including attitudes toward gender, ethnicity, age role, family, the environment, nutrition, politics, and science. In terms of political opinions, researchers have found that television's tendency is to socialize people into standard roles and behaviors and that heavy television viewing correlates to middle-of-the-road and mainstream political outlooks. Heavy viewers also reply to questions more readily than others, suggesting that there is a cognitive shortcut already in place and that their answers are less considered. Studies have also found that cultivation's effects may be moderated or strengthened by other variables including educational attainment, life experience, and whether television is viewed alone or with others.

Though cultivation was originally envisioned as relating primarily to television, subsequent studies have expanded it to include a variety of other media, including magazines, newspaper articles, video games, and online social networking. Some modern theorists have pointed out that the Internet, like television, represents an immersive media environment and that reality television in particular bears much in common with social networking platforms.

The cultivation approach to research distinguishes it from many other positivist traditions in communication. While traditional effects research focuses on the impact of specific media treatments and measurable effects, cultivation focuses on long-term socialization over time and across media. Because of this, cultivation researchers rarely use experimental methods that test the short-term effects of media exposure. Instead, cultivation research usually involves two methods: content analysis of media and surveys (primary and secondary) of viewers to assess exposure to television and perceptions of the world.

This shift in perspective from selective exposure to immersive experience of a medium over time has sometimes been a challenge for cultivation's broader acceptance and has generated controversy within the media effects community. Critics have noted that cultivation theorists rarely differentiate between different kinds of programming and have questioned whether general exposure or exposure to genre-specific content are better predictors of effect. Critics have also claimed that cultivation theorists haven't thoroughly explained the cognitive processes behind television's impact on viewers. Cultivation's precise mechanisms of social change (including mainstreaming and resonance) are also difficult to test using traditional social scientific methods that would assess causality rather than merely correlation. But meta-analyses of the many cultivation studies published over more than three decades indicate that there is a small but reliable cultivation effect in heavy consumers of media. Cultivation theorists liken this to other systems such as climate change, financial markets, or elections, where a slight but pervasive shift in public opinion may have a system-wide effect.

Paul Falzone
Independent Scholar

See Also: Communication; Echo Chamber Phenomenon; Legacy Media/Old Media; News Media; Polarization, Political; Television and Social Media.

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Cyberculture

Historically, *cyberculture* is a term that is interrelated to a set of issues that can be characterized by ideological, technological, sociocultural, or social scientific theory and praxis. In contemporary terms, cyberculture is broadly used by media pundits and laypeople alike as a catchall phrase to capture the social norms of everyday technology users such as hackers or cyberpunks or various literary versions of techno-utopia motifs or themes. More specifically, despite the appearance of the term *cyberculture* during the 1960s and 1970s, it is generally understood as the mass human interface with digital technology that began in the 1990s. Therefore, despite the existence of the term *cyberculture* for over a generation, it is only recently, since the emergence of cyberculture studies, that an investigation of its impact in relation to humans has occurred. However, at a historical minimum, it is important to note the historical beginnings of cyberculture, its manifestations, and how the concept of identity is reflected in relation to the digital sphere.

Kathrin Fricke, known by her online persona of Coldmirror, signs autographs at the Gamescom 2012 convention in Cologne, Germany. Coldmirror operates one of the most popular German YouTube channels, and publishes blog and vlog entries. The ability for Internet bloggers and video posters to become celebrities is part of recent cyberculture.

Historical Beginnings

Computers had been developed in the 1950s; however, the appearance of personal computers in the 1970s would transform work and leisure via communication technologies and the subsequent manufacturing and globalization of those technologies. For example, by the 1980s, people could utilize their personal computers to communicate in what came to be referred to as cyberspace. The term *cyberspace* became popular following the publication of William Gibson's book *Neuromancer* in 1984, which described an existence where the human body is left behind and cognition is transformed and exists in a virtual realm. However, it may be more appropriate to describe the physical construct of cyberspace as a term used to describe an aggregate of electronic digital technology that enables individuals to communicate in different formats. The specific technology that allows individuals to communicate was based upon military technology of the 1960s, referred to as Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET), which was developed to enable American communication networks to survive a nuclear attack. However, cyberspace is where the social interaction of cyberculture via communication, work, entertainment, and business takes place and is embedded with other physical and social spaces.

Manifestations

There are several manifestations of cyberculture including, but not limited to, social network sites (SNSs), online gaming, blogs, e-commerce, file sharing, chat, and other forms of communication. Currently, within this context, these manifestations of cyberculture have influenced new forms and patterns of consumption, habits, and techniques of knowledge acquisition and exchange. In fact, it may be argued that, by 2013, virtually

every aspect of personal and institutional life in the physical world has developed its counterpart in cyberspace.

For example, since the emergence of e-commerce sites like Amazon and the online auction site eBay, more and more consumers make online purchases instead of traveling in person to traditional brick-and-mortar business locations. Second, social network sites like Facebook, BlackPlanet, Twitter, and Myspace collectively have hundreds of millions of members and influence the outcomes of elections and social movements. Third, influential blogs and online news sites are rapidly displacing traditional news outlets as primary sources of information for media consumers. Fourth, more relationships are now being formed through online dating sites like E-harmony or Match.com than through traditional social locations such as church. Finally, online sites such as Wikipedia and/or search engines like Google have rapidly influenced the acquisition and exchange of information, and the confluence of these and aforementioned manifestations of cyberculture have had tremendous implications for the previous conceptualizations of culture and community in relation to identity.

Identity

The Internet, its sociophysical construct cyberspace, and its cultural construct cyberculture offer their participants an instant ability to communicate within and across borders and over previously inaccessible distances. Thus, participants are creating imagined communities where individuals can participate and form various types of relationships whether real, virtual, or simulated that reconfigure previous human limitations. However, in relation to identity, some important considerations regarding cyberculture are ethics and the nexus between informational and communication technologies (ICTs) and community formation.

In regards to ethics, previous scholarship done by Lisa Nakamura explored race and cyberculture via the tension between previous conventions of a unitary identity that was influenced by a certain set of stereotypes, laws, and social hierarchies. Furthermore, these practices operated with a cultural hegemony or dominance that served the interests of powerful interests vis-à-vis the more collaborative approach of social media that operated under a different set of conventions. For example, previous cyberpunk text, film, or media frequently supplied and informed users of the templates and conventions or tropes to appropriate in order to either engage in acts of machine-influenced consciousness that promoted the posthuman and the postracial with the traditional casting formula of nonwhites as window dressing, or engage in online cultural tourism, masquerading as the cultural other. In contrast, cyberculture is heavily invested in the idea of forming imagined communities—and, increasingly, the virtual complement to real-world affinity groups—that reflect the needs and desires of online users and is especially impacted by the forces of globalization.

Cosmopolitanism and provincialism are strongly implicated in the growth of social networks and the desire for users to have relationships with relatives and other like-minded users that previous generations of predigital communities were unable to have. For example, despite the consequences of what scholars, politicians, and business leaders refer to as globalization, these forces have not necessarily drawn people closer together. Moreover, it has enabled and made it easier for immigrants in particular to retain cultural ties or connections with families and communities left behind and to slow down the process of identification with new homelands. Therefore, the formation of these imagined communities has empowered users to not only take advantage of organizing their cultural worldviews and social capital for economic or political motivations but also to provide insight into how these identity formations operate across boundaries.

Reynaldo Anderson
Harris-Stowe State University

See Also: Avatars; Digital Citizen; Immigration.

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Cyber-Jihad

Cyber-jihad conjures up the fears and apprehensions long associated with the so-called dark side of the Web. The Internet's capacity to transform modern political life, whether as an empowering tool at the disposal of activists and dissenting populations, such as the anticorporate globalization movement, or as an unprecedented megaphone in the hands of politicians, has not totally quelled some underlying fears about the dangers and risks arising from the open nature of the Web. These apprehensions and fears largely stem from new media's sociopolitical and security threats, such as military cyberattacks that could cripple governments and business infrastructure, hacking sensitive intelligence, cyberbullying, cyberterrorism, and cyber-jihad.

While the term *jihad* comes from the Arabic verb *jahada,* which literally means "to struggle," its popular usage has become predominantly associated with Al Qaeda and other Islamist terrorist organizations, especially after the 9/11 attacks. Cyber-jihad conflates those terrorist organizations' use of the Web with regular Muslims' turn to the Internet for religious information and/or benign social, political, or personal uses of the technology. This entry focuses on these twin implications embedded in the concept, the security threat, and religious usage implications of cyber-jihad.

As a security threat, cyber-jihad "loosely describe[s] Islamic extremist terrorists' use of the Internet as a communications, fundraising, recruitment, training, and planning tool in their battle against the enemy," according to R. B. Davis. Cyber-jihad facilitates acts of cyberterrorism, in a "convergence of terrorism and cyberspace" that may attack computers, networks, and other information infrastructures to disrupt and coerce governments and populations. Terrorists' use of the Internet presents a clear and present danger to targeted governments and communities. The Internet provides a tactical tool to facilitate command-control communications between different members of a terrorist organization. According to this view of cyber-jihad, lack of strong regulation and tough governance regimes turn the Web into a lawless territory and a magnet for terrorists.

The ability to avoid state surveillance and law enforcement detection attracts terrorist organizations to the Internet because they can freely create and use e-mails and Web sites. Internet service providers (ISPs) do not verify the identities of registrants and those wishing to create Web sites undetected. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), the international body in charge of regulating the Internet, does not have enough muscle to police the World Wide Web and prevent terrorists from recruiting, organizing, communicating, and fund-raising online. Further complicating the matter are the jurisdictional issues often faced by those law enforcement organizations like Interpol, who do have the clout, the resources, and the mandate to address transglobal criminal and terrorist threats but who often find themselves bogged down in the reams of red tape generated by nefarious activities that cross national and international boundaries.

From encrypted e-mail and messages, chat rooms, and spam mimicking to password-protected Web sites, Al Qaeda terrorists proved adept at employing the Internet as an operational and tactical platform. After capturing many Al Qaeda terrorists and seizing their computers, U.S. security and intelligence officials discovered computer evidence of encrypted messages and secure Web site communications among the 9/11 conspirators and Al Qaeda leaders, such as Abu Zubyaydah, about the planned attacks. In addition to password-protected communication, Al Qaeda-affiliated Web sites host a range of material including terrorist training manuals and propaganda videos. Ansar-al-Islam, an Al Qaeda-affiliated Web site, gained notoriety after posting a video of the beheading of American hostage Nick Berg by Al Qaeda's Iraqi branch. While it is difficult

to provide exact numbers of Web sites that incite terrorism, G. Weimann estimates such Web sites to exceed 4,000 in number. Despite the Web sites' proliferation, Western governments choose not to shut them down as they provide a trove of information regarding terrorist activities and, thus, help in the surveillance of terrorism.

Some critics claim that Islamist terrorism as a threat is overhyped and alarmist at best, pointing to cyber-jihad's religious dimensions, which are worth examining as well. A growing number of Muslims use the Internet as a religious communication tool. In this view of cyber-jihad, sometimes described as e-jihad, the Internet facilitates individual Muslims' quests for self-improvement by providing a source of spiritual guidance, *fatwas*. In this way, the Internet becomes both a means of propagating the faith and of circumventing traditional state censorship in Muslim societies. In shifting the center of authority, these online environments permit Muslim users a degree of anonymity while granting antiestablishment religious *fatwas* unprecedented exposure. Other scholars similarly conclude that the Internet has enabled alternative Islamic voices to be heard, which has decentralized traditional religious authority. In this regard, Internet use appears to squarely fit in with the literal definition of jihad, as improving the self and the community by seeking religious guidance online.

Aziz Douai
University of Ontario

See Also: Arab Spring; International Unrest and Revolution; Nation of Islam Movement.

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Cyber-Vigilantism

The Internet provides its users with unprecedented means to access and disseminate information, the ability to speak and act anonymously, and a vast potential audience from which to find people with similar passions and convictions. Cyber-vigilantism refers to the ways in which citizens without official legal authority use such affordances to participate in the preservation of law and order in both the online and offline worlds. Unlike traditional vigilantes like those associated with the frontier justice of America's western expansion or the subway patrols of New York City during the 1970s and 1980s, their online counterparts can come together and act more quickly, responding to a wider range of transgressions and acting with diminished accountability, largely shielded from threat of retaliation or physical harm.

Perverted Justice is a prominent antipedophile organization that exercises cyber-vigilante methods to aid official law enforcement, using tactics to target pedophiles that police are not allowed to use and contributing time and expertise that extend the limited resources of the professionals. Its members pose as minors in chat rooms and work to find the identities of adults who engage them in sexual conversations. Before forging a relationship with

police, Perverted Justice carried out its own brand of punishment by publishing the chat transcripts and identifying information to its message board. Members would then attempt to shame the alleged predator by notifying his neighbors, family members, and employers of the illicit acts.

Similar tactics have been employed for a broad spectrum of offenses, including matters trivial to criminal justice systems. In 2005, after a woman refused to clean up after her dog on a subway in South Korea, another rider took a picture of her and uploaded it to a blog, leading to the identification of the culprit only days later. In the large-scale public shaming that followed, cyber-vigilantes unleashed an onslaught of criticism and verbal abuse on the woman and attempted to locate and inform as many of her associates as possible. The speed and ease with which these kinds of damaging public humiliation campaigns can be carried out by anonymous groups without due process is exemplary of both the power and the danger presented by cyber-vigilantism.

The largest and most prolific group of cyber-vigilantes is Anonymous, a loose association of activists and pranksters united by a common Internet subculture. Its members are ideologically heterogeneous but numerous and active, regularly forming both ad hoc and long-term initiatives with targets as varied as copyright enforcement organizations, pedophiles, foreign governments, security companies, and children's online video games. They employ a range of strategies, including public shaming, but with an emphasis on more technical measures, like hacking to access private accounts and information, changing the contents of a Web site, or removing the Web site from the Internet completely. The latter, which results from a distributed denial of service (DDoS) attack, is usually accomplished through control of an army of malware-infected computers. Many of Anonymous's attacks, to the contrary, have succeeded by assembling such an army through members who voluntarily install the software. In this way, individuals are able to take part in organized protest with a few mouse clicks, effecting real monetary, political, or social damages.

Although Anonymous frequently acts internationally and has several times targeted governmental entities, its actions are in defense of openness, against censors and loosely defined oppression, and not for the benefit or protection of any particular country. In contrast, The Jester, usually written as *th3j35t3r,* is an example of a patriotic hacker, known for taking down dozens of Web sites identified as supporting or recruiting Islamic jihadists. The Jester is notable not just for its success and prolific activities but also for communicating with the public almost entirely through social media, such as using Twitter to advertise each of the strikes as they are happening.

In 2011, an offshoot of Anonymous, which called itself Lulz Security, or LulzSec, too confidently exploited what the Internet grants vigilantes, succeeding in a series of attacks on high-profile targets, each followed by publication of hacked data, all the while taunting its victims and law enforcement alike through Twitter. Although it is common for vigilantes to become folk heroes, in June 2011, LulzSec twisted this role, soliciting requests from fans for sites to attack, resulting in a number of video game-related Web sites going down shortly thereafter. In the year that followed, most of the prominent members of LulzSec were arrested on hacking, conspiracy, and other charges, illustrating the other side of the coin: The Internet fosters a feeling of disconnectedness from real-world consequences, but since the September 11 attacks and the realization that the dangers presented by the very properties of the Internet that make it great, it is increasingly unfriendly to anonymity.

Ryan McGrady
Jeremy Packer
North Carolina State University

See Also: Anonymous; Cyber-Jihad; Hacktivism; Privacy.

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Cyclical Message Strategies

A cyclical message strategy involves using online resources, especially social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, to establish a message that will be received and then relayed to other users. Additionally, messages will also have built in a response node, or return path, whereby the receiver sends responsive feedback to the originator of the message so that subsequent waves of messages may be disseminated. When a variety of message channels are interconnected, the life cycle of the message is extended, and its audience is vastly expanded. The use of the Internet and participation in social media sites has had a substantial impact on the nature of the candidate–constituent relationship.

With the proliferation of user-controlled social media sites, it is now possible to friend (or unfriend) the president of the United States. An individual or organization's popularity and well-being are often directly connected to the number of Facebook friends or Twitter followers one can claim. The narrowing of psychological distance between political actors and those who are able to put them into or remove them from office is an outcome of Web-based message delivery systems, including blogs, online news forums, and social media sites.

A study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project found, relative to the 2012 U.S. election cycle, that about one-fifth of registered American voters used a social networking site such as Facebook or Twitter to urge members of their social networks to vote. About one-third of those surveyed reported that others had contacted them via posts on social networking sites to ask them to vote for a specific presidential candidate, either Barack Obama or Mitt Romney. Finally, 22 percent of registered American voters used a social networking site to tell how they voted or intended to vote; when age is factored in, the percentage rises to 29 percent of those under age 50 who did so.

A variety of message channels is used to converse about and influence political matters, including face-to-face conversations, posts to social media, e-mails, and telephone and text messages. The Pew Project found that face-to-face interactions were the most common in the vote-urging conversations, with 29 percent urging Obama and 32 percent urging Romney. The next most-used channel was social media posts, with 25 percent of those messages coming from both supporters of Obama and of Romney.

Networked Message Cycles

At some point, the multidirectional flow of information becomes user powered, and a message can take on a life of its own, going viral or escaping the Web completely to be taken up by mainstream and elite media. In many cases, the loss of control by the producer over the message is compensated for by the return on investment that comes from the wide reach to networked audiences.

The great majority of the thousands of Internet tools that exist, including social media sites, are free. In this new realm of information channels, the ability to tap into and direct networked political messages through a variety of channels offers a distinct advantage to candidates and campaigns. However, determining which to use and how to use them strategically can be difficult.

Establishing credibility, gaining receiver interest, and triggering receiver action are the intended outcomes of what pioneering Internet strategist Julielyn Gibbons terms cyclical message strategies. Gibbons founded a social media consulting agency, I3 Strategies, as an extension of her work with patient advocacy campaigns and early use of the Internet as a tool in her work as an outreach director for the Michigan Democratic Party. In her home state of Michigan, where she was the first blogger to receive credentials in the Michigan State Capital, U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow recognized Gibbons for her online advocacy and campaigns.

In 2008, Gibbon spearheaded a David-against-Goliath Web-based campaign that relied successfully on use of social media as essentially free marketing tools to overcome a well-funded opponent. In a similar campaign the same year, Gibbons and her colleagues developed a plan to interconnect Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube presences with Google and Facebook ads. Rather than aiming for a mass audience, Gibbons's group employed microtargeting by age and gender demographics.

Her cyclical message strategy in these campaigns consisted in integrating links, uniform resource locators (URLs), and references to all of the other media in use, in addition to face-to-face

approaches, e-mail marketing, and other more traditional message channels. Each message referenced the other channels and included small calls to action. Gibbons reports,

> Some of the tactics that we used included asking supporters to change their Facebook profile picture and Twitter avatar to the campaign logo days before the election, posting and sharing campaign ads and messages on YouTube, encouraging supporters to share on their Facebook walls, creating and spreading a hash tag when folks tweeted about the campaign.

Every message included ways that the receiver could connect back to the campaign's other social media sites.

Another online political innovator is Republican Justin Amash, who as a member of the Michigan House of Representatives, was one of the first to connect directly to constituents by posting his votes on his Facebook page in 2009 and announced his ultimately successful candidacy for U.S. Congress on Facebook. As a member of Congress, Amash's Web site includes links to e-mail, to a newsletter subscription request, and to his voting record on Facebook. The use of Internet resources for political purposes is constantly expanding, as is the sophistication of media-marketing algorithms and their strategic use to drive messages to targeted consumers. New social networking tools, such as Google Wave, are likely to expand the possibilities for transparency, collaboration, and enhanced communication, according to Gibbons. Traditional elite and mainstream media are less prominent as decision drivers for consumer and constituent decisions, as people forage for news on the Internet. Logging software, click path monitoring, data mining, algorithms, and other analytical tools allow for a finely tuned understanding of consumer intentions and behaviors.

Thus, information networkers will increasingly become important in helping political message producers to navigate the labyrinthine connections and networks that now exist. In conjunction with technological savvy, Gibbons and Amash emphasize that the accuracy and authenticity of the message itself is of primary importance.

"You want the social media to be a very natural, authentic extension of the campaign and candidate or issue," says Gibbons. "If it's forced or faked, the public will know it and you'll look worse than not trying it at all."

"The best way to garner votes and support is by maintaining transparency and communication with voters," concurs Amash. "Most elected officials haven't figured that out yet."

Leslie Reynard
Washburn University

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Campaign Strategy; Microtargeting; Social Capital.

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Cynicism, Political

Political cynicism is an important sentiment and is an indicator of the health of a democracy. The

Oxford English Dictionary defines cynic as "a person who believes that people are motivated purely by self-interest rather than acting for honorable or unselfish reasons." The proposition that politicians are motivated by self-interest rather than the public good is one most readers of this encyclopedia will be familiar with. But, there are further dimensions of political cynicism beyond politicians alone.

Conceptualizing and measuring political cynicism has proven problematic, and disagreement exists over how best to approach it. For many years, scholars made inferences on political cynicism based on American National Election Studies that measured political trust, alienation, and efficacy. While there are some robust links between these measures and political cynicism, Joseph Cappella and Kathleen Hall Jamieson convincingly argue for a set of measures of political cynicism that focus on the following:

> . . . the manipulativeness of advocates (candidates in campaigns and representatives of groups in policy debates), dishonesty, winning and getting ahead, looking good, using fear, the absence of real choice, and the role of big money.

Nevertheless, it is important to point out that Joseph Cappella and Kathleen Hall Jamieson's measures of cynicism are primarily aimed toward politicians. Other scholars have established a distinction between political cynicism directed at persons on the one hand and issues and institutions on the other. Furthermore, studies have found that these dimensions of political cynicism are not always correlated; for example, a citizen may be cynical toward politicians in his or her country but still have full faith in his or her system of government. This broader dimension of political cynicism is usually more stable and less prone to short-term change than that specific to a particular issue or person.

In many Western democracies, political cynicism is said to be on the rise and has been associated with broader concerns about declining political engagement, party identification, and voter turnout. Research shows that those people most cynical of politics also tend to be the least politically knowledgeable and engaged. Young people tend to be the most cynical of all.

There has been a proliferation of explanations for the apparent rise in political cynicism, with many accounts focusing on the way politics is communicated. Mass media critiques focus on the impact of television entertainment in terms of both its displacement of time available to partake in civic activities and the program content that favors entertainment over civic values, therefore facilitating the conditions in which political cynicism thrives.

Campaign critiques contend that the growing influence of marketing and public relations techniques used by political parties has ruptured the link between citizens and representatives. Negative political campaigning (particularly advertising) has been found to encourage cynicism, though its impact on electoral turnout is disputed.

News media critiques contend that many practices in political journalism are encouraging political cynicism. For some commentators, the news media have shifted from a position of watchdog of the powerful to attack dog, evidenced through increasing journalistic negativity and cynicism toward politicians. A growing body of literature has explored the role of the political interviewer, for example, and how cynicism is increasingly imbued into his or her encounters with politicians. Whereas in the past, interviewers displayed respect and even deference toward politicians, now they are aggressive and confrontational, with an emphasis laid on landing punches or scoring points over their opponent. Such reporting is said to present the political process in a manner designed to encourage suspicion, negativity, and distrust among its audience. In their defense, journalists point out that (1) rather than stirring up voter cynicism, they are merely reflecting it; and (2) politicians have given the public many reasons to be cynical about their motivations (through high-profile scandals and so on).

Social Media

Social media is increasingly important in these debates over political cynicism. The use of social media is becoming an everyday feature of political and civic engagement for many people across the world. A distinctive feature of social media is how it offers many new opportunities for small-scale, low-cost forms of political engagement, which coexist alongside high- and medium-threshold

expressions of engagement. According to research conducted in 2012 by the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project, some 66 percent of social media users—or 39 percent of all American adults—have done at least one of eight civic or political activities with social media. These range from small-scale actions such as reacting to others' postings, sharing political content, or "liking" a political cause, to pressing friends to act on issues and vote, or creating one's own content, which is then shared.

There is much hope that the many opportunities for ordinary citizens to participate in political actions through social media might lead to greater political empowerment and reduced political cynicism. There are many examples of social media facilitating mobilization of like-minded individuals around a political issue or campaign, and sometimes forcing change. Some studies have found that individuals who participate in social media environments are likely to experience a sense of understanding, connection, involvement, and interaction with others who participate in these environments. Other studies have shown how those who use social media, especially Facebook, are more civically and politically active than nonusers.

Young people in particular are increasingly relying on social media as a source of news and information about politics and as a platform for interpersonal political communication. Younger users are more likely to post their own thoughts about issues on social media, post links to political material, encourage others to take political action, belong to a political group on a social networking site, follow elected officials on social media, and like or promote political material others have posted.

Furthermore, by facilitating unmediated, two-way communication between citizens and elected representatives, many hope that more productive connections can be made. In the United States, President Barack Obama has been praised for his innovative use of social media in engaging, mobilizing, and empowering supporters. All over the world, politicians are developing their social media presence. However, studies examining their use of social media find that most politicians have been slow to embrace its participatory and empowering potential, largely using the platforms for one-way impression management.

Conclusion

Many of the findings mentioned above might suggest that social networking can reduce political cynicism. However, studies that have isolated political cynicism as a dependent variable have not found a significant impact of social media use. Furthermore, despite the fast-growing and diverse repertoires of political engagement offered by social media, levels of political cynicism in most Western countries—especially cynicism directed at elected officials—remain stubbornly high. This would suggest that there are still more powerful explanations for political cynicism, rooted in political socialization, culture, and broader features of political systems. Nevertheless, as social media make increasing inroads into everyday life, and thus political socialization and culture itself, it will be a central focus of future research into political cynicism.

Daniel Jackson
Bournemouth University

See Also: News Media; Social Capital; Voter Apathy; Voter Turnout; Youth Engagement.

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D

Daily Show, The

On July 21, 1996, *The Daily Show,* a satirical news program, premiered on Comedy Central as a replacement for Bill Maher's *Politically Incorrect*. Created by Lizz Winstead and Madeleine Smithberg, and hosted by former ESPN *SportsCenter* coanchor Craig Kilborn, *The Daily Show* parodied traditional newscasts through monologues and on-location reports from correspondents such as Brian Unger and Stephen Colbert. *The Daily Show* quickly developed a sizable audience of young, primarily male, 18- to 36-year-olds, a key demographic for advertisers. Under Kilborn, the focus of the show was popular culture and character-driven human interest story parodies. This changed when Jon Stewart took over as host on January 11, 1999, after Kilborn moved to CBS. Renamed *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart,* the show became much more politically focused.

The show's coverage of the 2000 election, "Indecision 2000," showcased the new editorial voice of the show as a comedic, but informative, option to traditional news sources. While the show tends to present a more liberal viewpoint, the goal is to encourage the audience to question the political discourse being driven by traditional and social media rather than to present a specific agenda. While the show is seen as a soft news source, a 2007 Pew Research Center survey found that viewers of *The Daily Show* were more knowledgeable about news than people who watched "real" news programs.

Having a media-savvy audience requires the show to be multiplatform in its approach to content delivery. As the Internet and social media gained prominence, the show's audience wanted to be able to view segments from the show and share them with others. Comedy Central, like many media companies at this time, was concerned about allowing its programming to go viral. Originally part of the larger Comedy Central Web site, video of *The Daily Show* could not be downloaded nor could users post comments or blog.

In the summer of 2007, *The Daily Show* launched its own Web site. Users could embed video clips into any social media site because the embedded content serves as a portal back to the show's Web site. By September, the site was receiving more than 800,000 views. After the success of the Web site, *The Daily Show* expanded its social media presence to include Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Tumblr, and Foursquare. *The Daily Show* was also an early adopter of Facebook's Open Graph applications, which allow users to automatically publish their media use onto their social media sites. Open Graph allows people to see what their friends are reading and watching and, thus, pushes that content to a

broader audience. Serving as advertising tools for upcoming episodes, the social media sites primarily repurpose the content from the television episodes. However, they also provide a way for fans to share their favorite videos and comment on recent stories, thus creating spaces for instantaneous political discourse.

On September 21, 2010, Jon Stewart announced, at the height of the Tea Party movement, that he would be hosting a Rally to Restore Sanity on the National Mall on October 30, just days before midterm elections. Stephen Colbert of *The Colbert Report* also announced he would hold a March to Keep Fear Alive rally on the same day. Both marches had their own Web sites, and within a day of the announcement, the Rally to Restore Sanity Facebook page indicated that more than 132,000 people planned to attend. Attendance at the event reached more than 200,000, while 4 million streamed the event live over the Internet. Both Stewart and Colbert actively tweeted and posted to Facebook throughout the event.

In October 2012, Jon Stewart faced off against Bill O'Reilly in "The Rumble in the Air-Conditioned Auditorium." This presidential debate parody was streamed online (no other coverage was available) for $4.95, with half of the proceeds going to charity. The demand was so high that it overloaded the servers, which forced organizers to tweet an apology to fans.

The rally and debate typify how *The Daily Show* utilizes social media to spread its humor and political viewpoints. The events required minimal traditional publicity beyond the initial television announcement followed by information on Facebook and Twitter. Yet, the publicity that the network received was significant as all the major U.S. media outlets provided some level

Retired U.S. Navy admiral and former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Michael Mullen speaking with Jon Stewart on The Daily Show *on September 12, 2011. After some initial reluctance on the part of Comedy Central to make content available online,* The Daily Show *embraced social media; its Facebook page had 3.5 million "likes" and it had 951,000 followers on Twitter as of October 2012.*

of coverage about both events. *The Daily Show* has shown that, by embracing social media, the show develops a greater reach into and understanding of its audience, who are able to stay connected with the show no matter what device they are using. While Stewart may not call himself a journalist or politician, his influence on political culture is significant. As of September 30, 2012, *The Daily Show*'s Facebook page had 3.5 million "likes" and 951,000 followers on Twitter.

Pamela C. O'Brien
Bowie State University

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Advertising and Marketing; *Colbert Report, The*.

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DailyCaller.com

In the competitive political news market, the Daily Caller has emerged as one of the leading voices of right-leaning/libertarian journalism. As an online-only entity, the Daily Caller effectively uses social media by teasing story slugs to attract consumers to its multimedia content. With over 100,000 Twitter followers, @DailyCaller bills itself as "USA's fastest growing news Web site dedicated to providing our audience with original reporting, in-depth investigations and thought-provoking commentary." The Daily Caller has found a niche by making its content readily available to frequent news readers through social media, a YouTube channel, and mobile platforms for iPad and Android users.

Journalist Tucker Carlson, the former cohost of CNN's *Crossfire*, launched the Daily Caller in early 2010 alongside his college roommate, Neil Patel, a former aide to Vice President Dick Cheney. Carlson began his journalism career in the 1990s at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* and then later at the *Weekly Standard*. The site found immediate success, surpassing its traffic estimates in its first 10 months of existence, according to Carlson. Now the Daily Caller is a profitable entity. In January 2013, the site claimed 6.3 million unique visitors, an audience Carlson says rivals that of the *Boston Globe* and *Miami Herald*.

The Daily Caller often employs slideshows to go along with its stories in an effort to increase user clicks. One such slideshow, "Top 10 Most Punchable Faces in Media," created by Entertainment Editor Taylor Bigler, gained a lot of attention in social media prior to the 2012 presidential election. Bigler's slideshow was based on a comment MSNBC host Lawrence O'Donnell made about Mitt Romney's son Taggert Romney saying he wanted to take a swing at President Barack Obama.

In an effort to run a lean operation, the Daily Caller has a staff of just under 50 people and tends to hire younger reporters out of college while also utilizing a lot of content generated from freelancers.

Although it is part of the new wave of online journalism, representatives of the Daily Caller are now entrenched in the Washington, D.C., news establishment as they belong to the press corps on Capitol Hill and the White House press pool. As a result, the Daily Caller's roster of talent is often featured as guests on major cable and broadcast news programs.

The Web site is a mixture of news, features, opinions, and investigative pieces with topics ranging from politics to pop culture and sports. Content is often based around catchy headlines and stories that utilize a combination of pictures, video, text, and embedded links. Many maintain that the Daily Caller's amount of original material—both text and video—has helped it emerge

as a top journalistic voice rather than just a partisan outlet. Noted left-wing watchdog group Media Matters is often critical of the Daily Caller and its journalists for what the organization contends is biased reporting that unfairly distorts liberal points of view and President Obama. In turn, the Daily Caller has run a series of articles that details the close relationship Media Matters' director David Brock has with the Obama administration and MSNBC executives.

The Daily Caller covered in-depth the court case of Philadelphia "abortion doctor" Kermit Gosnell and the terrorist attacks on the U.S. embassy in Benghazi, Libya.

Key Figures

The Daily Caller attempts to avoid being a mouthpiece for the Republican Party. While former Bill Clinton associate Lanny Davis has published material on the site, and Mickey Kaus, a liberal on many topics, is a prominent writer for the site, most of the key editorial figures call upon a right-leaning background. Matt Lewis, one of the Daily Caller's commentators, is a renowned conservative blogger who first gained notoriety with America Online's Politics Daily. Vincent Coglianese, a senior editor, has spent time with the Heritage Foundation and in conservative talk radio. The site's original primary investor, Foster Friess, is a prominent conservative financier.

Senior video reporter Nicholas Ballasy's style of guerrilla journalism plays well for the site and its social media identity. Ballasy has caught up with numerous politicians including Bill Clinton, Howard Dean, and Mitt Romney and entertainers like Clint Eastwood, Tom Hanks, and Matt Damon in public settings, putting them on the spot with interviews that are then often shared virally.

Controversy

In March 2013, the Daily Caller published claims made by Dominican prostitutes that they were paid by New Jersey Senator Robert Menendez for sex. Menendez disputed the claims, and later Dominican investigators reported that someone from the Daily Caller entered the country and offered to pay prostitutes $5,000 to make claims about Menendez. Speaking on behalf of the Daily Caller, Carlson said his site "never paid anyone, was never asked to pay anyone and of course never would pay anyone for this story." After facing criticism about the Menendez prostitute story by those on social media, Carlson responded, "Why should I care if a bunch of losers on Twitter don't like it?"

Aaron J. Moore
Rider University

See Also: Backchannel; Menendez, Robert; News Media; *Politico*.

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Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act

The Daniel Pearl Act of 2009 was signed into law by President Barack Obama on May 17, 2010. As an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the act requires the secretary of state to expand the examination of the status of freedom of the press worldwide in an attempt to draw attention to governments that attempt to silence or condone media opposition by censorship, coercion, imprisonment, or death. This addition to the U.S. State Department's Annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices identifies countries where freedom of the press is violated, including imprisonment or other sources of pressure, physical attacks, or censorship from sources including the government, military, police forces, intelligence agencies, rebel or extremist groups, or criminal groups. The annual reports incorporate information about the status of the press in

foreign countries, violations to press freedoms, and actions taken by local governments to remedy those situations.

Freedom of the press includes descriptions of efforts to improve or preserve media independence, as well as an assessment of progress made on efforts to improve media treatment. In countries identified as having severe violations of freedom of the press, the report must detail government involvement (participation or condoning violations of press freedom), the actions that the government has taken to preserve the safety and independence of the media, and measures taken to prosecute those who attack, injure, censor, or murder journalists. The annual report factors into decisions made by the U.S. Congress as it considers foreign aid and human rights issues.

Daniel Pearl

The Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act is named in honor of former *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl, a veteran correspondent who was reporting on terrorist groups in Pakistan. Specifically, he was attempting to discover possible financial links between Richard Reid, known as the "shoe bomber," and Al Qaeda. Pearl was abducted in Karachi on January 23, 2002, just four months after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. His Islamic extremist kidnappers, calling themselves the National Movement for the Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty, saw Pearl as a symbol on several levels: a media figure, an American, and a Jew. They demanded a range of actions from the United States for his return, sending photos of him holding up a newspaper with handcuffed hands and a gun at his head.

Pearl's kidnapping garnered attention from people around the world; his pregnant wife called for Pearl's release. Several weeks passed without information about his whereabouts or fate; his murder by decapitation was confirmed on February 21, 2002, via a three-minute videotape titled *The Slaughter of the Spy-Journalist, the Jew Daniel Pearl* that showed Pearl's mutilated body. His body was found on May 16 in Gadap, about 30 miles north of Karachi, in a shallow grave. Three of the murder suspects were caught after the Internet protocol (IP) address of the initial ransom demands was traced. Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheih, identified as the mastermind, surrendered. They were convicted on July 15, 2002, and sentenced to death, but those sentences remain on appeal. In March 2007, during a closed military hearing at Guantanamo Bay, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, mastermind of the September 11 terrorist attacks, said that he had personally beheaded Pearl. Pearl was 38 when he died.

Journalist Daniel Pearl was reporting on terrorist groups in Pakistan when he was abducted by Islamic extremists in Karachi on January 23, 2002. The act, named in his honor and signed into law in May 2010, amends the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

Legislation

The bill that established the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act was sponsored in the House by Representatives Adam Schiff (D-CA) and Mike Pence (R-IN) as H.R. 3714, introduced on October 1, 2009. It passed 403–12 on December 16, 2009. Sponsored in the Senate by Senator Christopher Dodd (D-CT) as S. 1739, it passed the Senate unopposed on April 29, 2010, after a controversial provision providing grants for independent media was removed. On May 17, 2010, President Barack Obama signed the legislation,

with Pearl's widow Mariane, his 7-year-old son Adam Daniel (born after Pearl's murder), his parents Judea and Ruth, and his sisters Michelle and Tamara attending.

As recorded by the White House, President Obama said,

> I am very proud to be able to sign the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act, a piece of legislation that sends a strong signal about our core values when it comes to the freedom of the press. All around the world there are enormously courageous journalists and bloggers who, at great risk to themselves, are trying to shine a light on the critical issues that the people of their country face; who are the frontlines against tyranny and oppression. And obviously the loss of Daniel Pearl was one of those moments that captured the world's imagination because it reminded us of how valuable a free press is, and it reminded us that there are those who would go to any length in order to silence journalists around the world.

In a press release marking the signing, Judea and Ruth Pearl said, in part,

> We absolutely agree with the president that this act sends a strong message for defending the freedom of the press and empowering Danny's colleagues around the world to seek the truth and share their reporting without fear of retribution from their government.

Conclusion

Daniel Pearl has been remembered as a symbol of hope who has inspired others toward developing cultural understanding. His legacy has resulted in a stronger U.S. policy concerning freedom of the press. Representative Adam Schiff, one of the main sponsors of the act, stated on April 30, 2010,

> Daniel Pearl's life was an inspiration to all of us. We hope this legislation will help the United States work with other nations to better protect his colleagues serving on the frontlines in the fight for greater accountability and transparency. Freedom of expression cannot exist where journalists are not safe from persecution and attack. Our government must promote freedom of the press by putting on center stage those countries in which journalists are killed, imprisoned, kidnapped, threatened, or censored.

Beth M. Waggenspack
Virginia Tech

See Also: Foreign Policy; Global Center for Journalism and Democracy; Human Rights; News Media; Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press; Reporters Without Borders; Terrorism.

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Data Mining

Three inter-related concepts capture both the nature and the importance of social media meta-information in the political process. Political use of social media, "big data," and "data mining" constitute a powerful triangle in elections, each determining and informing the other.

Politicians use social media as strategic tools mainly for election campaigns with the aim to connect with their publics and advertise their candidacies. Issues related to the impact of social media on democracy and public debate raise significant questions of global interest, such as (1) the impact of social media on political communication and civic engagement; and (2) how politicians in different political systems use social media to communicate with the voters, according to James Webster.

Philip Howard writes that campaigns are complex exercises in the creation, transmission, and mutation of significant political symbols; however, there are important differences between political communication through new media and political communication through traditional media.

As social media is widely used for various purposes, vast amounts of user-generated data exist and can be made available for data mining of social media, which can expand researchers' capabilities of understanding new phenomena and improve business intelligence to provide better services and develop innovative opportunities, P. Gundecha and P. Liu have found. An effective political campaign is about defining and acknowledging the stakeholders, framing arguments, and creating icons, and all three of these kinds of political objects are much easier to manage using the new communications tools developed over the last decade, says Philip Howard. Information is still power, but having raw data does not a king make, and instead, Philip Howard proposes that it is the careful production of political culture through the manipulation of data that makes political power. The implications of thinned citizenship roles and data shadows are profound, and people must continue to assess trends in political communication both in terms of individual voter behavior and the larger character of political culture.

Understanding the opinions of the general public and consumers may uncover unknown patterns, and that is the goal of data mining processes. Patterns of consumption evolve with changes in the digital media marketplace; social media have emerged to challenge the notions of what media are, how they operate, and how they impact society, says J. G. Webster. Social media data is largely user-generated content on social media sites, and it is vast, noisy, distributed, unstructured, and dynamic—characteristics that pose challenges to data mining tasks to invent new, efficient techniques and algorithms.

Data mining (DT), knowledge discovery from data (KDD) or knowledge discovery and data mining (KDDM) are all umbrella terms describing several activities and techniques for extracting information from data and suggesting patterns in very large databases, which includes massive data collection, data warehouses, statistical analysis, and deductive learning techniques. P. Gundecha and P. Liu propose that it is an integral part of many related fields including statistics, machine learning, pattern recognition, rule induction, genetic algorithms, decision support systems, bioinformatics, business intelligence, data visualization, and information retrieval. Data mining algorithms aim to effectively handle large-scale data, extract actionable patterns, and allow insights. For instance, anaylsis of variance (ANOVA) or Kruskal-Wallis tests can be used to compare audiences; multivariate regression models or time series are for predictions; tree analysis or latent class models target voters; and multidimensional scaling helps in analyzing the positioning of media.

New Techniques

New examples of data mining techniques used in the contemporary era are algorithms that are commonly found in the machine learning and data mining communities, such as artificial neural networks, decision trees, and support vector machines. M. Hindman, K. Tsioutsiouliklis, and J. Johnson propose using crawl depth to capture surfer behavior that starts at each of the seed sites, and then follow all of a site's outgoing hyperlinks, downloading all of the pages accessible from a given seed site. These downloaded pages are then classified as either positive (similar to pages in the seed set) or negative (more similar to a reference collection of random content). The depth of the crawl reflects the number of iterations of this process, and thus how many hyperlinks away a site can be from one of the original seed sites.

Next they used support vector machines classifier (SVMC): After being provided with both a positive set (in this case the seed set) and a negative set (a collection of random Web pages), the SVMC inductively learns to differentiate between

relevant and irrelevant pages, producing highly reliable classification of Web pages.

Advantages

Before the 2012 U.S. presidential election, Erin McCarthy and Micah Sifry described the enormous advantages they foresaw for the techniques of data mining in election campaigns:

> The 2012 U.S. election may very well come down to who leverages big data better. So far, Obama has a five-year head start and is the clear frontrunner when it comes to leveraging data, data mining, and social media to achieve very real results. . . . This will be a year of discovery in exploring how quickly things can change in the new world of social communication. . . . Mitt Romney is just now beginning to consider building an analytics team and infrastructure. A *Huffington Post* AP report, "Mitt Romney Uses Secretive Data Mining to Identify Wealthy Donors," said Romney's data mining activities started as early as June.

The smartest campaigns now believe they know who will vote for candidates even before voters do. S. Issenberg tracks these fascinating techniques—which include cutting-edge persuasion experiments, innovative ways to mobilize voters, heavily researched electioneering methods—and shows how the most important figures, such as Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, are putting them to use with surprising skill and alacrity.

Jaime R. S. Fonseca
Technical University of Lisbon

See Also: Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Big Data; Innovation and Technology.

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Data.gov

Data.gov is a U.S. government Web site launched on May 21, 2009, that provides public access to data generated and held by the federal government. At the nexus of the "open data" and "e-government" movements, Data.gov is a vast repository of government data sets, a source for information about how to access, use, and build the repository, as well as an interactive platform with research tools that leverage the data. As of May 2013, the Web site claims to host approximately 450,000 data sets derived from 172 federal agencies, a significant growth from the 47 data sets that were initially made available at its inception. Almost 60 percent of the data falls into either the category of "geography and the environment" or "transportation." Some of the other categories include "national security and veterans affairs," "population," "energy and utilities," "federal government finances and employment," and "information and communication."

The site is one manifestation of the Obama Administration's Open Government Initiative, an attempt to bridge citizen-government divides through the creation of a more inclusive, transparent, and accountable administration. Data.gov was launched by Vivek Kundra, the first

chief information officer of the United States, and is currently managed by the General Services Administration's Office of Citizen Services and Innovative Technologies, in connection with the national chief information officer and chief technology officer. Though recent federal budget cuts have threatened the viability of the site, Data.gov continues to serve as a model for open government. It was one of the first U.S. government Web sites to move to the cloud, and is a leader in the open data movement that has spread to more than 40 countries throughout the world, as well as to entities like the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations, and the World Bank.

Technical Architecture

In both its conceptualization and everyday usage, Data.gov broadly reflects technical architectural principles that are characterized by various "open" movements, particularly those of "open data" and "open source" (software). Beyond making content available to the public, raw data sets available through the site are organized by type (such as table, chart, map, calendar, files and documents, or forms), agency, category, and topic to allow for more efficient access by users. Geospatial data is also available. Data sets are also accessible in a variety of formats that are machine-readable and platform-independent, namely CSV, XML, KML, and SHP. This allows users to create tools (such as widgets, gadgets, data extraction tools, and Rich Site Summary [RSS] feeds) based on the materials contained in one or more of the relevant raw data sets. Ensuring that this raw data can be marked up to allow for machine interoperability is a central component of the Semantic Web initiative, whose incorporation Data.gov details in their "Concept of Operations" document. The site also promotes an open source approach to software development, in that it makes the architecture leveraged by Data.gov to publish datasets available to interested developers themselves. This "Open Government Platform" is based on Drupal, an open source content management system, and includes modules for data, content, and visitor relationship management. The source code is hosted on GitHub, which uses a particular revision control system to manage collective software development projects.

Open and Electronic Government

Data.gov is one of 18 sites that compose the Obama administration's Open Government Initiative. Upon taking office in January 2009, President Obama released an "Open Government Directive" directing government departments and agencies to increase the transparency of government activities while also promoting citizen participation in, and collaboration with, government programs and services. Specifically, the directive requires these departments to take the following steps toward a more open government: (1) publishing government information online; (2) improving the quality of government information; (3) creating and institutionalizing a culture of open government; and (4) creating an enabling policy framework for open government. An Executive Order issued by the White House on May 9, 2013, further clarified the role of Data.gov by mandating that the data disseminated by the government be open and machine-readable as the new default standard. To promote its efforts, Data.gov maintains a blog on its Web site and has an active presence across popular social media platforms, such as Twitter.

Community and Developer Engagement

Data.gov fosters a variety of end-user communities, so as to provide a space where like-minded researchers and citizens may access material that is particularly relevant to their needs. Examples of these target sectors include agriculture, education, energy, health, and manufacturing. A special "developers" section of the site engages the developer community by encouraging participation and collaboration on projects that make use of government data. Additionally, developers may provide feedback as to what datasets they would like to see on Data.gov as an application programming interface (API), and may join challenges pertaining to the effective usage of open data via a related Web site, Challenge.gov.

Through these mechanisms, Data.gov "crowdsources" solutions to managing open data in partnership with various individuals and organizations in the broader public and private sectors. For example, the Sunlight Foundation, an educational organization committed to increasing accountability in the U.S. government, ran an "Apps for America" contest in 2010 to leverage the data sets released through Data.gov. Among

the submissions was a tool designed to help check wait times for security screenings at airports. Other mobile and Web-based applications based on data sets published through Data.gov include an alternative fuel locator, a tool to look up product recalls, and a search engine for traffic safety statistics. In March 2013, Data.gov recorded over 6,000 daily visitors, including hits from outside the United States, and published over 1,300 new data sets to the Web site.

Michael Dick
Jonathan A. Obar
University of Toronto

See Also: Crowdsourcing; Digital Government; E-Democracy; Open Data; Open Source Governance; Open Source Politics; OpenCongress.org; OpenGovernment.org; Social Media and Freedom of Information Act; Sunlight Foundation; Transparency.

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Debate

The integration of social media and politics has altered the foundations of many traditional political processes and provided new methods through which people can engage with politics. The use of social media both for and during political debates offers new options for hosting political debates and has changed how individuals, the media, and candidates engage in political debating.

History of Social Media Debates

Online political debates, also referred to as e-debates, date back to the mid-1990s, with candidates at local, state, and national levels participating in rudimentary forms of online debate. These debates, which were organized and hosted by various organizations and media outlets, attempted to harness and capitalize on the growing power of the political Internet. Questions for these debates were drawn from comments made on the campaign trail, and the hosting organization would post the candidates' answers to a Web site for the public to read.

While these debates occurred through online technologies, the public could not ask the candidates questions nor interact with them; interested individuals would have to either follow the debate via the Web site or sign up to receive the debate through e-mail. These debates did, however, utilize early forms of wikis (Web sites that allow users to add, modify, or delete content) and other group-page technologies, where individuals could discuss the candidates' answers. As online technologies continued to evolve, organizations and media outlets continued to experiment with various types of e-debates.

In 2008, technology and politics began connecting in new ways, and social media provided new options for reaching and engaging audiences in online debating. The explosive use of social media during the 2008 presidential election marked a substantial shift in both social media platforms as hosts of political debates and in the integration of social media functionalities into televised debates. Major media outlets and social networking sites, such as CNN, YouTube, Myspace, Yahoo!, the *Huffington Post,* and *Slate*, teamed up to host political debates and candidate forums and to engage the public in political debating in a new way.

The CNN–YouTube presidential candidate debates invited the public to submit questions to the candidates via 30-second videos uploaded to YouTube. These questions, if selected, would be featured during two live candidate forum debates broadcast on CNN. Between the two debates, more than 8,000 videos were submitted for possible inclusion, with roughly 80 videos being selected for broadcast. During the debates, the candidates responded directly to the videos, marking the first time that unfiltered questions created by the public were answered during nationally televised debates. The two broadcasts broke debate viewership records for both viewership on cable news

and for viewership from the ages of 18 to 34. The candidates' answers were then uploaded to YouTube's YouChoose 2008 platform, where users could discuss the candidates' answers through the site's social media functions.

Attempting to specifically target a younger generation of voters, Yahoo!, the *Huffington Post,* and Slate teamed up to host an entirely online and interactive set of candidate debates. These debates, which ran simultaneously on all three organizations' Web sites, allowed users to submit questions that were posed directly to the candidates. The candidates responded live, via the Internet, and debate viewers were able to evaluate the candidates' answers and performance in real time.

Myspace and MTV took a slightly different approach while still using social media to engage the public in conversation with the candidates. These media outlets promoted a series of candidate dialogues, town-hall style discussions that were hosted on various college campuses, Webcast live on the MyspaceTV video platform and MTV.com, and broadcast on MTV and MTVU. While these were not candidate debates, the questions were submitted by the public through the MyspaceIM instant messaging platform, e-mail, or text message, and online viewers could ask the candidates follow-up questions, respond online to the candidates' answers, and debate among each other in real time.

Capitalizing even further on the relationship between social media and political debates, Myspace sought and received official sanctioning by the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) to launch MyDebates.org. The Web site offered a downloadable application that streamed the presidential debates live, provided searching and tagging capabilities, allowed the debates to be archived for on-demand viewing, organized online polls, and tracked the candidates' positions on issues. This marked the first time that the CPD partnered with an Internet and social media outlets for debate coverage.

The integration of social media into political debates has continued to increase as social media technologies have evolved. Major mainstream media, online services, and social networking outlets have worked with the CPD to develop live debate streams and live reaction platforms. Even XBox Live, the gaming system, incorporated into its social networking functionalities a way for subscribers to use their controllers to judge candidates' debate responses as they were speaking. Other interesting uses of social media appeared throughout the 2012 presidential primary debates and included the solicitation of debate questions via Twitter and inviting the viewing audience to submit real-time feedback via social media, some of which was inserted by the moderators into the live debates.

These debates, candidate conversations, and social networking initiatives illustrate the distinct shift in the level of participation that voters can now exercise in political debates. While they all functioned differently, they are indicators of the impact of social media upon political debates and provide a lens through which the rise of social media in political debates may be viewed. Integrating social media into political debates offers the public a level of interactivity with the process and the candidates that was once reserved for high-level donors and other political elite. The future of successful political debate must address an expectation of interactivity with the common voter and will be marked by campaigns' abilities to effectively engage the public through social media.

How Social Media Has Changed Debate

Social media has substantially altered the ways that individuals, the media, and the candidates engage in political debate. Debate viewers are no longer simply passive audience members; instead many have become dual screeners, or viewers who watch debates on television and simultaneously follow, discuss, and tweet about the debates through computers or mobile devices. Through sharing opinions, fact-checking, assessing diverse perspectives, and judging the candidates' performance, participation in social media during televised debates has changed the level of engagement many audience members have with political debates. Debate interaction through social media has also provided the media and political campaigns with a ready-made focus group of at-home viewers through which to assess the public's thoughts, perceptions, and opinions.

The Audience

Social media has provided new methods for a generalized audience to engage in political debate

discussion. Historically, there have been very limited opportunities for the public to engage with the formalized political debate system. While town-hall formats have allowed for a minimal level of participation, the collective public has never possessed much ability to have unfettered discussions about political debates that the mainstream media and political campaigns actually paid attention to, until social media. Through engagement with social media functionalities during televised debates, audience members are expanding the sphere of engagement and using social networks to have influence, voice opinions, and be involved. Through millions of posts, comment, and tweets, online engagement in political debates fosters a more genuine dialogue between the constituencies and allows the audience to be engaged at a substantial level.

Candidates can no longer assume that political gaffes will be missed or quickly forgotten by the media as the social media sphere will capitalize on these in ways not previously fathomed. In this way, the public is able to leverage the functionalities of the social media environment to insert itself into political agendas and upend political messages carefully crafted by the political and media elite. This ability makes it practically impossible for either the media or the campaigns to ignore the public's engagement and quickly turns political moments into pop culture fodder. Social media have also pushed campaigns to be more responsible in their distribution of facts during debates. Dual screeners are often also savvy Internet users who can instantaneously fact-check any statement made by any candidate, pundit, or media personality. Social media allows the audience to quickly identify incorrect information, find the correct facts, and link followers to the accurate information; these instant fact-checks keep the constituency aware and discourage campaigns from providing false or misrepresented information.

The Media

Audience engagement with social media has pushed the mainstream media to find ways to effectively integrate what occurs in the social media environment into broadcasts. The audience no longer needs to wait for pundits to analyze debates or candidate's answers for them because they have access to reactions and opinions from pundits, journalists, bloggers, other politicians, and average citizens unfolding in real time through social media. The mainstream media, specifically cable news outlets, have recognized the emerging role of the viewers' voice in politics and also the importance of engaging with these viewers. It is not uncommon for news anchors to cite audience tweets and Facebook posts during newscasts, make political predictions based on Twitter reactions, or have the creators of Facebook or Twitter pages on as guests to discuss what is occurring on social media regarding a topic or candidate. Social media has helped to democratize political commentary in the mainstream media and has given a voice to a wider range of political participants who can help to shape debate narratives long before the television pundits have the opportunity to dissect debates for the audience.

The Candidates

Social media has also substantially altered the ways in which candidates and campaigns engage in and respond to debates. Social media provide instant indicators regarding the public opinion of a candidate's answer or stance on an issue. Social media sites allow campaigns to quickly and efficiently determine what topics are resonating, or trending, with potential voters and what topics the voters attach the most significance to. Often, what is being discovered through social media analysis is that the issues that the campaigns have attached the most significance to are not the issues that their constituencies find most important. Social media listening (real-time monitoring and analysis of social media traffic) allows campaigns to better understand what issues are resonating with potential voters and strategize how to effectively communicate with these voters during debates.

Prior to social media, campaigns would have to wait until after the debates to gain access to audience opinions and reactions through formalized debate analysis methods. With social media, the spin rooms of the past are no longer necessary as campaigns can now analyze rapid-fire online chatter to judge in real time the audiences' responses to the debate. In addition, most social media sites also include some type of user geolocation data, which makes it easy for campaigns to identify the locations of the posters, understand how their candidate is being received, and what

Many different types of organizations have experimented with the use of social media to engage the public in e-debates. These men watched economic debate videos in a "YouTube Corner" at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on January 28, 2009. Among the many platforms and media outlets having an impact in online debates are Facebook, Myspace, YouTube, Twitter, Yahoo!, XBox Live, CNN, the Huffington Post, *and* Slate.

is trending by geographic region; this data could be especially important in vital battleground and swing states. For campaigns and advocacy groups, the integration of social media into debates can also serve as a boon for candidates, with massive amounts of online communication pushing information about their candidates directly to voters, even those who may not be watching the televised debates, through status updates, tweets, links to videos, and other types of online content.

Social media has also changed how candidates engage opponents in online debate. Campaigns are not only using social media updates and engagement to push their own platforms but also to attack the credibility, stance, or statements of their opponents. Social media have allowed campaigns ways to quickly and efficiently rebut claims made by opponents and negatively reframe opponents' talking points. Social media have also led to the rise of hashtag attacks, or the appropriation of a hashtag written by the opposition and used to reframe the conversation against an opponent. Although social media has become a consistent tool in contemporary digital campaigns, candidates are using the platforms mainly to push their direct messages and discredit opponents versus using it to engage in conversation or debate with the potential voters. With a voting population that is increasingly engaged in social networking, the successful incorporation of social media into debate strategies will be vital.

The future relationship between social media and political debates is uncertain. While many major media outlets have embraced the role of social media in political debate, the CPD and most debate moderators have not largely accepted social media into the formalized political debate process. As social media functionalities continue to develop, they will likely continue to grow in importance as an increasingly active channel of political engagement and allow for a more robust and accountable discussion of key issues facing the constituency.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Presidential (2000); Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; E-Democracy; Focus Groups; Geotagging; Hashtag; Social Listening; YouTube; YouTube Politics Channel.

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Deception in Political Social Media

The anonymity of the Internet, which has only recently with the explosive growth of Facebook ceased to be a default condition, has always lent itself to abuse. It has always been relatively simple, and certainly very common, for Internet users to pretend to be people they are not, and to do so for various purposes: sometimes anonymity is an important shield against abuse or to enable the same kind of forthright honesty enabled by offline venues of anonymity like 12-step programs and the Catholic confessional. Sometimes it has allowed teenagers to lie about their age and interact in a social world of adults. Sometimes it provides a cover for whistle-blowing and other important activities. But the types of abuse are obvious: fraud, trolling, harassment, and others. As politics has extended into social media, naturally political figures and groups have both committed and fallen victim to these abuses. This is not surprising: money in politics is spent, ultimately, to convince the audience of an idea, whether that idea is to vote for a candidate, to support a cause, or to believe a particular interpretation of a set of facts. Competition can often encourage deception.

At its most basic, the deception committed in social media is simply an extension of other deceptive statements, as when political groups provide an account of events that is heavy on spin or leaves out elements that might be crucial to the reader's interpretation. A prominent example in recent history was the Kony 2012 viral video campaign launched by Invisible Children, a San Diego–based organization founded to raise awareness, especially among young people, of Joseph Kony and his Lord's Resistance Army in Africa.

The video spread virally and was tweeted and otherwise linked to by numerous celebrities. *Time* magazine ranked it the most viral video of all time. But the video portrayed Kony as being in Uganda, glossing over the fact that he had left six years earlier and was likely in the Central African Republic, and an intervention by the Ugandan army as advocated by the video would be either pointless or circuitous. The "Stop Kony" campaign associated with Kony 2012 had the size and shape of a major social justice movement, but was often criticized for not being grounded in the facts of the real-life situation in Africa and the problems of real-world child soldiers.

Fake Accounts

According to a 2013 *Wired* article, it has become a simple business matter to purchase fake Facebook friends, Google+ friends, Twitter followers, Twitter retweets, Facebook "likes," or other quantitative forms of social media support. An internal Facebook study in 2012 revealed that 83 million of Facebook's 955 million accounts were either false accounts or duplicates (such as maintained by people who have separate personal and professional accounts). Most of these fakes were not politically connected and many were likely not maliciously deceptive. But among them are millions of false accounts created and maintained by social media management companies in order to create the illusion of popularity or support.

According to a 2013 *Guardian* article "Click Farms," usually operated overseas where labor is cheaper, have workers either retweeting tweets, liking Facebook pages and posts, or adding Twitter or Facebook friends from numerous fake accounts, for a predetermined fee, such as $15 per 1,000 Facebook "likes," or $100 per 1,000 Twitter followers. This practice is common outside

politics, where marketers have discovered that the number of "likes," fans, friends, or followers is important to a large number of consumers, who weigh these quantitative data much as they do the qualitative data of reviews.

When Facebook purged known fake accounts, as reported by TechCrunch, some of the fan pages that lost the most "likes" as a result were those of games—Texas HoldEm Poker (the mobile app and Facebook game), CityVille, and FarmVille—and pop singers Justin Bieber and Lady Gaga. One company advertised having 83,000 social media personas—each with multiple social media accounts on different platforms like Facebook and Twitter—which it could use to generate "likes" and friends. In 2013, a botnet—using 1.8 million linked personal computers—was discovered to be generating 3 million clicks per day (liking, retweeting, and other social media activities) and earning $1 million per year from its customers. A 2013 study by Barracuda Labs found that the average consumer of fake Twitter followers purchased 50,000 followers; 16 percent had boosted their support to more than 1 million followers, though in those cases it was not clear how many were fake. Major brands accused of purchasing fake social media support include Pepsi, Louis Vuitton, Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, and Mercedes Benz.

Politicians and Fake Accounts

In 2012, the Mitt Romney presidential campaign was accused of having hired one of these companies to generate hundreds of thousands of fake Facebook "likes" and Twitter followers. Beginning in July, his average number of new Twitter followers increased from 3,500 per day to 62,000 a day, overnight. Facebook "likes" similarly climbed steadily in late July, spiking drastically just in time to hit 3 million "likes" on August 1 (and 3.2 million a day later, despite an increase of less than 2,000 a day a week earlier). Part of the motivation may have been the launching of the Twitter Political Index, which claimed to track enthusiasm levels for Romney and President Barack Obama. Creating fake Twitter accounts was an easy way to manipulate the index. Later in the month, Obama's campaign was accused of having used the same tactic. Failed Republican candidate Newt Gingrich may have beaten them both to the punch: the previous year, when Romney had fewer than 100,000 Twitter followers, Gingrich had 1.3 million, and bragged about them to the press several times before it was discovered that 82 percent of them were fake accounts (though that still leaves his real total as higher than Romney's).

Fake accounts are used not only to bolster the appearance of support of specific politicians, campaigns, and initiatives, but to encourage the spread of particular memes and talking points. A careful examination of some of the most-shared political posts and meme images on Facebook, especially those that are controversial or related to a current issue before Congress or in the news, will reveal among the sharers and likers a number of accounts that are almost certainly fake. (Telltale signs on Facebook are a use of only one profile photo, a busy feed but little to no personal interaction with friends, and minimal profile information.) These fake accounts may actually be actively maintained instead of existing just to generate "likes"—they may be used as incognito personas for political action committee (PAC) staffers and political party operatives to comment from, discredit opponents' supporters, and manipulate the online conversation.

Fake Facebook and other social media accounts claiming to belong to politicians and public figures are common, and sometimes used as parody or online roleplaying games. Other times they are actively deceptive or used for political propaganda by opponents. In 2009, a 38-year-old screenwriter, Alex Grossman, created a fake Facebook account, "Governor Palin," for former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin. He said later that he created the account in order to demonstrate the low political acumen of Palin's supporters, and made frequent updates to the account that were a mild parody of Palin's persona, such as "God loves us all, now matter how black or African, or even gay or Jewish we are."

In 2011, a cache of 75,000 private e-mails obtained by the hacktivist group Anonymous and released to the public online revealed that defense contractor HBGary Federal had discussed a plan to work with partner companies Berico Technologies and Palantir in order to create fake social media profiles to infiltrate leftist political groups. One of the profiles was explicitly discussed, that of a Holly Weber who worked for Lockheed Martin and maintained Facebook and LinkedIn

accounts. HBGary Federal staff also brainstormed strategies for pretending to be teenagers online. The "persona management" operation was proposed as a $2 million project, and was the basis for various projects HBGary attempted to sell to the federal government.

Though attention has been focused on generating false "likes" and followers in social media, denying real ones is another form of deception. In 2010, Sarah Palin favorited and retweeted a tweet made by neoconservative commentator Ann Coulter, linking an image of a sign saying, "The blood of Jesus against Obama history made 4 Nov 2008 a Taliban Muslim illegally elected president USA: Hussein." Palin deleted the tweet and claimed it wasn't intentional.

Bill Kte'pi
Independent Scholar

See Also: *Al Gore's Penguin Army*; Astroturfing; Avatars; Decoy Campaign Web Sites; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Flog; Sockpuppets; Splogs.

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Decoy Campaign Web Sites

The first candidate Web site was constructed by U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein's campaign in 1994. A decade later, Howard Dean's pioneering use of Meetup.com and a myriad of individual bloggers as a fund-raising, information-generating network in the 2004 election cycle was another landmark in electronic campaigning. Then, in 2008, Barack Obama was named both "the first Internet President" and *Advertising Age* magazine's "Marketer of the Year" for the Web savvy demonstrated by his campaign. Further transformation of political communication continued in 2012, when candidates' debates were streamed live to computers and mobile devices for the first time.

As informal word-of-mouth contacts via social media sites becomes pervasive, more information exchange occurs via social media sites than via elite news sources. Among findings of the 2012 Pew Internet and American Life Project surveys of digital politics are that more Americans now obtain their news from Internet sources than from print and electronic media; 69 percent of online adults in the United States are active users of social media, and 66 percent of these employ online tools to communicate about civic and political matters. Younger voters are especially impacted by this shift in sources and forms of political news. The conflation of "objective" reporting, subjective impressions, parodies, satires, and outright deceptive message-generating practices creates new attitudes toward the democratic process, both humanizing and distorting perceptions of its actors and, early research shows, may be increasing both political cynicism and political engagement among younger voters.

Dual Processing and Online Politics

Research in human reasoning has posited that people tend to process information via one of two mental channels: centrally, with focus and logical concentration, or peripherally in a nearly automatic way, using heuristics or rules of thumb. People are likely to view Web content using peripheral processing. As Internet content is generally uncontrolled, its message-generating capacity is easily abused, especially as people are not likely to be closely scrutinizing the information they are receiving. Critics of the user-driven, bottom-up information flows in Web 2.0 believe that false consensus or pluralistic ignorance may drive public policy decisions and election outcomes.

A 2006 study of a cable news show hosted by comedian Jon Stewart coined the phrase *The Daily Show Effect* to describe the impact upon viewers of political parodies. Findings included negative impressions of both candidates, increased cynicism about the political process but increased confidence in their ability to sort through and understand public policy issues. A study of Tina Fey's 2008 *Saturday Night Live* impression of Sarah Palin found attitude changes among those who viewed it. The word *truthiness* was coined in 2005 by Comedy Central pundit Stephen Colbert and, in being named Word of the Year by the American Dialect society, was defined as "the quality of preferring concepts or facts one wishes to be true, rather than concepts or facts known to be true." While some online communication strategies are clearly designed as humor, and some (such as YouTube videos from sites like The Fake News Network) may be meant as parody, there is a likelihood that some users will not get the joke. Other studies of political humor cited findings that Colbert's satirical treatment of conservative talk show hosts leads some respondents to agree with the conservative viewpoints he implicitly pokes fun at.

Social Media and Political Skullduggery

Other Web tactics clearly fall into the dirty tricks category. These include fake Twitter feeds; fake or paid Twitter followers; fake spam messages; election malware embedded in political Web sites; and decoy election Web sites, some of which attempted to scam users in the 2012 cycle.

Some look-alike decoy election sites that pose as fund-raising arms of the major parties are actually siphoning funds collected into the bank accounts of the individuals who constructed the site. Two such sites identified by news sources as fund-raising scams were DemocraticNationalCommittee.org and RepublicanNationalCommittee.org. The September 21, 2012, broadcast of *ABC News With Diane Sawyer* reported that the owner of these two domain names is a Massachusetts truck driver who operates dozens of similar sites. Because he owns the domain names and posts a small disclaimer on the sites, the site developer claims that his actions are legal. Neither party was aware that the look-alike Web sites existed until ABC News contacted them. The sites were rerouted shortly after the ABC News report.

Another form of decoy content on social media are election Web sites that use forum software and anonymous domain registrations to generate discussion among genuine supporters of a candidate along with sham supporters who make inflammatory remarks that take the genuine supporters' positions to extremes. Early examples discussed in a Wired News report of November 6, 2007, included RudyGiulaniForum.com, MittRomneyForum.com, and FredThompsonForum.com. The Thompson forum was suspected as being driven by Ron Paul supporters.

These decoy forums often include links to YouTube videos that further denigrate the candidate. Those who are familiar with the actual rhetoric of the candidate and her or his supporters can differentiate between real and fake posts. However, in accordance with the peripheral processing mode that most people utilize in perusing online material, fact-checking seldom takes place. Many can miss the fakery and, taking it as gospel, send it forward through their networks, with the more sensational messages going viral. The use of forum links to generate spam often uses the opponent's name in the hot type and enhances both the virility of the message and its placement high on search engine results when the candidate's name is keyed in.

Researchers at the Indiana University School of Informatics and Computing studying information diffusion and opinion dynamics in networked online content have identified a form of political spam that they call political astroturf. Under the guise of grassroots organizing online, a single entity generates a campaign via Twitter and other social media that can be used to

spread disinformation to undermine competitors' campaigns. Such information flows can go well beyond the original online venues. In cases where tweets are retweeted and go viral, mainstream news media may pick up the story and generate it further. In their report to the Fifth International Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) Conference on Weblogs and Social Media, the researchers presented an example from the 2010 midterm elections where inflammatory wording in a tweet relating to the use of stimulus funds for a study of drug-addicted macaques generated a viral coke monkeys meme.

Whether political speech on the Internet should or can be controlled is a growing issue. Anonymity is a key component of these discussions. While courts have found that the First Amendment protects anonymous political speech and activity for those conducting those activities in the actual world, the protection of anonymous speech in online venues has not been secured and remains open for judicial review. Legislation to ban anonymous online speech has been introduced in a number of states, including California and New York.

Leslie Reynard
Washburn University

See Also: Astroturfing; Deception in Political Social Media; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Flog; Going Viral; Push Polling; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; Sockpuppets; Wikipedia Misuse.

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Deep Packet Inspection

Deep packet inspection is a refinement of the firewall technique that allows a third party to block or examine packetized information as it travels over a network. One way that the Internet succeeds in quickly transmitting data is by breaking information into small blocks of information known as "packets." A typical packet contains about 500 bytes of data, not including the header information used to address and monitor the packet; the maximum Ethernet packet is 1,518 bytes. In practical terms, this means that a short, text-only e-mail would be split into five to 10 packets when it transverses the Internet, while a low-resolution photo would be split into 200 to 500 packets. A basic Web page with graphics could be around a megabyte in size, requiring as many as 2,000 packets, and an hour voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) call would be 10 times that much.

In what is now called shallow-packet inspection, a packet's addressing information is checked to see whether the source or the destination of the packet meets with the approval of the network administrator. This kind of technology was used for the first Web filtering, but it was rather crude; network administrators were able to block entire domains, such as YouTube.com. In addition, if all a network administrator wants to do is block certain kinds of packets (e.g., a telecom that wants to stop customers from using VOIP), or block the originator or sender of a packet (e.g., a government that wishes to stop communication between its citizens and an offshore dissident group), then a standard firewall will be sufficient. However, this is increasingly too crude of a device.

With shallow-packet inspection, it would be more difficult to block specific videos. As large content providers came to dominate the Web, a new technology was needed to see what a user was sending. This was not easy; packet headers

contain standardized addressing information that is easy to decode, while the information each packet contains may be in any variety of formats, and is likely only a snippet of the entire message.

In 2005, Thomas Porter reported that major networking providers (such as Microsoft, Cisco, Checkpoint, Symantec, Nortel, SonicWall, NAI, and Juniper/Netscreen) had begun to develop systems that look at the contents of each packet, including the address information but also reaching into the data each packet sends, before a decision is made to send the packet to its destination. In 2009, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that the Iranian government had set up a sophisticated deep packet inspection system, causing Internet users to experience extremely slow response rates. More recently, in 2012, the administrators of the Tor service noticed that the Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation began to employ deep packet inspection based on its observation of its users, joining China, Iran, and Kazakhstan in this practice.

Christopher Leslie
Polytechnic Institute of New York University

See Also: China; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; FinFisher; Firewalling; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Great Firewall of China; Iran; Tor.

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Delicious.com

Delicious.com was founded by Joshua Schachter in September 2003 as a social bookmarking application. It is a free service that was designed to allow users to keep track of bookmarks by uniform resource locator (URL) address. The site was an extension of Muxway, a blog created by Schachter to keep track of links related to Memepool, a cooperative site that included links to interesting items on the Web. Originally dubbed deli.icio.us, the site represented a domain hack that took advantage of the newly launched .us Web address. The site was renamed delicious.com in 2007.

The goal of the Web site was to allow users to secure a single place where they could collect and showcase individual links to pages across the Web. The service didn't save the Web pages; rather, it stored the URL address to the pages along with descriptions and tags. The service allowed users to edit the URL address and title and to add notes for additional descriptions and information about the bookmark.

Although other bookmarking services had been around since 1996, Delicious was different because it pioneered the use of tags. Tags are short key words that users developed to categorize and locate links again. These tags allowed users to organize their bookmarks by topic by assigning nonhierarchical key words, which provided an overview of information on the referent site without having to access the site itself. Tags could be created using freely chosen index terms or chosen from a list of drop-down words. Originally, multiple tags were space separated, so multiword tags were written as run-on words (such as socialmedia instead of social media). Now, tags are comma separated, but the old run-on words are still used. The popularity of the site led to the creation of online communities that developed shared vocabularies around these tags, known as folksonomies.

The Web site allows bookmarks to be stored publicly—so other users can see them—or privately. With the focus on public bookmarks, the site encourages others to add, annotate, and edit public bookmarks and tags. Users are able to search through collections of other users to discover new things, and a combined view of all bookmarks with a given tag is available. The Web page allows uses to follow not just particular topics but specific users or specific tags by other users. Following topics, tags, or users allows users to see new links posted on the site. By subscribing to multiple tags, users are provided with automatically updated lists of relevant bookmarks. Many

credit the social aspect of Delicious as a reason for its success.

While public bookmarks are an important part of Delicious.com, there are options for private bookmarks. To keep an item private, users need to specify the bookmark as private when saving or editing. In addition, any bookmarks imported from Web browsers are private by default but can be made public. The ability to import links from personal computers enables new users to start with an established set of bookmarks and allows users to access the same bookmarks from any computer.

Although the site was launched in 2003, Schachter maintained separate employment until March 2005, in time for the firm to receive $2 million in funding from Union Square and Amazon.com in April. In December 2005, Delicious .com was bought by Yahoo! for a rumored $15 million to $30 million. And by 2008, the bookmarking service had more than 5.3 million users and supported 180 million unique bookmarks.

In April 2011, Yahoo! sold the domain to AVOS, a company founded by Steve Chen and Chard Hurley, the original founders of YouTube. AVOS redesigned the sight and relaunched it in September 2011 to help mitigate information overload. The redesign came as a surprise to many users and brought a great deal of criticism. Critics charged that many of the features were disabled, removed, or temporarily unavailable. And, although the company provided multiple reminders to export and back up bookmarks, many users found their bookmarks deleted in the switch.

AVOS sought to counter some of this criticism by creating stacks, which allowed users to group together links with similar topics. Stacks could be worked on collectively, publically, or privately within groups. In addition, users could create their own stack in response to stacks created by others. Delicious users felt this new format was too closely mimicking pinboards (such as Pintrest), and the feature was discontinued in August 2012. AVOS continues to try to appease its member base and announced smartphone applications and a new redesign that features faster loading and better search features in January 2013.

Carolyn Popp Garrity
Birmingham-Southern College

See Also: Bookmarking; Content Communities; Digg; Evolution of Social Media; Folksonomy; Reddit; Social Bookmarking; StumbleUpon.

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Demand Progress

Demand Progress is a political advocacy organization that seeks to promote progressive policies and candidates in the United States. It was founded in 2010 and claims over 1 million members. It has an especially strong voice on issues of open access to information, censorship, and regulation of the Internet. Its self-proclaimed mission is to promote civil liberties, civil rights, and government reform. As such, it has taken on a number of positions opposing various prospective laws that would criminalize some types of online information sharing along with similar measures. Aaron Swartz, its late founder, is also the inspiration for its current support of a law to decriminalize the violation of Internet service provider agreements and to reclassify them as civil matters.

Historical Background and Campaigns

Swartz founded Demand Progress as an outgrowth of his earlier work in providing easy public access to public documents through initiatives like his public.resource.org and his even larger project called Open Library, which sought to make information about every book ever published available online. Rather than limiting itself to online petitions and

publicity campaigns, Demand Progress has directly engaged in fund-raising efforts to support politicians who are friendly to its causes and to bring pressure to bear on lawmakers who are voting on legislation that affects its core values.

To date, Demand Progress has led a number of campaigns that have been successful in drawing wide attention to potential government overreach and abuse of secret information. It has been active in publicizing legislation such as the Protect Intellectual Property Act (PIPA), the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA), and the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act (CISPA).

Other related efforts include the "You've Been Owned" campaign, which raised awareness of the potential impacts of the October 2012 case *Kirtsaeng v. John Wiley and Sons*. Unlike the online security legislation it had previously opposed, this judgment would have impacts in both the digital and material landscape. In essence, John Wiley and their supporters argued that individuals should not be able to resell used intellectual or copyrighted material, including books, music albums, and countless other items.

Aside from the obvious threats to Web sites like eBay, this case would have potentially made it a crime for people to engage in a host of long-standing practices like selling used items from home, lending films or books to friends, and so on. Being a court case there was no means of bringing direct pressure to bear on justices, but Demand Progress mobilized its supporters in order to bring the indirect pressure of public awareness to the case. Interestingly, in addition to the usual social media viral efforts its campaigns typically employ, Demand Progress also created entertaining cartoons to explain the ruling's relevance and to serve as a public education resource.

A protester at a January 18, 2012, event organized by the New York Tech Meet Up, which featured Demand Progress founder Aaron Swartz and others speaking against the Protect Intellectual Property Act (PIPA) and the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA).

Current Campaigns

There is a high degree of continuity in the issues targeted by Demand Progress. One of its prominent political allies, U.S. Representative Zoe Lofgren of California, is spearheading efforts to support work that honors Swartz's legacy. The so-called Aaron's Law has been proposed as both a tribute to Swartz and as an effort to counterbalance what the organization sees as heavy-handed tactics used to prosecute open information advocates. Specifically, it changes the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act so that violation of an individual Web site's terms of agreement or user agreement would no longer be classed as a felony, with corresponding lengthy prison sentences. It is the prospect of such a long custodial sentence that is supposed to have been a key motivator in Aaron Swartz's suicide.

Another central campaign is "The Internet versus Hollywood." Its claim is that after the failure of PIPA/SOPA legislation, the motion picture industry continues to try to criminalize uploading user-purchased materials to cloud computing sites. Specifically, it has filed a legal brief on behalf of Kim Dotcom, the operator of the Web site Megaupload.com, who has been charged with intellectual property and copyright violations as his site has been used to distribute these materials by others. According to Demand Progress, the implication that a site operator could be held liable for acts committed by site users is potentially catastrophic for any Web site that relies on user-uploaded content, including even well-known sites like YouTube. Taken to extremes, it argues the logic could even extend to online e-mail services that millions of people rely upon.

Because of the genuine possibility that Megaupload could be reasonably held liable for at least providing controls on uploaded content, the Demand Progress effort to generate petition

signatures to send to the judge on the case specifically focuses on the government seizure of files and information belonging to people who used Megaupload and related sites and who now have no way of retrieving their personal files. In other words, it appeals to the long-standing principle that personal property cannot be seized without probable cause and specific legal sanction.

Demand Progress is also involved in a nonlegal campaign against major U.S. Internet service providers (ISPs) that are implementing a "six strikes" plan to cut down on copyright infringement and similar problems. Rather than using legal means, these firms will simply restrict or deny Internet access to users who have been accused of violating copyright. The objections of Demand Progress center on the lack of a means to contest accusations without paying a fee, the ambiguity of how and when the rules will be applied, and the likelihood that most terms will be buried in the fine print of user agreements and thus not clearly understood by customers.

Other Progressive Campaigns

Though the majority of its efforts have focused on Internet issues, Demand Progress has also engaged in initiatives that are in the wider stream of progressive (leftist) politics. These have included a campaign to end indefinite military detention at places like Guantanamo Bay; an effort to have state legislatures amend their constitutions to create a national popular vote for the U.S. presidency; and support for Lawrence Lessig's Grassroots Democracy Act, which would create vouchers to fund political campaigns for politicians who exclusively use public funding and small donations and allow organizations to aggregate smaller amounts into large donations that would theoretically reduce the influence of the wealthiest citizens and corporations on the political process.

Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St. Andrews

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Virtual; Cause-Marketing Campaigns; Digital Media Law Project; Downstream Liability, Political Implications of; Privacy; Reddit.

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DeMint, Jim

Jim DeMint has served in the U.S. Senate from South Carolina. Elected in 2004, DeMint is arguably one of the most prominent conservatives in the Senate. He is an economic and social conservative opposed to abortion, gay marriage, and pork barrel spending. DeMint is considered one of the leaders of the Tea Party movement in Congress. Recently, DeMint shocked political insiders by announcing that he was leaving the Senate in January 2013 to serve as the president of the Heritage Foundation.

James Warren DeMint was born in 1951 in Greenville, South Carolina. He attended the University of Tennessee, where he received his bachelor's degree, and Clemson University, where he graduated with his master's in business administration. After college, DeMint founded a marketing research firm.

In 1998, DeMint was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from South Carolina. He was reelected in 2000 and 2002 and established his reputation as an economic and social conservative.

In 2004, DeMint was elected to the U.S. Senate from South Carolina. He quickly took conservative stands on abortion, gay marriage, pork barrel projects, and government spending. He blocked thousands of pork barrel projects. He is frequently described as the most conservative member of the Senate. In 2007, the American Conservative Union gave DeMint a "perfect" rating.

In 2009, DeMint became an enthusiastic supporter of the Tea Party movement. The movement's opposition to President Barack Obama's stimulus package and health care plan and vision

of a limited government reflected DeMint's conservative views. He is usually considered one of the movement's leaders.

In 2010 and 2012, he sought to recruit conservative candidates in Senate races. These included Sharron Angle in Nevada, Christine O'Donnell in Delaware, Ken Buck in Colorado, Richard Murdock in Indiana, and Todd Akin in Missouri. Some of the candidates DeMint supported—such as Marco Rubio in Florida and Pat Toomey in Pennsylvania—won their respective races. Supporters admired DeMint's attempts to hold the Republican Party true to what they perceived to be its core principles. On the other hand, critics lamented the fact that most of the conservative candidates endorsed by DeMint lost. They argued that these candidates were too radical for their respective electorates and that more moderate Senate candidates would have won and resulted in Republican control of the Senate in 2010 or 2012. Instead, conservative candidates like Richard Murdock and Todd Akin made controversial statements about rape and abortion, and Republicans missed the opportunity to regain control of the Senate.

DeMint easily won re-election in 2010, receiving 61 percent of the vote. In the Senate, DeMint served on a variety of committees, including the Foreign Relations Committee; the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee; and the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee.

Heritage Foundation

On December 6, 2012, Jim DeMint shocked his Senate colleagues and political insiders when he announced that he would resign from the Senate in January 2013 to accept a position as president of the Heritage Foundation. DeMint contended that he would have more influence over the conservative movement as president of the Heritage Foundation than as an individual senator from South Carolina. Some conservatives praised the decision as a brilliant move on DeMint's part, while other conservatives condemned DeMint for deserting the movement. Some observers noted that DeMint's decision might have been motivated by monetary factors. They pointed out that DeMint's assets were valued at only $69,000—unusual in a body famous for its millionaires. While DeMint is leaving the Senate, he will likely play a significant role in the conservative movement for years to come.

Jason Roberts
Quincy College

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2002); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); ContractfromAmerica.org; Tea Party Movement.

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Democracy Now!

Democracy Now! is a national, nonprofit, independent radio and television news program that broadcasts around the world. The program, broadcast by Pacifica Radio, is the largest public media collaboration in the United States. One of the principal goals of *Democracy Now!* is to provide its listeners access to people and perspectives that are often not available in the dominant, corporate-sponsored media in the United States.

History

Democracy Now! was founded in 1996 by Amy Goodman, Juan Gonzalez, Larry Bensky, Salim Muwakkil, Julie Drizin, and Denis Moynihan.

Amy Goodman is the core creator and principal host of the program, with Juan Gonzalez as a consistent cohost. Goodman was previously the producer of the evening news on Pacifica Radio's New York Station, WBAI, and gained international recognition and a number of awards for her groundbreaking coverage of the U.S.-backed Indonesian occupation of East Timor and associated public massacres.

On February 16, 1996, *Democracy Now!* completed its first broadcast and became the only daily election show in broadcasting. The show became so popular that public demand led to the daily program continuing beyond the elections, which quickly became Pacifica's flagship news and public affairs program.

In 1998, Goodman and Jeremy Scahill, an early contributor and producer, traveled to Nigeria to investigate the drilling activities of U.S.-based oil companies in the Niger Delta. Goodman and Scahill then produced the radio documentary "Drilling and Killing: Chevron and Nigeria's Oil Dictatorship," which investigated allegations of Chevron's role in the murder of Nigerian civilians who were protesting the frequent oil spills that decimated their communities. The documentary won the 1998 George Polk Award.

In 1999, Goodman traveled to Peru to interview American prisoner Lori Berenson, where Goodman was the first journalist to be admitted into the prison to speak to Berenson. Later that year, *Democracy Now!* did extensive coverage of the World Trade Organization (WTO) protests in Seattle, Washington, also known as the Battle of Seattle. Extensive coverage of the protests in the streets was paired with interviews and coverage of the discussion and significant events taking place in the actual WTO meetings.

Democracy Now! orchestrated a unique multimedia collaboration to cover the 2000 presidential election. Distribution included satellite and cable television, nonprofit community radio, and the Internet. The shows were live, two-hour daily specials at the Republican and Democratic national conventions, broadcast directly from independent media centers in Los Angeles and Philadelphia. Then, on Election Day in 2000, Amy Goodman and Gonzalo Aburto conducted an impromptu interview with Bill Clinton during which they asked challenging questions that the president was not accustomed to hearing. The interview marked one of the few times during the election that the public was able to hear hard-hitting questions, and Clinton called the questioning "hostile," and "combative," and at times "disrespectful." Goodman said she was "just doing her job."

Democracy Now! began its daily weekday television broadcast shortly after September 11, 2001, and became an independent nonprofit organization in June 2002. Highlights since 2002 include extensive coverage of the buildup before and operations during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; in-depth analysis of the 2004, 2008, and 2012 political conventions and national elections (during the 2008 Republican convention, several staff were forcefully arrested, leading to public outcry and a lawsuit against the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota); in-depth coverage of the Troy Davis execution; the 2008 financial crisis and the Occupy Wall Street movement; as well as a wide-ranging list of national and international issues.

Democracy Now! is as of December 2012 the only public media program in the United States that airs simultaneously on radio, satellite and cable television, and the Internet. The program continues to cover critical news and social justice issues around the world, many of which receive little to no coverage in the corporate news media. As such, *Democracy Now!* is widely seen as one of the most important and valuable sources for news.

Reach and Role

Democracy Now!'s broadcast is carried on more than 1,000 public radio and television stations, making it the largest media collaboration in the United States. The program is broadcast on Pacifica Radio, National Public Radio (NPR), community and college radio stations, public access TV channels, some public broadcasting systems, satellite TV channels, Free Speech TV and Link TV carried on both DISH and DirecTV satellite systems, and on the Internet as downloadable and streaming audio and video on democracynow.org and via podcast.

Democracy Now! plays a critical role in the news media landscape by offering an alternative to the main current news media industry, which is dominated by corporate, for-profit media conglomerates. Corporate news media is often categorized as threatening free press and democratic

processes because corporate media outlets in the United States are legally responsible to their shareholders to maximize profits. Ed Herman and Noam Chomsky point out several issues with for-profit corporate news media in their book *Manufacturing Consent,* in which they trace the routes by which money and power are able to filter the news, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to dominate the messages that reach the public. The critical elements are a set of news filters that focus on the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms and advertising as the primary income source of the mass media, among other selection biases and control mechanisms. *Democracy Now!* is able to avoid these filters by remaining an independent, nonprofit, commercial-free news broadcast funded entirely through contributions from listeners, viewers, and foundations. *Democracy Now!* does not accept advertisements, corporate underwriting, or government funding.

Frequent and noteworthy guests on *Democracy Now!* include (not a comprehensive list) Jeremy Scahill, Sharif Abdel Kouddous, Norman G. Finkelstein, Cornel West, Dennis Kucinich, Howard Zinn, Michael Moore, Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky, Ralph Nader, Jeff Cohen, Danny Glover, Matt Taibbi, Paul Krugman, Alan Dershowitz, Alan Greenspan, Arundhati Roy, Bill Clinton, Bill Moyers, Edward Said, Evo Morales, George McGovern, George Papandreou, Gore Vidal, Hugo Chávez, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Jimmy Carter, Joseph Stiglitz, Julian Assange, Lori Berenson, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Yoko Ono, and Lou Dobbs.

Democracy Now!, including Amy Goodman and other staff, have won a myriad of awards for their contributions to journalism and news media, including the Right Livelihood Award (often referred to as the Alternative Nobel Prize), the Gandhi Peace Award, the Park Center for Independent Media Izzy Award (three times), the ACLU-NCA Henry W. Edgerton Civil Liberties Award, the Paley Center for Media She Made It Award, the Gracie Award for American Women in Radio and Television Public Broadcasting, the James Aronson Award for Social Justice Journalism, the Puffin/Nation Prize for Creative Citizenship, the Ruben Salazar Journalism Award, the George Polk Award, the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Prize, the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award, the Electronic Frontier Foundation Pioneer Award, and the Golden Reel from the National Federation of Community Broadcasters, among many others.

Devan Rosen
Ithaca College

See Also: Citizen Journalism; Economic and Social Justice; Global Warming and Climate Change; Nonprofit Organizations.

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Democracyfor America.com

Democracy for America (DFA) is a nationwide grassroots organization of more than 1 million people. Officially classified as a political action committee (PAC), DFA pursues progressive political reforms within the Democratic Party as well as the nation as a whole. Founded in 2004 by former Democratic presidential candidate and Democratic National Committee (DNC) chair Howard Dean, DFA provides campaign training, organizing resources, and media exposure so members can support progressive issues and candidates up and down the ballot. DFA also sponsors public educational venues for various issues and makes donations to candidates running for office.

Initially formed by Dean in 2001 as the Fund for a Healthy America PAC, the group was renamed Democracy for America in early 2004. After failing to win the Democratic nomination for president

later that same year, Dean sought to build grassroots support for various Democratic candidates through the DFA. Headquartered in South Burlington, Vermont, DFA endorsed Democrats running for office at all levels of government in 2004. After ascending to the DNC chairmanship in 2005, Dean relinquished control of the PAC to his brother, Jim Dean. Since then, DFA has supported some 600 candidates in their successful campaigns for office, including President Barack Obama.

As a PAC, the DFA can accept up to $5,000 in donations per individual or PAC, but it cannot take contributions from corporations or unions. In accordance with government regulations, the DFA reports to the Federal Election Commission (FEC) the identities of its donors. From the start, the DFA has concentrated its efforts primarily on candidate endorsements and sponsorships of training academies for grassroots activists, campaign staff, and candidates (in contrast to large TV advertising campaigns). Members of the DFA, from both local and national levels, take part in these programs in order to learn how to conduct winning political campaigns. The foremost training program within the DFA is the Campaign Academy, which involves two day-long workshops on campaign operations for candidates, staff, and activists. Various sessions, led by professional campaign personnel, cover the full range of campaign activities—from fundraising to voter turnout to social networking—in order to build a nationwide, grassroots organization of progressive activists possessing the skills necessary for competing effectively in elections.

The DFA also runs a free online training program called Night School that involves video Web-conferencing seminars. These hour-long, interactive sessions allow individuals to converse with professional trainers and learn about a variety of campaign-related topics. Through such exchanges, participants can ask questions and glean campaign materials right from their own homes. In addition, the DFA grants scholarships to liberal bloggers via a program called the Netroots Nation Scholarship.

The DFA's Campaign Academy and Night School are complemented by a social networking mechanism known as the DFA Community. This setup allows DFA members to identify and meet with other progressives in their locales as well as organize groups and plan events. Members normally gather together once a month in groups across the nation, carrying out goals set at the national level. These local groups, however, are independent and not formally associated with the national organization. The DFA Community has a presence in all 435 congressional districts and involves more than 600 online groups. Local members' support for certain political candidates can serve as a guide for the DFA in determining whom to back. In addition, the DFA considers endorsements made by local groups in order to gauge member support for various candidates.

Universal health care was the center of attention for the DFA after the 2008 presidential election, specifically a single-payer system through the U.S. government. This position is more liberal than most Democratic officials' stances at both state and national levels. Although candidates in the Democratic Party frequently receive endorsements and campaign support from the DFA, the organization differs with the official party line on a variety of issues, including the legalization of same-sex marriage (which the DFA favors). The DFA also was against the Don't Ask, Don't' Tell military policy, sending an open letter—with the signatures of 100,000 members—to President Obama and all 100 U.S. Senators in 2010. The dispute in Wisconsin over labor union rights was a prime focus for the DFA in 2011, and the DFA continues to fight against state voter identification laws, arguing that certain groups—particularly minorities, seniors, and the disabled—are disproportionately affected and thus disenfranchised.

Steven J. Campbell
University of South Carolina–Lancaster

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Blog for America; Bottom-Up Campaigns; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Campaigns, Virtual; Networks, Political.

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Demonstrations, Organizing

Contentious politics is rooted in a set of consolidated action repertoires, with demonstrations being the most widespread protest tactic. Among the most powerful images of 2011 and 2012 are the pictures of thousands of people demonstrating in Tahrir Square (Cairo, Egypt), Zuccotti Park (New York City), and Puerta del Sol (Madrid, Spain). However, citizens have been organizing demonstrations long before the advent of social media, at least since the 19th century. What has changed is the way people organize collective action, and the range of media and technology that support them in these operations.

Demonstrations play two fundamental roles within social movements: they are instrumental in conveying the contentious goals of a movement, and, at the same time, they contribute to sustaining and reproducing the movement itself. Demonstrations, in fact, provide activists with an occasion to build and consolidate a collective identity, establish networks of communication and exchange, and create a community. Traditionally, demonstrations have been organized through word of mouth, as well as communication channels like the telephone, the fax machine, and, more recently, Internet and e-mail. How did the advent of social media and mobile devices change the way people organize demonstrations, and how do they contribute to shape contention repertoires? How are collective identity and movement creation and reproduction influenced in this process?

Impact of Social Media

The influence of social media and mobile devices on demonstration organization can be traced primarily on two levels, one external and one internal to the movement. On the external level, social media have an impact on the diffusion of repertoires of action across different national contexts and thematic settings. On the internal level, one can distinguish two further spheres of influence of social media: first, on the organizational processes of collective action, specifically on how people organize protest events, take to the streets, and network with other groups; and, secondly, on collective identity, that is to say the mechanisms and practices through which people motivate themselves to take action and recognize each other as part of the same struggle.

Observers have mixed views about the impact of social media on organized collective action. The debate on the topic, in particular on account of the 2011 protests, has developed along the dichotomy techno-optimism versus techno-skepticism. For some, Facebook and Twitter are behind the new wave of contention, and they have made obsolete everything we know about people's participation in politics and social movements; organized collective action from now on will emerge online. For others, social media are unable to originate the strong ties that are needed for radical and massive mobilization; digital social networking promotes individual rather than collective action, while at the same time social media offer new and efficient tools for state monitoring. Some observers have used the label "slacktivism" in order to describe online political activities performed with minimal effort, which tend to make participants feel good about themselves but are not very efficient in achieving the stated political goals.

Both positions find partial confirmation in the most recent waves of mobilization. In the so-called Arab Spring, for example, scholars Philip Howard and Muzammil Hussain write that digital social media were

> . . . singularly powerful in spreading protest messages, driving coverage by mainstream broadcasters, connecting frustrated citizens with one another, and helping them to realize that they could take shared action regarding shared grievances.

They continue:

> [T]he precise grievances have varied significantly from country to country. Yet the use of

digital media to rouse and organize opposition has furnished a common thread.

But empirical analyses of Egyptian protests show that online social networks were primarily used as a platform of solidarity among upper-middle-class English-speaking activists and as "a key resource for getting information to the outside world, perpetuating the feeling that the world was watching, which was an important factor for morale and co-ordination on the ground," according to Christopher Wilson and Alexandra Dunn, rather than to organize protests.

Analysis

The 2011 protests have encouraged a more nuanced analysis of organized collective action in times of social media. Some scholars have focused on the actual practices of organizing demonstrations, with the aim of understanding the interaction among digital social media, the different forms of movement organizations, and the physical and geographical spaces of contention and the different cultures, both referring to the use of communicative tools and to the organizational structure of mobilization, that are embedded in different experiences of collective action.

Looking at the reciprocal influence of social media and organizational cultures, scholars have observed how in the Arab Spring, the Spanish 15M, and Occupy Wall Street the use of social media has contributed to shape the repertoire of action and the structural organization of movements. Scholars W. Lance Bennett and Alexandra Segerberg, embracing techno-optimism, define "digitally networked action" as those instances of political participation and protest built on "personalized communication" rather than on organized groups. Digitally networked action is characterized by a set of "inclusive [. . .] personal action

Occupy Wall Street protesters at a General Assembly meeting in Washington Square Park in New York City on October 15, 2011, display their approval through hand signals adopted by organizers. October 15 was a global day of protest under the banner "United for Global Change" in 950 cities in 82 countries; organizers spread the word online using many different types of social media.

frames" shared via social media. In this process of individualization of protest, the new "logic of connective action" overcomes traditional social movement schemes; however, the two coexist, resulting in hybrid forms of protest. At the core of this hypothesis is the idea that social media, providing immediate access to information, and therefore to calls for action and available repertoires of contention, have the ability to enhance the personalization of protest, attributing to the individual citizen-protester direct agency in the mobilization, at the expense of existing organized activist groups.

In his research on Occupy Boston, Jeffrey Juris has found empirical support to this observation, even if he does not share in full Bennett and Segerberg's techno-enthusiastic perspective. Focusing on the interaction between media practices and organizational cultures, Juris argued that the activists' adoption of specific communication tools has the ability to strengthen as well as weaken some of the organizational models proposed by the different groups in a movement. He observed how "the increasing use of social media such as Facebook or Twitter has led to new patterns of protest that shape movement dynamics beyond the realm of technological practice." Further, "rather than generating organizational networks, social media primarily operate via interpersonal networks, resulting less in 'networks of networks' than in 'crowds of individuals.'" In other words, social media enhance the "logic of aggregation" in a way similar to how the Internet has fostered a "logic of networking" within the global justice movement.

Scholar Paolo Gerbaudo shares with Juris the focus on the interaction among social media, organizational cultures, and physical space, but his analysis moves away from the techno-optimist position. What for Juris is the "logic of aggregation," that is to say the capacity of social media to bring together in the same physical space and in the same act of demonstrating a wide group of individuals with different backgrounds and goals, for Gerbaudo is the "choreography of assembly," in other words "a process of symbolic construction of public space which facilitates and guides the physical assembling of a highly dispersed and individualized constituency." In this setting, "influential Facebook admins and activist tweeps become 'soft leaders' or choreographers, involved in setting the scene, and constructing an emotional space within which collective action can unfold."

From this point of view, the influence of social media in the organization of demonstrations is not only technical, but it deeply restructures the way in which people participate in acts of protest, even if not in the way that supporters of the principles of "horizontalism" and "leaderlessness" would think. Gerbaudo offers the examples of MeetUp, "informing users about 'offline' meetings they might be interested in"; Doodle, a Web-polling "application used to schedule meetings and other appointments; and of course the popular Facebook Event function, used to invite people to various activities." These services, contends Gerbaudo, "are testament to the extent to which the assembling of social groupings in our fragmented and dispersed societies relies on a complex process of symbolic and technical mediation."

Social Movement Media Cultures

The influence of digital media over mobilization is culturally mediated at different levels: it interacts not only with organizational cultures, but also with "social movement media cultures," as Sasha Costanza-Chock has found in his research on Occupy Wall Street. Costanza-Chock argued that the movement, in terms of media practices, is "complex and internally differentiated, rather than a mass of digitally savvy youth with laptops and smartphones." Different media cultures, shaped by "previous histories of movement media practices, as well as key individuals with past experience as movement communicators" inform the way in which different activists use digital media.

The widespread accessibility of social media has challenged, transformed, and reshaped the role of media activists, without eliminating it. In fact, while the use of Facebook is almost ubiquitous within Occupy protesters, "media, tech and press WGs composed by small numbers of relatively highly skilled, more experienced movement actors play key roles in creating, curating and circulating media texts, as well as in shaping the media culture of the movement." In this process, the media cultures of contemporary movements interact with the legacy of past struggles for free culture and digital commons, even if it is still too soon

to assess the level of continuity and hybridization that this interaction will produce and to identify a new established movement media culture.

Diffusion of Action

Social media also influence the diffusion of action repertoires across national boundaries. People have seen the modular character of contention repertoires at work with antiausterity protests like the Occupy Wall Street mobilizations, which have been reproduced with varying degrees of success by different actors in various parts of the world. The same mechanism is being analyzed by scholars using similar hypotheses and different definitions: both Sidney Tarrow's concept of "thin diffusion" and the notion of "cloud protesting" aim at identifying in contemporary forms of protest an immediate exchange of symbolic content, such as slogans, tactics (think for example of the rapid diffusion of protest camps within the "global" Occupy protest), and protest know-how, well beyond the traditional channels of communication of social movements. Social media and mobile technology are at the core of such thin diffusion, which is nonetheless as powerful as the textbook "thick diffusion."

Stefania Milan
Tilburg University
Lorenzo Zamponi
European University Institute

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Africa, North; Arab Spring; Bahrain; Cloud Protesting; Egypt; Internet Gathering; Libya; Occupy Movement; Piccadilly Riots, London; Quebec, Canada, 2012 Student Protests; Seattle 1999 WTO Protests; Spanish 15M Movement; Syria; Tunisia.

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Department of Homeland Security Social Media Monitoring Initiative

In response to the growing ubiquity and pervasiveness of social media, in 2010, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) created its Social

Media Monitoring and Situational Awareness Initiative (hereafter referred to as "the program"). The program's initial mission was to monitor social media Web sites for evidence of emerging and credible threats to national security and to share and collect data about possible terrorism suspects and terroristic and criminal acts in planning.

The program's first task was narrowly targeted at monitoring Web sites like Twitter and Facebook for commentary on three 2010 events: the Haitian earthquake; the Vancouver, British Columbia, Olympic events; and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. This focus was subsequently expanded to include monitoring of numerous and disparate publicly available online forums, blogs, public Web sites, and message boards, as well as search engines and content aggregators. Sources of the derived information might originate from citizenry, the public at large, as well as first responders, the press, volunteers, and others. The categories of individuals who are eligible to have their data monitored expanded as well. They include the following:

- Any U.S. citizen or foreign individual whose information is of a potential life-threatening nature
- Any U.S. or foreign official (whether private or public sector) who speaks publicly for an organization
- News readers, reporters (regardless of media focus) who utilize their reporting capabilities to keep their audiences updated and informed on various phenomena or events
- Public officials (current or past) who have been victimized in incidents related to national security
- Individuals engaged in terror incidents, drug cartels, or other major crimes as determined by DHS, who are killed or found dead.

The program's stated guidelines note that, in the course of monitoring, analysts and information compilers are not to post any information, seek out other users of the social media service or interact in any way with them, or accept any invitations to interact in any way. Personally identifiable information can include the individual's name; his/her affiliation, position, or title; as well as any identification that is publicly identifiable. Analysts are instructed to disregard information not belonging to these categories.

Once information of value is ascertained, it is extracted from the site and, utilizing a specific Web application, it then forms the basis of a report. DHS maintained that only user-generated information from publicly available social media sites is retained and that all unused information is discarded or deleted. All saved information becomes part of the federal record but is retained for no more than five years. By its own accounting, information derived from social media sweeps are wide-ranging (over 9,300 reported in one six-month period alone) but often innocuous (e.g., news stories about natural occurrences, power outages, tornadoes, floods, or fires, or Border Patrol apprehensions). Notwithstanding, DHS issues no assurances that it will not seek more robust and sophisticated tools to mine the Internet for what it views as threats to national security. This wide scope has alarmed privacy advocates, who, through a series of legal maneuverings and public disclosures, have sought to, at the very least, curtail the scope of the program.

History

In 2010, the DHS Privacy Office approved the initiative aimed at monitoring social media Web sites for what DHS believes are emerging threats to national security. The DHS Privacy Office was created by the U.S. Congress in 2003 as a component of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (PL 107–296, 116 Stat. 2135), specifically Section 221 and 222 of that act. Under the supervision of the chief privacy officer, the Privacy Office is tasked with reviewing major initiatives of the agency to ascertain whether citizens' right to privacy is respected when planning or updating any program, system, or initiative, while, at the same time, ensuring that DHS has the ability to effectively collect and share information about potential or ongoing threats to national security. DHS's Privacy Office was the first statutorily required privacy office in any federal agency and is responsible for evaluating DHS programs, systems, and initiatives for potential privacy impacts, and providing mitigation strategies to reduce the privacy impact. Furthermore, when privacy complaints or

violations are alleged, the Privacy Office is tasked with responding to those complaints and, if necessary, provides redress by ordering additional training, education, and public outreach in order to encourage departmental transparency.

As its guide, the Privacy Office purports to use DHS's Fair Information Practice Principles (FIPPs) as its policy framework in order to enhance individuals' privacy protections by assessing the nature and purpose for all personally identifiable information (PII) collected in the service of fulfilling DHS's mission. The eight FIPPs—transparency, individual participation, purpose specification, data minimization, use limitation, data quality and integrity, security, and accountability and auditing—are a set of principles that rest at the heart of the Federal Privacy Act of 1974 [PL. 93-579] and are highly influential in the crafting of privacy laws in many U.S. states as well as other nations.

DHS developed the program very much out of the public eye. Only after DHS was sued under the Freedom of Information Act by the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) did details about the program emerge into public view. In two contentious meetings on February 15, 2012 (one public and one classified), DHS officials were called before the Subcommittee on Counterintelligence and Intelligence headed by Rep. Patrick Meehan (R-PA) to explain the depth, ubiquity, goals, and technical capabilities of the program. During testimony, DHS revealed that the agency had outsourced the program without competitive bidding to General Dynamics, a major defense contractor located in West Falls Church, Virginia. As a condition of the contract, DHS noted that it required all General Dynamics employees to adhere to DHS privacy standards and to undergo training in handling PII. Furthermore, the agency noted that if General Dynamics employees misuse PII of journalists, public figures, or the general public obtained through monitoring of various social media (Facebook, Twitter, and a growing list of other unspecified Web sites), said employees will be directed toward additional training or dismissal from the program.

How the Program Works

To facilitate the program, General Dynamics and DHS engage in key word monitoring of various Web sites of interest, with particular attention paid to social media. For example, the key word searches are used when scanning Facebook or Twitter because DHS is particularly interested in breaking news tweets and Facebook posts. The names, usernames, blog URLs, and other identifying information of "first responders" to these events are recorded for later analysis. The list of key words is dynamic, not static, but key words were initially selected by an unspecified commercially available software package and later customized by DHS. Some at the hearing questioned whether DHS was intending to keep dossiers on private citizens. In response, the agency denied this and stipulated that it regularly scrubbed its servers of nonrelevant information.

At the subcommittee hearing, DHS officials noted the department is merely fulfilling its mission under the Homeland Security Act to keep abreast of possible and credible threats to national security, and the program is an extension of other initiatives already in place with respect to monitoring traditional media. Furthermore, DHS argued that the program is legal because the agency forbids the wide-scale targeting of individuals (with some exceptions made for individuals in potential life-or-death situations, senior public officials or spokespeople making public statements, and members of the news media) and does not collect or catalogue PII. Privacy advocates argued that this last statement directly contradicts prior statements made by DHS on the collection of PII (even in the same hearing) as well as the contents of DHS's own report of the program, which contained portions of PII in commentaries, blog postings, and tweets from disparate sites.

Key Words

After its hearing before the subcommittee, DHS reluctantly released a redacted list of key words and phrases the program uses to monitor social media and other Web sites. DHS deems a search of any of the key words or phrases worthy of investigation for possible signs of terrorist activities or threats to national security. The key words were included in DHS's 2011 Analyst's Desktop Binder that was used to identify suspect media content.

Free Speech and Privacy

In response to the release of the list, EPIC characterized the words and phrases as broad, vague,

and ambiguous. EPIC and other advocates like the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) are concerned that the actions of the program have the potential to violate First Amendment rights and the Federal Privacy Act of 1974 (PL. 93–579]. Specifically, privacy and free speech advocates worry that DHS seeks to have unfettered access to and use of individuals' and groups' PII (in violation of guidelines put in place by the Federal Privacy Act of 1974) and to monitor online dissent and criticism of the federal government by the press and others in order to chill free speech.

Illustratively, privacy advocates noted that the cache of documents released to them by DHS specified that, as part of its $11 million contract, General Dynamics is expected to collect reports that criticize the handling of various events and phenomena by agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Protection, and others. Within the documents released by DHS were the names of dozens of media outlets and publications that were being monitored such as the *New York Times, Computerworld, Wired Magazine, Drudge Report,* and *Huffington Post*. As a result, the privacy advocates argued that DHS's practice of surveilling social media and other Web sites (especially without independent guidelines and proper oversight) could lead to abuse and could discourage citizens from speaking out against the government.

The privacy advocates argued that concern should not only be for the actual content collected but also for the metadata behind it, as this allows federal officials to access a computer's identifying number (which can reveal the location of the individual, when the communication took place, and the identities of other unsuspecting parties). They noted, too, that other agencies are seeking to follow the lead of DHS by implementing their own social media surveillance. For example, shortly after the implementation of the program at DHS, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) initiated its own operation, a tool that alerts FBI officials to social media threats and harvests historical data from the Web that can later be searched and analyzed for content and location. As well, the Department of Defense (DOD) follows DHS in exploring how DOD can forecast how groups will behave based upon information culled from message boards, chats, and postings on blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and more.

Privacy advocates are most concerned that regardless of assurances to the contrary regarding the purposes of the program, DHS activities could expand to all online speech with no reasonable suspicion that a crime had occurred and, as a result, degrade free speech and individual privacy as protected under the Federal Privacy Act of 1974. They noted that even DHS's stated framework for the program was fluid, particularly regarding the purposes for which the collected information would be used and which agencies would have access to it.

Finally, during the subcommittee hearings, it was noted by many journalists and members of Congress that there seemed to be little consensus among DHS officials as to the scale, scope, and overarching goals of the program. EPIC, EFF, and other privacy advocates have continued to urge DHS to make available its reports on the program. Despite DHS's assurances to the contrary, a particular worry is that DHS might target community activists, those engaged in controversial political issues, and those critical of DHS itself. DHS has been generally uncooperative in disclosing documents and other pertinent information about how the program operates. Privacy advocates have requested that Congress require that DHS suspend the program until the full scope of the program is revealed and privacy protections are developed and implemented by entities outside of DHS.

Debra Glassco
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Electronic Frontier Foundation; Electronic Privacy Information Center; Federal Privacy Act; Mobile Media User Data Collection and Privacy Protection; Pentagon Digital Engagement Team; Privacy; Social Media and Freedom of Information Act; U.S. Pentagon Social Media in Strategic Communications Program.

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Developing Nations

As people in the developing world are gaining access to the Internet, they join social networks at a high rate. Facebook creators have envisioned particular strategies for attracting users in developing countries, and as such Facebook is becoming a popular social networking platform in such countries. Twitter is also growing in importance for developing nations, especially for sharing community-related information. People in the developing world often access the Internet and social networks through their cell phones, which provide a less expensive and more convenient option than fixed-line connections, and with ownership of cell phones rapidly increasing, particularly in Asia and Africa, Internet usage through mobile phones is now the largest and second-largest worldwide on these two continents, respectively.

Social media networks have been useful in developing nations because they can be an equalizer; can help save lives; and are instrumental for economic empowerment, public mobilization, and protest organizing; as well as for documenting human rights violations, voting rights violations, and corruption. People in developing nations prefer communication through social networks both because of interactivity and flexibility and because social media content is more often displayed in other languages than English and is often more culturally relevant than other Internet content.

Facebook

Facebook's stated mission is to make the world more open and connected, and the Facebook corporation has been looking outside of the developed world to market its products. This seems to make sense, since beyond Facebook's largest market, the United States with 160 million users, its next three largest markets are all in the developing world, respectively Brazil with 58 million users, India with 56 million, Indonesia with 43 million, and Mexico with 38 million. Additionally, over 4 billion people have yet to get access to the Internet, and many subsequently to social media, and a majority of these live in developing countries.

In a report for the *MIT Technology Review*, David Talbot states that Facebook already has a well-established strategy of offering a Facebook-centric Internet to those in the developing world. This began in 2010 with Facebook Zero, which allows Internet carriers to offer a stripped-down text version of the social network as a free or low-cost service. About 50 carriers in 45 countries participate, and they get revenue when users click out of the text-centric Facebook Zero to see photos or other links displayed in the feed.

Facebook is augmenting its strategy of providing a Facebook-centric Internet to those in the developing world through its new Facebook Home, a collection of apps that lets Facebook lock the screens of smartphones and create a cover feed that fills those screens with status updates from Facebook friends. Facebook Home might have limited appeal to users in developed countries who might already be besieged with a variety of smartphone options, but it has a large market of users in developing nations in which smartphone adoption is at an earlier stage of growth.

Twitter

Facebook is not the only social media provider expanding quickly into the developing world.

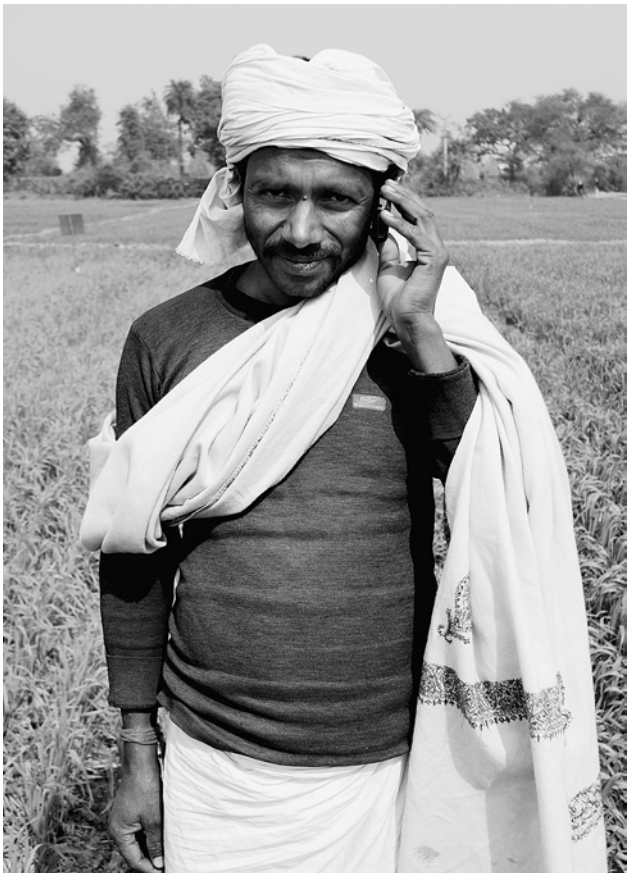
Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Google+, Google Chrome, and Instagram are also being promoted and gaining reputations in various parts of Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Twitter, which now has over 500 million users and over 200 million active users, has a growing presence in the developing world. Among the top 10 countries with the highest proportion of population with Twitter accounts are, along with developed nations (including the United Kingdom in first place, the United States in second place, and the Netherlands in third place), several developing nations (Chile in fourth place, Venezuela in fifth place, and Brazil in eighth place).

For countries whose media is strictly controlled by the government, such as Venezuela, Twitter has become the main source of freedom of speech. In Venezuela, there is only one television channel that is openly in opposition to the government, and even this television channel is often self-regulated due to constant threats of annulling its operating license. Consequently, over 30 percent of Venezuelans use Twitter, and many of them engage on this social media platform to voice their concerns and to let others know what is happening in the country. Additionally, Venezuelans in the capital of Caracas often post on Twitter or learn from Twitter about important community information that is not otherwise available regarding safe commutes to work, streets to take and streets to avoid, accidents that require help, and various types of hazards. As such, police and hospital representatives have consequently become accustomed to checking Twitter regularly.

Internet Access

According to a 2012 Pew Research Center Report, fewer people in developing countries have access to the Internet than in developed countries, but when getting access to the World Wide Web more people in developing countries are likely to join social networking sites than in developed countries. The report, which examined the state of social media internationally based on a survey of 20 nations worldwide, found that the vast majority of Internet users in developing nations such as Mexico, Brazil, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, India, and Russia are using social networking sites. The report also found that, conversely, less than half of the Internet users in developed nations such as Japan and Germany are interacting with others on social media platforms. While music, movies, and sports are popular topics across social media users in developed as well as developing nations, politics, community issues, and religion are more often approached by those in developing nations.

In Tunisia and Egypt, two nations at the heart of the Arab Spring, more than six in 10 social networkers share their views about politics online, whereas across the 20 nations surveyed a median of only 34 percent post their political opinions. Similarly, in Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan more than seven in 10 social networkers discuss community issues online, compared with a cross-national median of just 46 percent. In Tunisia, Egypt, and Jordan more than six in 10 social networkers include religion in their online



A wheat farmer accessing information directly from the fields using a cell phone in India, a country where half the population owns cell phones. In 2013, almost a third of those with a cell phone worldwide connected to the Internet through it.

comments, while cross-nationally only approximately 30 percent post anything about religion.

The Pew report and other reports by the United Nations (UN) Foundations and by technology expert groups show how the adoption of cell phones has led the way for this growth in social media usage in developing countries. In 2013, the number of cell phone subscriptions was roughly equal to 90 percent of the world's total population, while global mobile/cellular penetration was estimated at 96 percent, and almost a third of those with a cell phone got on the Internet through it. Asia has the largest and Africa has the second-largest Internet usage through mobile phones, enabling those without the financial or infrastructure means for fixed-line Internet to get online. A relatively cheap mobile phone is a more realistic option in Asia and Africa than a fixed-line connection, and it still provides a quite stable way to reach the Internet. Over 60 percent of the people in Mexico, over 75 percent of the people in Egypt, over 85 of the people in Turkey, and over 50 percent of the people in India own cell phones, and many of them employ these for not only Internet access but also social media presence.

In both developing and developed countries people use cell phones for sending texts, pictures, and videos, but in developing countries people are more likely to share such items with larger groups through social media, whereas in developed countries people tend more to share such items with small groups of family and friends through texting and conferencing. Additionally, when using cell phones, those in developing countries are more likely to engage in conversations online, whereas those in developed countries tend more to check the news, consumer information, and job-related information.

The rising ownership of cell phones in developing countries, followed by the access to the Internet and use of social media in such countries, has been attributed primarily to the emergence of a middle class across the developing world. People in developing nations are entering the global market for the first time and are just beginning to garner the attention of major global brands. They are earning enough disposable income to start buying mobile phones and other products such as household appliances or means of transportation. They constitute an attractive consumer market all the more as the annual growth rates of developing nations are much higher than those of developed ones. As developing nations become established as consumer markets, the costs of phones and of data plans continue to decline, and phone coverage and telecommunications infrastructures continue to improve, thus making phones and Internet connections through them increasingly affordable.

Use and Effects

Regarding reasons for the widespread use of social media in developing nations, two of those outlined by expert Mike Shoag are that social media can be an equalizer and can help save lives. Those with little economic power and without access to services can now tap into information and resources pertaining to education, health, safety, or financial opportunities in ways that were impossible before mobile phone technology and social media. In countries in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, people have started to share on and get from social media networks information regarding survival and life skills and personal and community protection. As a World Health Organization report recently stated, one emergency message can be spread through Facebook or Twitter faster than any influenza virus. Additionally, social media provides real-time insight into the lives of people, and as such thorough monitoring of social media can help predict disease outbreaks and enable remedial interventions more accurately than traditional methods of prediction and intervention. As a *Chronicle of Higher Education* article recently affirmed, social media tracks cholera better than any health authority.

Another reason mentioned by Shoag for the success of social media in the developing world is that social media can be instrumental for economic empowerment. Many individuals, groups, and communities in developing countries can gain access to microlending programs with help from social networks. Additionally, social media is increasingly useful to farmers in various parts of the world, who were often tricked because they did not know the value of the crops they grew before they gained access to social media networks, and who today are savvier traders because they can find out the correct prices of their products through social media. For example, the

World Bank's International Finance Corporation has funded a project that helps farmers with information about prices via a short messaging service (SMS) message platform.

Social media is also useful, for example, to cattle owners in Kenya, who were not able to track a cow before the existence of social media, but who can now find out where a cow is through social media. Kenyan authorities use a SMS platform to find stolen cows, which are expensive in the country and very important for the livelihoods of people in rural areas. A local Kenyan, for example, knew nothing about this platform until one evening when her cow disappeared; she was advised to post on the network and her cow as well as the thief were identified within 30 minutes.

Mobilization and Protest Organizing

Social media have also become so popular in the developing world because they can be instrumental for public mobilization and protest organizing. Social media networks have often been employed in actions striving for fairness in recent years. For example, the social media campaign of the Invisible Children organization to prevent Joseph Kony and his militia group, Lord's Resistance Army, from forced recruitment of child soldiers in northern Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and southern Sudan, while so far not having led to the capture of the rebel leader, has helped bring international awareness to the horrific cases of kidnapping, abuse, and killing of children in the area. Numerous politicians, activists, and celebrities from various parts of the world have become involved in promoting the cause, and the African Union, backed by the UN and the United States, has established a brigade to put an end to the atrocities in the region. In addition to helping raise awareness about various causes, social media can help organize protests related to such causes. It has already been extensively documented that social media such as Facebook and Twitter functioned as a catalyst in the Arab Spring, enabling protesters to meet, put their forces together, and resist government actions. Social media are arguably becoming part of an emerging system of political communication in which discontent can be expressed even when formally forbidden by an autocratic government and a movement can be organized by announcing to people where they should gather.

Several recent studies have examined the role of social media in public mobilization and protest organizing in a developing nation through cases from the Middle East. Social networking sites including Facebook, FriendFeed, Flickr, and Twitter were central to organizing and publicizing the postelection protests in Iran in 2009, facilitating solidarity inside the country and in the diaspora, although these conjugated efforts were ultimately unsuccessful in overthrowing the regime.

Social networking sites were also at the core of the uprising in Egypt in 2011. Various groups including the April 6 Youth Movement, We Are All Khaled Said, National Association for Change, and Kefaya used social media platforms to coordinate the spread of a revolutionary message. These groups called for gatherings in Cairo's Tahrir Square as well as in Alexandria, Mansoura, and Suez to express outrage over the economic oppression of the population and the administrative malfunctioning of the state. Their demand was for Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak to leave the country. About 85,000 people pledged on social media to attend the gatherings, and over a short period of time the revolutionary groups gained tens of thousands of Facebook friends and Twitter followers.

On January 28, 2011, Mubarak shut off the Internet for five days across the entire nation to halt the communication flow and coordinated assembly taking place over social media platforms. This outraged the international community and made the protesters even more determined. Following the blackout, over 1 million Egyptians joined demonstrations across the country, a tenfold increase in the number of participants. The day the Internet was restored, social media experienced its highest number of active users from Egypt ever.

As the demonstrations continued, some of the nation's most prominent public figures came out in support, and they too posted online comments. After 18 days of relentless protest, the unthinkable happened: putting an end to 30 years of authoritarian rule, President Mubarak heeded the demand of the Egyptian people and resigned from office. Since the Egyptian uprising, people in the developing world have increasingly used social media for political activist purposes.

Citizen Journalism and Human Rights

People in developing nations have also come to rely on social media for sharing as well as for learning about human rights violations in various settings, voting rights violations during elections, and corruption at various societal levels. Prior to smartphones, special gear was needed to capture instances from everyday life in pictures and videos, and media professionals were the only ones with capabilities not only to capture such instances but also to make them broadly known. Many situations of social injustice, political abuse, or administrative dishonesty used to remain unreported either because there were insufficient media professionals to cover all such cases or even because professional journalists agreed to hide, partake in, or benefit from such actions.

Today, almost anyone with a cell phone can take a picture or make a film, and many can share such materials with the world in nearly real time. This has had a dramatic impact on many realms, not least of which is the ability of people in developing nations to provide eyewitness accounts of oppression, violence, and abuse. The images of a young man who set himself on fire to bring attention to the corruption of local officials in Tunisia, or the video of a female protester who was sprayed with tear gas by police in Turkey, captured by locals, spread fast through social media, and showed the world what was happening in these countries. Moreover, iReport-style mobile apps have allowed regular citizens to show what occurs during social unrest and to report such situations as police brutality, and iVote-style mobile apps have allowed regular citizens to monitor elections and report such situations as vote rigging.

Corruption

A study by Catie Snow Bailard, published in *Political Communication* in 2009, outlined the use of social media through mobile phones in Africa to combat corruption. Bailard writes that common forms of corruption in countries such as Cameroon or Namibia include misappropriation of aid from international donors and nongovernmental organizations; misappropriation of government resources; bribes for basic services, administrative assistance, special policies, and licenses; clientelist politics; and favors to ethnic compatriots. Bailard asserts that such practices, which are arguably catastrophic in many African nations, often flourish due to lack of transparency and low likelihood of detection. This researcher states that elite monopoly over telephonic communication increases the opportunities available to commit corrupt acts and decreases the likelihood of detection and/or punishment. Conversely, the use of mobile phones and access to social media through mobile phones helps uncover acts of corruption, increases transparency, provides means of detection, and can lead to imparting the appropriate punishments. For example, social media users can signal to one another, to justice-oriented organizations, and to the international community instances in which international aid and government resources are appropriated by those in power rather than given to those in need. Social media users can also document with pictures and film abuses and bribery in administration, elections, and the treatment of various ethnic groups. Bailard also affirms that in order for mobile phone communication to effectively serve in combating corruption there is a need for public awareness campaigns as well as for coordinated efforts, including through traditional media and social media, of activists inside those countries and in the international arena.

A powerful example of social media activism utilized for combating corruption comes from India, where social media outcry helped stop President Pratibha Patil's plan to build herself a postretirement residence on land meant for military veterans. On April 11, 2011, moneylife.in carried a lead story uncovering that President Patil had grabbed 261,000 square feet of land that was intended for facilities for former soldiers. While former-presidents are entitled to secure accommodation paid from the national budget, Patil's project was criticized because she was trying to do that while she was still in office and at the expense of the military, and also because of the huge size of the piece of land and the luxury of the projected home.

After the story broke in moneylife.in, activists used social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter to provide daily updates (including tree cutting on the property, explanations by the president and her advisers, and reactions of military personnel and of opposition forces) and to mobilize for action (starting online petitions and asking for street protests). While initially Patil,

who herself had used a combination of traditional media and social media strategies to win the elections in 2007, refused to give in to the social media dissent, finally she announced on April 27, 2011, that she would stop the construction of her residence and return the land to the possession of the state. Following this scandal, propagated through social media, Patil decided to not seek re-election as president of India in 2012.

Culture

In addition to serving health, economic, political, and social purposes, social media networks also have a cultural role in the developing world. A study by Amir Hatem Ali, published in the *Harvard Human Rights Journal* in 2011, details this role. According to Ali, there is language disparity on the Internet, with English being its unofficial language and over three-quarters of all Web sites being in English, and consequently the Internet has been more accessible to English-speaking people. Before the emergence of social media, the lack of online content in languages other than English limited Internet development in nations where English is not the primary language. With the growth of social media, other languages than English are more frequently utilized in the online environment, and this is appealing to people from developing nations and also offers an opportunity to bridge the digital divide.

Additionally, there is cultural disparity on the Internet, with Western ideas, products, and practices being the main focus and an overwhelming majority of Web sites coming from developed nations, and consequently the Internet has been viewed with reluctance in developing nations around the world. Again, social media allowed people from such nations to contribute and seek culturally relevant and culturally sensitive content and has also made people less inclined to see the Internet as a Western technology that might be a threat to their local cultures. Growth of Internet use in developing countries, after a period of stagnation, might be related to such aspects.

Ali provides several examples of instances in which the collaboration between the international community and local agents has resulted in increased abilities of people in developing nations to partake in the creation, management, and sharing of local content for local use through social networking platforms. Such a program is e-Sri Lanka, partially funded by the World Bank and supported by the government of Sri Lanka, through which people in this country were encouraged to build "knowledge centers" through social media capabilities.

Conclusion

Social media are more affordable for those in developing nations because posting or searching on social media networks is free beyond paying the already decreasing cost of Internet connectivity, and requires little knowledge of technological underpinnings beyond familiarity with getting online. Additionally, social media empower individuals to create their own content (for example, posting on someone's Facebook wall, posting a video to YouTube, or tweeting), and as such it is more convenient for people in the developing world than more centralized approaches to generating content. Social media substantially reduce barriers regarding publishing content to the World Wide Web by simplifying the process of publishing, allowing self-expression as well as collective action, and encouraging users to become active participants rather than being passive readers, listeners, or viewers. Thanks to these features of social media, the next billion people will be easier to engage.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Africa, North; Arab Spring; Asia; Crowdsourcing; Demonstrations, Organizing; E-Democracy; Egypt; Facebook; India; Indonesia; International Unrest and Revolution; Iran; Latin America; Microblogging; Mobile/Smartphone Messaging; Social Media, Adoption of; Twitter.

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Diaspora/Migration

Social media provide a particularly fascinating entry point to explore diasporas, because diaspora and digital communication platforms are both characterized by paradoxical processes of space and time compression. The links between the two processes have only received increased attention during the last few years, although the current total number of transnational migrants would amount to a country that would rank among the first 10 in size globally.

Diasporas online raise questions about the core dynamics of cultural globalization spurred by the developing World Wide Web and transnational migration flows: Do they ultimately, globally connect or divide humans; enable opinion formation, voice, mobilization, and protest, or new forms of surveillance and censorship; homogenize and balkanize the Internet or promote diversity; promote democratization or reinstall hierarchies? Evidence for all these processes is emerging and movements in both directions have been observed.

Etymologically, the term *diaspora* derives from Greek words for scattering, sowing, and movement, while historically the notion was used mostly to describe Jews living outside Palestine or modern Israel. Currently, the term *diasporas* captures the dynamics of people migrating away from their homelands, to describe people living outside of their homelands and to indicate the geographical locations where these people live.

Media and Technology

Previously, migrants became largely uprooted from their origins when having to make do with letters that took a long time to arrive or costly phone calls to stay in touch with family and friends in their homelands. Recent developments of low-cost airlines, social media, and affordable long-distance telephone services allow migrants to maintain transnational ties with contacts living in the diaspora and their home countries. Indeed, although technology developers did not project them as target groups, migrants have been early adopters of technologies motivated by their desire to keep in touch with family members and friends and remain engaged with developments in their homelands.

Digital technologies are often celebrated with freedoms gained through increasing speed,

mobility, unboundedness and deterritorialization, while migrants are often found to negatively experience deterritorialization as displacement and dislocation instead of freedom. With the widespread adoption of digital technologies, those living in the diaspora may however digitally reterritorialize themselves. Being inexpensive, decentralized, international, low-threshold, easy-to-operate, and fairly deregulated, social media enable migrants to remain connected beyond their physical environments. Examples include audio- and video-chat including Skype and Viber; social networking sites such as Facebook and QQ; microblogs such as Twitter and Weibo; video sharing sites like YouTube and DailyMotion; and mobile messenger applications such as What's App, Nimbuzz, and iChat. Social media and digital technologies such as the mobile phone have thus altered processes of migration and diaspora formation, as migrants in the diaspora may experience living in a third space—a space not here or there, beyond their homeland and country of arrival. The third space sustained through social media might be of assistance in coping with feelings of dislocation and homesickness. Furthermore, it may provide an outlet for the circulation of news, identity and belonging, arranging for remittances, mobilization, protest, and activism.

Several recent large-scale research projects have explored the intricate relationships between diaspora groups and social media use. Under the heading of Mig@Net a consortium of European researchers studied how migration and gender intersect in transnational digital networks. They focused in particular on border crossings, communication flows, religious practices, education, sexualities, social movements, and conflict/dialogue (MigNetProject.eu). The e-Diasporas Atlas brought 80 researchers using digital methods together to map various processes of migrant connectivity. In particular, they traced the online presence of various groups, including "Moroccans on Facebook," "French Expatriates," and also Chinese, Tamil, Tunisian, Palestinian, Russian, Hmong, and Lebanese diasporas, among others (E-Diasporas.fr).

Political Implications

Several separatist movements use social media to garner public support for greater autonomy over geographic regions. As such, global and deterritorialized social media are used by landless population subsets to manifest territorial claims. These include Tamil Eelam, Kurdish people, the Free Tibet Movement, and Uyghurs. The Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora is estimated at 877,000 people. On the Tamil Nation Facebook group and other Web sites, blogs, and forum discussion pages such as eelamweb.com ("aimed at rebuilding Tamil Eelam") and eelam.com ("advancing the independence of Tamil Eelam"), Tamils living in the diaspora make claims for the nation of Tamil Eelam, expressing desire for political autonomy in Sinhalese-ruled northern parts of Sri Lanka.

The "Kurdish question," which pertains to autonomy of the region of Kurdistan in southwest Asia, is increasingly debated online by cyber-Kurds. Portions of the estimated 850,000 Kurds living in the diaspora use blogs such as kurdistan blogcount.wordpress.com ("a blog counting the blogs of Kurdistan"), Facebook groups such as the "Support an Independent Kurdish State" page, and Twitter hashtags such as #Kurdish to identify messages pertaining to Kurdish people, culture, and politics.

Young Tibetan activists in the diaspora advocate for Rangzen, an independent state of Tibet, on social media. They attract users to their cause on Twitter using, for example, the hashtag #Free Tibet. Dharamsala, the capital of the exiled Tibetan community in the Indian Himalayas, is home to an estimated 150,000 Tibetans. Social media use increased during the 2008 Summer Olympics in China and the 2011 community elections in exile. Illustratively, Tsering Choedup, an International Tibet Network Asia Coordinator, noted,

> I see social media such as not just as an intermediary to relay news stories but also as an important and effective tool to directly connect individuals together and mobilize the overseas Tibetan diaspora community, and to awaken global awareness on the Tibet issue. Social media also give an opportunity for exiled Tibetans to build a link with Tibetans inside Tibet despite China's Great Firewall.

Proxy servers allow users to bypass Chinese Internet protocol-address-based geo-located filters and censorship.

Uyghur people are a Turkic-Muslim minority group living in the northwestern Chinese Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. An estimated 600,000 Uyghur are living in the diaspora. Uyghur language Web sites Diyarim.com, Salkin.com, and Shebnem.com were tightly monitored after July 2009 mass mobilizations by Uyghur protesters in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang. In September 2009, Xinjiang authorities approved Internet monitoring legislation, blocking Internet access for 20 million inhabitants in the region. In addition, the surveillance of these sites eventually led to the arrest of hundreds of moderators and contributors living in China.

Sites maintained by Uyghur people living in the diaspora have also been blocked by the Great Firewall of China: Reporters Without Borders found in October 2009 that 85 percent of Web sites dedicated to the Uyghur community were blocked. Nonetheless, a transnational Uyghur political/cultural space is maintained on platforms like Facebook (the "Uyghur Community" page), Weibo, and YouTube as emotional responses and calls for mobilization circulate alongside Uyghur language folk songs and Islamic-themed videos.

Social media are also used to mourn dissolved geographical entities. For example, former Yugoslav countries are digitally reunified on Titoville.com and other sites that disseminate Yugo-nostalgic and retro-socialist discourses. Discourses published on such sites may downplay the atrocities and traumas of war and conflict.

Furthermore, diasporic media, increasingly visible on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, not only connect diaspora audiences with their homelands, they may also provide bottom-up interventions in Western-dominated international news media flows. During protests in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria, postings on Facebook played a chief role in circulating news about political discontent from homelands and the diaspora to mainstream media such as CNN and Al Jazeera. The Jasmine Revolution of 2011 in Tunisia was fuelled by digital alignments between the homeland and the Tunisian diaspora sustained through Twitter, YouTube, and DailyMotion and blogs such as Nawaat.org. In addition, ElectronicIntifada.net, set up by U.S. citizens of Palestinian origins, has become an important global English-language news outlet providing alternative coverage on Palestine issues.

Members of the Tibetan diaspora in the United States march past New York's Grand Central Station on October 10, 2009, on their way from the United Nations to Times Square. The cultural parade marked the 50th anniversary of exile from Tibet.

Beyond rallying for support and providing news, digital technologies are also used for activism and even sabotage. Tamil cyberactivism, for instance, included electronic disruption of Sri Lankan embassy Web sites that Tamil activists felt disseminated propaganda. In a similar vein in early 2013, Twitter user "@ThisIsGame0ver" defaced the official Web site of Sri Lanka's Media Center for National Security. Palestinians living in the diaspora have aligned themselves digitally with the "Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions" movement by campaigning against Israel on the popular Facebook group page "BDS movement." The international Anonymous hacker collective has assisted activist diasporic groups during the Arab Spring by hacking into government Web sites in 2012.

Other Uses and Concerns

In addition, everyday use of social media among people living in the diaspora provides migrants—who are often marginalized in their country of arrival—opportunities to assert their voices, provide alternative depictions of minorities, identify themselves with fellow diasporic subjects as well as their homelands, express belonging, and show solidarity. Living in the diaspora, Indian migrants (nonresident Indians or NRIs) may, for instance, turn to the three-dimensional virtual game environment of Second Life to articulate a Desi identity (diasporic south-Asianness), interacting with avatars (game characters) that, for example, combine Indianness and American popular culture. As the popularity of dedicated discussion forums such as AsianAvenue.com, BlackPlanet.com, and MiGente.com, frequented by Asian Americans, African Americans, and Latino Americans, respectively, showcase, social media may be perceived as safe space to gather, articulate hybrid identities, and circulate alternative community knowledge.

What remains unclear in the emerging literature on digital media use among migrants are (1) the disparities in technology ownership and Internet access between diaspora communities living in first world countries and those remaining in developing countries; (2) the role of social media in financial transactions and remittances; (3) differences and similarities between economic migrants and refugees; (4) the implications of tracking and data-mining migrant activity by government and state regimes; and (5) the role of social media in human trafficking, circumventing border patrol, and policing.

Considering the role of digital technologies in diaspora and migration underlines the urgency of contextualizing social media use. Social media do not exist in isolation and use in the diaspora is shaped by the sociopolitical history of the different homelands, the variety of motivations for displacement or migration (which may be political, economic, social, or religious), and the present living conditions and social, political, and economic status of diasporic people in their country of arrival.

Koen Leurs
Utrecht University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Developing Nations; Immigration; International Online Communities; Race/Ethnicity and Social Media; Reporters Without Borders.

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Digerati

The term *digerati* is a label used to refer to the technological elite. Digerati are distinguished innovators and opinion leaders of information technology, cyberspace, social media, and the technological hardware industries. The digerati have come to fruition in an environment in which the intersection between information and networked technology continues to grow. People considered members of the digerati are technological elites who are professionals at the forefront of the Information Age. The digerati both understand and advance the economic focus on technology and, as such, have immense control over the flow of digital information. Control over the means of communicating digital information is a decisive responsibility that could plausibly influence the way people understand and interpret politics throughout the world. In essence, digerati is a class of people both economically and ideologically.

Economically, the digerati develop, finance, and generate the innovations and products characteristic of the Information Age. The economic underpinnings of the digerati class are distinguished from more traditional business elites first and foremost by their business philosophy focusing on information as a valuable resource rather than any material product. In addition,

the digerati are rarely seen as in competition with one another. Instead, the digerati often talk to one another about ideas. They encourage innovative breakthroughs in one another. John Brockman notes that the cooperative competition characteristic of the digerati is a key to innovation born from within the digerati class.

The digerati also have a unique ideological view of the entrepreneur–worker relationship. Eran Fisher proposed that the digerati remove workplace hierarchy. The traditional workplace is rejected by the digerati, who favor an environment in which the workers are the entrepreneurs and the entrepreneurs are the workers. At one point in time, the color of a man's collar dictated his level of importance within the workforce. The digerati reject collars altogether in favor of denim jeans and cotton T-shirts. In turn, the digerati perceive themselves as equally invested in the success of their endeavors, regardless of traditional workplace labels.

The term *digerati* is a hybrid of *digital* and *literati,* a centuries-old Latin term describing the intellectual community who read and critique literature. Hence, the digerati are those who are society's premier digital intellectuals. The term joins other labels proposed to describe this class of people, such as the virtual intelligentsia or the creative class. The origin of the term *digerati* as a descriptor of the technological and cyberelite is debatable; however, popular press articles in *The Guardian*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *The New York Times* have all used digerati to refer to a range of people within the technological elite. Most would consider the premier bloggers, hardware developers, software developers, Web developers, and social media innovators as members of the digerati. However, the digerati label is appropriate for individuals in publishing, business, and academia who influence the economy of the Information Age as well. The social media landscape is malleable, with an influx of new, formidable players who are continually altering the face of the digerati.

When one considers the responsibility of the digerati to transform communication technologies and assign functions for the use of technological innovations, the influence of the digerati on the diffusion of information to the public becomes clear. In turn, the capacity of the digerati to alter political information also becomes evident. Consider the Google problem of Rick Santorum as a case study in the relationship between the digerati and politics. Santorum was a candidate for the Republican nomination for president in 2012. Years prior, columnist Dan Savage started a campaign to redefine a lewd sexual act as a "santorum" in an effort to defame Rick Santorum. In turn, when searching "santorum" on Google, the first entries that appeared were the Web sites constructed by Savage related to a sexual act. The Santorum presidential campaign requested the sites be removed from Google searches, but Google refused. One can see how the digerati at Google made decisions that were based on their philosophies about the diffusion of information and, subsequently, how said decisions could be interpreted as politically charged.

The digerati are a new class of individuals considered the cyber- and technological elite. Digerati often have the means to reinforce or alter the exchange of information, including political information; as such, digerati have power to influence the flow of political information.

Bradley J. Bond
University of San Diego

See Also: Alpha Blogger; Luddite; Mashable; Superconnected; Technology Diffusion Paradigm.

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Digg

Digg, begun in 2004, was a social news site and one of the best-known examples of Web sites relying on user-generated content, a phenomenon commonly referred to as Web 2.0. Essentially, Digg was

a Web platform where users were able to submit stories and have other users upvote or digg them. Celebrated as a turning point in the way that news stories were aggregated and disseminated across the Web, one of Digg's strengths was the ability for stories that didn't make the mainstream news to reach a wider audience if there was enough interest in digging it. While Digg was initially focused on technology stories, the site soon became a key way for political news stories to spread.

Digg was launched in 2004 by TechTV star Kevin Rose. The site grew in popularity over the next few years and became one of the most heavily trafficked sites on the Web. In 2012, the site was sold off to a number of companies (including LinkedIn, BetaWorks, and the *Wall Street Journal*) and went under a complete redesign. With the 2012 redesign, the focus has shifted to bigger stories dominating the site with more editorial oversight. With this major change, it remains to be seen how this will affect the overall distribution of mainstream versus alternative news stories.

Like earlier social news and bookmarking sites, such as Slashdot and Del.icio.us, Digg has long been used as an example of how the Web democratizes media coverage of politics and world events. Rather than have news stories chosen by a group of newspaper editors or television producers, Digg's structure (particularly in the older version) allows that process to happen via crowdsourcing. Rather than a small group of people choosing what content makes the front page, that decision is made by each individual person who diggs (votes up) or buries (votes down) a particular story. This process lends itself to alternative views having a chance at the spotlight, but it can also simply mean that predictably popular stories reach the front page.

While its beginnings were largely devoted to technology stories in 2004, by the 2008 presidential elections political stories soon began to dominate both the main page on Digg and media coverage about Digg. The site arguably reached its peak of popularity during this time, and beginning in August 2008, Digg began its Digg Dialogg series, which was a collection of video interviews with prominent politicians and celebrities in which the questions asked were generated and voted upon by the Digg user community. These Digg Dialoggs began with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi during the 2008 Democratic National Convention and, over the next two years, included interviews with notable political figures such as Bill Clinton, Al Gore, John Boehner, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chair Julius Genachowski. In late 2008, Digg also came under criticism for what was perceived as a liberal bias as most of the top stories on the front page came from left-leaning Web sites such as *Huffington Post* and right-leaning stories were often buried.

While the 2012 sale and redesign of Digg has dramatically changed Digg's form and function, the concept of socially curating the news that Digg helped to popularize has had ripple effects throughout the Web as mainstream media sites included ways to share their content on sites like Digg, Reddit, and StumbleUpon as well as social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. By 2011, even CNN occasionally let viewers choose which story would air in the next hour of television by voting via text message, demonstrating that the idea of crowdsourcing the news had become a fixture for the public. Regardless of Digg's future after its sale and redesign, the Web and social media continue to redefine the limits and possibilities of user engagement with journalism and politics, and the impact of Digg is an important part of that change.

Shayne Pepper
Northeastern Illinois University

See Also: Content Communities; Delicious.com; Going Viral; Reddit; Social Bookmarking; StumbleUpon; Web 2.0.

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Digital Citizen

In 1997, *Wired* contributor Jon Katz introduced the concept of the digital citizen. In his original article, Katz posited that a postpolitical community was developing and brought with it a blend of liberalism (focusing on humanity) and conservatism (highlighting economic positions). In this way, the new community would directly refute the interventionist attitudes of the left and the base intolerance of the right. This new community—which Katz referred to as digital citizens—embraces rationalism, believes in civil liberties and free-market economics, and overall leans toward moderated libertarianism. Most important, it believes all of this while actively utilizing available technologies. Since his initial claims, there have been numerous studies of digital citizen, including another by Katz, and the eventual development of a Bloom's taxonomy for this American.

The cornerstone of the digital nation—as perceived by Katz—is individuals who actively participate on the Internet. Their professional and social lives revolve around their ability to function on the Internet. While today this may seem like commonplace, in 1997—when Katz was writing—the number of Americans in this category was rather limited.

In 1997, these individuals seemingly formed a new social class. Digital citizens then did not consist of a representative sample of the American public. Members were young, educated (or at least in the process of gaining an education), and typically affluent. They had disposable income and more free time than the average American. Most worked in a small number of industries—higher education, computers, telecommunications, financial, and media. At the time, they were geographically clustered in many of the same areas where today's leading tech firms are. Digital citizens were found in New York, the San Francisco Bay Area, Seattle, Boston, Austin, and the Research Triangle of Raleigh–Durham–Chapel Hill in North Carolina. Originally, most were male; and a vast majority was white.

With their reliance on the Internet, they also had access to far more information than the average citizen. Given their continuous education, they actively sought out opportunities to gain knowledge, making their political beliefs more fluid than the traditional party structure typically allowed for.

Despite the fluidity of their understanding, Katz did believe many of their common values were fairly obvious. Digital citizens are libertarian, tolerant, technologically adept, disconnected from traditional politics, rational, materialistic, and eager to learn. Most important, they enjoy discourse and discussion. Instead of accepting decisions as fact, they choose to ask why and how. In this sense, they will challenge authority when necessary and are apt to do so publicly via the Internet. Passivity is simply not common. Likewise, they share a love for popular culture. While they are attuned to politics, they are far more likely to talk about movies and television. These things are not simply entertainment; they are their identity. As would be expected, the digital citizen tends to view the population of the world in two categories: those who understand and those who do not. When it comes to government, the digital citizen has a negative view. Government is wasteful and clueless—unable or unwilling to be efficient and effective with the resources provided to it. They view politicians as uninformed and unwilling to work for solutions. The digital citizen simply does not believe in the conventional political process.

Categories and Characteristics

After Katz's initial predictive article, *Wired* worked with the Merrill Lynch Forum to conduct a survey assessing Katz's claims. In an effort to create a clear profile of the digital citizen, the survey involved just fewer than 1,500 Americans who were divided into four categories based on their usage of e-mail, laptops, cell phones, beepers (revealing the age of the study), and home computers. The *Wired* categories were superconnected (e-mail three days a week and all four of the pieces of equipment), connected (e-mail three days a week and three of the pieces of equipment), semiconnected (at least one piece of technology), and unconnected (none of the pieces of technology). Digital citizens were deemed to be those in the superconnected and connected categories. In total, based on the survey they represented 8.5 percent of the overall American population.

Connectivity was found to lead to more democratic values, more political participation, more political knowledge, and better trust of said

institutions. Connected Americans are shown to have more political knowledge (as Katz notes, more connected individuals were able to identify Newt Gingrich as speaker of the House than knew Seinfeld's first name is Jerry).

Connected Americans are considerably more likely to read books, which contradicts the anti-literacy claims made by those who are opposed to technology. Further, digital citizens are more likely to be informed and outspoken and have prodemocratic ideals. They are more likely to have confidence in democracy and take action by voting. In short, the less connected people are, the more ignorant they appear to be. These findings run against some of Katz's original hypotheses, which claimed that digital citizens were not likely to be involved in mainstream politics. Additionally, critics of the study have pointed out that it is almost impossible to distinguish which is the cause and which is the effect within these variable relationships, wondering, for instance, if digital citizens are more politically engaged because they are more technologically sophisticated or if being more technologically sophisticated is somehow a cognate characteristic of political engagement.

Likewise, some of Katz's demographic beliefs were proven to be untrue with the survey results. First, digital citizens are found to be young but not necessarily youths. Connected Americans are more likely to be in their 40s than their 20s. Just over half of the digital citizens were male. As expected, almost nine out of 10 were white and over half lived in suburban areas surrounding large metro areas. When it comes to education, the results are both confirmatory and perplexing. Connected Americans are far more likely to have graduated from college, but fewer than half are in the category. The connected are economically well-off, with most in the middle class as compared to those not connected.

What the Katz article provided was a glimpse at the development of a subculture in America based on technological usage and skills. In the wake of Katz, there have been a rash of scholarly attempts to better understand what makes digital citizens unique and how their technological usage correlates to political attitudes and behaviors. In lieu of the development of digital citizens, there has even been a transformation of the classical Bloom's taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) into a digital taxonomy (remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating). The changes reflect the new nature of learning and gathering information in a digital world.

With the advent of social media, Katz's hypotheses become even clearer. Digital citizens use the Internet for both dissemination and deliberation. With the plethora of tools available today (even compared to 1997), digital citizens now access the Internet through computers, phones, and tablets. They blog, post on Facebook, upload to YouTube, and tweet on Twitter. And, there are clear differences still present between those who adopt and those who do not. If Katz felt there were differing levels of citizen usage in 1997, the myriad of options available today to individuals with an interest in following news or impacting change through the Internet has only made such divisions more clear.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Citizen Journalism; Digerati; Digital Government; Luddite; Social Media, Definition and Classes of; Superconnected.

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Digital Cultures Research Center

The Digital Cultures Research Center (DCRC) is a network hub for researchers from across the

University of the West of England. Researchers from multiple disciplines, including art and design, computer science, cultural and media studies, and geography, collaboratively investigate contemporary technocultures, how people create culture via digital communications, and the applications, practices, and politics of emerging media technologies. Through a variety of publications, events, projects, and initiatives, the DCRC aims to support and promote research regarding the role and configurations of technology in contemporary cultures.

Research and Initiatives

The DCRC conducts research and promotes initiatives across five broad themes: pervasive media, play, participatory media, the attention economy, and connected communities. DCRC's pervasive media research focuses on how technology is being integrated into the fabric of urban space, how content creation provides individuals new ways of engaging with and in their environments, and how tagging digital content can impact advertising, education, and entertainment. DCRC's play research, investigating the cultural significance of play and games, has led to the development of core texts within the field of game studies. The center's participatory media research examines how new forms of social media production, such as Web 2.0, alter cultural production. This research, which could be especially relevant to politics and political communication, examines the influence of expanding user-generated content, such as blogs, citizen journalism, peer-to-peer media distribution, and video and photo sharing Web sites, and its impact on culture. The attention economy research looks at how social and technological environments, where many individuals in democratized societies spend their lives and time, alter the traditional values of the public sphere. This research positions human attention as a scarce commodity, with the attention of individuals being estimated, costed, marketed, bought, and sold via technology. Finally, connected communities focus the DCRC's broad areas of research into the context of social values by examining how individuals engage in civic engagement and participatory culture via creative citizenship, or the use of creative resources and talents to engage socially and civically.

The research conducted by the DCRC revolves around the concept of critical reflexivity, which combines criticality, creativity, and application. Critical reflexivity incorporates critical reflection on ethics, values, and aesthetics and combines creative arts, experimentation, and innovation with digital media in an effort to make the center's research more useful for its audiences. Much of the center's research is conducted in open-innovation studio space. This atmosphere provides a unique environment where ideas are shared through knowledge transfer projects, and designers, artists, and engineers can share expertise to produce more effective research results.

Projects and Partnerships

The DCRC also engages in projects with multiple worldwide partners. The center engages in a range of projects that aim at understanding the various applications of new media and how individuals interact daily with technology. These partnerships work to develop location-based applications along with new forms of performance and narrative and to inform new media development strategies.

Partnering with Knowle West Media Center, the DCRC's Keeping in Touch project looks at how communities may be strengthened through individuals' everyday uses of mobile media and communication technologies. The Measuring Value Networks project pairs the DCRC with the Watershed Media Center to produce a multicriteria method that organizations can use to measure the value of their digital networks and leverage them to develop and strengthen their networks' communities. The Creative Citizens: Creative Networks project examines online interaction between individuals participating in different types of networks, both formal and informal, to understand value-creation communication. The goals of this project are to understand the potentials that communication patterns, built around online platforms, may have in the practicalities of creative citizenship, community engagement, and community-led design and to recognize both the potentials and limitations of digital media. Finally, a project called Microethology investigates the habitual coming together of individuals and technology and considers how digital culture is experienced in everyday life. This project strives

to develop a method for analyzing the everyday interactions between people and digital media.

Conclusion

The DCRC produces research aimed at enhancing knowledge and understanding regarding how technologies are integrated into contemporary cultures. Through research, projects, and initiatives, the DCRC is able to provide valuable information and data regarding how individuals engage in digital communication environments.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Content Communities; Cyberculture; Digital Revolution; Social Media Political Gaming; Web 2.0.

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Digital Diplomacy

Digital diplomacy refers to emerging multidimensional platforms that have the potential to enhance international relations and other political communication. The Internet and social media are already being used by national governments to disseminate messages to sway public opinion and influence other countries. At best, these efforts are part of an integrated structure that supports strategic goals and complements conventional diplomacy tools.

Diplomacy, as the art and practice of conducting negotiations between nations, is a complex form of communication that needs different media to reach its target. Through digital media, the actors of diplomacy can listen, publish, engage, and evaluate with innovative and new techniques that enrich the quality, reach, and impact of their work. Diplomacy via information communication technology (ICT) obviously has more power to reach and affect target audiences such as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), other governments, citizens, and others. This approach has been called digital inclusion in diplomacy or digital civil engagement.

Public Diplomacy

Conventional diplomacy might be described as the ways in which government leaders communicate with each other at the highest level—the familiar form of elite diplomacy. However, public diplomacy, on the contrary, focuses on the ways in which a country (or multilateral organization such as the United Nations) communicates with citizens in other societies. The term *public diplomacy,* which is associated with the U.S. Information Agency, was coined in the mid-1960s to describe the conduct of foreign policy by engagement with foreign publics. Much digital diplomacy is based on the principles of public diplomacy.

Technology continues to present new challenges to the way that diplomacy is conducted. For example, computer databases enable the collecting and sharing of vast quantities of information, while upgraded networks facilitate instantaneous communication. Information has always been the raw material of two of diplomacy's basic tasks—reporting and negotiating. In both cases, the advantage lies with the side that is better at using advanced technologies to collect and process the data needed for decision making.

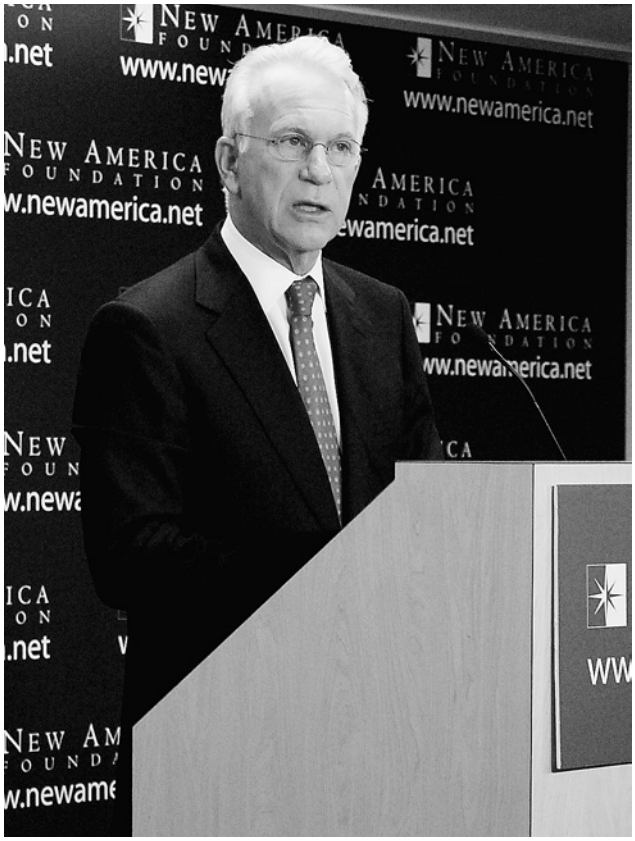
When the structure of contemporary digital diplomacy is analyzed, the four steps observed in any digital diplomacy activity include listening, publishing, engaging, and evaluating. By listening, one can find out which blogs, groups, and forums are already discussing the issue; gauge their attitudes; and figure out the angles and tones. By publishing messages in news, blogs, videos, and pictures across the global Web, a presence can be pushed out creatively. In the engagement step,

people can encourage questions, take part where the debate is happening, and form partnerships with relevant organizations and online groups. Finally, in the evaluating process, one can explore whether goals have been achieved.

Examples

One example that supports the idea of the potential of digital diplomacy was the virtual news conference held by Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs James K. Glassman in 2008. On the virtual platform of Second Life, Glassman had a conversation with eight Egyptian political bloggers who had covered the latest presidential election in the United States. It was an international event that a global Internet audience had the chance to follow via live Webcast.

The Public Diplomacy 2.0 Program, established by Glassman, was also a turning point in the comprehension of contemporary diplomacy. The program focused on using new social networking sites, including the creation of a Facebook page for the State Department's Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau. The Digital Outreach Team (DOT) program also established blogs in many languages including Arabic, Urdu, and Farsi.



James K. Glassman, the former U.S. undersecretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs, who worked to increase the use of the Internet in diplomatic outreach, speaking about Iran at the New American Foundation in 2010.

Conclusion

At its most basic, digital diplomacy offers a new way to solve foreign policy problems using various Internet platforms; digital diplomacy is conventional diplomacy through a different medium. It can be said that this new form of diplomacy is a consequence of the emergence of Web 2.0, because it makes use of social media's interactive features. Web sites, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and vlogs may now be seen as methods of soft power and as effective management tools.

Ece Inan
Girne American University

See Also: International Examples of Political Parties and Social Media; International Intervention; International Social Media and Politics.

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Digital Due Process Coalition

The Digital Due Process Coalition (DDPC) is an alliance of bipartisan political, commercial,

and legal interests seeking to reform U.S. laws on access to electronic communications/data. Launched in 2010, the DDPC has sought to reform key aspects of the 1986 Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA). The DDPC argues that the ECPA is obsolete and inadequate for determining government access to electronic communications/data for criminal investigations. The DDPC's work benefits communications companies and their customers by requiring that access to data be determined by a consistent (e.g., across data types) and a due process (e.g., requiring probable cause, warrants, and/or judicial review) protocol. The DDPC works toward its goal through a public awareness campaign and through political lobbying.

There are over 96 groups in the DDPC including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), American Library Association, Amazon.com, Americans for Tax Reform, Association of Research Libraries, AT&T, the Brennan Center for Justice, the Center for Democracy and Technology, Citizens Against Government Waste, Competitive Enterprise Institute, Computer and Communications Industry Association, Dell, eBay, Electronic Frontier Foundation, Google, HP, IBM, Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, Integra Telecom, Intel, Microsoft, NetCoalition, Oracle, Reddit, Salesforce.com, the Progress and Freedom Foundation, Tumblr, and Vaporstream. Over 30 lawyers and professors of law belong to the DDPC. Google executive Richard Salgado has given congressional testimony between 2010 and 2013 in support of the DDPC. Other organizations have attempted reform but DDPC has arguably achieved a wider range and diversity of support.

Reform Attempts

DDPC argues the ECPA has not been modified since its enactment in1986, when the World Wide Web and e-mail were not widely commercially available to the public and fewer than 350,000 Americans owned cell phones, albeit without today's text messaging, Web surfing, and application downloading capabilities. Since 1986, DDPC argues, communication and technology have become central foci of people's daily lives including e-mail, electronic documents, mobile computing, social media, global positioning system (GPS) technology, and cloud computing.

The DDPC notes that courts apply ECPA inconsistently and with difficulty and this, they contend, leaves Americans susceptible to cybercriminals, sexual predators, and compromised electronic privacy rights. Two examples of legal inconsistency the DDPC notes are how e-mail is subject to different laws based on whether it is being drafted, is opened/unopened, or is being stored by a service provider; similarly, a desktop document may be subject to Fourth Amendment warrant requirement, or possibly not if it is stored in a cloud.

Kevin Bankston, an attorney with the Electronic Frontier Foundation, has said publicly that coalition members disagreed on several issues, though they share agreement on the following principles. First, they would give private electronic communication the same protection as physical files stored in one's home. Also, law enforcement's access to information, they believe, should require appropriate legal paperwork. Additionally, they would protect private information in either transit or storage with access to electronic communication based on probable cause and not whether the content has been opened.

In its stated wish to clarify, simplify, and unify rules for communications service providers, users, and government investigators, the DDPC would allow exceptions for access without court orders in emergencies. The DDPC has also claimed to focus on the most frequently arising issues (e.g., probable cause access to cloud, stored email, or private communications, or GPS/location information, or transactional data).

The DDPC notes that requiring a warrant for documents and private communications was raised in 1998 by the bipartisan team of then-Senator John Ashcroft (R-MO) and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) in keeping with appeals, court rulings, and legal scholarship on the issue. Such proposals are referred to as the warrant-for-content/location rules, as the DDPC wants a search warrant to demonstrate reasonable grounds in an authorized criminal investigation for tracking any mobile device and obtaining transactional or Web site visit data. This is perhaps meant to address the occasional practice of making bulk requests for information on all of a Web site's visitors or all of the online transactions in a jurisdiction to find possible criminal activity; this is sometimes popularly called a fishing expedition.

More recently U.S. Congressmen Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) and John Conyers (D-MI) supported the DDPC's goals by introducing the U.S. Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) Modernization Act of 2012 that ultimately failed; instead it was referred to committee.

Effects of Reform

A survey by Microsoft that suggests that 90 percent of the population and business leaders care about the privacy and security of their personal data in the cloud seemingly validates the shared principles of the DDPC. As another justification for the need to reform the ECPA, the DDPC argues that the government currently can compel a service provider to disclose e-mail contents over 180 days old with a subpoena and a notice to the user, yet a warrant is required if the e-mail is 180 days old or younger. In response to this issue, the Texas State government passed House Bill 2268 in 2013 with no nay votes in either house of state government. The bill requires a judge's warrant for access to e-mail regardless of age, but it provides no federal coverage. As of June 2013 the bill was awaiting the signature of Governor Rick Perry.

By protecting the privacy of users of communications and technology companies' products and services, reforming the ECPA would arguably profit many of the companies within the coalition. Some sectors of law enforcement and government would arguably oppose reform because the 1986 version of ECPA before reform allows for more or easier access to electronic information.

Some note how the courts are divided on whether access to GPS/location information requires a warrant or a subpoena. The DDPC cites how Justice Department lawyers have previously argued that cell phone customers gave up privacy expectations when they voluntarily gave that information to their carriers/service providers. The DDPC has offered assurances that reforming ECPA would not interfere with national security or prevent companies' use of consumer data for marketing purposes.

Gordon Alley-Young
Kingsborough Community College

See Also: Center for Democracy and Technology; Cloud Computing; Cloud Computing and Citizen Privacy; Electronic Frontier Foundation; Electronic Privacy Information Center; Lobbyists; Privacy.

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Digital Government

Digital government first emerged in the mid-20th century, when computers were introduced into the public sector. Since that time, digital government has moved through a series of overlapping phases, variously emphasizing service delivery, information sharing, and democratic engagement. As low-cost, networked, and widely used communications platforms, social media have potential applications for all of these functions. Likewise, social media offer governments novel platforms for internal collaboration, with the capacity to link civil servants across and within various departments and agencies. Accordingly, a number of governments have developed both external and internal social media initiatives, along with policies governing the use of these technologies by the civil service.

While some are hopeful about social media's capacity to produce more participatory, transparent, accountable, and effective governments in the digital age, the role of social media within the public sector has, as of yet, not been the subject of rigorous empirical analysis.

Early Digital Government

Computers were first introduced to the public sector in the 1950s and 1960s. Soon after this, academics theorized that the computerization of government would have dramatic effects on both the policy process and on the organization

of public-sector bureaucracies. As they argued, computers would bolster information processing capacity and disrupt established power structures and organizational forms. However, by the 1980s, research on digital government largely betrayed these predictions. Captured most famously by James N. Danziger and colleagues' reinforcement thesis, these studies suggested that computers tended to reinforce rather than undo established dynamics in the public sector. While perhaps not as influential as initially predicted, computers, and with them information databases, intranets, and office-related software programs, nonetheless continued to play roles in the day-to-day internal operations of governments from the 1960s onward.

Online Service Delivery

The advent of the World Wide Web in the 1990s introduced new opportunities for government–citizen interactions. Seeking cost savings and improved customer experiences, governments initially focused their efforts on the Web's applications to service delivery. Using their Web sites, governments shared information about their departments and agencies and offered guidance on how to access public services. With time, governments focused not simply on the Web as a platform for sharing information regarding services but also as a platform on which those services could be delivered. For example, some government Web sites now allow citizens to pay fines, file taxes, and register changes to personal information.

With a typically lower per-transaction cost than telephone, mail, and in-person options, online transactions are appealing to governments. That said, the public sector has not always proven itself capable of effectively managing contracts with the private-sector information technology (IT) firms whose systems support these online transactions. Given the high costs of these contracts, and in certain cases the high failure rates of online service initiatives, governments—and the academics, journalists, and members of the public who criticize them—have found reason to doubt the value of new IT projects that promise massive savings and improved services. Similarly, online service delivery can be slowed by concerns over privacy and data security and by citizens who are unwilling or unable to access services online.

Democratic Engagement

While service delivery was the central focus in the early days of government on the Web (and remains a key focus now in programs like the United Kingdom's Government Digital Service's Digital by Default agenda), many have now turned their attention to the Internet's capacity as a platform for democratic engagement. Initially, this capacity was explored in a relatively ad hoc way as particularly innovative ministers, departments, or civil servants experimented with online consultations and chat forums, blogging, online voting, and e-petitions.

With time, a number of governments introduced more comprehensive and sustained online engagement programs. Coinciding with the rising popularity of social media and phenomena like crowdsourcing, these programs explore how new technologies can support more participatory, transparent, accountable, and effective governments. President Barack Obama's Open Government initiative, the United Kingdom's Power of Information Taskforce, and Australia's Gov 2.0 Taskforce are examples of such initiatives. While largely focused on the benefits that will accrue from public-sector transparency and data sharing (open data), these programs also invoke social media as fruitful avenues for government–citizen engagement.

Social Media in the Public Sector

At present, many governments have developed their own social media (such as blogs) in addition to joining third-party sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Typically, governments employing social media do so for the following reasons:

- To support deliberative exchanges between government and the public
- To share information about policy and services
- To solicit and collect public feedback on policy and services
- For crisis communications (e.g., during a natural disaster or a security threat)
- To advertise job openings in the public sector

- For social marketing (i.e., using marketing tactics to promote a socially beneficial outcome, such as healthy eating campaigns)
- To collect data in support of policy analysis or service delivery

As the above list demonstrates, even though public-sector social media use first emerged amid discussions of the Internet's role in democratic engagement, in practice social media serve a range of ends within the public sector, including the more established service function of earlier digital government.

In addition to their applications within this range of government–citizen interactions, a number of governments are employing social media internally to support information sharing and collaboration among civil servants. In some cases, third-party public platforms like Blogger, Twitter, and WordPress are used as forums for civil servants to share information and network with colleagues. In other cases, governments are developing their own internal social media tools. For example, the Canadian federal government has developed a cross-government wiki. Titled GCPedia, this wiki enables civil servants to share information, collaboratively build documents, discuss work-related issues, and network in a secure environment. Social media tools that support collaboration may prove particularly valuable when addressing complex, overlapping policy issues that demand the input of various units across government. Similarly, tools like wikis may enable governments to retain valuable corporate information that might otherwise remain restricted to an individual computer's hard drive or with employees who leave or retire from the civil service. Due to a lack of empirical research, however, it is difficult to discern the extent to which these benefits have accrued as a result of governments' internal use of social media.

Governing Public-Sector Social Media Use

As departments, agencies, and individual civil servants adopt social media, governments have recognized the need for policies governing their use. Typically, these policies address issues such as threats to IT security imposed by social media use; privacy concerns arising from government–citizen interactions on social media; social media's capacity to accommodate official state languages and those with disabilities; the definition of an official government spokesperson in online environments; ownership of government content on social media; and information management in social media environments. In some cases, governments must negotiate tailored terms of service agreements with popular social media sites to ensure that they can use these sites while also complying with existing government policies. In addition to policies governing how civil servants use social media in professional capacities, some governments have developed policies governing civil servants' personal use of social media. Typically, these policies attempt to ensure that civil servants' personal use of social media does not betray their commitment to political neutrality and professionalism.

Amanda Clarke
University of Oxford

See Also: E-Democracy; Open Source Governance; OpenGovernment.org.

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Digital Media Law Project

Formerly known as the "Citizen Media Law Project," the Digital Media Law Project was created in 2007 by four scholars to support independent online journalism and media. The Digital Media Law Project (DMLP) asserts that it contributes to the progress and maintenance of online media sources by providing individuals and organizations with the education and legal resources necessary for protection. The goal of DMLP is to encourage proactive thinking about online publication and the law.

Citizen media, a term coined by Clemencia Rodriguez, refers to media content produced by citizens, or nonjournalists, and distributed through various means to the citizen's community. The use of online media as a means of communication is not limited to citizens: since the start of the project more corporations and industries have adapted to the rise in social media and begun utilizing these media. As more commercial interests began using social media, members of the Citizen Media Law Project changed the designation of the project to its current name to reflect the expansion of digital media content.

The Digital Media Law Project is hosted by the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University. The Berkman Center is home to research initiatives exploring the development of cyberspace. The DMLP was inspired by the information gap between traditional news outlets and online journalism and media. As the number of independent online ventures increased, so did the need for legal protection to ensure the security of such ventures. Independent initiatives differ from professional news organizations that have resources available to obtain legal advice and/or counsel when presented with legal challenges. Seeing the need for legal assistance by individuals and organizations exploring the realms of online journalism and media, the founders of DMLP began researching and creating means to meet the demand for legal assistance.

The four founders of the Digital Media Law Project are David Ardia, Dan Gillmor, Matt Lovell, and Phil Malone. With backgrounds in a variety of legal fields, the founders came together at the Berkman Center with a common interest—the role of law in communication. As a faculty associate at the Berkman Center and associate professor at the University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Law, David Ardia served as the first director of the project. Ardia's connection to the Berkman Center arose through his pursuit and completion of a LL.M. from Harvard University. Dan Gillmor serves as the director at the Knight Center for Digital Media Entrepreneurship at Arizona State University. Gillmor began his career as a journalist in the 1980s. Over the course of his career, he has worked with the *Detroit Free Press*, *Kansas City Times,* and *San Jose Mercury News*. In 2005, Gillmor cofounded a Web site for the San Francisco Bay area that is now part of Backfence.com's "hyper-local" community sites. Matt Lovell is an alumnus of Harvard Law School and a partner of Kirkland & Ellis LLP in a Chicago branch. He worked for the Berkman Center by serving as the former assistant director of the Clinical Program in Cyberlaw. As with Lovell, Phil Malone has a connection to the Clinical Program in Cyberlaw, currently serving as director. Prior to his work at the Berkman Center, he served as a federal prosecutor with focus on the Internet and computer software/hardware. Malone served as primary co-counselor in the *U.S. v. Microsoft Corp*. trial.

As a result of the rise and development of technology, members of the Digital Media Law Project provide legal assistance and practical education for online media. Members of the DMLP recognize the rights that new business initiatives are entitled to under the First Amendment and have developed resources to aid new initiatives through the initial, and risky, stages of development. The project has enlisted a community of attorneys and scholars to respond promptly to legal issues that arise affecting journalism. Legal resources available to the project's clients include an online legal

guide, threat database, and a 50-state pro bono lawyer referral network.

The three primary goals of the project are to provide legal education and training, litigation and pro bono legal services, and a collection and analysis of legal threats present to the online community. These primary goals are carried out through DMLP's five core initiatives. The project defines its initiatives as "(1) [providing] its detailed Legal Guide on media and business law topics for nonlawyers; (2) [providing] its searchable Database of Legal Threats directed at online publishers; (3) a nationwide attorney referral service, the Online Media Legal Network; (4) a Research and Response initiative to address breaking issues and trends in digital media law; and (5) its regularly updated Blog and Newsletter on current issues in media law, technology law and journalism." The mission of DMLP is carried out through these five initiatives and continual research efforts.

The DMLP's Legal Guide addresses the rights and responsibilities of individuals and organizations using online publication. The guide provides information on many legal issues that may arise as a result of or in reference to online publication. The legal guide is intended for use by citizens, regardless of formal legal training, looking to create items for online publications. The guide can also be utilized by anyone interested in the subject of online journalism and the rights of its creators. The guide is available online through the DMLP Web site. The guide can be searched by key word and browsed by state or by section.

Individuals and organizations seeking to begin new journalism initiatives can benefit from the pro bono legal assistance DMLP has provided the Online Media Legal Network. Launched in 2010, the Online Media Legal Network (OMLN) includes attorneys, law school clinics, and in-house legal counsel from across the United States. The purpose of OMLN is to provide legal assistance at little or no cost to online journalism initiatives and digital media creators.

The Database of Legal Threats provides users with online speech threats including access to previous lawsuits, subpoenas, and cease and desist letters. Users can search the database using full-text search or through categorization of entries. The types of threats available through the database include correspondence, criminal charge, criminal investigation, denial of access, disciplinary action, lawsuit, litigation, police activity, and subpoena. The project's Web site also provides a threat entry form for any individual or organization faced with a legal threat so that the database can remain up-to-date.

Access to the project's blog and newsletter can be found on its Web site. Following through with its initiatives, DMLP has participated in major First Amendment and intellectual property cases through the filing of amicus curiae briefs. Such cases include *Barnes v. Yahoo! Inc,* No. 05-36189*; Wright Development Group LLC v. Walsh,* No. 08-2783; and *Barclay's Capital, Inc. v. Theflyonthewall.com, Inc,* No. 10-1372-CV.

R. Bruce Anderson
Christine Rose Warne
Florida Southern College

See Also: Berkman Center; Center for Civic Media; Citizen Journalism; Committee to Protect Journalists.

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Digital Revolution

In an attempt to cast light on the term *digital revolution*, it is convenient to make a parallelism

with the Industrial Revolution, which took place during the 18th and 19th centuries and had significant consequences on social, economic, and cultural conditions. Certainly, the Industrial Revolution marked a major turning point in history: For the very first time, living standards underwent unprecedented, sustained growth after the transition from an agricultural-based economy toward a machine-based manufacturing one—the introduction of steam power, water wheels, machine tools, and so on. The first Industrial Revolution started in the 18th century and merged into the second Industrial Revolution in the second half of the 19th century with the development of the internal combustion engine and electrical power generation.

The digital revolution has often been referred to as the third industrial revolution and implies the change from analog mechanical and electronic technology to digital technology, occurring since the 1980s throughout the present day. The digital revolution is both a manifestation and result of the emergence of information communication technologies, and thus, inaugurates the Information Age. This revolution entails mass production and widespread use of digital logic circuits and its derived technologies—that is, the computer, digital cellular phone, and fax machines. The important technological, social, economic, and political consequences brought about explain its revolution-like nature. The information society represents the natural environment of this phenomenon.

The Information Society

The term *information society* became popular in 1980 through the work of Japanese sociologist Yoneji Masuda, *The Information Society as Post-Industrial Society*. Masuda recalls the notion of postindustrial society, which was previously coined by Alain Touraine.

As a continuation of the industrial society, in the postindustrial society information is a decisive factor of economic activity. Certainly, a preindustrial society depends essentially on commodities; an industrial society is organized around the use of energy to produce goods; and in a postindustrial society, information—the creation, distribution, use, integration, and manipulation—information technology (IT) is a key element of the productivity model. Therefore, technologies of information and communication represent catalyst forces, which have pushed forward and enabled changes in politics, in the structure of society, and in work organization. Moreover, people's capacity to get to know global events and react instantaneously through online communication has transformed the international society into a global village. This revolution has marked a new age: the Information Age.

Together with the term *postindustrial society*, the information society is often compared or identified with the following concepts: post-Fordism, superindustrial society, postmodern society, knowledge society, information revolution, liquid modernity, and digital society or network society, among others.

On the whole, new technologies are not only typical features of the information society but also a necessary condition or prerequisite for this society to exist and evolve. Nevertheless, their nature is not democratic: Information and communication technologies have become another element of stratification among people and countries.

Uneven Spread: The Digital Divide

Certainly, there is evidence of striking inequalities in the networked world regarding use, knowledge, or access to information and communication technologies. The digital divide can be referred to as unequal rates of Internet penetration, either among developing and developed countries—the global digital divide—or inside the same country—the social digital divide.

In wealthy countries, access to digital technologies has been much more widespread than in developing countries. The gap is a question of accessibility and of quality of service. For instance, some developing countries might be constructing infrastructures to expand new technologies. Yet, they might have rejected fiber optics—which transmit faster signals—because the technology is more expensive than slower cable. Economic development appears as one explanatory variable of the global digital divide, which occurs once again between rich and poor societies. Politics is another factor to take into consideration. As a matter of fact, in some African countries, state-owned technological firms have created de facto

situations of public monopolies, leading to higher Internet costs for citizens.

Regarding technological disparities inside countries, scholars have concluded that diversification in Internet use in western Europe and the United States has to do with patterns of household income, education, and occupational status. These factors explain as well the uneven spread of "old" mass communications, that is, cable, satellite television, videocassette recorders (VCRs), and fax machines.

Information and communication technologies offer new opportunities to attain higher levels of development. Considering their capacity to reduce many traditional obstacles—for example, time and distance—these technologies have great potential to benefit millions of people. In this light, technological tools should be available for all in an inclusive information society. Efforts and strategies to mitigate the digital divide should intensify.

Cyberpolitics

New technologies—the Internet, mobile phones, and tablets—have the capacity to strengthen civic society and consolidate democracy around the world. In postindustrial societies, significant institutions of representative democracy—parliaments, political parties, and government departments—have established Web sites where they outline their goals and tasks, post official documents, and release updates and announcements. These Web pages enhance government transparency and accountability. Regarding political

A young indigenous man in Brazil works on a computer in 2010. The computer center was originally set up with the assistance of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of an effort to narrow Brazil's digital divide. In less developed countries, disparities in access to technology have been found to be related to infrastructure cost, political issues, and economic underdevelopment.

parties, online instruments have contributed to fund-raising, to improve management and organization, and to diffuse ideas or publicize electoral programs.

Campaigning and voting have substantially benefitted from the potential of digital technologies. Indeed, the development of social media and digital marketing strategies in the 2008 Barack Obama presidential campaign has transformed the classic mechanisms of political communication. In the recent 2012 presidential election, both candidates—Barack Obama and Mitt Romney—made special emphasis on cyberpolitics.

Electronic voting technology has been improved and become rather popular in the last decade. As a result, countries such as the United Kingdom, Estonia, and Switzerland have implemented this voting system in governmental elections and referenda. E-voting has also been used in Canada's municipal elections and primary elections in the United States and France.

In transitional regimes, digital tools have had a gigantic influence in the promotion of democratic change. The use of Twitter in the coordination of different revolutions and protests has resulted in the term *Twitter revolution*. In this respect, it is convenient to mention civil opposition against fraudulent voting in Moldova (2009), Iranian election protests (2009–10), and the dissolution of authoritarian regimes in Tunisia (2010–11) and Egypt (2011).

Civic engagement and activism have also adapted to virtual societies, maximizing their organizational linkages and networking skills in an attempt, on the one hand, to consolidate democracy in Western civilization, and on the other hand, to promote transition processes in autocratic systems. Finally, one of the most innovative effects of the digital revolution has been the revitalization of direct democracy. Definitely, the interactive capacities of new technologies have enhanced citizen participation and deliberation, creating a sort of virtual agora or digital public sphere where digital citizens discuss matters of mutual interest. In this discursive space, public opinion is formed and exerts influence on political action.

Conclusion

The digital revolution has had a multidimensional nature, reaching the world of politics, finance, culture, and entertainment; facilitating administrative or commercial transactions; and becoming a fundamental tool in the workplace. In few words, the manifestations can be seen in all orders of life: from reading an e-book, Skyping with a friend living in another country, booking a hotel, buying and downloading music on a cell phone, applying for a job, paying bills and taxes online, sending money from a laptop, holding a Web conference with business partners, or participating in online forums or blogs. The capital impact of the phenomenon explains its revolutionary dimension and scope.

Although people find themselves in a globalized society, the digital revolution is not yet a global, comprehensive revolution: There are still noticeable inequalities in the use and access to modern technologies around the world and even inside developed countries.

In addition, this study has underlined the positive side of digital technologies. However, the new media represent serious dangers and threats—cybercrime. At the same time, they entail real challenges for the law to define new types of crimes and for police forces to establish mechanisms and procedures to capture computer criminals.

There is no need to speculate about supposed tension between representative democracy and direct democracy after digital politics. Direct democracy is not going to replace representative governance. On the contrary, digital techniques can nurture deliberation and discursive methods of decision making, which will invigorate political participation both through representative and participatory channels.

The potential of digital technologies is to be explored and developed throughout the new millennium. The ideal horizon envisaged evokes the concept of technoromanticism: Romanticism is reinterpreted in the new age, attributing to technologies the capacity to enhance the power of imagination, restore the role of genius, and bring about unity.

Leocadia Díaz Romero
Independent Scholar

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Digital Citizens; Economic and Social Justice.

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DipNote

DipNote is the first official blog of the U.S. Department of State. DipNote was created in 2007 during the George W. Bush administration with Condoleezza Rice as secretary of state. The blog was created with an American public in mind as a part of government public affairs efforts. The idea behind the blog's creation was to bring transparency to the State Department's activities, educate people about its work, and create space for open and constructive dialogue. The blog came alive on September 25, 2007, with a first post by then spokesperson Sean McCormack.

In 2009, DipNote was reformed with the launch of the 21st Century Statecraft, a new approach to foreign policy through innovation developed by the State Department, which operates within the context of an array of "smart power" public diplomacy techniques initiated by former secretary of state Hillary Clinton. As a result, the objectives and engagement of DipNote expanded to include frequent reporting on the travels, speeches, and work of the secretary of state as well as dissemination and translation of the president's speeches and public addresses. This included extensive efforts by DipNote to circulate Barack Obama's historic Cairo speech, which was translated into 10 different languages.

DipNote partly seeks to challenge the mainstream news media and offer an alternative source of information on U.S. foreign policy by allowing participants to discuss important foreign policy issues with senior officials. However, there is very little interaction between blog authors and commentators, as it appears that DipNote encourages more interactions among readers. Nevertheless, DipNote is a moderated blog with all posts, comments, and questions being reviewed before posting. Sponsored and operated by the U.S. Department of State, it does not, however, represent official government communication. Various bureaus within the State Department supply most of the information posted on DipNote. For example, public affairs officers, who often travel with the secretary of state, are constantly on the lookout for potential content.

DipNote is managed by the Office of Digital Engagement under the Bureau of Public Affairs. The Office of Digital Engagement works across the State Department's units to organize and update information across numerous social media platforms employed by the State Department, including DipNote. A central editorial board manages the content of the blog by soliciting contributions from numerous authors within the State Department, U.S. Diplomatic Corps, and Foreign Service officers in embassies abroad. In addition to internal staff who post daily updates, moderate comments, and provide daily links to leading news stories in international relations, blog contributors range from ambassadors to operatives.

Expanding the digital presence of the U.S. Department of State, DipNote represents an effort of American government to engage in cyberdiplomacy and public diplomacy 2.0. The blog is a space where the department aims to provide an alternative version of events to mainstream media as well as promote a discussion surrounding U.S. foreign policy using Web-based communication technology and engaging various

publics via social media. Content from DipNote is shared on the official State Department Facebook profile, Twitter account, YouTube channel, Flickr account, Google +, and Tumblr. The blog is structured so that visitors can browse the stories and posts by issues and regions. In addition, a social media dashboard on the home page allows one to see easily most recent tweets, YouTube videos, and photos on Flickr. Such energetic online presence across various social media platforms allows diplomats to more effectively use the power of multimedia, images, videos, audio, and information to inform the American public. For example, DipNote allows one to easily track the diplomatic activity of Secretary of State John Kerry on an interactive travel map and tweet him questions.

Although the general mission of the blog is to manage public affairs and to inform U.S. publics exclusively, the content of the DipNote blog addresses global audiences and often attracts comments from all over the world. In this sense, DipNote becomes a platform through which diplomacy is portrayed publicly, serves as a window to American public diplomacy efforts, and creates a space for global dialogue.

Despite the fact that DipNote generates modest traffic, it attracts visitors from more than 170 countries. The blog is most often accessed from China, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Iran. Because the blog offers an opportunity for foreign service officers to inform the public and engage in foreign policy discussions and debates, a significant portion of the traffic could also be originating from American government employees abroad.

Anna Klyueva
University of Oregon

See Also: Center on Public Diplomacy; Foreign Policy; Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication; Office of Government Information Services; Pentagon Digital Engagement Team; Public Affairs Council; USAIDs Impact Blog.

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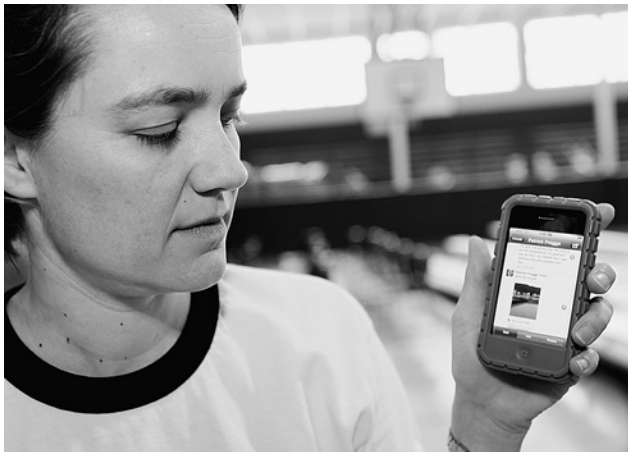
Disaster Relief

In recent years, the world has been hit with a series of big disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, earthquakes in Haiti and in various parts of Asia, the tsunami in Indonesia, and the earthquake and tsunami in Japan. Millions of people worldwide are affected annually by such disasters, and in the United States alone hundreds of people die yearly in such disasters. Due to the rising frequency of natural and human-made disasters in various parts of the world and even at a global scale, there is an increasing need for fast and effective communication about damage and coordination of responses.

In the past several decades information and communication technologies (ICT) have greatly helped such communication and coordination, and in the past several years social media have also provided means of expression and opportunities to aid in situations of disaster. Despite some concern about the legitimacy and reliability of information provided through such platforms, ICT and social media are contributing to sharing, seeking, and synthesizing data, conveying opinions and emotions, and organizing, managing, and synchronizing relief.

Public reaction to natural disaster has become an increasingly politicized phenomenon, made all the more impactful by its amplification via social media multiple leveraging. During election cycles, especially, the human and economic fallout from hurricanes, earthquakes, tornados, floods, and tsunami has become an opportunity for reciprocal finger-pointing within the national media discourse, as opposing parties seek to leverage public suffering by developing critical rhetorical



Both government agencies and citizens are using social media extensively during natural disasters. This survivor of severe flooding in Tennessee used a smartphone on May 5, 2010, to share photos of damage to her home in Nashville on Facebook.

narratives about their opponents' responses and reactions to events and valorous narratives about their own. Although the politicization of disaster scenarios like Hurricanes Sandy and Katrina does not preclude the possibility of there being truth in the accusations of, for example, institutional negligence and/or insufficient government response, the extended mining of such scenarios in order to gain strategic political advantage appears to be a growing trend.

Use of Technology

As disasters affect the welfare of individuals and family groups, as well as the well-being of communities and even nations, they serve as catalysts for innovative uses of computer technologies and social media. As researchers Jeanette Sutton, Leysa Palen, and Irina Shklovski assert, disaster situations are nonroutine events that result in nonroutine behaviors. In times of disaster, people and organizations adapt and improvise to suit conditions as needs demand. Although in the United States and around the world relief agencies have flexible structures that allow them to accommodate the particularities of the situation in order to pursue warning, rescue, and recovery operations, they do not always successfully interact with publics who might be in panic, in doubt, or in expectation of rapid interventions. Such publics often leverage their own networks to ask for and give input outside of the official reports, and to make critical decisions about, for example, heeding warning and making plans to evacuate.

Computer technology has been useful in emergency and disaster response and relief. Examples include residents' accessing of computers connected to the Internet in public libraries during various Gulf Coast hurricanes in the United States to check for situation updates, look for missing family members, and communicate with loved ones; farmers' usage of a grassroots computer network in their area in the foot-and-mouth disease outbreaks in the United Kingdom to exchange information, talk to each other, and give emotional support; and donors' employment of a broad digital network, with participants from almost 100 countries, after the 2004 tsunami disaster in Indonesia, to identify local needs, check assistance pledges, and make additional contributions.

As technology is advancing, so are the ways in which it is utilized in disaster response. Social media technologies including Internet forums, Weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, social networks, podcasts, instant messaging, and crowdsourcing are becoming the latest tools in the disaster preparedness field because they allow imparting and sharing of information quickly by regular citizens and elected officials while the disaster is still unfolding or in its immediate aftermath. Social media platforms are thus becoming the newest go-to tool in cataclysmic situations.

Examples

In the United States, Facebook, Twitter, Skype, and smartphone apps were actively used to provide real-time situation updates during the 2007 California wildfires, the 2009 Red River flood, the 2009 Oklahoma grass fires, and the 2011 tornado that devastated Joplin, Missouri. With aid from social media platforms, many people from the regions hit by these disasters identified dangers and sought help, whereas others from outside the regions affected by the disasters found information about loved ones living there or contributed to the relief efforts. Designated digital communities to share information and resources were also developed specifically for use in some of these disasters. During the 2007 California wildfires, RuralSite was a short-lived but well-used simple

bulletin board created for a small rural community directly in response to the wildfires, whereas MountainSite became a mature and resourceful online community developed as a place where regional residents could get information.

In 2010, the Red Cross published a research report based on a survey of 1,054 people in the United States about their expectations from and use of social media during and after disasters. The survey data showed that Facebook was the most popular social media platform, with over 58 percent of the respondents maintaining a Facebook account, and also the preferred channel for posting eyewitness testimony or information regarding safety.

Twitter was also high in both current use and user preference for communication in case of a disaster. As expected, the study also showed that the 18-to-35-year-old respondents were more likely to engage in social media activity in a situation of disaster than older people. As Facebook currently has over 1 billion users and Twitter over 500 million users worldwide, it is expected that they will continue to be the predominant media for disaster information and relief in the United States and internationally, although other social media platforms will also be employed in disaster relief.

After the Haitian earthquake in January 2010, many people showed what was happening and shared their personal experiences by posting texts, pictures, and videos on blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. Within just 48 hours, the Red Cross received 8 million U.S. dollars in donations directly from texts on social media sites.

In China, microblogging through a local site, Sina-Weibo, was used in response to the Yushu earthquake in April 2010. According to a 2011 study, people used this microblogging system for four major purposes in the context of the Yushu disaster: situation update, opinion expression, emotional support, and calling for action.

After the Japan earthquake followed by a tsunami and by nuclear failures in March 2011, residents of the areas affected by the disasters used Facebook, Twitter, and Japanese social networks to keep their relatives and friends as well as the national and the international communities up-to-date, whereas relief agencies also used such networks to provide help where it was needed and to coordinate the aid flow.

During the earthquake in Haiti in 2010 as well as during the disasters in Japan in 2011, social media users constituted a volunteer base through Ushahidi, an application which allows the creation of maps of first respondents in disaster zones. Additionally, in the Japan disaster over 8,000 social media reports allowed the creation again through Ushahidi of a large map with details about shelters, food stores, cell phone charging centers, and road closures. Other crowdsourcing tools such as OpenStreetMap and GeoCommons were also utilized in disaster relief in these contexts to help match needs with resources.

Analysis

As social media are being utilized for communication and coordination in situations of disaster, reflections about their uses, opportunities, and challenges have also began to emerge. In the United States, a 2011 Congressional research report argues that the use of social media for emergencies and disasters may be conceptualized as two broad categories: a passive use to disseminate information and receive user feedback via incoming messages, wall posts, and polls; and a systematic use as an emergency management tool.

The systematic use might include conducting emergency communications and issuing warnings, receiving and responding to victim requests for assistance, monitoring user activities to establish situational awareness, and using uploaded images to create damage estimates. The report states that the passive use represents the way in which emergency management organizations, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), currently employ social media, whereas the systematic use should be a goal for such organizations. The report finds, however, that many problems regarding use are at least partially due to the emerging state of the social media.

Recommendations

This congressional research report also outlines several lessons learned or best practices regarding the use of social media for emergency management and relief administration purposes. These include the need to identify target audiences for the applications, such as civilians, nongovernmental organizations, volunteers, and participating governments; the need to determine appropriate

types of information for dissemination; the need to disseminate the information of most interest to the public; and the need to identify any negative consequences arising from the application and work to eliminate or reduce such consequences.

According to the report, the negative consequences that can arise from use of social media platforms in disaster relief include instances of inaccurate information (e.g., after the 2011 disasters in Japan tweets about persons who were considered disappeared were retweeted even after the victims had been found), malicious activities (ranging from mischievous pranks to acts of terrorism), technological limitations (such as those related to power outages), administrative cost (regarding polling and feedback and also regarding data storage and compilation), and privacy issues (about the potential for the collection, retention, and data mining of personal information by the federal government with respect to its use of social media for disaster recovery purposes).

FEMA has taken into account such considerations as those outlined in the congressional research report, and in 2011 it implemented social media strategies into its emergency management plans. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced that it will revise its terrorism advisory system, including a provision for alerts to be sent out over social media networks "when appropriate."

FEMA and the Federal Communications Commission, along with the mayor of New York Michael Bloomberg, also unveiled in 2011 PLAN (Personalized Localized Alert Network), the first geographically targeted emergency notification system in the United States, which sends free emergency alerts to enabled mobile devices to warn citizens of imminent threats in their area. In other countries, similar attempts to integrate social media into disaster relief are being made by various governmental bodies and nonprofit organizations.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

See Also: Crowdfunding; Crowdsourcing; Facebook; Flickr; I Am Gonna Be Your Friend Campaign; Microblogging; Social Media, Definition and Classes of; Twitter; Ushahidi; YouTube.

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Documentaries, Social Media, and Social Change

Documentary films and videos have always combined the emotionally involving strengths of narrative storytelling with compelling situations presented by actuality. They use the strength of authentic presentations from the real world with all of the emotionally compelling structures of storytelling in order to situate the audience in a

specific relationship with the subject. This relationship should lead to a deeper understanding of different social circumstance as a result of having seen the documentary. But the challenge is that seeing a documentary does not equal the same thing as doing something about the issue the documentary discusses. The challenge faced by documentary filmmakers is not just to be understood as a filmmaker but also to be able to present issues in such a fashion that the audience feels motivated to act on them.

Through a history of advocacy documentary, journalistic documentary, and independent production, attempts to reach audiences and instigate both understanding and social change have grown. The advancing quality and gradually declining costs associated with production have helped to multiply the range of voices that use documentary in these ways.

Social Media

Through more recent developments in interactive computer networks, social media presents new opportunities to connect with audiences. Through the Internet's ability to add context, interactivity, and linking, a viewer's opportunity to take action is enhanced. In some cases, the interactivity extends to organizational action, where a geographically diverse group with common interests may be inspired by online documentaries to take collective action and work toward social change.

Networking through social media has also created the possibility of crowdsourcing production opportunities through fund-raising that takes place specifically to finance a film (on Web sites like Take Part, Kickstarter, and others). Some producers and directors are even implementing their efforts as cross-platform efforts, where the documentary film at the center is connected to peripheral activity and networked groups through events, Web sites, podcasts, etc.

History

Getting to this point has required an increasingly diverse set of notions of the function and conventions of documentary. The history of documentary that most viewers are not actually that aware of consists mainly of documentaries adopting an advocacy position. Most of the historical figures significant to documentaries, such as John Grierson, argued that the documentary form was a way of saving democracy from a trend in public participation that had become perfunctory, apathetic, meaningless, and often nonexistent. In the 1920s and 1930s, Grierson thought that the dramatic power of documentary would help citizens to function with more passion and vitality; in other words, documentaries have the narrative power to spur people into social change.

While many viewers are aware of the more journalistic approaches of recent decades, this has followed a less well-known history of advocacy in documentary. Sometimes this was on behalf of governments; for example, the Nazi-era *Triumph of the Will* (1935) or the U.S. "New Deal" films of Pare Lorentz, such as *The Plow That Broke the Plains* (1936) and *The River* (1938). Sometimes this was done for independent causes, such as the 1937 production of *The Spanish Earth*, designed to inspire support for the agrarian anti-Fascists in Spain, assembled with the participation of Joris Ivens, Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, Lilian Hellman, Dorothy Parker, Archibald MacLeish, and Orson Welles (as a narrator in an early version).

In the network TV era (1950s until the mid-1980s), networks would mostly broadcast documentaries from their own journalism divisions, with a more restricted intent to inform, rather than aspiring to the larger goal of inspiring social change. However, the power of exceptional films like Edward R. Murrow's broadcasts on Joseph McCarthy (*See It Now*, March 9, 1954) and migrant farm workers (*Harvest of Shame*, 1960), or Robert Drew's work on the John F. Kennedy campaign (*Primary*, 1960) would profoundly change social attitudes and occasionally result in legislative change. But these were documentaries operating out of a journalistic mode.

Between Grierson's writings in the 1930s and the rise of television journalism in the 1960s documentary had been taken as something resembling journalism. Audiences expected that what they were seeing were objective stories, not advocacy. But a greater reevaluation of documentary was taking place in the last decades of the 20th century. Filmmakers like Frederick Wiseman, Barbara Kopple, Errol Morris, and Michael Moore benefited from the idea that documentary could be both observation and advocacy, where

Documentary filmmaker and activist Michael Moore advocating for a single-payer health care system in the United States at a Washington, D.C., event sponsored by the nonprofit organization Public Citizen on September 29, 2009.

audiences could be informed, could be shown to see the world differently, and could potentially act on that difference. Simultaneously, this reevaluation saw an increase in the popularity of documentary film as a theatrical experience.

Developments in independent documentary film separate from television had a greater ambition to directly provoke an audience into action. An instance that demonstrates the extent to which documentary could spur social change came as a result of Frederick Wiseman's 1967 documentary *Titicut Follies*. This film was an exposé of the Bridgewater State Mental Hospital in Massachusetts. Its footage was disturbing enough to cause the film to be suppressed for a number of years, with viewing restricted mostly to lawyers, doctors, and health care professionals. The film is considered to have had a direct effect on the closing of Bridgewater. Relatives of patients who subsequently died claim that if the film had been in wider release their relatives might have had a better outcome. The idea that this documentary could spur change in the way that the mental health industry conducted itself was exactly the kind of thing that Grierson argued documentary could accomplish.

Public screenings played a great role in distribution in the 1960s and 1970s, where a number of antiestablishment films were circulating to a highly mobilized audience of antiwar protesters. The 1968 film by Emile de Antonio *In the Year of the Pig* was highly influential, and earned an Academy Award nomination for Best Documentary. A group of 19 filmmakers known as the Winterfilm Collective collaborated on the 1971 documentary *Winter Soldier*, also advocating against the Vietnam War. These were followed by *Hearts and Minds* in 1974, which won the Best Documentary Academy Award. One of the members of the Winterfilm Collective was Barbara Kopple, who went on to make *Harlan County U.S.A.* in 1975. The film is notable because many of the striking miners depicted in the film believe that the presence of the film crew helped to bring a faster end to the strike.

Errol Morris in 1988 made *The Thin Blue Line*, which relayed the case of Randall Adams, who had been accused of murdering a trooper in Texas. Morris's film indicated that Adams was largely being railroaded, and his conviction and death sentence were actually hiding the real murderer. Reaction to the film and surrounding publicity led to Adams being exonerated.

Michael Moore

Michael Moore's first major film was the 1989 *Roger and Me*. Moore included himself as a character advocating on the side of the labor unions opposing the corporate interests of large auto companies that were slowly destroying Flint, Michigan. Moore subsequently made *Bowling for Columbine* in 2002, an extremely influential documentary about the nature of gun culture in America. He then made *Fahrenheit 9/11* in 2004, which remains the highest grossing documentary of all time (as of May 2013). This film was an extended critique of America during the Bush administration following the attacks of 9/11. Moore remained a character who adopts an advocacy position against the U.S. government.

The advocacy positions that Michael Moore has adopted have been translated to social media

events. Moore claimed that if people could actually see the damage done to the bodies of the children of the Sandy Hook massacre they would immediately change their positions on gun rights and the National Rifle Association; he based this on his understanding of the effects of photographs of Emmett Till's body and the images of the 1965 Selma police attacks on African Americans that subsequently bolstered support for the 1965 Civil Rights Act.

Moore has a large number of social media followers (in the millions). With every new 10,000 followers he gains, Michael Moore gives $1,000 to a charity chosen by one of his followers. Moore believes that the communication of images of brutality and violence through social media would actually have a positive effect on the way people relate to events and instigate social change.

Other Approaches

Moore's films have capitalized on the popularity of theatrical releases of documentary films as a way of instigating social change. A slightly different approach has been taken by Robert Greenwald and his company Brave New Films. Their projects have included the 2004 documentary *Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism*, 2005's *Walmart: The High Cost of Low Price*s, and the 2006 documentary *Iraq for Sale: The War Profiteers*. Greenwald and Brave New Films have capitalized on distribution through social media of documentary materials. He releases material in shorter pieces on the Internet, where they have collectively received over 50 million views. Brave New Films has also used sales to individuals who host house party viewings as another way to get viewers in touch with each other, increasing the possibilities of collective social action.

The plummeting prices of cameras, the ubiquity of simple editing platforms, and a higher general level of media awareness (if not media literacy), plus the ability to distribute through YouTube and online sites have led to an explosion in the production of documentaries. The challenge for the filmmaker now is standing out in the crowd. The challenge for the viewer is deciding which of these stories is worth paying attention to and what kind of action to take as a result of seeing them. And the challenge to social change is having a large enough niche of viewers to reach a critical mass, and to incorporate paths of action that can connect a documentary to social change.

Some more traditional documentary outlets, like the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) series *POV* and *Independent Lens*, have developed positions for people who coordinate both outreach and education efforts. Nonprofit organizations that have experience in the development of educational materials have also gotten involved. The Rockefeller Foundation awarded $975,000 to Columbia University's Teacher's College to develop a multidisciplinary curriculum guide and a Web site to support the teaching of Spike Lee and HBO's *When The Levees Broke*, a multipart documentary about Hurricane Katrina. The grant included the distribution of 30,000 copies of the film along with the curriculum book to educators. The Web site remained active though most of 2010, and offers a place where the curriculum materials can still be downloaded free.

A similar effort is underway through Facing History and Ourselves, which develops teaching materials to combat racism, anti-Semitism, and prejudice. It developed curriculum materials for the Marco Williams film *Banished*, about the historical effects of the banishment of African Americans from several towns in the first decades of the 20th century. The materials are freely available online.

Other documentaries are trying to use social media to develop transmedia platforms with a particular documentary or set of documentaries at the center. Top Documentary Films, DocumentaryWIRE, and Films For Action offer collections of both short and full-length documentaries online. Over 20 years of growth, Witness, an international nonprofit organization, has offered a combination of social documentaries, with a variety of educational materials to teach visitors to its Web site how to make documentary projects, all built on the action of using the documentation of human rights abuses to help curtail them.

Kony 2012

A visible recent example of the interaction of social media and documentary—for better and worse—came with the campaign and film known as *Kony 2012*. In March 2012 the organization Invisible Children released a 30-minute film that

sought to make African war criminal Joseph Kony widely known. The film spread virally and received 94 million views on YouTube, along with 17 million views on Vimeo. The film was tied to a social action campaign, a Web site, and the distribution of posters, T-shirts, and stickers to publicize Kony and his human rights abuses. In the months after its release, the film was widely discussed, both in positive and negative terms. The film was moving and easy to watch, causing an emotional resonance in viewers. At the same time, the film was widely criticized for its manipulation, inaccuracies, oversimplification of political issues, and ultimately misguided efforts. There were short-term gains in international attention and criticism of Kony and his recruitment of child soldiers, and international aid for efforts to apprehend him. But these efforts, as of this writing, have not achieved their central goal.

It remains to be seen whether *Kony 2012* was a fluke incident or a sign of what might be possible in the interaction of documentary and social media. It is also still not clear whether the general arc of the campaign was primarily an example of "slacktivism"—offering online participants an opportunity to do something that seems like social activism, but actually accomplishes little beyond a feeling of accomplishment.

Conclusion

Organizations like the Center for Social Media at American University are attempting to develop methods for better understanding what is considered successful in the relationship between documentary and social media. As larger numbers of documentary productions are chasing after more elusive sources of financial support, what counts as a worthy investment in this relationship becomes critical. At the same time, the differences in form that are affecting the understanding of documentary—a culture's documentary literacy—remain an area in need of additional study.

Ralph Beliveau
University of Oklahoma

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Brave New Films; Center for Innovative Media; Center for Social Media; Crowdfunding; i-Docs.org; Interactive Documentary; Television and Social Media; YouTube.

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Domestic Surveillance and Social Media

Domestic surveillance is surveillance by the government (especially the federal government and its intelligence agencies) conducted within the United States and its territories, and in particular surveillance of American citizens and legal residents. Surveillance techniques include surveillance by human operatives (the proverbial unmarked van, as well as discreet interviews of parties of interest, searches of property and vehicles, and other means), cameras and other recording devices, satellite imagery and aerial surveillance, and many forms of electronic surveillance. Electronic surveillance is sometimes referred to as wiretapping, which originally referred literally to the act of listening in on telephone conversations via accessing the telephone wire, but which has been extended to include other

means of monitoring telephone calls, information transmitted by telephone wire, and all online conversation and activity, from e-mails and text messages to Web browsing and downloads. Wiretapping can sometimes also refer to, and surveillance would certainly include, the monitoring of activity online that may not constitute "conversation," such as Web browsing, downloading of images or information, Facebook activity (including profile information and pages "liked"), and so on.

Development

Domestic surveillance has always been a concern of the press, who in the course of their work must regularly deal with confidential information and cloaked sources. In 2013, these extant worries were exacerbated by a relationship between the government and investigative journalists made increasingly tense by incidents like the Justice Department's subpoenas of reporters' phone records and the detaining of *Guardian* columnist Glenn Greenwald after breaking a story on NSA surveillance. One online news site, Groklaw, even ceased operations over surveillance concerns. Social networks have been key to surveillance since before the Internet, when part of the process of creating a profile of a subject included mapping his or her social network—a visual presentation of information about the people the subject knows and has contact with, with both subjective and quantitative information about each of his or her relationships to these people. Such social network maps could reveal information that could prove to be useful: two parties who might seem to be unconnected might prove otherwise after being mapped. Phone records may indicate calls between two suspicious parties who have no apparent innocent reason to know each other, for instance.

Modern social network analysis incorporates far more information than was used in the past—whenever possible, the amount of information greatly exceeds what a human agent could be expected to keep track of. Data mining is then used to search for useful information and patterns that would once have required an intuitive leap to perceive. Data mining in this informal sense refers to the collection, extraction, and analysis of large sets of data by software designed for the purpose, using data management and preprocessing, visualization, interestingness metrics, pattern mining through association rules, grid computing, and other techniques. (In computer science the term is somewhat more specific.) It is especially used to refer to these processes in such cases as when the sets of data are so large that extracting information from them manually would be prohibitively laborious. The use of data mining makes it practical to collect and maintain large amounts of data which, were they to be analyzed manually, would be too much of a nuisance to be useful, and in this fact is the principal difference between domestic surveillance then and now.

Modern social network analysis, when conducted by the relevant agencies in the federal government, draws on information from social network sites like Twitter and Facebook, traffic analysis from the National Security Agency's (NSA) phone call database, and such information as purchase records and whatever has been uncovered through other means of surveillance. Specialized data mining software has been developed for this purpose—AT&T's Hancock, for instance, was developed to data mine customer information in order to generate marketing leads, but the social network connections that it unveils have been repurposed for the intelligence community's use.

Social Network Analysis Research

Government entities like the Department of Homeland Security and the National Security Agency are at the forefront of social network analysis research. It and related technologies and techniques like data mining are among the most actively developed technologies and can be expected to remain so for some decades to come. Because so many threats to national security come from decentralized extremists—the Boston Marathon bombers, Tamerlan and Dzokhar Tsarnaev, for example, or the attempted 2010 Times Square bombing by Faisal Shahzad—social network analysis can be critical.

The monitoring of social media becomes attractive to the intelligence community because suspects flock to social media as a place to exchange information less conspicuously than through in-person meetings. In other words, the use of social media to avoid surveillance makes social media a target for surveillance. However, in truth the wealth of information that can be uncovered through social media surveillance would make it appealing to the intelligence community regardless.

Concerns about domestic surveillance and the new forms it would take through technological advancements in the 21st century first focused on the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency's (DARPA) Information Awareness Office (IAO) and its Total Information Awareness goal. The IAO was formed in January 2002, combining several DARPA projects in order to address the government's new priority on surveillance and security in the immediate post-9/11 months. IAO is especially concerned with assymetric threats—those threats which, like most modern terrorists, differ radically in scale and strategy from the United States. The goal of Total Information Awareness would be met by assembling a database of all Americans and U.S. residents, including personal information and online and offline activity, in order to create a block of data that could be mined to search for threats. Columnist William Safire spoke out vociferously against the IAO, and public and media criticism mounted until the program was defunded the following year.

NSA

The NSA's domestic surveillance program, referred to in the government documents that initiated it as the President's Surveillance Program, began shortly after the 9/11 attacks. Much of the program remains classified, and what is publicly known is largely the work of whistle-blowers and the occasional factoid revealed during a congressional investigation. Though some suspected its existence, most Americans had no inkling of it until the *New York Times* published an exposé in 2005 on domestic wiretapping conducted by the NSA without warrants. The lack of a warrant, with the checks and balances it implies, was the major point of concern.

It became clear with time that an additional point of concern for privacy advocates was the underlying reason for permitting warrantless surveillance: the purpose of the program was not limited to targeting persons of interest, but to identifying persons of interest. A warrant requires identifying a suspect in some form. What the new program did was capitalize on modern technology and the dense bricks of information it produces about peoples' activities for a variety of uses, some strongly suspected, some confirmed, including collecting information for later use (in order to provide the intelligence community with the ability to quickly build a profile for a newly identified person of interest), and searching for patterns of suspicious activity in order to alert human agents to the need for further investigation, much as software detects suspicious activity in order to alert human personnel to the possibility of actions ranging from password hacking to money laundering.

In addition to telephone call data, the NSA program monitored Internet traffic in real time, including e-mail and social media activity, as well as Web browsing, downloads, and other activity. The original program ended in 2007 under public pressure, but was resumed sometime shortly after the passage of the FISA (Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act) Amendments Act of 2008, with the FISA court officially reviewing surveillance programs and procedures. Arguments continue about whether the program violates Articles I or II of the Constitution, Fourth Amendment protections, or restrictions on the War Powers Resolution, among other issues. The view of many is that the legal argument itself is convoluted in part because the body of privacy and surveillance law simply has not caught up to the capabilities of technology: there are few privacy or surveillance laws, or court decisions in the relevant area, that are contemporary to the technology at the heart of the matter.

According to a report by privacy advocacy group the Electronic Freedom Foundation, the NSA constructed a $2 billion data center in Utah, which went fully operational in September 2013, housing over 11 years of data collected by Narus Semantic Traffic Analyzers (which intercepted and copied Internet traffic as it happened, in essence wiretapping the Internet as a whole) and other hardware.

PRISM

A more recent revelation is the existence of the PRISM surveillance program, an electronic data collection program operated by the NSA since 2007, supervised by the FISA court, and revealed to exist in June 2013 thanks to the whistle-blowing of NSA contractor Edward Snowden, who subsequently sought asylum overseas. The exact parameters of the PRISM program are unclear.

They were originally alleged to include warrantless demands for customer records from telecommunications companies and social media companies including Google, Facebook, and Apple.

The government has asserted that the program is not used on domestic targets without a warrant, while individual companies have denied knowledge of the existence of the program, or of backdoors providing government agencies with access to their databases. Many in the media remained skeptical of the defenses following Snowden's accusations (accompanied by documentation), with the *New York Times* announcing that the Obama administration had no credibility on the issue. The assurance that the FISA court reviewed the process was challenged by a former FISA judge, James Robertson, who criticized the procedures of the court and its usefulness as an overseer.

Bill Kte'pi
Independent Scholar

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Carnivore; Department of Homeland Security Media Monitoring Initiative; ECHELON; FinFisher; Independent Media Center; Media Research Center; 100Reporters Whistleblower Alley; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security; Privacy.

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Dooced

Dooced is a term that refers to being terminated from a job because of something one has posted on a personal blog or Web site. The word originates from the personal blog Dooce, written by Heather B. Armstrong. In February 2001, Armstrong began blogging about her personal life and work experiences, although she did not refer to her company or coworkers by name. A year after Armstrong began blogging, someone anonymously tipped off the vice presidents of the company for which she worked. Armstrong was then fired for making disparaging remarks about her colleagues and employer on her blog. Armstrong may not be the first person to lose a job because of their blog or Web site, but as a prominent and vocal member of the early blogging community, her blog became synonymous with these firings.

Following Armstrong's termination in 2002, several other bloggers were fired because of their blog content, including Mark Jen, fired from Google for blogging about Google's employee orientation process, and Ellen Simonetti, who was terminated from her position as a Delta Airlines flight attendant for blogging photos that the company deemed inappropriate. Simonetti later filed a sex discrimination lawsuit against Delta Airlines, claiming inconsistency in its treatment of employees' online postings. These and other firings ignited a debate about workers' rights to free speech and privacy, a debate that continues as blogging and social networking become a more ubiquitous part of individuals' daily lives.

Blogging and social networking have blurred some of the boundaries between public and private, as comments that may have gone unnoticed and unreported in a face-to-face conversation leave a digital footprint when posted online. However, as blogs and social networking sites have gained popularity, they have also become a part of corporate culture, facilitating interaction between colleagues and allowing companies to reach out to clients by creating and maintaining an online presence. The blurring between public life and private life alongside the need for social media use in the workplace creates the potential for employees to post defamatory or harassing content for which employers may be liable. Accordingly, some employers monitor their

employees' activity on blogs and social networking sites, resulting in numerous terminations due to workers' online activity.

In the United States, most employees are employed at-will, meaning they can be terminated at any time and for almost any reason, provided the reason does not violate state or federal law or a contractual agreement. As part of the doctrine of employment at-will, employee monitoring is legal in many forms, both inside and outside of the workplace. Employers monitor employees for several reasons, including maintaining productivity, protecting trade secrets, and avoiding liability in cases where employees may be in violation of the law. Employees have some limited privacy protections at work, for instance, against wiretapping or in cases in which the employee has a reasonable expectation of privacy. However, the law has been slow to respond to changes in technology that allow employers greater scope in their capacity to monitor employees.

The doctrine of employment at-will puts the employee at a disadvantage in disputing claims of being "dooced." Many bloggers, including Armstrong, do not initially intend for their blogs or social media content to be seen by their employers. Employees may be protected in cases in which they have a reasonable expectation of privacy, but regardless of an author's intentions or audience size, because blogs and social networking sites are publicly accessible, users have little reasonable expectation of privacy. Content posted to blogs and social networking sites are archived and traceable, and thus can be used in cases against employees even if the content is published under a pseudonym or on an individual's own time.

Many forms of employee monitoring are legally protected, and many employers actively monitor workers' blogs and social media use. Due to inconsistencies in how employees have been disciplined due to their online activity, many employers have instituted blogging and social media policies to decrease their liability in cases in which employees are fired because of their use of blogs or social networking sites. Social media policies typically contain stipulations against sharing confidential information, disparaging the company, and posting harassing or abusive content. However, there have been some debates as to the legality of some blogging and social media policies, as the threat of discipline for blogging and social media use could be seen as limiting employees' freedom of expression, and in particular, curtailing workers' rights to organize and improve working conditions.

Passed in 1935, the National Labor Rights Act (NLRA) has historically provided some speech protections for employees, and ambiguity and unequal treatment in cases of termination have raised the question of what constitutes protected speech online. Section 7 of NLRA protects employees' right to self-organization and collective bargaining, allowing employees to discuss wages, hours, and working conditions without fear of termination, while Section 8 makes it unlawful for employers to interfere with employees' Section 7 rights. These laws apply to both union and nonunion workers. Thus, employees' use of blogs and social networking sites to discuss working conditions may include protected activity, so long as the content is not abusive.

The National Labor Relations Board's (NLRB) general counsel has disputed the lawfulness of some blogging and social media policies on the basis that they violate workers' right to organize. The NLRB's general counsel argued that vaguely worded confidentiality and antidefamation policies could potentially curtail employees' rights to discuss wages, hours, and working conditions. The NLRB has called upon several companies, such as General Motors, Target, and Costco, to reformulate their blogging and social media policies. However, the NLRA only protects employee postings related to working conditions.

Jennifer Whitmer
Simon Gottschalk
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

See Also: Blogger Rights and Responsibilities; Privacy; Professional Bloggers; Social Media Career Wreckers; Tweet Insurance; Unemployment.

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Downstream Liability, Political Implications of

The term *downstream liability* refers to a practice in which an organization's network is exploited in order to impair the computing capabilities of another network. The intermediary's system is used as a stepping stone to gain access to the end target's system. A fundamental legal issue lies in the determination of the liability of the intermediary organization for any damaging activity targeted at another organization. The organization that facilitates the downstream action could be at fault because of insecure systems, processes, or failure to warn of potential danger. Once an organization is notified that there has been a network breach that could lead to the spread of a virus, liability can arise. Negligence can be found if there is an awareness of a security breach with potentially wider implications followed by a lack of action or notification of the danger.

This leads to a need for organizations to ensure the security of their systems and the effectiveness of internal notification procedures in order to avoid liability. It is often difficult to track down the hackers, the originators of the damaging activity, whereas an intermediary organization, whose lack of oversight may have inadvertently aided that hacker, is easy to identify and sue. The concept of downstream liability is further complicated by the differing legal approaches taken across jurisdictions in relation to the duty to secure a computer system. For example, the relevant legal regimes in the United States and the European Union mandate differing duties and responsibilities in relation to computer security. The laws on this issue also vary in the United States from state to state. The divide lies between regimes that impose no liability and those that enshrine a concept of downstream liability. In general, the trend is moving toward the imposition of liability for intermediaries.

The concept of downstream liability is important in relation to use of computer systems to raise awareness of a political issue, also known as hacktivism. This practice relies upon the use of networks to highlight political points by impairing systems, and it has been seen as a type of civil disobedience. Such hacktivism is becoming increasingly sophisticated and increasingly relies upon the exploitation of vulnerable systems as a route toward the impairment of other, better protected systems. This phenomenon can lead the political and legislative impetus toward the expansion of the concept of downstream liability to better protect public services. However, there is a need to find a balance that ensures that organizations maintain secure systems while avoiding the imposition of duties that could hinder growth and commercial competitiveness.

Catherine Easton
Lancaster University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Hacktivism; Political Parties.

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Dragonfly Effect, The

Sameer Bhatia was an entrepreneur. He had a successful Silicon Valley business and was living the high life when he was diagnosed with leukemia. At the time, he was 31 years old. Bhatia would need a bone marrow transplant if he wished to survive and beat the disease. Unfortunately, there were few South Asian donors, and as a result,

hope looked dim. Understanding firsthand the potential of social media and networks, he took to the Internet in an effort to solicit more potential donors of the same ethnicity as Bhatia. Over 11 weeks, more than 450 bone marrow drives were held, and approximately 150,000 visitors looked at the Web site devoted to the cause. In the end, more than 20,000 possible donors entered the registry, and one was a perfect match for Bhatia. Unfortunately, he did not survive his illness, but thanks to his social media efforts, 266 patients were matched with donors enlisted as part of the Bhatia campaign. These events caused Jennifer Aaker and Andy Smith to write *The Dragonfly Effect* in 2011.

The Dragonfly Effect is titled as such due to the dragonfly being the only insect capable of flying in any direction when its four wings are working together. Culturally, the dragonfly means many things depending on where one is located. It typically involves new beginnings or change. Aaker and Smith use these ideas to show how social media can make a large impact when harnessed properly by those utilizing it. Following the metaphor of the dragonfly, the authors use their work to describe the four wings of the dragonfly effect—focus, grab attention, engage, and take action.

The first wing of the dragonfly is focus. Rather than thinking big (which many marketing experts have previously recommended), Aaker and Smith instead suggest targeting a single, clear outcome. All resources should go directly toward this goal. Within the text, the authors suggest setting a goal, breaking it into subgoals, determining how to measure success, and creating a specific plan to use in reaching the goal. In the case of Bhatia, one can see the clear focus: finding a donor match.

The second wing is to grab attention. Once the single goal is decided upon, the main task is to convince an audience to care. Aaker and Smith suggest being original, keeping it simple, making it grounded, and using as much visual imagery as possible. After grabbing their attention, individuals must get their audience primed to take action in support of the single goal. Stories and personal engagement are the key ways by which to do this. Online technologies can prove to be pivotal. Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, text messages, a blog, or YouTube videos can all prove to be successful in implementing an engagement strategy.

The final wing involves taking action. If an individual has set a goal, engaged a chosen audience, and convinced them to care, it should be easy to get them to act. Key in this stage is to keep providing positive reinforcement to those who are doing what an individual is asking. This will encourage others to do the same.

The key takeaway from *The Dragonfly Effect* is that small, integrated activities can cause a ripple effect that leads to greater changes than expected. These changes can have a positive impact. All it takes in the social media era, however, is a wireless connection to begin implementing change.

Political Campaigns

During the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, the George W. Bush campaign team reminded America of the importance of word-of-mouth endorsements. Rather than relying on formal endorsements from national politicians, Karl Rove orchestrated an Amway-style campaign in which supporters called their friends and endorsed Bush and urged others to do the same. Rove understood that the best way to sell a product (or candidate) was through word of mouth and that consumers are more open to endorsements from friends than formal pitches. Today, this is even more easily done via social media. In this way, *The Dragonfly Effect* provides campaigns (both candidate and issue-based) with a blueprint for success in tapping social media and psychological insights to see victory in the ballot box.

To see how *The Dragonfly Effect* can be used in campaigns, consider the election of President Barack Obama in 2008. The Obama 2008 campaign was the first to truly utilize social media as a vehicle for possible success. Obama and his team used social media to raise money, advertise events, and empower supporters to be active campaign assistants. Over the course of roughly 15 months, Obama saw nearly 5 million supporters join his cause on a combined 15 social networks. On YouTube alone, he had more than 50 million views on his channel. Other campaigns used social media, but none were successful in creating a culture of involvement and participation. Rather than simply creating the pages and social networking hubs and expecting individual supporters to help them take off, Obama and his team made sure that social media served as a

vehicle to bring together supporters in real time to help bring about the change they desired for the country. Obama allowed supporters to run individual campaigns on their own through the Internet.

Looking at the specifics, the Obama team was successful by focusing all attention onto Barack Obama as an individual. Rather than worrying about policies or politics, the campaign wanted people to get to know Barack Obama, the individual. After doing so, they believed voters would be inclined to agree with him. Next, they assured that Obama was authentic on the Internet. As opposed to Senator John McCain, Obama enjoyed the social networks. He used his own favorite music, interests, sports, and movies. He did not pretend to be anyone but who he truly was. Likewise, his day-to-day updates were easily relatable to all Americans. The conversation seemed to be more about how Obama was like the average American than his activities as a presidential candidate.

Perhaps most important, Obama acknowledged that every single American was capable of helping to create change. A vast majority of the money he raised was in amounts of $20 or less. By sharing posts and using Facebook walls and Twitter feeds, Obama empowered even the most powerless of Americans to work toward making a difference, and the average citizen responded.

In the most general sense, Obama succeeded in 2008 by following *The Dragonfly Effect*: he created a single, clear goal and put all resources toward garnering the necessary support to achieve it. Obama focused on hope and change—a focused message for the future of the country. He utilized top bloggers and social network specialists (such as Chris Hughes) to assure social media was used properly, and he had a complete map of the digital landscape. He assured authenticity by being himself in all networks. Everything he posted or said was geared toward getting individuals to vote for him and Vice President Joe Biden. And, most important, he embraced cocreation. He allowed average citizens to take his brand and run with it to their friends, family, coworkers, and social networks.

The Obama campaign did exactly what *The Dragonfly Effect* predicted: It took a series of small events and allowed them to collectively lead to major change in the world. In the aftermath, more campaigns have begun attempting to do the same.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Facebook; Fan Page; Social Media Optimization; Social Networking Web Sites; Twitter; YouTube.

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Drudge Report

The *Drudge Report* was one of the first political Web sites to achieve international fame when it broke the story of the affair between U.S. President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky in 1998. Its mixture of politics and gossip paved the way for later political Web sites, including the *Huffington Post* and *Politico*. Founder Matt Drudge considers his publication to be part of the tradition of whistle-blowing, muckraking journalism, and to this extent, the *Drudge Report* also may have influenced the development of sites like WikiLeaks. However, the *Drudge Report*'s unique talent lies in recognizing and publishing small stories from the mainstream press that grow into much larger stories later. The site has little in the way of original content, choosing instead to aggregate content from other publications, and consists mostly of links to other Web sites.

While its popularity has ebbed and flowed over the years, the *Drudge Report* remains one of the top-rated U.S. political news Web sites and among the most popular Web sites in the world, drawing more than 20 million unique viewers per month. Journalists and political pundits recognize the *Drudge Report* as an influential media agenda setter.

Background

Matt Drudge was born in 1966 in Tacoma Park, Maryland. He moved to Hollywood, California, in 1989, where he managed a gift shop at CBS Studios before launching the *Drudge Report*, which started as an e-mail newsletter in the mid-1990s. Hollywood gossip was the focus of the newsletter, but when Drudge shifted to Internet publication in the late 1990s, he turned his attention to politics. In the early days, Drudge has said that he received news tips from entertainment industry sources and sometimes even rummaged through trash bins to get story ideas. Drudge has been both praised for his ability to scoop mainstream news organizations on major stories and damned for recklessly publishing stories that later turned out to be false.

Drudge calls himself a conservative populist, and his publication is consistently listed among the top conservative Web sites. The *Drudge Report* and the conservative Fox News cable TV channel emerged at about the same time.

The Lewinsky Scandal

On January 17, 1998, Drudge broke the news of the affair between President Bill Clinton and White House intern Monica Lewinsky. The story originated with *Newsweek* magazine's Michael Isikoff, but *Newsweek* editors delayed running the story in order to get more verification. Drudge found out about the story and promptly posted it online. Mainstream media coverage followed a few days later. Drudge continued to break new details of the story, which culminated in Clinton's impeachment in December 1998.

Format

While the *Drudge Report* is often considered a groundbreaking online news publication, it has eschewed many social media norms. Other than a form where readers may submit news tips, it has never incorporated user participation into its site. There are no audience comments, no opinion bloggers, and no way to like or share stories via social media. However, the *Drudge Report* is among the top Internet sites that drive traffic to other news Web sites.

Susan Jacobson
Florida International University

See Also: *Huffington Post;* Information Aggregation; *Politico;* WikiLeaks.

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Durbin, Richard J.

Richard J. "Dick" Durbin was born on November 21, 1944. A native of East St. Louis, Illinois, Durbin became involved in that state's politics in 1969, running several unsuccessful campaigns before being elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1982. First elected to the U.S. Senate in 1996, Durbin served as Senate minority leader (minority whip) from 2005 through 2007 and as Senate majority leader (majority whip) from 2007 until the present.

Although known for his relatively traditional campaign style, Durbin has come to the attention of many proponents of social media for his sponsorship of a variety of legislation seen as curtailing freedoms, including the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and his calls for a return to the Fairness Doctrine. Although neither of these proposals has led to incursions in the right to free speech or innovation, Durbin's continued influence and authority make his support for these types of reforms significant.

The son of William Durbin and Anna Kitkin Durbin, Durbin was educated in parochial

schools, graduating from East St. Louis's Assumption High School in 1962. Both of Durbin's parents worked for the New York Central Railroad, and he worked in stockyards and slaughterhouses during the summer to earn money to pay for college. Enrolling at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University the following fall, Durbin earned a bachelor of science degree in 1966. While a senior at Georgetown, Durbin served as an intern in the office of Illinois's senior U.S. Senator Paul Douglas. Immediately upon graduation from college, Durbin enrolled in the Georgetown University Law Center, graduating with a juris doctorate in 1969. Moving to Springfield, Illinois, the summer after graduating with his law degree, Durbin passed the Illinois bar exam and began his own law practice that same year.

Beginning in 1969, Durbin served as legal counsel to Illinois Lieutenant Governor Paul Simon, a position he held until 1972. After this, he served as legal counsel to the Illinois State Senate Judiciary Committee, remaining in this role until 1982. Although he ran for a seat in the Illinois State Senate in 1976 and for Illinois lieutenant governor in 1978 (as the running mate of Illinois State Superintendent of Schools Michael Bakalis), Durbin lost both these elections. After the 1978 loss to Republicans Governor Jim Thompson and Lieutenant Governor Dave O'Neal, Durbin began working at the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine as an adjunct professor, all the while continuing his practice of law.

In 1982, Durbin again ran for election, this time winning the Democratic nomination for Illinois's 20th Congressional District, which was centered in Springfield. In the general election in November, Durbin surprised 11-term Republican Congressman Paul Findley, who had first been elected to the seat in 1960. Durbin was successful for several reasons. First, his message focused upon high unemployment rates and financial difficulties facing constituents, resonating with voters in the off-year election who felt that President Ronald Reagan's economic policies were failing. Second, Durbin was able to raise donations from pro-Israel groups across the United States who opposed Findley's push for more equal treatment of the Palestinians by the Israeli government. Finally, Durbin benefitted from the 1980 redistricting process, which had redrawn the now-eliminated 20th Congressional District to include more voters aligned to the Democratic Party.

Once in office, Durbin became known as one of the more progressive members of the U.S. Congress and is acknowledged for having consistently liberal views on most issues. His voting record over the past three decades has been very similar to the Democratic Caucus position. When he first entered the House of Representatives, Durbin supported maintaining pre-existing restrictions on abortion and favored an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would have nullified the holding in *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U. S. 113 (1973). After 1989, however, Durbin reversed his opposition to abortion and has supported Medicaid funding of the process and opposed any attempts to limit *Roe v. Wade*. Durbin has also consistently favored legislation that restricts access to tobacco and regulates smoking. Durbin's opposition to the tobacco lobby stems in part from his father's death from lung cancer when the future senator was 14 years old. To further this concern, Durbin sponsored legislation in 1987 that would ban cigarette smoking on all domestic flights of two hours or less. Durbin's proposal, which sought to protect the health and safety of nonsmokers and airline employees, was adopted as part of the 1988 transportation spending bill and was extended to all domestic flights, regardless of length, in 1989. Durbin ran successfully for re-election to his House seat six times, handily beating the Republican opposition each time.

In 1996, two-term Senator Paul Simon announced that he would not run for re-election. Durbin entered the Democratic primary for the Senate seat, ultimately defeating future Illinois Governor Pat Quinn for the opportunity to run in the general election. In the fall of that year, Durbin scored a win against Illinois State Representative Al Salvi, winning the election by 15 points in part because of President Bill Clinton's landslide re-election. Durbin quickly rose to a leadership position within the Senate Democratic Party Caucus, as he was appointed the assistant minority leader (assistant minority whip) by Senator Tom Daschle. Following the 2004 elections, in which Daschle was defeated for re-election, Durbin became the first Senate whip from Illinois since Everett Dirksen had served in that position during the 1950s. Durbin served as minority whip until 2007, when the Democratic Party assumed control of the Senate, at

which point he became majority whip. In addition to his service to the Democratic Caucus, Durbin has also served on a variety of committees, including the Appropriations Committee, the Foreign Relations Committee, the Judiciary Committee, and the Committee on Rules and Administration.

Use of Social Media

Durbin uses a variety of social media to communicate with his constituency as well as to publicize stances he is taking on a variety of issues. To this end, Durbin's office maintains a Web page, a Facebook page, a Twitter account, a Flickr account, and a YouTube channel. Each of these has a slightly different purpose and focus. The Web page, for example, not only delineates policy initiatives and legislation Durbin favors but also provides connections for those seeking constituent services, the locations of local field offices, or protections afforded consumers. Durbin's Web page also provides updates regarding the legislative agenda, recent press releases, and stories of Illinois residents.

Durbin's Facebook page contains reminders to vote, links to Web sites and Facebook pages of political allies, and other features relating to constituents, special interest groups, and other issues of concern. His Twitter account sends out two to 10 tweets per day, updating those interested in Durbin's daily routine, speeches, Senate votes on pending bills, and the like. The Flickr account contains Durbin's photostream, which shows the Senator greeting other politicians and guests in his office, Durbin at work on various Senate subcommittees, and him out in the field campaigning and meeting constituents. Finally, Durbin's YouTube channel contains videos of him making speeches on the Senate floor, announcing workshops for constituents, promoting public works projects that will provide jobs in Illinois, and interacting with special guests to his office. Together, these social media sites permit Durbin a chance to connect with voters, constituents, and others in a variety of ways, thus allowing individuals of all ages to interact with him in the manner they feel most comfortable.

Controversy

Durbin has angered some proponents of free speech and Internet communications through his support of certain legislation and policies. In particular, Durbin has expressed a desire for a return to the Fairness Doctrine, which has alarmed those concerned with free speech and in favor of limited government regulation of the Internet. Durbin has also expressed support for SOPA and has served as a sponsor of the Preventing Real Online Threats to Economic Creativity and Theft of Intellectual Property (PROTECT IP) Act (PIPA). While none of these attempts to limit activity on the Web was successful when first introduced, Durbin's support of this sort of regulation has left some uneasy.

The Fairness Doctrine was a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) policy that was first introduced in 1949. Through 1967, the Fairness Doctrine was applied on a case-to-case basis, after which point it was formally codified as part of the FCC's regulations. The Fairness Doctrine existed until 1987 when the FCC determined that the doctrine was no longer needed, although language referencing it was not removed from FCC regulations until 2011. At its essence, the Fairness Doctrine sought to ensure that viewers of television programming were exposed to a variety of viewpoints related to controversial issues facing the nation. To that end, the FCC required holders of broadcast licenses to make two interrelated commitments. First, the Fairness Doctrine obliged broadcasters to devote a certain amount of their airtime to discussions of controversial topics affecting the public interest. Second, it compelled broadcasters to present contrasting views regarding these topics. The FCC afforded broadcasters a wide degree of autonomy in presenting the controversial topics, and many used editorials, news segments, or public affairs programs to do so.

Although the Fairness Doctrine was repeatedly challenged in the courts, a variety of judicial opinions determined that Congress acted within its discretion in promulgating the requirement. In *Red Lion Broadcasting Co. v. FCC*, 395 U. S. 367 (1969), for example, the court held that when a broadcast station makes a personal attack on an individual, he or she must be given free on-air time to respond to the attacks. As a variety of alternative channels of communication became available, the Supreme Court did begin to question the necessity of the doctrine, but left its fate to Congress. In 1987 the FCC abolished the Fairness Doctrine, which was met by proposed legislation

Democratic senator from Illinois Richard J. Durbin answering questions from bloggers in "The Big Tent," an area set aside especially for new media, including Google, Digg, and YouTube, during the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colorado. Durbin has angered some online activists and proponents of free speech through his support of such legislation as the Preventing Real Online Threats to Economic Creativity and Theft of Intellectual Property (PROTECT IP) Act (PIPA).

reintroducing the policy, although this was vetoed by President Ronald Reagan. The Fairness Doctrine was separate and distinct from the equal time rule, which requires radio and television broadcasters to provide opposing political candidates equivalent opportunities to appear on the air.

In 2005, more than 20 members of the House of Representatives proposed the Fairness and Accountability in Broadcasting Act (FABA), which would have restored the Fairness Doctrine as part of the requirement to renew broadcast licenses. Specifically, FABA would have required broadcasters to cover important public matters, hold twice-yearly public meetings to determine which issues to cover, and demonstrate to the FCC that these obligations were being met. Although introduced, FABA was referred to committee, where no further action was taken. In 2007, Durbin publicly suggested a need for the return of the Fairness Doctrine, emphasizing his belief that open discourse required a variety of viewpoints. Nothing has come of this, however, although conservatives and libertarians continue to oppose any return of the doctrine.

In 2010 Durbin cosponsored the Combating Online Infringement and Counterfeits Act (COICA), which sought to combat media piracy by shutting down Web sites that facilitate such behavior. COICA was criticized by many First Amendment advocates, who insisted that the proposed legislation would foster censorship and harm many for the illegal actions of a few.

The following year, after COICA failed to pass, Durbin served as a cosponsor of PIPA, which was the Senate version of the more well known SOPA. PIPA was designed to prevent or curtail copyright infringement of intellectual property. Infringement was defined by PIPA as the distribution of counterfeit goods, illegal copies, or technology designed to foil digital rights-management

software. The bill was designed to facilitate law enforcement efforts to curtail digital copyright infringement, allowing the U.S. attorney general to seek injunctive relief against Web sites, facilitating such activity. Indeed, after applying for and receiving a court order so permitting, the government would be able to force advertisers, financial institutions, Internet service providers, and search engines to cease all interaction with the rogue site and to delete all links to it.

PIPA and SOPA enjoyed broad support among a variety of groups. Both the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) supported the legislation, as did copyright and trademark holders in business and industry, along with labor organizations representing their employees. Film studios, record companies, publishers, and a variety of businesses representing traditional means of distribution, such as cable networks, movie theaters, and others who felt piracy was threatening their ability to compete, also supported the measure. Other groups, however, opposed PIPA and SOPA vigorously. Opponents of the legislation asserted that its passage would impede innovation, limit freedom of speech, and impugn Internet integrity. A variety of companies and organizations, especially those engaged in or affiliated with Internet businesses, joined civil libertarians in opposing the bills.

After the administration of President Barack Obama announced that it opposed the legislation in its current form as a potential means of censorship of lawful activity and as a threat to the underlying architecture of the Internet, congressional leadership withdrew the bills from consideration so that they could further study the problems presented.

As one of the more liberal members of Congress, Durbin continues to receive high marks from a variety of left-leaning advocacy groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and the National Education Association (NEA) while receiving low grades from conservative advocacy groups. Durbin's passion for protecting the rights of workers and his willingness to accept government regulation may cause him to continue to support efforts to combat Internet piracy.

Stephen T. Schroth
Megan A. Lee
Knox College

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2002); Campaigns, Congressional (2008); Campaigns, Organizing; MoveOn.org; Social Media, Adoption of.

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E

Earned Media

Three types of media exist: paid media, owned media, and earned media. Paid media involves a group purchasing air time or space in order to distribute its messages, such as a commercial during a television show. Owned media involves a group using its own outlets to distribute messages, such as press releases on a Web site. Earned media refers to the dissemination of a group's messages through other outlets for free, such as news media coverage or social media sharing. Political campaigns rely on earned media to engage audiences with their messages.

With traditional media such as television and newspapers, campaigns use formal speeches, enter debates, stage events, create commercials, and write editorials and letters to the editor with the hope that news organizations would do more in-depth stories on them. In contrast, social media allow political campaigns to earn media from both traditional media outlets and individual users. In addition to the traditional events, campaigns use sites such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Tumblr, and blogs on dedicated Web sites. With these options, the campaigns employ short, word-based posts, still images, and videos to communicate their positions and their activities.

Social media make getting earned media even easier than traditional activities did. Part of the hope behind these activities is that individuals share them with members of their social networks. How these individuals connect with their social networks depends on the possibilities offered by the various Web sites. A "like" on Facebook shows up in a person's newsfeed for his or her friends to see and hopefully prompts those friends to like the same thing. Microblog sites such as Twitter and Tumblr allow users to share others' posts with one click, to comment on them, and to create their own posts. Pinterest allows users to create online pinboards with various images. YouTube channels and accounts host video, and these channels also allow sharing and commenting. After winning the 2012 election, for example, Barack Obama tweeted a picture of himself hugging his wife Michelle Obama and the words *four more years*. In the days following the election, Twitter users retweeted the post more than 800,000 times, setting a record.

The other part of the hope is that traditional news media cover social media activities as well as the previous approaches. Obama's tweet and the record number of retweets became a news item for several media outlets. His campaign's starting a Pinterest account garnered media coverage as well, with some stories even mentioning the chili recipes listed there.

Earned media offer several advantages. First, they offer the opportunity to reach a wider

Barack and Michelle Obama embrace in a photo similar to the one that went viral on Twitter after the 2012 election, becoming the site's most shared photo ever. The photo was taken on August 15, 2012, after a campaign event in Davenport, Iowa.

audience than targeted activities. Second, they help generate interest in the campaign and draw attention to it. Third, they offer an affirmation for those already supporting the campaign through seeing their efforts getting outside attention. Overall, this attention implies an agreement with the campaign's messages.

Earned media also come with challenges, such as standing out in a crowded media environment and losing control over intended messages. Republican candidate for president Mitt Romney learned this lesson when his comments about some Americans not paying income tax and about his views on gay marriage became viral videos. The videos gained traction from individual social media users and from the mainstream press, both in support and in derision of his comments. Once the videos become available and start gaining attention, they become difficult to retract or control.

Further, earned media allow others to insert their own messages into political conversations. During the 2012 campaign, billionaire Donald Trump created a video in which he offered President Obama $5 million to any charity of the president's choice if Obama produced records such as his passport application and his college transcripts. The video became available to audiences through YouTube and soon gained media and popular attention. Instead of garnering support, though, Trump's video drew criticism.

Not all political activities relate to political campaigns. The group Invisible Children released a video known as *Kony 2012*, which laid out plans for a campaign to raise awareness about the crimes of Joseph Kony, leader of the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, accused of kidnapping children and forcing them to serve in his army. The video called for Kony's capture and arrest, and the video quickly went viral across multiple social and traditional media. The video brought attention to the issues, but it also drew criticism for its messages and their execution.

Heather McIntosh
Boston College

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Buzz Creation; Cause-Marketing Campaigns; Engagement Advertising; Facebook; Going Viral; Return on Investment; Tumblr; Twitter; Viral Marketing; YouTube.

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ECHELON

ECHELON is a term associated with an intelligence collection system used by the United States and several of its allies. It is used primarily to sort through communication intercepts. This system is based on a network of computers that automatically search through large amounts of intercepts for preprogrammed key words or addresses. Since the existence of ECHELON was first revealed

in the late 1980s, debates have focused as to its potential impact on civil liberties. Similar concerns can be raised about the capabilities that intelligence agencies are developing for the purpose of digital surveillance in the age of social media.

The term *ECHELON* is often used to refer to the widespread surveillance capabilities developed by the National Security Agency (NSA), the U.S. organization in charge of collecting and exploiting signals transmitted from communication systems, radar, weapon systems, or signal intelligence (SIGINT). The ECHELON network relies on a series of monitoring stations throughout the world. These are managed by the NSA and its counterparts in a series of partner countries, including the Government Communication Headquarters (United Kingdom), the Government Communication Security Bureau (New Zealand), the Defense Signals Directorate (Australia), and the Communication Security Establishment (Canada).

The origins of the ECHELON system can be traced back to the special relationship that developed between the United States' and the United Kingdoms' (UK) intelligence apparatuses during World War II. This was formalized in 1946 when the two countries signed the UK–USA agreement that institutionalized cooperation in the realm of SIGINT. This agreement was later extended to include three second parties: Canada, and then Australia and New Zealand. Later on, third parties such as Norway, Denmark, Germany, Italy, and Turkey also joined the multilateral intelligence cooperation network. Cooperation between these countries played a vital part in the collection of SIGINT on the Soviet bloc during the Cold War. At the end of the Cold War, ECHELON, along with other interception systems, was redirected away from the Eastern Bloc to focus on threats such as terrorism and organized crime.

The scope of the ECHELON primarily targets nonmilitary entities such as governments, public and private organizations, companies, and individuals. Originally, the ECHELON computer network was only able to sort through intercepted satellite communications, and was only able to analyze phone call–related information, but not its content. In the last decades, however, the system has reportedly been updated and its surveillance capabilities broadened to tap into cable communications and monitor the Internet.

The term *ECHELON* comes from the computers that form the backbone of the surveillance system. Within each monitoring station, computers contain catalogues and lists of key words, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses that reflect information that the intelligence agencies of the partner countries are seeking. Each station uses a particular ECHELON dictionary that contains target lists entered by its parent agency and partner organizations. When certain key words, addresses, or patterns appear in an intercept, they are automatically recognized by the computer system, and are sent to the intelligence agency that originated the request. The system is particularly useful because it separates intercepts of interest from those not of interest. A majority of intercepts are thus filtered out and not retained within any database.

Controversies

ECHELON, as with any other surveillance system, raises important questions about the trade-off between national security and liberal democracy. Most media reports on ECHELON have emphasized potential abuses of power. In 1988, Margaret Newsham revealed that when she was working as a software engineer at a ground station based in Menwith Hill, UK, in the late 1970s, she heard phone calls from Senator Strom Thurmond (R-SC). In addition, Margaret Thatcher supposedly used ECHELON to spy on her ministers. In 1992, senior intelligence officials working for GCHQ, the British SIGINT organization, revealed in the (London) *Observer* that nongovernmental organizations such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace, and Christian Aid had been intercepted by the system because they referred to arms trafficking.

Negative media reports have reinforced the tendency among the general public to consider the government's eavesdropping networks as all-powerful. These stories have also raised important questions about the impact of surveillance on democracy. International intelligence cooperation in the area of SIGINT has allowed partner countries to circumvent prohibition on domestic spying. This is done by means of a mechanism whereby each partner can ask other partner-states to carry out intelligence collection on its citizens on its behalf. Fears that ECHELON or other similar surveillance systems have been used as a tool for domestic control are widespread. Allegations

about the use of the ECHELON system for political and economic espionage, and public knowledge of the existence of NSA-run stations throughout Europe, led the European Parliament to establish a Temporary Committee on the ECHELON Interception System (1999–2004). This did not lead to any major revelation, but confirmed the existence of the ECHELON system.

The controversies generated by the ECHELON network are not without historical precedent. The investigations carried out by the U.S. Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities (the Church Committee) in 1975 shed light on a series of abuses of human rights and civil liberties committed by the U.S. intelligence community in the early Cold War. In a project codenamed SHAMROCK, the NSA was able to intercept international telegrams entering into and exiting from the United States, using the facilities of three major telegraph companies. This surveillance program may well have been in contradiction of the First and Fourth Amendments to the Constitution, which respectively protect political freedoms and guard against unreasonable searches and seizures. The revelations of the 1970s paved the way for the institutionalization of the congressional oversight of intelligence in the United States.

The Foreign Intelligence Act of 1978 put in place a process of judicial review that required U.S. government agencies to obtain a warrant from a special court in order to collect "foreign intelligence information" between "foreign powers" and "agents of foreign powers" (the latter category potentially includes U.S. citizens). Further procedures were instituted in subsequent years to limit the acquisition and retention, or prohibit the dissemination, of certain types of intercepts made by U.S. intelligence agencies, in order to safeguard the rights and privacy of U.S. citizens. U.S. government agencies now operate under a set of legal requirements when they intercept communications involving U.S. citizens. This also applies to the ECHELON system.

However, the existence of a formal system of intelligence accountability does not ensure that civil liberties are systematically respected, or that controversies will not emerge. For instance, in 2005, a controversy arose following media allegations that, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the administration of George W. Bush had allowed the NSA to carry out a warrantless wiretap program which involved intercepting the communications of U.S. citizens.

The growing importance of social media in the early 21st century further stimulates long-standing debates about the trade-off between national security and liberal democracy. Social media have become an essential source of information for intelligence agencies seeking to find information on potential terrorist organizations or to predict political trends abroad. For example, experts have suggested that a better understanding of social media could have helped the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to forecast the Arab Spring of 2011.

The vast amount of information available within social media platforms poses significant challenges to intelligence agencies, which typically need to process information and distinguish the "wheat from the chaff," relevant information from noise. Social media publicize vast amounts of essentially private information. This phenomenon redefines the boundaries between public and private spheres. This societal evolution and the efforts of intelligence agencies to cope with it should prompt continuous scrutiny from intelligence overseers and activists.

Damien Van Puyvelde
University of Texas at El Paso

See Also: Carnivore; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; FinFisher; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Pretty Good Privacy; Privacy; Search and Scrape Capability; Terrorism; Tor.

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Echo Chamber Phenomenon

The concept of the "echo chamber phenomenon" emerged as a result of the rise of opinionated and partisan media. In relation to political media, the echo chamber phenomenon most commonly refers to the flow of information on the Web and the information-seeking behaviors of Internet users. The vast number of partisan Web sites and the proliferation of partisan voices on social network sites create cavernous echo chambers as people reiterate what others have already said, an idea that is reminiscent of Gaye Tuchman's notions of the "web of facticity" and the "news net," but practiced with political intention, rather than as an unintentional by-product of modern journalistic practice. The metaphor of the echo chamber, which alludes to the idea of a bounded enclosed communicative space that can potentially magnify messages and insulate them from rebuttal, has been employed in varying ways to explain relationships between the media and audiences.

The echo chamber phenomenon has been used to explain the production and dissemination of information published among news media outlets. In an era when online journalist outlets are expected to publish content 24 hours a day, seven days a week, information is consequentially recycled and reused as the same stories and opinions tend to appear in multiple outlets at once. Large and established media companies, as well as smaller, alternative media outlets and Web logs, reference each other to support their material. In echoing each other's news and opinions, each outlet legitimizes the other.

This premise was illustrated in a study of conservative media outlets and their audiences conducted by Kathleen Hill Jamieson and Joseph N. Cappella in 2008. They argued that three outlets in particular—Rush Limbaugh's radio talk show, Fox News, and the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*—constitute an echo chamber that effectively promotes and defends conservative principles and the Republican Party. Not only do these three distinct media entities quote each other in their reporting, they also create positive feedback loops for audiences by featuring links to each other's content on their Web sites. Jamieson and Cappella conclude that the consistency and repetition of their conservative message creates an ideological comfort space for conservative audiences because the media's opinions resonate with their existing beliefs.

Social Media

The above example describes the audience as a passive consumer of information in a media-dominated echo chamber. However, audiences can also assume a more active role when they participate in content creation on interactive digital venues. Using social network sites, personal Web logs, and other Web platforms that encourage audience interaction, individuals strengthen the echo chambers by reposting media content and offering supporting opinions.

In particular, scholars and critics have acknowledged the capacity for social network sites to amplify echoing effects as a result of their technical structure and design. On social network sites, users seek out and maintain connections with others with whom they share similar beliefs. Friends and connections overlap in most networks, and consequentially, users end up hearing the same information over and over. Research has suggested that people who are repeatedly exposed to the same information delivered by diverse sources eventually accept the information as truth.

To exemplify this point, it is helpful to consider the blogosphere during the 2004 election, which successfully convinced the mass media that presidential candidate Howard Dean had more traction in the campaign than he actually did. The echoing of support that reverberated throughout the realm of digital Web logs suggested that Dean had engendered a significant number of supporters, stimulating the media to report on his popularity among the electorate. However, it was eventually recognized that the digital endorsement for Dean represented in the blogosphere did not translate to offline support, and therefore the online echo chambers had created a false depiction of reality. More recent uses of social network sites by activists and special interest groups have successfully created a similar distortion of the truth, as the repetition of slogans and stories that travel through online social networks create the impression that a given message has gained more visibility and public acceptance than it actually has.

Audience Fragmentation and Polarization

Creating a false illusion of reality is just one negative implication yielded by the echo chamber phenomenon. Audience fragmentation and polarization are additional problems that have been recognized when the echo chambers are fueled by media and audience participation. Communication and social science research suggest that audiences enter the political arena with existing attitudes and preferences that they wish to reinforce through their selection of compatible media. Internet technology empowers users to selectively expose themselves to certain content and opinions that resonate with their pre-existing beliefs. Through this information-seeking process, audiences guard themselves from information that challenges their beliefs, and ultimately their involvement in partisan echo chambers leads individuals to adopt more extreme attitudes that increase the polarization of political attitudes.

Some have suggested that the echo chamber phenomenon and its polarizing effects continue to intensify as a result of the advancement of technical and cultural characteristics of the Internet. For example, news organizations and political campaigns are increasingly encouraging their online audiences to formulate social groups and discussion forums surrounding topics of shared interest. Researchers have claimed that this activity produces social enclaves of like-minded people, which ultimately prevent citizens from gaining exposure to diverse viewpoints and sharing of common experiences. Online social groups insulate themselves and their opinions from challenges, which results in a widening of gulfs between extreme sides on public issues.

Conclusion

Despite the widely discussed negative implications of the echo chamber phenomenon, some have suggested that the repetition of information created by the echo chamber effect may allow audiences to become more informed on political issues. The echo chamber phenomenon represents an important theory that has significant implications for political communication, especially when conducted in a digital environment.

Stephanie E. Bor
University of Utah

See Also: Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Blog for America; Blogosphere; Polarization, Political; Social Media, Definition and Classes of.

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Economic and Social Justice

Combining elements of several key views of social justice it is possible to generate a definition of social justice. Social justice is a state of affairs in which (1) benefits and burdens are dispersed through a society based upon some principle(s); (2) political leaders and other integral decision makers protect the basic rights, liberties, and entitlements of individuals and groups by utilizing procedures, norms, and rules; and (3) authorities and other actors, including citizens, treat all humans beings with dignity and respect. These three aspects of social justice are closely aligned with distributive, procedural, and interactional justice.

Rise of Social Media

Access to information is critical for the functioning of a healthy democracy. As a result, the role of the printing press during the rise of American democracy was critically important. It was through the printing press that new ideas emerged and conversations could take place that refined and developed these ideas. In fact, during George Washington's administration the Federalists, under the leadership of Alexander Hamilton, created the *Gazette of the United States*, causing

Republicans, led by Thomas Jefferson, to publish the *National Gazette*. These newspapers allowed competing political views to further the interests and goals of the political parties. Access to information flourished during the 1840s after the invention of the telegraph. News could immediately be sent from city to city. In the 1920s radio became available, and in the late 1940s television revolutionized the way many Americans received information. Moreover, the advent of television allowed politicians to speak directly to the American citizenry.

The rise of modern social media presents a new and exciting chapter for American democracy. The Internet has connected people like never before. Recent research from the Pew Research Center found that more people receive news from online sources than through radio or newspapers and, while television remains the most popular outlet, its audience consists mostly of older Americans. By mid-2012 over 2.4 billion people were using the Internet. In addition, by the end of 2012 there were 6.7 billion mobile subscriptions connecting people throughout the world.

Social media provides a means for individuals to become informed about events and a means to connect people who share common concerns and interests. Social media allows individuals to work and be champions for their own political views as well as to highlight issues important to them and work toward generating concern among other people as well. The 2008 U.S. presidential election saw a significant increase in the use of social media to connect with potential voters. Senator Barack Obama's campaign in 2008 was much more successful using social media than Senator John McCain's campaign. The role of social media in the 2012 election was even greater. In fact, the second debate of the 2012 U.S. presidential election generated 12.24 million comments on Twitter and Facebook, making it the top political event of all time in terms of such comments. Social media provides individuals with the opportunity to share their thoughts, critiques, and agreements with political leaders. In addition, social media also presents a means for inequalities and inequities to become known. That is, social media provides a way to remove the invisible barrier that keeps injustices from being widely known and recognized. Eliminating this invisible barrier can help increase the recognition of these events and generate a desire to ameliorate these injustices.

Distributive Justice

At its core, distributive justice focuses on considerations of equity. Specifically, the point of concern is on how to allocate scarce resources fairly and appropriately. A frequent issue, however, is that decision makers typically disagree about what factors should be utilized to determine proportional outcomes. Liberals and progressives, at least in Western society, were quick to pick up the cause of social justice. Two traditions emerged: one focusing on utility and the other on the basis of basic individual rights. "The greatest happiness of the greatest number" reflects the foundations of the utility approach. Essentially, then, a just approach is one that satisfies the majority of individuals. The focus of utilitarianism is on the consequence of a decision. The basis of the welfare state depends on the utility approach. That is, redistributing valuable resources to assist those who need the assistance the most serves the common good. However, there is certainly disagreement about whether this approach is just. For instance, in a leaked recording from a private fund-raising event, 2012 Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney was recorded as saying that 47 percent of Americans are "dependent on government." In effect, he was making the claim at a closed-door event that 47 percent of the country is unjustly using and relying on money from wealthier Americans.

Basic individual rights refer to a common conception of universal principles that apply to everyone. This approach is often referred to as deontological. Ultimately, the focus of deontological approaches is not just on the consequences of human action, but on other considerations as well, and requires a willingness of all people and institutions to abide by these principles. John Rawls famously claimed the more just system is the one that would be selected by decision makers under a "veil of ignorance." That is, without having any knowledge about one's own status or position in society, the system that one would select without an awareness of his or her own position would be the most just system. Interestingly, a voluminous amount of empirical research has shown that making decisions

without considering individual life experiences, personal characteristics, and opinions is clearly impossible. The practicality of this approach to justice has been called into question.

The concept of justice is often called into question by political conservatives who view the current social systems as perhaps not perfect, but certainly necessary. Recent research has found political conservatism to be related to two principles: traditionalism, or being resistant to change, and the justification of inequality or hierarchy. Not surprisingly, justice concerns that often involve challenges to the status quo are concerning to conservatives. Political conservatives do not disregard issues of justice, but they often prioritize other issues such as merit and personal freedom.

Procedural Justice

Concerns for justice often entail more than a concern about the allocation of resources. Procedural justice, for instance, focuses on the procedures or methods used in the decision-making process. Research has found that the perceived fairness of the procedures used in the decision-making process influence not just the perception of the final outcome, but also the individual's view of the decision maker. Early procedural justice theorists suggested two processes are used in perceptions of procedural fairness: process control and decision control. Process control refers to whether people have the opportunity to present evidence on their own behalf prior to a decision being made. The impact of being able to present evidence on one's behalf has generated a great deal of research labeled the "voice effect." Having a voice in the process drastically increases perceptions of procedural fairness. Moreover, having a voice increases positive affect, decreases negative affect, and is associated with greater trust in decision makers. Decision control refers to whether individuals have a voice in the decision process itself. When individuals feel they have a voice in the process and will have some influence in the decision-making process, people perceive procedures to be fair and just. In contrast, when people are excluded from presenting evidence on their behalf and lack a voice in the decision-making process, perceptions of procedural fairness are negatively impacted.

Why do people care about the procedures used in the decision-making process? One idea is that it ensures people have received a fair outcome. In addition, the fairness of the decision-making procedures communicates that people are valued, respected, and understood. That is, allowing people a voice in the process makes them feel appreciated as individuals and increases perceptions that other group members value their input and perspective. Perceptions of fairness are associated with social comparison processes. As a result, procedural fairness alleviates concerns about one's standing compared to relevant others. Social comparisons lead to perceptions of injustice when an individual has not had a role in decision-making processes.

Interactional Justice

It is has been proposed that perceptions of justice can be affected not only by how people are treated by authority figures, but also how citizens treat one another. That is, individual experiences of discrimination or the harboring of prejudiced attitudes can create unjust environments leading to feelings of unfair interpersonal treatment. Four aspects of an interaction impact interpersonal justice: respect, truthfulness, justification, and propriety. Being treated with respect and engaging in honest, truthful interactions increase perceptions of justice. Justification refers to receiving quick and satisfactory explanations for decisions. Finally, propriety refers to the avoidance of prejudicial treatment. People desire justice not only in the allocation of resources and in decision-making procedures but also in everyday interactions with others. This is an often overlooked but important aspect of justice.

Social Media and Justice in Action

The *Arab Spring* is a term that has been used to describe the protests, demonstrations, and revolutionary actions that occurred in parts of the Middle East and northern Africa starting in 2010. While the role of social media in the revolutions has been discussed at length, there seem to be two important factors during the Arab Spring that were strongly impacted by social media. One, social media allowed information to spread and knowledge about government abuses to become widely known. Two, social media allowed individuals to

Young speakers at a rally for the creation of antibullying legislation in the state of Michigan at the Michigan Capitol in Lansing on October 8, 2011. Social media campaigns have been instrumental in bringing attention to social issues such as bullying.

connect with one another and organize protests and demonstrations. These networks connecting and working through social media became difficult to contain.

During the Egyptian uprising, activists provided near real-time updates about protests and demonstrations. The instant access to information helped create an atmosphere of revolution as a result. The impact of social media during these revolutions was critical. Moreover, the role of social media as a means for unifying people together in other political movements and protests will surely prove a fruitful avenue for future research. For instance, Twitter has become a commonly used means for dissent and criticism among citizens in Saudi Arabia. In a country that did not experience issues during the Arab Spring, many citizens have used social media to connect and, perhaps for the first time, criticize the Saudi government.

In the United States, the Occupy Wall Street movement, a movement aimed at confronting the greed and corruption of the top 1 percent in America, began with a Twitter message by the magazine *Adbusters* suggesting a march in the Lower Manhattan area. The message was spread through various social media outlets (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and more) and participants used these outlets to provide real-time updates. When protesters began to have confrontations with law enforcement officials, many of these altercations were recorded and uploaded to social media outlets. The use of social media connects individuals from across the nation and allows local groups from different cities to stage united demonstrations and protests.

In the United Kingdom (UK), social media has presented a forum to address the growing concern about bullying. In November 2012, during National Anti-Bullying Week in the UK, Facebook created an anti-bullying page as part of the Family Safety Center. The emphasis of the page was placed on conflict resolution and creating stronger social networks to prevent and address bullying.

With parents feeling many school districts lack the ability to adequately address bullying, social media provides a means to address the issue without the assistance of school districts. In March 2013 a father used Facebook to express his frustration with bullying behavior at his son's school. In the Facebook post that father held a sign saying "I stand behind my son in the fight against bullying!" Within a week the post had received 453,000 "likes" and 466,000 shares.

Social media presents an exciting medium for connecting concerned citizens, mobilizing the disenfranchised, and bringing greater attention to economic and social justice violations both domestically and around the world. Social media allows individuals access to information about issues of inequality, as well as ways to take action to help ameliorate these issues.

Justin D. Hackett
California University of Pennsylvania

See Also: Antibullying Campaigns; Antislavery Campaign and Social Media; Antiwar Protesting; Arab Spring; Civil Rights; Disaster Relief; Ethics of Social Media and Politics; Faith-Based Social

Change; Hacktivism; Human Rights; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights; Nongovernmental Organizations; Nonprofit Organizations; Occupy Movement; Poverty; Quebec, Canada, 2012 Student Protests; Seattle 1999 WTO Protests; Social Issues Advocacy, Netroots Driven.

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E-Democracy

Over the past two decades, innovations in digital information technologies have contributed to the emergence of electronic government, or e-government, designed to communicate information, deliver services, and offer additional avenues to interact with and participate in government across industrialized countries. Strikingly, this new technology has revolutionized and empowered human interaction through a new, unmediated many-to-many communication on a large scale through new forms outside the antiquated boundaries of television, radio, and newspapers. These new forms, that is, e-mail, database software, and especially the Internet, have had, and will continue to have, significant influence on the functioning and health of democratic political institutions and their relationship with the citizenry through enhanced opportunity to participate.

An expanding body of research focuses on the Internet and democratic governance relationship. Not surprisingly, opinions about the Internet's effects on democracy are mixed and range from those that foresee revolutionary changes and a strengthening of democracy to those that envisage no changes regarding the distribution of power in society or a weakening of democracy. With e-democracy defined as the ability of citizens to electronically access governmental information and services, interact with governmental officials, and participate in governmental decision processes and elections, this entry focuses on the context, practice, and assessment of e-democracy.

Context

The scope of e-government emphasizes the dissemination of information, delivery of services, and provision of avenues for citizens to participate in government decisions via the Internet. These Internet features build the foundation for the implementation of e-democracy, and in doing so, government Web sites are more than cyberspace highways flanked by information-driven billboards and a series of service stops along the way. Based on the dissemination of government-related information to provide both transparency to citizens about political issues and check on the government's power, such sites offer interactive online tools to enhance public space with dialogue between citizens and their governments, such as with the United Kingdom's MySociety and the Sunlight Foundation in the United States. Another example is Meetup, which enables common-interest groups to set a time and place to organize locally, practicing their rights of assembly and speech. Jared Duval finds that there are 6 million Meetup members and 2,000 meet ups daily worldwide, while the SeeClickFix application facilitates citizens to report potholes, fallen trees, and so on. As these Internet innovations spread, they, according to S. Rho, facilitate an informed citizenry, specifically addressing direct democracy through openness and active participation. E-democracy is providing creative solutions for transparency and accountability in government.

Practice

John Stuart Mill wrote that local governments are "schools of democracy," thereby affording greater potential for citizen–government interactions and participatory opportunities than other levels of government. Current research by T. Wohlers and others reveals that local government Web sites across industrialized countries are mostly limited to providing a range of basic one-way services rather than transactional services. Similarly, M. Bräuer and T. Biewendt's study of Germany's 80 largest cities suggests that they provide a variety of virtual ways to directly interact with city officials. However, J. K. Scott and others find that, while some cities have made great advances, only a few facilitate meaningful, interactive forms of participation. For example, L. S. Clift finds that St. Paul, Minnesota, offers an e-mail notification and personalization option, while the Village of Hastings, New York, provides an online input system. Across the Atlantic, German cities like Esslingen and Ulm use the Internet as a tool to elect the Municipal Youth Council and evaluate public projects.

It has also been argued that, while the successful facilitation of interactive online public dialogue and consultation with government remains rare, new digital information technology applications, such as Web 2.0, have the potential to enhance both direct and representative democracy. However, several obstacles remain regarding the implementation and growth of local e-democracy. They include the lack of information technology expertise to reduce errors and system tampering, lack of city administrator motivation to implement Internet-enhanced participatory structures, limited access for the poor within the context of the digital divide, and uneven telecommunication infrastructure availability nationwide. Moreover, the prevailing ideology among citizens and policy makers, socioeconomic conditions, and the policy entrepreneur presence either inhibit or facilitate policy innovation.

Assessment

Opinions about the merits of e-democracy are mixed. Optimists, such as Clift, argue that the Internet can be used to enhance direct democracy with more community interaction with their respective governments. Others, like J. Johnson, perceive the implementation of e-democracy as running counter to a liberal democracy. Similar to the argument about a decline in social connectedness through technology, critics claim that the impersonal dialogue encouraged by e-government undermines the participatory nature of a democratic political system. Nevertheless, research points to promising advances made by local governments in e-democracy.

John R. Wood
Rose State College
Tony E. Wohlers
Cameron University

See Also: Digital Government; Open Source Governance; OpenGovernment.org; Project Vote Smart; Sunlight Foundation; Transparency.

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EdgeRank

EdgeRank is the name given to a suite of algorithms that optimize the news feed feature on the Facebook social networking service. EdgeRank determines which news items to display and in what order, thereby influencing the visibility and reach of user activity on the service. It structures a user's capacity to disseminate information, his or her exposure to the activities of others, as well as the capacity of groups to use Facebook for political and commercial purposes. While the particular details concerning EdgeRank's operations remain confidential, its basic functionality was first publicly outlined during Facebook's third semiannual F8 conference in April 2010.

Consistent with the algorithm's origins in graph theory (an area of discrete mathematics), in Facebook's terminology, an edge represents a relation or link between two relevant data points: one user's activity compared with another's news feed. Every time a user logs into Facebook, EdgeRank derives a set of relevant edges (relations among friends, fan pages, groups, and so on), which may include the posting of new Facebook objects (a change in status, a new photograph, video, or hyperlink), or recent interactions with already existing Facebook objects (the ongoing accumulation of "likes" or comments). To differentiate and prioritize the sheer number of these daily interactions into a useful news feed, EdgeRank scores each edge according to three formal properties: affinity score, weight, and time decay.

Affinity score assigns a value to the social relations between the user initiating the event (the edge creator) and those users who may view the event on their news feeds. The more Users B and C interact with content contributed by User A, for example, the higher the affinity score of edges originating from User A will be. Affinity is a one-way relation: it only considers the activities of news feed owners (e.g., Users B and C) and not those of the original edge creator. Taking this approach reduces the potential for link spammers to game the algorithm because the fact that other users engages with an individual's content does not necessarily mean that the individual is close to them.

Weight assigns a value to the kinds of activities a user undertakes on a scale that reflects the depth of engagement represented by certain activities: clicking, liking, following, reading, listening, and viewing. While Facebook continues to adjust EdgeRank's parameters, certain activities have been consistently assigned more weight than others. In terms of content creation, posting an image has more weight than expressing a change of status. In terms of content consumption, commenting on content has more weight than merely viewing it. Calculating weight also takes into account the path that led to a user's interaction. Clicking through an ad is differentiated from clicking through a fan page, for example; this approach reflects Facebook's overarching commercial strategies and goals.

Time decay assigns a value to edges based on the time of their origin and the recency of engagement with them. It is calculated dynamically to prioritize both newer edges and edges that have drawn recent engagement. In this way, older edges may still retain a high value if they continue to garner user interaction.

When deriving an overall score, EdgeRank also takes into account whether the edge was produced by a member of some prioritized group. People in a user's basic close friends list feature, or those organized into custom smart lists built according to a user's preference, produce higher scores: Family ties, work relations, and geographic location are common organizing criteria here. In general, EdgeRank seems to be motivated by Facebook's commitment to populate a significant percentage of the news feed with organic (e.g., nonsponsored) content, as well as its desire to experiment with and integrate new forms of relationality as prioritization heuristics. With the introduction of the GraphRank algorithm as a subset of EdgeRank in 2011, shared interest around cultural objects (such as books and films) became a key example of such heuristics.

While the precise ratio of the elements used by EdgeRank to calculate an edge's score is unknown, the algorithm tends to prioritize edges that either reflect a higher degree of engagement by other users or those that entice users to be more engaged themselves. In other words, EdgeRank is ultimately designed to draw users into becoming more active and for longer periods of time. Using prior activity around edges as a feedback mechanism for structuring present relevance has clear implications for groups large and small: Everyday

users, professional associations, and civil society organizations all use Facebook to promote their events, causes, services, brands, and products. Because visibility on the service is determined by the volume and depth of activity, EdgeRank motivates groups to contribute content that entices engagement so as to increase the likelihood that their content will persist and circulate on other users' news feeds.

Roy Bendor
Simon Fraser University
Neal Thomas
University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill

See Also: Algorithmic Authority; Engagement Features; Facebook; Fan Page.

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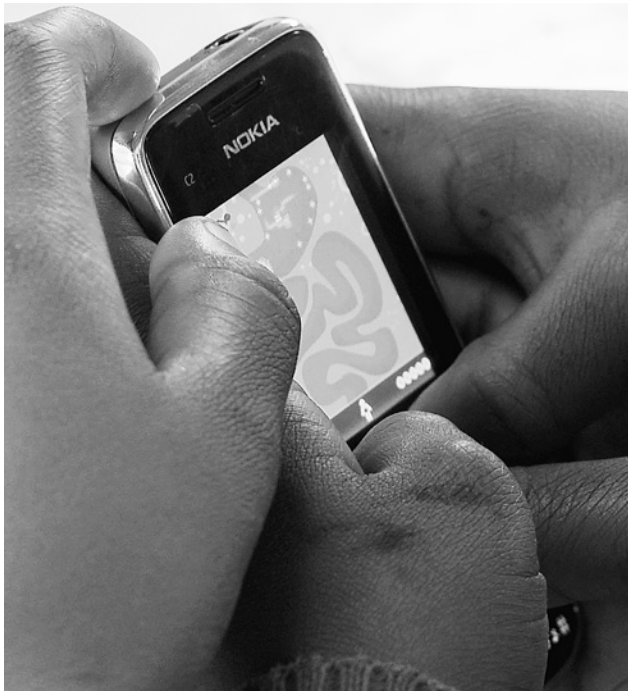
Education, Issues in

The intersection of social media and education began with trepidation. Kindergarten through 12th-grade (K–12) schools and institutions of higher education were among the last organizations to embrace this technology because of factors such as lack of access and training as well as fear of consequences of misuse. Within the last five years, public and private schools at all levels have recognized the need to develop and maintain a presence on sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Wikispaces, and YouTube. Issues such as freedom of speech, digital citizenship, resources, and security remain ones that often divide parents, teachers, administrators, and students in terms of policy and practice. However, it is no longer a matter of whether or not social media becomes integrated into curricula and instruction; social media are everywhere and will not be going away. Schools continue to grapple with safeguards and limits, while teachers and students are forging creative and rich spaces to build community and expand learning, despite the potential problems.

Teachers and administrators have become more comfortable with the use of social media in classrooms. They have recognized that three aspects of social media are becoming the norm: the immediacy of information, formation of links and bonds with individuals one may never meet in real life, and opportunities for collaboration and participation. Concerns regarding social media use in education have also grown, as has the backlash by administration and others. Four negative ramifications have generally been cited as reasons for prohibiting the use of social media in schools: inappropriate relationships between teachers and students; peer-to-peer harassment or cyberbullying, in which a victim receives numerous negative personal comments and continual derisive and insulting communication; risk of connections with sexual predators posing behind false identities; and student participation in illegal activities, including pirating music and movies. Legislation at federal and state levels, as well as acceptable use policy (AUP) adoption by individual schools help safeguard minors and protect the institutions yet allow for cautious and careful communication and learning activities.

Access and Limitations

Schools vary tremendously in technology, both in availability and use. Resource-rich districts are often replete with digital devices as well as teachers who know how to use them. Schools in geographic areas of lesser socioeconomic levels generally have less equipment, often older or with less capability, and may not have the luxury of professional development for faculty. This so-called digital divide is a concern because skills and knowledge associated with technology are becoming requirements for active involvement in the 21st century as an individual and as an employee.



Schoolchildren playing an educational game together on a mobile phone. Although social media and technology foster important skills, the ubiquity of smartphones has made monitoring Internet access and online activity much more difficult for educators.

K–12 school settings often provide students with information and expertise that help them advance and which they would not gain outside of the classroom. Education has been a way for many individuals to rise above their current social and economic background. Without access to tools and activities that are quickly becoming commonplace in society and business, some students will remain at a disadvantage and may not be able to maintain or improve their lives.

With the growth of Web 2.0, applications that allow users to easily post content, images, and videos and remix the same to create new material have changed the way many schools approach information and communications technology (ICT). Henry Jenkins and others describe the new participatory culture that exists and outline new and different skills necessary for full membership in society. Competencies necessary for college, career, and citizenship in the 21st century have been described as the 4Cs: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. Social media fosters all four, and students often become more skilled with these outside of school than in class. Smartphones have also dramatically changed the situation. Schools are no longer able to control access to the Internet as many individual students and faculty have the ability to connect within their pockets at all times. The result has been a combination of safeguards and blocks, policies that govern responsible use, and access and teaching that assist students in learning 21st-century skills related to ICT. Personal as well as professional ICT use by students and faculty, even outside of school, has become part of school policies.

Limitations of access to social media sites, especially Facebook and YouTube, have become a common way for schools to safeguard their students. Many parents express concern that, with too much freedom, students may knowingly or inadvertently access material via social media that is offensive or contains content that violates their family standards of morality, religion, and decency. This type of community dialogue and consensus on acceptable limits is commonplace with regard to curricula and texts. However, the openness and accessibility of social media presents numerous potential problem situations. Schools have been cautious with student, and even teacher, access of social media during school hours and on school equipment. Firewalls and other security measures help control this to some degree, but these measures are criticized as limiting legitimate educational uses of these sites.

Two federal laws govern ICT use in schools. The Children's Internet Protection Act was passed in 2000 and requires schools to filter or block obscene visual depictions and material harmful to minors during computer use by minors. The law was passed prior to Web 2.0 applications and does not specifically address social media. The Broadband Data Improvement Act, passed in 2008, includes a section called Protecting Children in the 21st Century. Schools are required to have an Internet safety policy that teaches minors about appropriate online behavior, including interaction social networking Web sites and cyberbullying awareness and response. Schools have learned to balance restriction with education for responsible use.

Promotion Versus Privacy

Many schools' first reaction to social media was avoidance. As social media use became the norm,

educational institutions realized that blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites provide a valuable mechanism for reaching stakeholders and maintaining continuous, real-time communication with the public as well as faculty, staff, and students. Schools also need to ensure that they are controlling their own public images and are able to ensure that accurate and positive information is available to all. In an era of accountability and standards, as well as competition and choice, social media can assist educational institutions in creating and maintaining unique identities, similar to brands in business.

In higher education, social media have become the number one way to reach prospective and current students and alumni. A majority of high school students are using social media as tools in their college selection processes. Colleges form social network groups for newly accepted students so that they can immediately feel connected to the institution and others. While schools may have official Web sites that provide public personae, there are also sites that allow current and past students to voice their opinions regarding all aspects of academic and campus life. The anonymity allowed by the Internet creates problems because individuals can post any negative comments without identification or supporting evidence. Schools have countered this by creating their own Facebook pages and Twitter feeds that balance the picture and respond to concerns immediately.

Promotion in school districts has become a necessary component in daily operations. School choice in some areas allows parents to compare schools and select one for their child. Charter and private schools provide alternatives to local schools. K–12 schools are vying for students in some cases much like colleges. Districts are turning to social media to demonstrate their use of innovative technology as well as to spread the word of their accomplishments. They recognize that the opportunity for positive connections with their communities outweighs the potential problems. One problem is time. Maintaining a presence in social media outlets requires at least one individual with dedicated time for creating, revising, and repurposing content as well as monitoring these sites and responding to unplanned comments or situations. Using tags to connect with other districts on similar issues has also become critical. Some districts that are not used to either publicity-minded activities or social media do not utilize these sites, and may see little benefit, get discouraged, and quit. Clear objectives and constant monitoring of statistics such as views, "likes," and comments are necessary, accompanied by strategic responses. Social media may feel inappropriate for some educators, yet many schools recognize that lessons from business and entertainment can have benefits for organizations that traditionally kept low profiles.

Privacy issues have grown to include the personal presence of individuals connected with the organization. Although teachers and administrators have the right to use social media for themselves outside of school, the impact of that use on their jobs can be a concern. Teachers have been fired, fined, or suspended for comments, activities, or photographs posted on personal Facebook or Twitter accounts. Individuals have also received sanctions for unprofessional comments that were job-related, such as complaints or pejorative terms used to describe students, colleagues, or parents. While some have argued that teachers and school personnel have the same freedom of speech as any citizen, others acknowledge that, by virtue of their responsibility as role models to young people, they are held to higher standards of appropriate actions and words. Online activities that are designed to hurt, defame, or harass others are part of cyberbullying or cyberstalking. Cases have been documented that establish how this type of activity can push some individuals to retaliate or seek escape through destructive behavior, even suicide. Two types of cyberbullying can involve direct messages, or use of proxy (someone else, or posing as someone else) to send negative comments or altered images.

Blurring Roles

Teachers and professors who have embraced social media for learning often find that students seek continual communication. The term *friend* has become a verb used to describe linkage on Facebook and other social media sites. The question of whether or not to friend students is a difficult one for some teachers. Teachers who would never consider students as friends in the traditional sense are grappling with benefits versus potential problems of connecting on social

media sites. This is especially true in higher education, where students are generally over 18 and more independent.

One of the most difficult aspects of social media use by educators and students is perception. Unlike face-to-face communication, words stand alone without voice inflections and facial expressions to mediate the message. Communications are swift, public, able to be forwarded beyond the intended receiver, and open to interpretation by others. The question of which identity, personal or professional, is used when posting becomes blurred.

Educators have become entangled in situations that have damaged their reputations through unintended consequences of actions. When something is shared on social media, it has the potential to become public in many other arenas. Individuals have been duped in many ways: Students have posed as adults on dating sites, downloaded questionable photos from teachers' posted vacation albums, or caught teachers' negative comments about colleagues or workplaces. In some cases, teachers have fallen into inappropriate sexual or personal relationships with students that may never have happened in real life but result from the ease of sharing personal feelings through social media. Schools are now taking precautions to decrease potential problem situations by establishing guidelines for personal as well as professional use of social media by teachers. As many of these consequences and incidents are reported, teachers are becoming more cautious and recognize that anything posted is really public, despite settings and attempts to keep it private.

Digital Citizenship

The Internet has broken through traditional classroom walls and allowed students and teachers to expand their learning globally. Connections with others in countries around the world, authentic learning, and virtual field trips to otherwise out-of-reach locations are some of the ways that social media has provided learning that would have been impossible before. Students are taught to follow rules for behavior at home, in classrooms, in business, and in various other social situations. They learn to vary speech and behavior in different situations. However, rules and norms for online social interaction are being forged and revised within the digital landscape. Teachers now must educate students in what it means to be a good citizen in the online world.

Four areas have become critical to social media in education. One is digital etiquette, or netiquette. This refers to electronic standards of conduct. Teachers are used to teaching students what is appropriate for courtesy and civility in school and holding them accountable for unsuitable behavior or speech. The same instruction must occur for online interaction via social media. Despite the freedom allowed in online environments, students should be taught and expected to follow the same standards for behavior and speech that they would in person. The second area, digital rights and responsibilities, extends this beyond mere courtesy. It refers to freedoms extended to everyone in a digital world. Just as teachers explain that rights such as freedom of speech come with responsibilities, students must be instructed that freedom to post comments and thoughts online is not a license for profanity, harsh comments, or hate speech. This is particularly true of many polarizing issues that educators currently face. Teachers and students must learn together how to disagree and debate in a manner that is reasonable, even forceful, and yet civil.

The first two areas of digital citizenship rely on personal responsibility for one's own behavior. Two other areas that are somewhat more grounded in society are legal aspects and security. New laws are helping to shape when online behavior is not merely discourteous but illegal. For example, individuals can form accounts with false names or the name of a real person and post comments that are harmful and damage someone's reputation. Inappropriate comments and behaviors on social media sites have been cited as partially responsible for serious results, damages, and even teen suicides. Courts are defining where and how individuals are culpable for online comments and behavior. The fourth area of digital citizenship that is related to social media is digital security. This refers to electronic precautions to guarantee safety and self-protection. Students are often victims of online scams and may provide personal information that can lead to identity theft. Native applications, or apps, may contain code that monitors and obtains digital information that can then be sent or sold to third parties. Staying logged in can also give unwanted access. These safety

features are different from security measures such as firewalls utilized by schools at the institution level. Teachers must educate students regarding the many cautions related to digital security that are especially important with social media.

Digital citizenship is not mandated in most curricula. However, it is as crucial as mathematics and literacy in the global world. Schools, parents, and teachers need to examine ways that knowledge and skills related to social media and online behavior can become the subject of instruction at all levels.

Conclusion

Schools need to find ways to continually respond to issues associated with social media in schools. In general, placing limitations on students tends to make something even more appealing; some students will always find ways to circumnavigate the restrictions. Most schools have accepted these new spaces as a constant in students' lives and ones that are difficult to impossible to control. They cautiously monitor new ICT tools in order to remain current and make careful selections and decisions that will provide quality education for students. Many educators have elected to teach students about the potential dangers and problems and provide them with skills to make good choices for their words and actions.

Social media use has become commonplace in classrooms, schools, and universities with the ubiquitous nature of smartphones and tablets. Schools and educators must find their individual comfort levels with devices and spaces so that they are conscientiously safeguarding those in their care as well as embracing innovations that challenge, engage, teach, and connect.

Cathy Leogrande
Le Moyne College

See Also: Antibullying Campaigns; Digital Citizen; Facebook; Schools4All; Youth Engagement.

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Egypt

On January 17, 2011, an Egyptian man set himself on fire outside of Egypt's parliament building to protest the government's refusal to allow him access to inexpensive, subsidized bread for his restaurant. A mobile phone was used to record and distribute, via the Internet, a closed-circuit television image of the incident. This self-immolation, and at least two others the following day, sparked an 18-day uprising fueled by social media that would end the three-decade dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak. The protest that began as a small youth movement drew ideas and strength from the successful uprising in Tunisia in December 2010, which brought down that country's authoritarian president, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali.

Following the Tunisian revolution, Egyptian activists began to organize an uprising of their own to protest Egypt's high poverty and unemployment rates, government and police corruption, and the almost constant state of emergency that allowed Mubarak to censor the media, stop protests, and try civilians in military courts. Activists, especially Wael Ghonim, the 30-year-old head of Middle Eastern marketing for Google, and Asma Mahfouz, a 26-year-old female activist, utilized social media to help organize a Day of Rage on January 25, 2011. January 25th was selected because it was a national holiday designed to honor Egyptian police. In addition, this national holiday had been used in the past by activists as a day for protest marches.

In both the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings, protesters used social media not only to organize

their activities but also to globally distribute information about their causes through a process referred to as cyberactivism. Ironically, it was the Egyptian government's own efforts, beginning in 1999, to expand the availability and use of information technology that would create the cybernetworks used by the protesters. Mostly young, educated Egyptians formed the core of the January uprising. Activism began with blogs, but quickly grew to include social media outlets, such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, that allowed for widespread and immediate interconnectivity of the protesters.

In the days leading up to the beginning of the Egyptian protests on January 25th, Egyptian activists used the Internet to communicate with Tunisian protesters in order to learn how to prepare themselves for demonstrations and clashes with police as well as how to counter the effects of tear gas using cola and milk. Protest leaders also discussed the safety advantages of protesting at night, the use of black spray paint to obscure the windshields of police and military vehicles, and how to utilize traditional media to add outside pressure to the government. Egyptian activists posted videos from the Tunisian protests to study and use as examples.

In addition to the information learned from Tunisia, protest leaders received assistance from activists who had been forced to leave Egypt. Omar Afifi, a former Egyptian police officer who fled to the United States after his life was threatened because he wrote a book that discussed how to avoid police brutality, used YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter to advise Egyptian protesters how to avoid arrest, what they should wear, and how to engage in peaceful protest.

Activists and Social Media

Ghonim, working anonymously through a Facebook page created for Egyptian Nobel Peace Prize winner and opposition leader Mohamed ElBaradei, began to distribute revolutionary ideas to the page's followers. Facebook was seen as a crucial tool for cultivating support for a potential uprising because, whenever someone friended the page, it would show up on that person's Facebook wall as well. Such reposting allowed the messages to spread more quickly and to a much larger audience.

Posting under the pseudonym El Shaheed, or the Martyr, Ghonim's messages quickly spread to other pages, such as We Are All Khaled Said. The Said page was created during the summer of 2010 in reference to a man who was taken from an Internet café and beaten to death by police after he posted a video on the Internet showing police stealing drugs that they had just seized. Photos of his beaten body went viral, and a YouTube video about his death was seen by more than 500,000 people. The Facebook page itself had more than 470,000 friends at one point, which is significant, considering there were only approximately 21 million Facebook users throughout Arab countries in 2010. While the Said page originally began as a way to share information surrounding Khaled Said's case, it quickly became a space for broader political discussions about Mubarak's regime.

On January 14, the day that Tunisia's government fell, Ghonim invited his more than 350,000 Facebook followers to protest Egypt's government on January 25. In less than three days, more than 50,000 people replied yes to his invitation to join a Day of Rage. During the days leading up to January 25, Egyptian activists took to social media to discuss ideas such as how technology could be used to avoid surveillance and how to set up effective barricades. In order to move the protest from the virtual world to the real world, additional activists used Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to call people to Tahrir Square and other sites around Egypt to begin the uprising.

Asma Mahfouz

The activist Asma Mahfouz already possessed experience in the use of social media for cyberactivism. Mahfouz was one of the founders of the April 6 Youth Movement that used Facebook in March 2008 to support a planned strike by textile workers in the city of Mahalla. While the April 6 protest was not successful, Mahfouz saw the power of social media in the Tunisian revolution. Using a Webcam, Mahfouz recorded a 15-minute video that helped to frame for Egypt and the world the reasons for the protest. In the video, posted January 18, she indicates that the protests are about basic human rights and that the men who set themselves on fire were not mentally ill as the government tried to portray.

An Egyptian activist and labor leader, Kamal el-Fayoumi, using Twitter to stay in touch with his followers in April 2009. Like Asma Mahfouz, el-Fayoumi had experience in organizing strikes in 2008 that were precursors to some of the events of the 2011 Egyptian revolution. Egyptian activists also received advice from Tunisian protest leaders in early 2011.

Mahfouz said that she would march in Tahrir Square on January 25, and she encouraged other women to join her. Mahfouz also took advantage of Egypt's patriarchal culture to encourage men to come out to Tahrir Square, if for no other reason than to protect the women. Such posts helped to diversify the ranks of the protesters from mainly young, well-educated members of the upper classes to doctors, lawyers, members of the media, Christians, and Muslims.

Mahfouz's video, originally posted on her Facebook page, quickly went viral. Under Mubarak's government, women faced high illiteracy rates, harsh divorce laws, and abuse by police. Women were not allowed to meet publicly to discuss reform under Mubarak's regime. However, the Internet provided women a safe space where they could gather and discuss controversial issues, thus continuing Egyptian women's long history of social activism.

Through social media, female cyberactivists coordinated how to prepare themselves for public protests. They encouraged each other to wear multiple layers of clothes, veils, and *abayas*, so if one layer was pulled off their bodies, they would not be exposed. In addition, women as well as men used social media, especially SOS tweets, to let others know when they were in danger, thus reducing the response time of aid givers. Such uses of social media by female activists dramatically increased the number of women participating in the uprising. At the beginning, women accounted for only 10 percent of protesters, but by the end, that number increased to 50 percent.

Media Framing and Control

Social media, as well as traditional media, was also used by protesters to frame the uprising in a way that was favorable. In an effort to sway Mubarak's foreign allies, cyberactivists flooded

the Internet with transparent content that served to counter the pro-Mubarak stories being presented by media outlets such as *Al Jazeera English*. Such transparency was especially important for American media, as the American government had been an ally of Mubarak and supporter of the Egyptian economy through billions of dollars of aid.

At one point, when the Egyptian Museum was vandalized and artifacts were destroyed by looters, media outlets began to describe Egypt as being in crisis and chaos. Egyptian reporters, such as Mona Eltahawy, encouraged the media to instead use the terms *uprising* or *revolution* to show that the movement had structure and a common goal. In addition, traditional media followed closely the social media feeds coming from Egypt and rebroadcasted many of the images and messages. This was especially important when media was banned from Tahrir Square, but through social media, citizens were able to become journalists and continue the dissemination of information.

The use of social media to organize and inflame the uprising was so significant that the Egyptian government on January 27 attempted to shut down the Internet and block cellular phones as activists were organizing more protests to begin after Friday prayers. Internet traffic dropped by approximately 90 percent as the few Internet access providers were told by the government to halt services. In spite of the efforts to take Egypt off of the grid, activists were still able to share information about how to access the Internet using dial-up connections in other countries.

At the same time, however, protest leaders began to be captured by the police, including Ghonim. Google issued a statement saying that Ghonim was missing and asked for tips as to his whereabouts without mentioning his role in the uprising. Google's statement went viral, and protesters began referring to Ghonim as their leader, while Facebook pages titled "We Are All Wael Ghonim" began to appear. He was released two weeks later.

In spite of the increasingly violent protests in the streets, Mubarak refused to step down. He did dismiss the government on January 28 and his cabinet on January 29. On February 1, he announced that he would not run for re-election in September but again refused to leave office. On February 2, Internet services were restored after five days, and Google improved its Speak2Tweet technology for use by people in Egypt. Speak2Tweet allows users to tweet on Twitter by leaving voice messages on international phone numbers, thus allowing social media use to continue even when Internet services are unavailable.

Approximately a million protesters continued to fill Tahrir Square, as foreign investors began to withdraw their capital from the country, and foreign governments, including the United States, began to issue statements indicating that it was up to the people of Egypt to determine who their leaders would be. Cyberactivists used the increasingly anti-Mubarak rhetoric to organize for a Day of Departure on February 4. After seven additional days of protests and violence, Mubarak announced on February 11 that he would resign as president and turn the government over to the military. This paved the way for Egypt to hold its first truly democratic elections in more than 7,000 years.

Democratic Elections and Continued Protests

Elections to the People's Assembly of Egypt, which took place in three parts from November 28, 2011, to January 11, 2012, occurred first. During the electoral process, there was continued concern about who would control the Egyptian government as well as whether the military would give up the powers given to it by Mubarak. Cyberactivists therefore continued to use the Internet to inform the world of the atrocities still being faced by Egyptians. For example, in December 2011, Tahrir Square was filled once again by Egyptians protesting that 17 women had been subjected to "virginity tests" by the military police after Mubarak left office. One of the female protesters was grabbed by the police, beaten, kicked in the stomach, and dragged through the street with her bra exposed.

The video of the beating of the girl in the blue bra went viral, and female activists took to social media to organize yet another demonstration in Tahrir Square for December 23, 2011. Thousands returned, with men forming a protective circle around the female protesters. While the identity of the girl in the blue bra remains unknown, one

of the 17 women who suffered the virginity test did come forward to sue the military police.

In spite of the continued protests, parliamentary elections took place. The Democratic Alliance, a coalition of 11 parties led by the Freedom and Justice Party created by the Muslim Brotherhood, secured approximately 45 percent of the seats in Parliament with the Islamist Bloc party receiving the next largest percentage of 25 percent. The elections, however, were ruled unconstitutional on June 14, 2012. After protests and rioting, the parliament was reinstated until a new election could be held in September 2012.

The presidential elections were also marred by controversy, including a dramatic constitutional reform by the military police that stripped the incoming president, Muslim Brotherhood candidate Mohamed Morsi, of many of his powers. It is yet to be determined if these reforms will stand. What is clear, however, is that Egyptians will continue to use social media as a tool for political discourse and reform.

Pamela C. O'Brien
Bowie State University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Africa, North; Al Jazeera Effect; Arab Spring; Bahrain; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Demonstrations, Organizing; 18DaysinEgypt.com; Facebook; Human Rights; International Intervention; International Social Media and Politics; International Unrest and Revolution; Libya; Mosireen.org; Speak2Tweet; Tunisia; Twitter.

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18DaysinEgypt.com

18DaysinEgypt.com is a collaborative, cross-sourced documentary project and innovative experience in social media. It is aimed at capturing the revolution lived in Egypt during the 18 days of the uprising against the government in 2011, which finished with president Hosni Mubarak's defeat and exile. The "18 days" refers to the period between January 25, when the Day of Rage march against the regime was promoted through the Internet, to February 12, the first day of the democratic transition.

The project collects material related to the pivotal events that occurred during this period and were captured by cell phones, pictures, texts, tweets, or messages on Facebook. These materials are uploaded in an interactive Web site open to users even after the end of the events, and is continuously evolving. 18DaysinEgypt.com enables participants to chronicle the Egyptian revolution. The Web site introduces the concept of streams, collective narratives composed of social media snippets from multiple contributors. This innovative approach allows for each story to be told from multiple perspectives, giving the viewer an in-depth look at personal moments and events of the revolution. Streams featured on the site already cover a broad range of topics from pictures of protesters' humorous signs and art inspired by the revolution, to women chanting for freedom and songs about the revolutionary struggle.

Built by Egyptian software company Emerge Technology, the platform allows users to explore the stories and to build a community of wide-ranging narratives. 18DaysinEgypt.com is powered by GroupStream, a program for group storytelling that fosters collaborative narratives told together. It is also supported by the Ford Foundation, Tribeca Film Institute, Sundance Institute, and the Brooklyn Law Incubator and Policy (Blip).

The technological supply is a simple slideshow, allowing instant access to stories. The Web site 18DaysinEgypt.com solicits user-contributed stories with a beta tool called Groupstre.am. 18DaysinEgypt.com was originally created by documentary filmmaker and journalist Jigar Mehta and interaction designer Yasmin Elayat. They worked together with the community manager of the project Shadi Rahimi, a photographer and journalist

and cofounder of the media arts organization Seventh Native American Generation (SNAG). The clips always include the context and the date of the story and extra graphs and data nodes, creating a complex document that provides exhaustive and thorough information to the user.

The Web site organizes the material in four categories that help to associate similar users' contributions by: latest, recommended, popular, and date. This material, pooled by fellows, has text cards to guide the user through the contents. It is also available in two languages, English and Arabic. Apart from this basic team, 18DaysinEgypt.com counts on a number of fellows to help set the tone of the project and value the stories that work best on the site. The fellowship acts as a bridge between the online platform and the offline world, represented by Egyptians telling their stories. Moreover, the initiative has set out to raise at least $18,000 in order to fund 20 aspiring or established Egyptian journalists to collect stories from eyewitnesses throughout Cairo. Six fellows were funded for six weeks to focus on stories in Cairo: Sara Elkamel, Nesma El Shazly, Mostafaa Sheshtawy, Mohamed Abd El-Hamid, Carmel Delshad, and Dina Fergani. The project was also supported by platforms like Kickstarter.com, a service to fund creative projects, which sent journalists to other Egyptian cities like Luxor, Aswan, Suez, and Alexandria.

The material hosted has a very eclectic and heterodox nature, from personal experiences in Egypt to analysis and opinions all over the world. Some of the clips are more traditionally narrative-driven, and others are just graphic or text material of personal experiences. Clicking on any of the bylines, the user can pull up a participant page and see all the stories that one person has contributed. The process of reaching out to people to tell stories is a multifaceted campaign: first, through a social media outreach, especially Facebook and Twitter; second, students of the American University in Cairo or nongovernmental organizations who did work throughout the revolution and contributed actively to create stories; and finally, professional filmmakers who made films about the revolution.

Aside from the content related specifically to the demonstrations and protests, some other subjects were detailed once the conflict was over, including the wish for a constitution and a referendum, hopes for Mohammed Morsi and Ahmed Shafik as candidates in the elections and Omar Suleiman as Hosni Mubarak's successor, the trials of the military and civilians, the links with Syria and the Arab Spring, and the sexual harassment that occurred among the population.

Postrevolution Content

Once the events of the Egyptian revolution were finished, 18DaysinEgypt.com changed course and evolved from a different perspective. The subsequent material explored the implementation of real freedom after the overthrow of the dictatorship and showed the struggle to achieve freedom beyond the revolution. The next contributions turned into a number of reflections on democracy and the Mubarak trial, as well as the presidential election on May 23 and 24, won by Mohammed Morsi.

A change occurred on the platform after the dramatic events of February 1, 2012, when a soccer match between the Al-Masry and Al-Ahly teams turned deadly in Port Said. The conflict was immediately politicized, as the Al-Ahly supporters were allegedly involved in the uprising and Al-Marsy followers mostly sided with the former dictator. Anti-Mubarak activists accused the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, still in the government, of consenting and organizing the confrontation. The date also coincides with the first anniversary of the Battle of the Camel, when armed mercenaries stormed protesters in Tahrir Square.

The 18DaysinEgypt.com fellows gathered personal interviews and collected firsthand resources from on the ground to create a stream capturing little-known details of the Ahly Massacre. This marked a turning point in the contributions to the platform after the revolution, as the deaths originated a number of marches and demonstrations and several protests against the action of the council. As the clashes continued, 18Days inEgypt.com focused on stories from the frontlines, including those about women, businesses that stayed open despite being surrounded by violence, motorcycle ambulances, and the tough task of negotiating a truce.

Manel Jiménez-Morales
Universitat Pompeu Fabra

See Also: Africa, North; Arab Spring; Egypt; News Media; Social Networking Web Sites; Twitter.

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Election Monitoring

The role of trust in democracy, democratic government, and political participation has been receiving more and more attention in political science and in the wider public recently. A particular concern among professional researchers and scientists as well as experts in electoral public moods lies in the declining level of democratic engagement in traditional politics exacerbated by media reports of politicians' untrustworthy behavior. Therefore, election monitoring is a powerful tool in promoting democracy, political rights, and good governance. Among the techniques being used to overcome these challenges is an attempt to use social media to monitor upcoming elections for irregularities and violence as well as to inform the public about the electoral process.

Various activists and groups monitor election campaigns through social media activities in order to discover the level of support for each candidate, to describe the general discourse, and to observe reactions to candidates' talks and debates. The resulting picture drawn from social media reactions can make for interesting comparisons with electoral public opinion surveys conducted by research agencies and published in news media.

The practice of election monitoring has been developing over the years, and technology is key in enhancing the efficiency of observation. Observers now have the opportunity to cover large samples across large geographic areas, capture data from polling centers, and report observations to central operations centers where the data is collected, organized, analyzed, and followed by periodically released public statements on the overall conduct of elections across a country.

New media and technologies may be widely applied in election monitoring, including blogs, social networking sites (Twitter, Facebook, Myspace), Google Maps, mobile phones (short messaging service [SMS], multimedia messaging service [MMS], mobile photos/videos), or Skype. The new features of social media important for successful election monitoring are the opportunity for two-way communication, the ability to address people worldwide, the opportunity to get the first stories of violations coming from citizens; the capability to broadcast low-resolution content on high-definition media, and having content from ordinary people added to reports from professional journalists. Challenges in using social media for election monitoring include that it is increasingly hard to ascertain the impartiality and accuracy of coverage, postdisaster communications can be unreliable and difficult, and information on election violence may not indicate an actual political party's behavior.

The new technologies give voice to many citizens. New information should still be perceived in a skeptical way, but the use of new media is pushing and pulling content during an election. Media literacy is necessary for embracing new technologies. Election reporting tool kits now include Rich Site Summary (RSS), Web sites, Wikipedia, podcasts, vodcasts, Google News alerts, and Alertnet for pulling content, and vodcasts, podcasts, blogs, Flickr, SMS, and mobile photos/videos for publishing the content. For both publishing and pulling content, YouTube, SMS and mobiles, Twitter, Facebook, and blogs are used.

Center for Monitoring Election Violence

One example of how a nongovernmental organization has initiated and carried out election monitoring using social media engines is the Center for Monitoring Election Violence (CMEV) in Sri Lanka. It was established in 1997 by the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), the Free Media

Movement (FMM), and the Coalition Against Political Violence as an independent and nonpartisan organization to monitor the incidence of election-related violence in Sri Lanka. Currently, CMEV is made up of CPA, FMM, and the INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre.

In 2011, CMEV conducted the monitoring of elections in Sri Lanka using such social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter as well as online video on the official Web site. The maps of incidents and violence were published on the CMEV Web site using the Google Maps platform. At the end of polling, CMEV had recorded 56 election violations in the elections to the 91 local bodies it monitored. Of these 27 were major incidents and 29 were minor incidents. The major incidents included one report of murder, a grenade attack, seven incidents of assault, seven incidents of intimidation including five reports of an intimidating presence around the polling station, the obstruction of polling agents and voters and election monitors, as well as the chasing away of voters.

In the elections conducted in Tunisia and Egypt in 2012, young citizens and domestic election observation coalitions were increasingly relying on social media to inform the world about the developments pertaining to the conduct of elections. The world was able to read observations uploaded by active citizens who were collecting data and using Twitter and Facebook to share it with the world. They protected the integrity of the election by trying to ensure that it was free and fair.

Ushahidi

Ushahidi is a tool for election monitoring and has been deployed in a number of countries for that purpose. It was developed by the nonprofit tech company of the same name that specializes in developing free and open source software for information collection, visualization, and interactive mapping. The word *ushahidi* means "testimony" in Swahili, and it was a name of the Web site initially developed to map reports of violence in Kenya after the postelection fallout at the beginning of 2008; that Web site had 45,000 users in Kenya. Examples of crowdsourcing (receiving reports from the general public) during elections include India, Mexico, Afghanistan, and Lebanon, all in 2009, and Sudan and Togo in 2010. Data collection using trained election monitors can also be done, and Ushahidi was used in this way during the November 2009 elections in Namibia and during the 2010 elections in Burundi.

The developers of this platform emphasize the necessity of early planning if one aims to apply Ushahidi to election monitoring. That is essential because disseminating information across an entire country will take time. The ideal moment to start using the platform is at least six months out, as it is for using it for monitoring something other than elections, such as monitoring traffic, crime, or corruption. The key is to have users familiar with the platform so they can see the added value well before the elections take place. This will help to expand buy-in in the lead up to the elections.

The next decision that initiators of the monitoring need to make is whether the project will be open so that anyone can report on election irregularities or whether the group of monitoring initiators will mobilize trusted networks to do the reporting. Both options are possible, and that is what the developers recommend. The advantage of combining both approaches is that this increases the possibility of triangulating and validating incoming reports.

Before turning to sourcing and handling incoming data, it is necessary to select the categories that will be used for the monitoring. The developers suggest such examples as fraud, vote tampering, illegal campaigning, and removal of observers. Considerations about incoming data raise the following question: What combination of technologies will be used to carry out the reporting? There are advantages and disadvantages to each that should be considered, including cost, usability, security, and amount and quality of incoming information. Ushahidi is usable on mobile phones and on e-mail/Web for online media monitoring.

Using Ushahidi's smartphone applications makes the reporting free, more secure, and automatically geotagged. If SMS is used, one can either set up a number using a service like Clickatell or FrontlineSMS, or approach the country's telecom company to set up a "short code." A short code is a three-to-four-digit number that can be made free for users who text that number. One advantage of using SMS is that it gives the opportunity to get a lot more individuals involved in the reporting. However, there is a disadvantage: it will be necessary to map the events being reported based on

the location information provided in the incoming text messages, which can be time consuming. Developers of Ushahidi also work on Swift River to automate the geo-location process whenever possible.

Election observers could also report on election violations by sending e-mails to a dedicated e-mail address. These e-mails should include detailed location information to make the mapping as easy as possible. The same approach can be taken using Twitter and a dedicated hashtag and/or Twitter feed. Customized Web forms can also be created as part of the Ushahidi instance that will allow people to submit detailed reports, including geographic information and categorization.

Online media monitoring is another question. It is important to decide in advance whether one wants to complement the on-the-ground monitoring with online media monitoring. The latter includes reading through official news, Twitter, blogs, and Facebook groups to find relevant election-related events that can be mapped. This is a time-consuming effort, however. The Ushahidi developers recommend considering the option of recruiting volunteers to help in combining the news during the elections. This produces a rich set of information when combined with reports coming in from the ground. It is possible to map pictures and video footage as well.

Reporting strategies using Ushahidi also vary. If one aims to proceed with traditional election monitoring at polling stations, it is necessary to have trained and dedicated monitors deployed to these stations in such a way that the data they generate is statistically representative. If the group of activists is more interested in crowdsourcing the election monitoring, then it is better to maximize the number of users who report on election violations. Both approaches can be combined.

Carrying out of the steps listed above will differ if the country in question is democratic versus authoritarian. In the case of the latter, extra precautions should be taken to maximize the safety of those who contribute to the election monitoring. This may mean using secure smartphone applications, or code when using SMS.

PakVotes

"PakVotes" is an election monitoring citizen journalists' platform in Pakistan. According to its developers, it is an initiative that aims to highlight the voice of ordinary citizens through citizen media to generate an alternate narrative of the 2013 electoral contest. Using social media tools, it encourages openness through citizen participation and tries to provide timely and reliable information. The focus is to increase citizens' ownership of the democratic system. The innovative citizen journalism portal aims to empower the common people to voice their opinion on the upcoming elections; cite any code-of-conduct violations before, during, and after the upcoming elections; and report incidents of violence or rigging.

As of 2013, the project has trained 40 field monitors from the most remote and most violence-prone areas around Pakistan. These field monitors are reporting election problems in real time to the platform from remote regions, which might often be ignored by the mainstream media. The project can be followed on Facebook and on Twitter. All witnesses of violence in Pakistan can report it to PakVotes. This platform allows Pakistani citizens to learn about elections and the electoral process via social media in order to urge them to vote.

The PakVoters site also provides information and links for informed voting decisions, while offering the information in a neutral and apolitical way. This process does not begin and end with elections—it is an ongoing endeavor and will require constant and long-term engagement of Pakistanis to not only vote, but also remain active after elections and hold the winners accountable to their mandate. Thus, the additional advantage of using social media in the electoral monitoring process is in empowering citizens to take a more active role in voting and in engaging people in maintaining democratic regimes in their countries.

Tetiana Kostiuchenko
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

See Also: Arab Spring; Citizen Journalism; Civil Rights; Electronic Voting; E-Voter Institute; Forecasting Elections; Human Rights; Influence on Elections; Push Polling; Transparency; Voter Apathy; Voting, Global Electronic.

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Electronic Frontier Foundation

The Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) is a donor-funded nonprofit organization that aims to protect the public interest regarding new technologies. The EFF employs a mix of lawyers, policy analysts, activists, and technologists. The staff keeps track of current developments about technology and the law, both in the United States and abroad; advocates for particular laws and policies; and educates the public about these issues. In recent years, much of the EFF's work has centered on challenges to the public's use of social networking technologies such as Facebook and Twitter. The EFF monitors not only governmental actions but also the policies and practices of corporate entities as they impinge on public use of technology.

The EFF was founded in 1990 following the U.S. Secret Service's seizure of electronic equipment from a small business, Steve Jackson Games. Jackson's business was severely impacted as the equipment was kept four months for examination; upon return of the business' computers, it was discovered that e-mail sent in by nonemployees to the company's electronic bulletin board system had been accessed and deleted. Jackson searched for an organization willing to pursue what he felt were serious violations of his civil liberties, but none of the then-existing groups understood the technology well enough to appreciate fully the ramifications of what had happened. Three people who were part of another online community agreed to take on Jackson's case, created the EFF, and successfully filed suit in federal court against the Secret Service. This was one of the earliest cases to begin creating a legal framework for digital media. Lawsuits challenging government and corporate actions continue to be an important part of the EFF's efforts.

Current developments at the intersection of law and technology are chronicled on the EFF Web site, https://www.eff.org/. There is a general feed of information on the home page and more specific links of interest on each of the following topics: free speech, fair use, innovation, privacy, and international and transparency. EFF maintains its Deeplinks blog, offering analysis of current events as written by EFF staff. Staff members also write more thorough analyses of important issues in the form of white papers. The EFF Web site is one of the major tools used to educate the public about their rights. There are multiple projects the organization is highlighting. The projects that apply most directly in the area of social media and politics are summarized briefly below:

- *Bloggers' Rights*: EFF has created a legal guide for bloggers in the United States summarizing relevant issues such as defamation law, intellectual property, and privacy. EFF also reminds bloggers of their rights to blog anonymously, to engage in political speech, and for online journalists to be treated the same way as their offline peers.
- *Coders' Rights*: EFF defends the rights of programmers and developers to explore cutting-edge technology. There are several sets of frequently asked questions provided for different types of issues that may arise, particularly in the area of security and encryption software.
- *Free Speech Weak Links*: This project identifies and explains the intermediaries that stand between communicators and their audiences on the Internet: Web hosting services, upstream providers, the domain name system, Internet service

providers, search engines, payment service providers, and third-party platforms. It details the pressures that these entities face and gives examples of how each has effectively censored expression in particular circumstances.

- *Global Chokepoints*: This project is an international effort similar to Free Speech Weak Links but with a particular emphasis on global efforts to use Internet intermediaries to enforce copyright.
- *Open Wireless Movement:* The EFF advocates a system of open wireless connections as a means of improving access but also as a way of lessening the ability of any particular user to be tracked by government or corporate interests. EFF is part of a coalition of volunteer engineers working to create technology that would allow users to open their wireless connections without sacrificing security or slowing their own service.
- *Surveillance Self-Defense*: This project seeks to inform members of the public in the United States about the laws and technology used for government surveillance of digital media. It also summarizes legal ways to protect oneself against such spying.
- *Transparency Project*: Using primarily Freedom of Information Act requests and lawsuits, the EFF monitors and reports on the government's use of technologies for law enforcement and national security. For example, EFF was instrumental in uncovering information about the use of unmanned drones for domestic surveillance.

Jennifer L. Lambe
University of Delaware

See Also: Civil Rights; Electronic Privacy Information Center; Privacy.

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Electronic Privacy Information Center

The Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) is a nonprofit research center funded through foundation grants, individual donations, and sale of its publications. The stated aim of the center is "focusing public attention on emerging privacy and civil liberties issues." Founded in 1994, the center serves as a clearinghouse of information about privacy, government transparency, freedom of expression, and general civil liberties. EPIC has a particular emphasis on privacy issues raised by new technologies and content forms, including social media.

The center was created by lawyers Marc Rotenberg, Dave Banisar, and David L. Sobel, who worked together at the Washington, D.C., offices of Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility. Their initial backing came largely from the Fund for Constitutional Government. The center became an independent nonprofit in 2000. Initial projects focused on government surveillance and encryption, but the scope of its work quickly expanded to encompass a range of privacy issues posed by government and private entities.

EPIC directs public attention to privacy and civil liberties issues using several strategies. First, it maintains an extensive Web site at epic.org. In conjunction with the group Privacy International, it also provides content to privacy.org. Both sites provide thorough summaries of current events and policy issues related to privacy. They also provide links to other groups that address privacy issues and information about practical privacy tools members of the public can use, for example, to protect their e-mail accounts against snooping, surf the Internet anonymously, or establish firewalls.

The group publishes an electronic newsletter every two weeks, the *EPIC Alert*. The newsletter

has a readership of more than 17,000 and is sent free of charge to subscribers' e-mails. The newsletter includes updates of privacy-related developments in the United States and globally, reviews of recent publications that address privacy issues, and lists of events and conferences of interest to subscribers.

Conferences, invited presentations, and publications are other ways EPIC provides information to interested parties. The group hosts multiple conferences a year, and staff speak at relevant events held by other organizations. EPIC produces publications summarized at its online bookstore and available for purchase through Amazon.com. Examples of its works include "Litigation Under the Federal Open Government Laws" (2010) and "Privacy and Human Rights 2006: An International Survey of Privacy Laws and Developments."

In addition to providing information, EPIC engages in advocacy to influence policy decisions and court cases and to enhance government transparency. EPIC makes regular use of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to gain access to government records of agencies such as the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the National Security Agency, and the Transportation Security Administration. The group also participates in lawsuits regarding privacy issues, both in the role of primary counsel and by submitting friend-of-the-court briefs. EPIC has identified more than 30 hot policy issues, which include a vast span of privacy-related matters, from the use of full-body scanners in airports to the privacy of medical records and the use of unmanned drones in domestic surveillance.

At least a third of EPIC's identified policy issues impact the use of social media for political purposes. The major concerns involve unauthorized collection of personal information by private entities or the government and the vulnerability of that private material to being shared with third parties.

EPIC has, for example, filed complaints with the FTC against Facebook and against Google's social network component, Buzz. EPIC argued that the policies and practices of these social networking sites are unfair and deceptive because the companies aren't clear about what information will be gathered and made available to the government, to members of the public, to advertisers, and to third-party application developers.

Cloud computing is another identified topic on EPIC's radar. Cloud computing refers to software, data, or processing power that is stored on remote servers and managed by a third party. The security of that information varies depending on the techniques the service provider uses to protect it. Data stored in the cloud is, by statute, easier for law enforcement officials to have access to than if the same information was stored on a private computer.

Tracking of individuals' movements in cyberspace and in real space are also matters of concern to EPIC. Various methods can be used by companies and by the government to track online sessions, including Web sites visited and terms used in search engines. Some of this tracking is done for the purpose of customizing content for each user, targeting them with links and advertisements that reflect their interests. Agencies of the government have also used tracking for investigative purposes. An increasing number of mobile devices and applications track a person's geographic location in real time, which has multiple implications in terms of safety and freedom of association.

Jennifer L. Lambe
University of Delaware

See Also: Civil Rights; Cloud Computing; Privacy.

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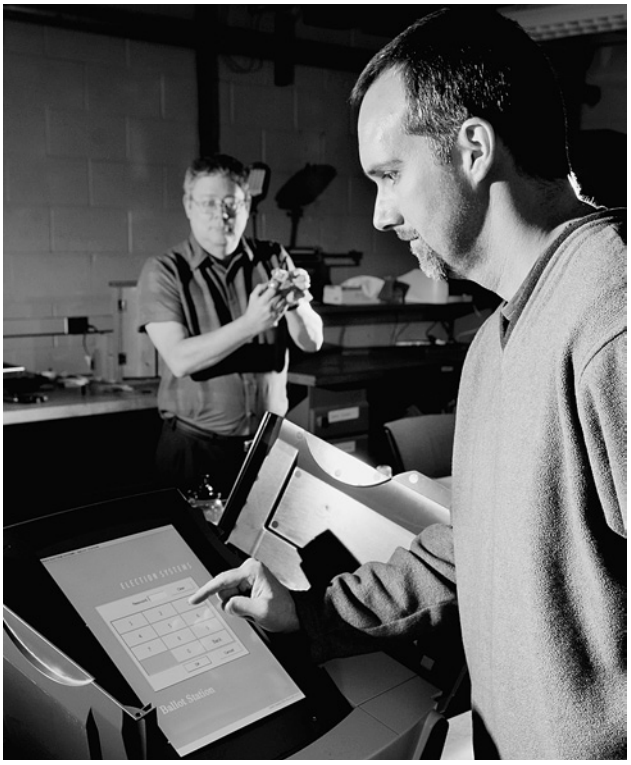
Electronic Voting

In the finale of *American Idol,* season 10, 122.4 million votes were cast via varying electronic means for finalists Scotty McCreery and Lauren Alaina. Over the course of that season, more than 730 million votes were generated by a wide range of Americans using text messaging, call-in numbers, Facebook, and an app. The same types of numbers have emerged over all 12 seasons of *American Idol* and have led to public questioning of why politicians have not worked harder to find a way to permit such convenient voting mechanisms when a dramatic increase in participation could occur. Advocates for moving toward social media voting point to groups like Major League Baseball (which uses online voting for a large portion of all-star game selections) and online polls and surveys as evidence of how turnout would dramatically increase if voting was easier. Detractors, however, point to the same organizations and polls for explanations on why not to make voting that simple. Major League Baseball suffered a ballot stuffing controversy in 1999, and online polls are susceptible to repetitive voters (once a user deletes cookies on his or her computer). Decision makers will need to assess the costs and benefits of bringing the *American Idol* form of democracy to the selection of public officials and votes for public policies.

There are various types and degrees of electronic voting that occur throughout the United States. It can involve casting an electronic ballot, or electronically counting ballots that have been cast through nonelectronic means. Electronic voting mechanisms that are presently used for governmental purposes across the United States include optical scan systems, punched cards, and direct-recording electronic voting (electronic voting machines). Methods used in nonpolitical contexts include voting by phone, computer networks, and the Internet. There are two main types of electronic voting: one utilizing electronic means while still supervised by election representatives, and one performed solely within the influence of the voter. For example, a voter may touch a screen on a voting machine at an official polling location, or use a personal iPhone. While electronic voting is largely viewed as more efficient and effective, it comes with severe risk of fraud.



These researchers in the vulnerability assessment team at Argonne National Laboratory were testing electronic voting machines for vulnerability to tampering in January 2012.

Electronic voting in the United States debuted in the early 1960s with the advent of punch cards that could be electronically counted instead of by hand—dramatically decreasing the time in which results could be announced. It was first used in the 1964 presidential election in a small number of counties. Later, optical scan systems became popular. After voters fill in the appropriate circle, the scanner can quickly tabulate results. The most recent development—and the most technologically advanced and controversial—is direct recording electronic voting machines (DRE). These tools are universally utilized in several countries and quite prominently in the United States. In these systems, voters cast their ballots by using a touch screen to mark their selections. The votes are internally tabulated by the machine and can be sent through a network to a central location that allows for immediate tabulations. Further, a paper audit trail can be printed for each machine. DREs first became popular after 2002 when the Help America Vote Act required every

polling place to have an accessible system (and DRE is considered accessible). In 2004, statistics show that over one in four voters in the United States used some form of DRE. This compares to fewer than one in 10 from 1996.

Advantages

The first advantage is the efficiency offered by electronic voting mechanisms. The 2012 presidential election had 126,226,713 votes cast across the country; imagine the amount of time, effort, and money it would take to hand-count each of those votes. Then, there would be the need to aggregate votes across jurisdictions before arriving at state totals—the time required would be significant. Whether paying election workers or counting the number of hours volunteered to do the counting, it is significantly cheaper to utilize electronic means as compared to hand-counting ballots.

Electronic voting is not only more efficient, but is also more effective. Further, the opportunities for human error are clustered. Each time that the votes per candidate are sent forward for aggregation, there is a potential for error. The potential for human error in miscounting a ballot is quite large. Even more problematic, however, would be recount situations. Each individual ballot would need to be secured until all elections for a jurisdiction were certified and not facing legal challenges. In the time between a cast ballot and the conclusion of legal proceedings, there would again be numerous opportunities for a single ballot to be misplaced or damaged, causing inaccurate results. When electronic voting is utilized, a machine is handling all counting and ordering—largely eliminating many of these concerns. There are no concerns about misinterpreting what someone meant (e.g., Florida in 2000), or of a misplaced ballot.

There is also a significant environmental benefit from the utilization of electronic voting. When paper ballots are used for an election, federal law permits (but does not require) them to be destroyed 22 months after the date of the election. Each state has protocols on this matter, but printed ballots are never recycled. They are either destroyed or stored—both of which are environmental drains because of the sheer volume. Even more problematic is that the number of paper ballots needed is significantly more than the expected turnout so that polling stations do not run out in any given jurisdiction. This guarantees waste, regardless of what occurs to used ballots. Electronic voting (particularly DRE and Internet-based) eliminates this concern.

Electronic voting also presents numerous benefits related to accessibility. The most prominent way it does this is by offering opportunities for individuals with disabilities (which explains the initial growth of DREs in 2002). DREs permit those who are blind (the most problematic disability from a ballot perspective) to have instructions and ballots read to them via headphones. Further, the machines can be calibrated to assist those with limited mobility. Considering the growing diversity of the United States and the potential need for ballots in multiple languages, DREs can be loaded with various forms of the ballot, permitting voters to be presented with their choices in the language most comfortable for them.

Perhaps the greatest advantage offered by electronic voting through the Internet or other direct means is what it means for democracy. While the United States has taken great efforts to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate in elections on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, voting is still largely regarded as an inconvenience by many potential voters. Voting occurs during the week, and is not recognized as a holiday. Citizens must either take off from work or go before or after work. Despite the technological revolution, there are still lines (significant at times). Further, the sheer volume of elections each year in the United States leads to fatigue. If individuals could vote via the Internet, cell phone, or other self-controlled mechanism, participation would likely increase and would benefit individuals who at present are considered disenfranchised because they are unable to get off of work or access polling locations.

Two groups that could particularly benefit from more innovative electronic voting would be individuals who are deployed with the American military and those suffering natural disasters at the time of an election. At present, deployed soldiers are only able to vote for federal offices and receive their ballot by mail, fax, or e-mail. They fill out the ballot and then send it back via mail, needing it postmarked on or before Election Day and received by 4:00 PM on the Friday following

Election Day. Ballots cannot be returned electronically. If overseas military could vote through electronic means, this would drastically cut back on the costs of ballots returned, reduce the hassle for servicemen and -women when trying to vote, and eliminate possible delays that could make their votes go uncounted. In terms of disasters, electronic voting could have helped in November 2012. In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, voters in the New York City metro area (in both New Jersey and New York) were able to walk into any precinct they could access and request a ballot to vote at that location. If there are concerns about voter fraud using the Internet, the same concerns could be voiced when voters are given free rein to vote where they want. The difficult part of Hurricane Sandy is that at the national level, it made no difference. Both New Jersey and New York were solid Democratic states, meaning the potential changes in venue did not necessarily matter. However, at the state and local level it was complete chaos, heavily impacting lower-level races. With electronic voting available, the situation could have been avoided.

Disadvantages

There are three common objections most frequently raised to electronic voting: familiarity, cost, and fraud. The familiarity issue is especially pertinent with older voters who are accustomed to more traditional means of casting ballots. DREs and butterfly punch cards can be intimidating for individuals who are not familiar with the technology. Likewise, asking these voters to cast a ballot online from home may be impossible. Maybe they do not have a computer or Internet access. What electronic voting should not do, however, is scare voters out of participating.

The cost of electronic voting is also frequently mentioned. Whereas printing paper ballots is not environmentally friendly, purchasing the requisite number of DREs or scanners or online voting software is not budget friendly. These tools require a significant capital investment when purchased and incur maintenance costs throughout their lives. Add in the cost of validating results and performing the necessary audits, and the cost of running an election can be roughly the same as when using paper ballots. Since state governments are charged constitutionally with conducting elections, the cost falls directly onto the already strapped budgets of this level of government.

The most frequently cited concern of electronic voting is susceptibility to fraud. Major League Baseball presents a great example. In 1999, with Red Sox shortstop Nomar Garciaparra roughly 20,000 votes shy of Yankee shortstop Derek Jeter only three weeks from the All Star game, a computer programmer created a program that immediately gave him an additional 25,259 votes—netting him a starting spot in the game. While the online ballot program was fairly primitive and was not designed with any real intent to keep hackers out, it exposes how dangerous online voting can be. DREs can be equally concerning. Viruses, hacking, and physical tampering could possibly influence the outcome of an election if someone is successful in influencing the numbers within a DRE or the network between one machine and the tabulation center. No matter how secure a network or machine seems to be, someone always seems able to get in. Likewise, there could just be unfortunate problems with the machines (even in the absence of any activity to cause the machines to produce errors).

From the world's short history of electronic voting there is already a collection of cautionary tales about when new methods do not work out as intended. In 2003, voters in Virginia noted that DRE machines would uncheck who they voted for after a few seconds. If the voters had not noticed, no one would have caught the error. Even the best audit of DREs can only describe what the machine entered, not what the voter actually intended. A year later, after having nonfunctioning machines, Diebold (now Premier Election Solutions) was sued by Alameda and San Diego Counties and had all of their machines decertified by the state of California. They ultimately settled for $2.6 million. Electronic voting across the United States was particularly rough in 2006. In three Florida jurisdictions, early tests showed calibration problems that led to misvotes by voters. Many voters in Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Ohio were forced to resort to paper ballots because of software problems; in Ohio, it was even worse around Cleveland when printers jammed in the DREs, making paper copies of votes impossible to gather. In Arkansas, a mayoral candidate claimed that there were serious errors when his home precinct

showed him collecting zero votes (despite his continued assurance that he had in fact cast a ballot for himself). In 2008, more errors occurred when machines in three states (Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia) all flipped votes. For example, a vote for John Kerry would appear in the results as a vote for George W. Bush, even though it looked right on the screen. Again, this error would never have been noticed by a voter. Other states had votes disappear, or Spanish ballots were not counted at all. Similar scenarios emerged in 2010 and 2012. While all of these incidents may seem minor, they are the sort of occurrences that shake citizen confidence in the voting process and, consequently, democracy as a whole.

If these real-world examples were not enough to sway voters against electronic voting, four major popular portrayals have emerged. *Man of the Year* (a 2006 Robin Williams movie) highlights a software error that causes voting machines to incorrectly tally votes. *Runoff* (2007) traces an election in which a hacker is able to defeat security on e-voting to fix the numbers. *The Campaign* (2012) traces a similar story and strongly implies that prominent backers of one candidate utilized voting machines to guarantee the desired outcome. And *Hacking Democracy*—a 2006 HBO documentary—looks at the actual anomalies and irregularities experienced by voters in Volusia County, Florida. The documentary's most shocking contribution, however, occurs when the filmmakers successfully hack into an election system in Tallahassee.

There are both reasons to embrace and fear electronic voting in the United States. While America has embraced types of electronic voting that utilize electronic means while still supervising voting with election representatives, it has been less open to forms that are performed solely within the influence of the voter. Americans are skeptical of DREs (possibly for good reason), but do not accept online voting—at least for now. Congress has pushed for greater security for any type of electronic voting, and the House of Representatives in 2008 went as far as to suggest reimbursing states for the extra costs of having paper ballots ready in case of a technology issue. Further, the House bill called for states to be reimbursed the costs of paying auditors and hand counters that had to be hired. In doing so, the hope was that those who did not trust electronic voting could still participate through more traditional means. The bill suggesting these changes, however, has yet to be voted on by either congressional body. In the end, the debate is as much theoretical as it is practical. Do Americans want to see voter participation increase? Or do they worry too much about providing new avenues for fraud to justify the addition of new voters to the electorate? Either way, there will continue to be incremental movements toward more utilization of technology and electronic voting.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Voter Apathy; Voter Privacy; Voter Turnout; Voting, Global Electronic.

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Ellison, Keith

With just over 32,000 Twitter followers, Minnesota two-term Congressman Keith Ellison does not actively cultivate a large social media audience. Despite Ellison's relatively small number of followers, he nonetheless constitutes a significant social media footprint largely maintained by a significant number of conservative and oppositional bloggers. Ellison is Minnesota's first African

American and the United States' first Muslim member of Congress. Ellison's history as a Catholic-turned-Sunni Muslim activist concerned with human rights and voter disenfranchisement appealed to his ethnically and religiously diverse constituents and helped him win a historically Democratic district in the Minneapolis metropolitan area. However, this same history—containing former ties to the Nation of Islam (NOI) and later renunciations of those ties, with offering his political support to someone offering less-than-flattering insinuations about Jews and racism, and with current allegations regarding "associations" with the politically motivated Muslim Brotherhood organization—antagonizes political opponents who view him with deep suspicion because of his professed Muslim faith.

Social media platforms—including Twitter and blogs—are especially adept at allowing users to quickly circulate and respond to rumors. It is these same platforms that enable oppositional social media users to respond to and call into question established television and print media coverage of Ellison. Indeed, social media users keep Ellison a very popular subject.

Activism

Julie Woodbury has observed that Ellison's history of activism explains his current notoriety among conservatives concerned about the influences of radicalized Islam on U.S. life According to Woodbury, Ellison presented himself as an easy target for political opponents during his initial run for Congress. As a law student at the University of Minnesota, Ellison penned several articles supporting Louis Farrakhan, minister and leader of the NOI. Because Ellison actively recruited members and other participants to attend the Million Man March in 1995, he became identified as a formal member of the NOI, though he denies such claims. Woodbury noted that Ellison needed to distance himself from the NOI and whatever involvement he had with the organization if he was going to avoid alienating his Jewish voters. Disassociating from the NOI was important for Ellison if he wanted to deny that it represented mainstream Islam. In addition, Ellison needed to take back some comments he made supporting a then-executive director of the Minneapolis Initiative Against Racism who allegedly claimed that Jewish individuals are some of the most racist white people. He disavowed the director's comments and expressed regret over not properly scrutinizing Farrakhan's anti-Semitic and racist remarks.

Minnesota's 5th Congressional District covers the city of Minneapolis as well as the suburb Saint Louis Park, which contains a strong Jewish community. As a result, Ellison's background was both uniquely suited for his district even as it presented significant hurdles to overcome.

Controversy

Certain elements of Ellison's history irked Jewish and conservative bloggers the most during the 2006 Democratic primary: he only recently disavowed the militant and anti-U.S. government elements of Farrakhan's rhetoric and his past dismissal of the anti-Semitism present in NOI messaging. Some Jewish and conservative voters found Ellison's expression of contrition to be disingenuous.

Woodbury notes how the conservative blog *Power Line*, *Time* magazine's 2004 blog of the year and the site whose coverage led to Dan Rather's dismissal at CBS, began to post letters Ellison wrote to the student newspaper while attending the University of Minnesota. These letters supported Farrakhan and reparations for African Americans and called for black nation within the United States. *Power Line*'s coverage was among the first uses of social media to portray Ellison as a racist, anti-Semitic candidate outside the mainstream of Minnesota and U.S. politics.

Woodbury notes that, because of unflattering attention in local and the influential *Power Line* blogs, Ellison was the subject of withering criticism in the months leading to his election. Oppositional bloggers were very effective at portraying conventional media, especially the local newspapers, of not asking the tough questions of Ellison's past due to his being a racial and religious minority. Natch Greyes implies that just as political figures can employ social media to foster and deepen followers' connections to campaign messages, so too can savvy oppositional bloggers deepen the salience of a message when it appears that message is being ignored or suppressed by either the targeted political candidate or from some other media outlet. Most of the 5th

congressional district of Minnesota identifies as diverse and politically progressive, so the effect of oppositional, adversarial social media on the district's voters is hard to gauge, especially among Jewish voters. Woodbury reports that many in the political blogosphere seemed to think that Ellison's campaign got a significant boost when Mordecai Spektor, publisher of the *American Jewish World,* a weekly newspaper serving Minnesota's Jewish community, endorsed his candidacy. Spektor's endorsement did not reflect a significant majority of the Jewish vote, but it did nonetheless indicate to some that Ellison's past affiliation with the NOI and subsequent renunciation of it and its anti-Semitic elements was a good-faith gesture worthy of supporting the candidate.

Ellison frequently downplays his religious faith, claiming that it is not a "big deal" and has asserted that he is not a religious leader of any kind. While those declarations were persuasive enough to some of his concerned constituents, they were not credible enough to oppositional bloggers who pointed to Ellison's staged swearing-in ceremony as proof of his continued devotion to a politically motivated version of Islam. All new representatives to the U.S. House of Representatives take the oath of office together. The iconic pledge featuring a hand placed on a symbolically important book is typical of judge swearing-in ceremonies. Regardless, Ellison decided to symbolically reenact the swearing-in ceremony by placing his hand on Thomas Jefferson's copy of the Quran. Ellison's stated purpose for staging the photograph was to celebrate religious tolerance and to celebrate the occasion of the first Muslim being elected to Congress. Because the act of staging the picture was voluntary, oppositional bloggers saw it as a calculated attempt to demonstrate Ellison's true religiously motivated political commitments.

Woodbury points out that, even though there were significant numbers of non-Christians in Ellison's class, including Jewish members, Buddhist, and even an agnostic, his decision to publicize his swearing-in ceremony was bound to draw critical attention from the blogosphere. Conservative blogs extensively covered Ellison's reenactment. Some Republican representatives took to Fox News to express that both they and their constituents were deeply concerned by the precedent set by Ellison. In the wake of his election, and the increased visibility that accompanied his being the first Muslim elected to Congress, Ellison faced the option of downplaying this fact or celebrating it. The media-friendly Quran pledge was an iconic image that for both Ellison's supporters and detractors helped define him to this day. President Barack Obama referenced the event a few years later in an address to Muslims in Cairo, Egypt, telling his audience that Ellison's act is proof that Muslims have a powerful and positive influence in American affairs.

Shortly after his swearing-in ceremony, and in the middle of ongoing media attention to his now-famous picture, Ellison appeared with conservative commentator Glenn Beck on *CNN Headline News*. Beck, by then an established radio personality, likely had some inclination as to how the conservative blogosphere, the site for most oppositional positions that circulated about Ellison, reacted to Ellison's use of Jefferson's Quran in his photo. Beck notably informed Ellison that he, like many Americans, especially those who formed the audience of his show, wanted Ellison to prove that he was not sympathetic to radical Islam, with its focus on Sharia law and jihad. In response, Ellison affirmed his patriotism and disavowed Muslim extremists. After the show's taping, Ellison told the hometown Minneapolis *Star Tribune* (long a subject of scorn for its unwillingness to scrutinize Ellison's past to the extent *Power Line* and other Minnesota-based blogs felt was warranted) that he felt Beck's questions were outrageous. Conversely, bloggers from *Power Line* and other conservative social media sites thought differently.

Domestic Terrorism

In 2011, New York Republican Representative Peter King, chair of the Homeland Security Committee, convened hearings on the problems of radicalization among American Muslims and the potential resulting acts of domestic terror. The hearings were a timely response to the media uproar that ensued a few months before regarding the proposed mosque and cultural center to be built near the Ground Zero site of the fallen World Trade Center towers. Ellison made an appearance before the committee to tell the story of a Muslim medical technician, Muhamed Salman Hamdani, who volunteered to help after the World

Trade Center towers had been attacked. Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Laurie Goodstein note that Ellison broke into tears when describing Hamdani's bravery. When the body of Hamdani went missing, some alleged he may have had something to do with the terror plot against the World Trade Center. It was not until Hamdani's remains were found before he was vindicated.

In response, the conservative Media Research Center decried Ellison's actions as political theater. Other conservative oppositional blogs registered similar reactions. Other more sympathetic blogs, like the *Huffington Post* and *Politico*, registered Ellison's emotional display as truthful, heartfelt, and sincere. Traditional media outlets, including the *New York Times* and the Minneapolis *Star-Tribune*, and national television reports tried to gauge the various reactions played out over social media channels to Ellison's testimony to see how it reflected how Americans were reacting to King's hearing on domestic terrorism.

Controversial Congressman Keith Ellison speaking at the Center for American Progress on March 2, 2011. Ellison was both the first African American to be elected to the House from the state of Minnesota and the first Muslim member of the U.S. Congress.

King's public denunciation of the Washington-based advocacy group, the Council on American–Islamic Relations (CAIR), reflected a concern first raised by conservative blogs during Ellison's initial campaign for Congress—namely, that CAIR is an organization linked by some government agencies to supporting terrorist organizations and whose members have donated to Ellison's campaign. Another member of the Minnesota congressional delegation, Michele Bachmann, has made public accusations against Huma Abedin, a Muslim woman who served as deputy chief of staff for former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, of having ties to the Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood organization is more familiar to most Americans as a result of Egypt's Mohamed Morsi, a member of the brotherhood, winning the presidency.

When bipartisan rejection of her claims followed, Bachmann leveled similar charges against Ellison. Taking to Glenn Beck's radio show, Bachmann alleged that Ellison had and continues to have associations with CAIR and with the Muslim Brotherhood. Bachmann and notable opposition blogs like *Power Line* profess that such associations invite suspicion and should entail official investigation into Ellison's allegiance to organizations linked to terrorism. Beck used his radio show as a platform to urge his listeners to remain vigilant in pursuing the evidence of Islamist infiltration of American governmental agencies. Such a move by Beck illustrates how traditional and social media forms collaborate to generate and circulate news stories. Social media news aggregators could take to Beck's exhortation as they had been the ones who initially broke the story of Ellison's problematic associations in 2006.

While the Abedin controversy abated quickly, amid a series of notable Republicans and a chorus of Democrats denouncing guilt-by-association allegations, the accusations persist against Ellison. Long critiqued by oppositional blogs, Ellison insists that the guilt-by-association tactics are unfounded and misleading. Just as Michele Bachmann prefers to speak almost exclusively with media outlets and blogs friendly to her position, so too does Ellison. It is noteworthy, for example, that in the wake of Bachmann's accusations against Ellison, he took to the *Huffington Post* to disavow any affiliation with the Muslim Brotherhood and to

suggest that Bachmann simply wanted attention and was reflecting ongoing efforts to marginalize religious minorities. Woodbury observes that, even in 2006, Ellison's campaign advisers were urging him to respond swiftly to misleading or false allegations made against him. Ellison historically has been reluctant to respond to allegations he believes to be false. Woodbury explains that, because Ellison does not view himself as racist or extremist, he does not always see a compelling reason to respond to those who allege otherwise. As is evidenced by his modest Twitter following and his preference for responding to blog-originated allegations to liberal-leaning blogs, Ellison does not readily target his detractors—or, perhaps more important, ask his followers to do the same—through oppositional tactics that social media make easy to employ.

In 2011, when Representative Anthony Weiner resigned from Congress after tweeting compromising pictures of himself to women who were not his wife—the aforementioned target of Michele Bachmann's proposed investigation, Huma Abedin—some in Congress thought Ellison, a fellow member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, might be ready to assume Weiner's leadership position. Michael Shear notes, however, that Ellison lacks the charisma and brashness of Weiner, and perhaps more tellingly, the ability or willingness to utilize Twitter to mobilize progressives behind common issues.

In possible attempts at humor, Ellison has in 2012 retweeted a message calling the Republican presidential nominee a "heartless douchebag" and tweeted his amusement that a song by "coke-addicted" James Brown was played while Mitt Romney and his family said goodbye to the convention. In both instances, Ellison alleged that the tweet in question was a mistake made by a staffer. Regardless of his alleged Twitter command, Ellison is a much-discussed figure who, while not presently employing social media to the fullest extent to expand his sphere of influence, remains a controversial and ever-trending subject in the social media universe.

Samuel Boerboom
Montana State University–Billings

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Bachmann, Michele; *Huffington Post*; *Politico*.

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Ellmers, Renee

Renee Ellmers is a member of the U. S. House of Representatives from the 2nd District of North Carolina. She was first elected in November 2010. She won re-election to a second term in the November balloting in 2012 and began serving her second term in the 113th Congress in January 2013. She has used social media effectively in her campaigns and in her service in the House of Representatives.

Congresswoman Ellmers was born Renee Jacisin on February 9, 1964, in Ironwood, Michigan. Her mother, Caroline Pauline (née Marshalek) Jacisin was of Croatian and Polish descent. Her father, LeRoy Francis Jacisin, was of Czech and French-Canadian descent. The family moved to Madison Heights, Michigan, when she was a child in order for her father to better provide for the family as an automobile worker.

After graduating from Madison High School, she worked a variety of jobs in order to pay her way through Oakland University in Oakland County, Michigan. She first received training as a medical assistant and then graduated in 1990 with a bachelor of science in nursing. She then worked as a nurse in the intensive care unit of Beaumont Hospital in metropolitan Detroit.

While working at Beaumont Hospital, Renee Jacisin met her husband Brent Ellmers, a surgeon. After the birth of their son, they moved to Dunn, North Carolina, in Harnett County where they practiced medicine and nursing, respectively. She also helped to manage the family's small medical practice.

In Dunn, she became the clinical director of the Trinity Wound Care Center. She served as vice president of community development for the Dunn Chamber of Commerce and as president of the chamber. She served on the Dunn Planning Board of the Betsy Johnson Hospital Foundation and the Harnett County Nursing Home Committee and taught Sunday school in the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Dunn.

Political Career

Ellmers had not been engaged in politics nor had she had any political ambitions until the political struggle that arose with the introduction of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), which was adopted on March 26, 2010. It is known popularly as Obamacare. Her husband and she attended a town hall meeting on President Barack Obama's proposed health care plan. What they heard was very distressing to them. It would, she believed, allow the government to dictate patient's rights to health care, and it would also punish small businesses.

As a nurse and the wife of a physician who was intimately involved in health care delivery, she found her opposition to the bill required action. To oppose Obamacare, Ellmers became active in local Republican Party politics in the summer of 2009. She also joined Americans for Prosperity (AFP). A conservative public policy interest group, AFP helped many Republicans in the 2010 election. Its advocacy is for free-market solutions rather than government-imposed solutions to most problems. Thereafter, she entered the Republican Party primary for the nomination as its candidate for the 2010 election for the office of representative in Congress.

In the Republican Party primary held on March 4, 2010, Ellmers defeated Todd Gailas, an automobile salesman, and Frank Destrich, a retired businessman. Gailas used Facebook during the primary campaign to seek votes. On his Facebook page, he described himself as a small business owner and concerned citizen rather than a career politician. This, he claimed, would enable him to understand the people because he was not governed by power brokers in Washington, D.C.

Frank Destrich was a newcomer to the district. After retiring from the Marine Corps, he had served in Nebraska as a district supervisor for Nebraska's Game and Parks Commission. He used LinkedIn and allied with other bloggers to gain an Internet presence. However, it was to no avail because Ellmers's campaign was able to raise and spend more money than her opponents, which helped her to win the nomination.

Bob Etheridge

Ellmers then proceeded to the general election campaign against Bobby Ray "Bob" Etheridge. In 1996, Etheridge had defeated Republican incumbent David Funderburk for the North Carolina 2nd District Congressional seat. He then won re-election in the subsequent elections in 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2008 by well over 50 percent of the vote as he defeated Republican challengers. In 2010, the prospects for re-election looked good against Republican challenger Renee Ellmers and Libertarian nominee Tom Rose. However, on June 14, 2010, Etheridge was involved in an infamous incident.

Two young men, who were traditional college age, hailed and approached Congressman Etheridge on a sidewalk in Washington, D.C. They identified themselves as student reporters working on a project. As they videotaped Etheridge, they asked him if he "fully supported the Obama agenda." Instead of answering the question or perhaps dismissing it, he repeatedly asked them, "Who are you?" Etheridge then grabbed one of the young men by the wrists, neck, and shirt (as shown in the video) while repeatedly saying, "Who are you" as the young man repeatedly asked to be let loose. The incident went viral on many blogs as the YouTube video quickly hit the Internet.

Later Etheridge apologized for the "Who are you" incident in a statement at a press conference. By the end of the next day, June 15, many on the Internet were calling for Etheridge's arrest for assault, although by engaging in physical contact, the appropriate charge would have been battery. Soon, Democrats were defending him for his actions, claiming that the youths were Grand Old

Party (GOP) operatives. The spin politicizing of the incident, much of it on blogs or other Internet sites, gave Etheridge political cover.

On June 18, 2010, a Mississippian, Brandon Leslie, gave a statement to the *Southern Pines Pilot* that he had been assaulted in a similar manner as the two young reporters in 1996 by Etheridge. At the time, Leslie was a student at Pinecrest High School in Monroe County, North Carolina, which then was part of the 2nd Congressional District. Etheridge, a first-time candidate for Congress, was the state superintendent of public instruction. When Etheridge came to one of the school's football games, Leslie approached him to ask about a particular education program. After Etheridge did not answer the question, Leslie repeated the question two more times. Then Etheridge, according to Leslie, grabbed him by the shoulders and shook him, saying that he should learn to respect his elders. Leslie found the incident shocking.

Now 32 years of age and an attorney in Oxford, Mississippi, Leslie described himself as a Democrat who supported the Obama agenda. However, he said that watching the "Who are you" video evoked bad memories. Leslie's claim was dismissed by his retired high school principal on the grounds that Leslie had been in the wrong. Many on the Internet found this insufficient and accepted the story as proof of a pattern of repeat offences by Etheridge, whose staff later claimed the report was in error.

The "assault" by Etheridge was defended by MSNBC host Chris Matthews as justified because it was bad manners to ask a question of a lawmaker. Furthermore, opined Matthews, it was an ambush by a group of unknown activists. These remarks generated a flood of blogging as supporters of the students denounced Matthews.

Etheridge's behavior aided Ellmers's campaign because it alarmed many people who viewed his actions as arrogant behavior. However, over the Internet, numerous negative comments were made on blogs, Web sites, and other forms of social media. The comments that defended the congressman were usually vitriolic and extreme. Those that denounced his behavior pointed to its character as warranting more than the statement he had released, including arrest and forced resignation. Ellmers used the video to boost her campaign, pointing out that, if it had been a teacher at a school where her children attended, the teacher would be in serious trouble.

Tom Rose, the Libertarian Party candidate for the congressional seat held by Etheridge, was also quoted on the Internet in *Current*. He called for the Washington, D.C., police to arrest Congressman Etheridge. The fact that they had not, he declared, was strange. Furthermore, when asked if Etheridge appeared drunk during the assault, he replied "drunk with power." Rose used social media to conduct his campaign. One program on which he appeared was a blognet radio program *A Stranded Citizen*.

2010 Election

In the 2010 election, Ellmers defeated Democrat Party incumbent Bob Etheridge. He had been expected to win by pundits as a seven-term incumbent of the House of Representatives despite Ellmers's support from the Tea Party and Sarah Palin. Libertarian candidate Rose received only 1.8 percent of the vote, a total of 3,505 votes. Etheridge received 48.7 percent (92,393 votes), while Ellmers won with 49.5 percent (93,876 votes). The election was close and ended with a victory of 1,489 votes after a recount.

In her first term in office, Ellmers was appointed to the House Committees on Agriculture, Foreign Affairs, and Small Business as well as the Subcommittee on Healthcare and Technology, of which she is the chair.

Ellmers was elected in 2010 with Tea Party support; however, she has been a strong supporter of Speaker of the House John Boehner. This has not pleased Tea Party members, who see her as inconsistent. Her committee assignments in the 112th Congress have enabled her to speak forcefully for her freshman class. Her guiding principles have been cutting wasteful spending, rolling back harmful government regulations, and giving small businesses and entrepreneurs the ability to succeed and prosper.

In June 2012, Ellmers, as chair of the House Small Business Committee's Subcommittee on Healthcare and Technology, requested that Kathleen Sebelius, secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, send a status report on the agency's health information technology patient safety efforts. The request was to address

recommendations in the Institute of Medicine (IOM) report of November 2011.

2012 Election

In the 2012 election, Ellmers defeated two opponents. Steve Wilkings, a retired U.S. Army officer, was her Democrat Party opponent. Her Libertarian Party opponent was Brian Irving, a retired U.S. Air Force officer. In this election, Ellmers won with 55.9 percent to 41.4 percent for her Democrat opponent and 2.7 percent for her Libertarian opponent.

Irving used some social media, including YouTube, to wage his campaign. He was interviewed on some blogs but with very limited success. Wilkins created his own Web page with links to Facebook, LinkedIn, Flicker, YouTube, Twitter, and e-mail. He also established a campaign blog that was, in the end, not enough. Ellmers, like her opponents, created a campaign Web page and a blog and included Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and media-streaming links.

In the 113th Congress, Ellmers served on the House Energy and Commerce Committee Subcommittees on Health, Communications and Technology, and Oversight and Investigations. Her Congressional office Web site has a number of links to other sites such as GOP.gov and C-Span.org. Some of these are causes that she supports, such as a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Another is SmallBizOPENmic, which is linked to the House Committee on Small Business.

Social Media

Ellmers regularly uses Twitter and encourages followers to sign up to follow her. Her subcommittee Web site has access to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other links to social media. One links to video feeds. She can also be reached via e-mail.

Ellmers's Facebook page has numerous posts from thousands of people as well as numerous links to other issues or supporters of her issues of promoting small business, ending the crushing public debt, ending high taxes, and reducing excessive regulations. She can be found on a number of blogs promoting her concerns and legislative issues. An important media link for her constituents is to constituent services. Here, her constituents can ask for help with a government agency, in getting a flag that was flown over the Capitol, or any number of things, including helping children learn about the American system of government.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: Bachmann, Michelle; Cantor, Eric; Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, 2012.

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Embedding

The concept of embeddedness, introduced by economic sociologist Mark Granovetter in the 1980s, is used to define to what extent individuals or groups are entangled in a particular social environment or network in its broad sense. Granovetter developed a sociological perspective on economic actions focusing on the patterns of social relations as a way to reduce market uncertainty through embedding economic transactions into social structures. Later, other scholars suggested differentiating between embeddedness and embedding: The first concept refers to the end state of embedding,

while the second is the process as such. In other words, embeddedness is more structure oriented, whereas embedding is dynamic, referring to the process that is continually changing.

Scholars whose research interests and projects lie within the application of social network analysis (SNA) suggest that embeddedness is a hierarchical nesting of cohesive structures. Moreover, they distinguish between the overall embeddedness of the networks in larger communities or societies that result in the prevalence of particular ego networks in a population and the network embeddedness of individual actors into groups and organizations.

Social Media

With the rapid development and expansion of social media in all forms of electronic communication (i.e., social networking sites), users receive opportunities to create online communities for sharing ideas, exchanging messages, and sending content such as music or videos. Social media allow for using Web-based technologies for communication in the form of interactive dialogue through the variety of social media tools: social networking sites, blogs, content communities, forums, podcasts, video and photo sharing sites, and virtual games.

Embedding of individuals in larger groups and communities via social media leads to higher inclusion of actors into various activities announced or communicated through social media, either on purpose or spontaneously. Use of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube affects various spheres of human life, from marketing and political actions to privacy and identity construction. There is a growing range of studies on how these platforms impact on contemporary life of people in different countries, where one possible angle is to compare the use of social media worldwide and across particular countries for specific purposes. For instance, the embedding of the Spanish citizens into the protest actions during the last year happened mostly due to the use of social media by public activists for citizens' mobilization. Thus, social media can empower actors who would remain powerless without these modern tools. Marginalized social groups are able to promote their agendas on free and easy-to-use platforms. Moreover, embedding in social media communities and groups matters for recruitment of new participants as well as for supporting continued participation among existing group members, discouraging them to leave the community.

When talking about the process of embedding with regard to social media, one should consider to what extent new forms of media become embedded in people's everyday lives. Hence, social media are saturated in contemporary life; they have become a tool and a place for conflicts among a multitude of organized and autonomous actors. New forms of media and news sources cause changes in politics of organization and changes in their self-representation online.

The positive aspect here is that social media platforms eliminate the pure use of traditional advertising when communication is directed mostly from producers to consumers; instead, social media platforms enable receiving easier and faster feedback about the product or service that the provider can get from its customers. It results in embedding of more clients into the network of a particular organization. Therefore, it becomes more crucial for the company to take care of its own reputation and image using social media platforms among other communication channels.

Social media serve as a free and open space for the interaction of wide ranges of stakeholders who aim to share comments about organizations or get opinions alternative to the official statement from an organization. Therefore, embedding of social media into the communication of stakeholders leads to lower domination of an organization in creating its image.

Embedding through social media occurs in various dimensions, specifically in relational, cognitive and emotional, cultural and political, and spatial and geographical spheres of one's life. It is highly connected with how people perceive social media trustworthiness and to what extent they are media literate. A number of studies of Internet penetration across countries, as well as across social categories by age or income, have demonstrated that different categories vary in their online visibility, which might lead to asymmetrical power relations. However, embedding of social media also leads to a blurring of public and private spheres.

Tetiana Kostiuchenko
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

See Also: Network Influentials; Privacy; Social Authority; Social Network Analysis; Topology of Social Networks.

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Engagement Advertising

Engagement advertising is a form of marketing that encourages customers to coconstruct the brand of a political entity such as a politician, group, issue, or campaign. Through engaging with the brand's digital presence, like a social network profile, the consumer creates the political entity's image by responding to existing information or adding content. Rather than conceptualizing the consumer as passive, engagement advertisers propose a long-term, active, and meaningful relationship between the brand and its public. In return for the consumer's engagement, the brand helps to construct the identity of the consumer by digitally linking with the individual and representing an interest or facet of that individual's life. Through this engagement, advertisers hope the consumer becomes invested in the success of the political entity, which will result in long-term support. While engagement advertising comes in many forms, the affordances granted by social networking sites have greatly changed the way engagement is conceptualized, measured, and implemented by political groups.

Engagement advertising encourages the participation of the public in the construction of a branded image through digital interaction. Tomi T. Ahonen and Alan Moore propose that this form of advertising rests on the basic assumptions that human beings are social animals and need to communicate and interact. These interactions can take place in the physical world and, more newly, through social media. The purpose of engaging messages is to encourage long-term relationships rather than one-time demonstrations of support, such as monetary donations. Political engaging messages ask supporters to go do something, such as watch a video and repost or share with friends. It is through an engaging action with the brand that a long-term commitment is developed between the public and the political entity.

Ultimately, this form of advertising asks the public to act in response to a communicated message. Responses include volunteering for a political cause, sharing information with friends through various channels, or posting comments on public message boards, digital profiles, and social network spaces. These responses both fulfill the needs behind the original message and encourage the public to take partial ownership and control over the brand by being responsible for the content associated with the entity. For example, a message asking supporters to like a candidate on Facebook not only increases the digital presence and status of the candidate but also offers supporters a means of controlling the candidate's digital image. Further, the public benefits from this action because the social media site connects the two profiles and associates them with each other. This multipronged relationship built between the political entity and its public elicits increased feelings of support and loyalty between both sides.

Engagement advertising encourages a prolonged relationship between a political entity and its public that increases communication long after the initial engagement campaign is complete. Cynthia M. Gibson advocates that, through digital engagement, the public can provide feedback on a politician's stances, policy creation, and issue salience. This can further encourage transparency between politicians and their publics as well as offer control over the actions of elected officials. Gibson also proposes that engagement advertising encourages both top-down and bottom-up communication due to the initial communication by a political organization and the following encouragement of a response by the public.

Studying Effectiveness

Web 2.0 technologies and social media make engagement responses diverse. Through the use of blogs, live chat, and product ratings, the public is invited to not only engage with the organization presenting the message but also to engage with other consumers or members of the public. These Web 2.0 spaces can be managed by the political organization behind the original engaging message or are alternatively created and controlled by the public. Consider President Barack Obama's presence on Facebook. In addition to an official politician page run by the official Obama for America campaign, there is also a community and fan page run by individual supporters. The many Web 2.0 spaces provide endless possibilities for the public to engage after observing or consuming an engagement campaign. Thus, measuring all forms of engagement responses in all social media is nearly impossible. To measure campaign success, engagement advertisers must make desired outcomes of messages clear, specifying where and when they want the public to respond.

The multitude of methods used to measure effectiveness suggests that engagement advertising can be studied through both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Researchers J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White studied advertising and identified two forms of engagement messages. Because of the differences between these two types, different methods and models are required to study engagement. First, heteroglossic messages are present when the engaging campaign does not explicitly state a desired outcome and the public is open to perform a variety of responses based upon their individual abilities, interests, and preestablished knowledge. Second, monoglossic messages occur when the engaging campaign demands one single, correct response, such as liking a candidate, watching a video, or sharing content with friends.

Monoglossic messages can be quantifiably studied for effectiveness because of their single-step cause-and-effect relationship. However, monoglossic messages are problematic because of their limited demands of the public and failure to recognize alternative responses outside of the predetermined set of actions. Heteroglossic messages can rely on models to determine effectiveness but may alternatively use qualitative methods such as focus groups or interviews to examine the reasoning behind a specific form of response.

Engagement advertising can be alternatively studied through neuroscience and psychology. Work on emotions in brand loyalty and consumer engagement suggests it is emotional appeals and not messages routed in logic that are most effective at engaging the public. Drew Westen found that emotional television ads and campaign electronic messages were more likely to encourage volunteerism, fund-raising, and voting. Westen further suggests engagement advertising should feature the emotional appeals found in other media such as songs, newspaper articles, and movies to encourage the public to digitally interact with a political entity. For example, integrating the lyrics of the popular song "Sweet Home Alabama" by Lynyrd Skynyrd into today's political campaigns will draw on the brain's preestablished emotional network that associates that song with previous mediated experiences. By drawing on these emotional networks, a campaign can encourage engagement with digital media by reinforcing its message with familiarity and a sense of community. To prolong these pleasant emotional connections, the public can go online to engage with similar-minded supporters of the political message, thus finding unity not just in the politics but also in the emotions of the engagement advertisement.

Alison N. Novak
Ernest A. Hakanen
Drexel University

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Candidate Image; Crowdsourcing; Engagement Features; Secondhand Political Engagement.

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Engagement Features

First defined by Sydney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady, engagement is an activity that is purposely done to influence government action through public policy or through the election of those who create public policy. As the theorists note, engagement is a key underlying feature of an active public sphere. Rather than a singular activity, engagement takes many forms including voting, volunteering, campaigning, digitally interacting with a brand's social media presence, and voicing opinions. It is critically important to study engagement because it is frequently the desired outcome of social media political campaigns.

The features or indicators of engagement are broad and include civic, political, public voice, and cognitive indicators. Participation is best viewed as a continuum; defining others as engaged or unengaged is problematic in considering the full scope of the features of engagement. When studying the practices of a social group, all four sets of indicators must be taken into account to understand full democratic engagement. These four sets of features are explained by Cliff Zukin and colleagues, who propose that, by interviewing participants and asking questions from each set, a comprehensive, quantitative assessment of the current state of public engagement can be achieved. Each set of indicators addresses various activities performed by individuals. The frequency of these activities suggests the intensity and longevity of each type of engagement. Because of this, it is possible for an individual to be mostly civically engaged and not politically, public voice, or cognitively engaged.

Zukin and colleagues define civic engagement as volunteerism directed at community problem-solving and assisting others. Civic engagement features include problem-solving, regularly volunteering for nonelectoral organizations, active membership in groups or associations, and participation in fund-raising ventures for charity. As a complement to these activities, those who are heavily civically engaged suggest that doing the ethically and morally correct thing is more important than following the exact letter of the law, thus accounting for the activism tendencies within this group.

Political engagement features emphasize regular voting; persuading others to vote; displaying buttons, signs, and stickers; financially contributing to a campaign; and volunteering for candidates or political organizations. Traditional political engagement demands a public that obeys the law and sees public engagement as obligatory.

Features of public voice engagement include contacting officials and media, protesting, petitioning, boycotting, buycotting, and canvassing. Zukin et al. contend boycotting and buycotting (the opposite of boycotting) are two of the fastest growing and most popular forms of engagement in the 21st century. These activities ask consumers to consider the ethical and moral implications of purchases and the corporations that produce the goods.

Lastly, cognitive engagement features consist of attending to coverage of government and public affairs, talking with family and friends about politics, political knowledge, and attention to news media. This feature is viewed as critically important to the potential of a group to orient and organize around a specific issue, politician, policy, or group. Therefore, the features of cognitive engagement support the efforts of political, civic, and public voice ventures.

Social Groups

Each of the four forms of engagement features is important to a well-rounded public sphere. While none are inherently more important than the others, civic and political engagement are viewed as the most widely practiced and most divisive. A key difference between civic and political engagement involves the social groups that primarily practice each. While older generations such as the G.I. Generation, Baby Boomers, and Generation X practice traditional political engagement, the Millennial Generation or DotNet Generation, born between 1980 and 2001, practice newly popular forms of civic engagement. Zukin and colleagues propose the divide between the

practitioners of political and civic engagement creates a tension between the generations that leads to intergenerational misunderstandings and miscalculations of the potential of the newer generation. For example, because civic engagement does not prioritize voting, those practicing political engagement see the newest generational cohorts as contributing to the perceived downward spiral of American politics.

Beyond generational groups, other social groups emphasize each of the four forms of engagement. For example, education is heavily related to civic engagement. Those with higher levels of education are more civically engaged. Interestingly, television watching and overall engagement is viewed as a zero-sum relationship. Zukin and colleagues suggest that the more an individual does of one, the less the individual will do the other. All forms of engagement strongly relate to being asked to participate. Across all social groups and generational cohorts, those who are asked to civically, politically, public voice, or cognitively participate are more likely to do so.

Benefits

Engagement is an important indicator of overall democratic health and individual life satisfaction. Gail Pacheco and Thomas Lange found individuals who heavily practice civic, political, public voice, and cognitive engagement are more likely to have high levels of life satisfaction. As amounts of engagement went up, so did life satisfaction. Importantly, life satisfaction was related to those who actually were engaged, not just those who lived in countries where engagement was possible. This is supported by John C. Beasley's work that proposes life satisfaction is highest when there is a perception that democratic engagement is effective and accomplishes a goal.

Critiques

The traditional understandings of engagement become complicated by social media, in that a frequent critique of social media is that it represents passive engagement, rather than active engagement. It is the notion of intentionality and activity that are intrinsically related to engagement that provide a challenge for researchers. Is use of political social media an active or passive form of political and civic engagement?

In general, this is a debate focused on the Millennial Generation. Because millennials are the most frequent and primary users of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, many researchers such as Jean M. Twenge question if this is a true form of political or civic engagement. Twenge's argument asserts that social media use is passive and primarily focused on the individual rather than the community or society aspects. Because of this, she deems millennial use of social media as an inferior form of political engagement.

However, not all researchers agree with this conclusion. Zukin et al. and Russel J. Dalton suggest that although political and civic engagement are now primarily mediated through social media, this does not take away from the political agency of the Millennial Generation. While engagement may take on a new form, it is still valuable and capable of change and government influence.

Alison N. Novak
Ernest A. Hakanen
Drexel University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Age; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Grassroots; Candidate Image; Clicktivism; Engagement Advertising; Facebook; Secondhand Political Engagement; Voter Apathy; Youth Engagement.

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Environmental Issues

Recent decades have seen two distinct but related changes in environmental politics, both of which are attributable to the expansion of social media. First, information about the state of the environment has become more readily available for those with access to the Internet or other networked technology. Second, those who are concerned about environmental problems have begun to make use of various social media channels in their organizing and mobilizing efforts.

The proliferation of social media channels has promoted a shift in the way that many think of news and journalism. The lines between professional journalism and user-created content are increasingly blurred as audiences gain access to new communication technologies and journalists take to Twitter and the blogosphere. As news content and social media converge, material about environmental issues like global climate change, pollution, habitat destruction, and animal welfare is increasingly shared fluidly between the once-distinct domains. For example, links to stories from more traditional news sources (such as newspapers, newsmagazines, radio shows, and broadcast and cable news programs) about environmental issues and events may be posted on Facebook, tweeted, or become the subject of a blog entry. In this way, news content becomes a part of social media, often with the addition of user reactions or commentary (however slim, this opportunity for participation is a hallmark of Web 2.0 technology). Stories that may otherwise have gone relatively unnoticed can be amplified (or "go viral") when concerned media users pass them along to their social network, and such extra attention may even lead to citizens demanding accountability from business leaders or government officials for actions they deem to be eco-destructive.

On the other hand, mainstream news media sometimes fail to cover an environmentally significant event, such as an environmental protest or the passage of potentially damaging legislation. In these cases, social media users have many different channels through which to disseminate the news, such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Tumblr (and other blogging platforms). Successful social media campaigns may even keep an issue in the public's awareness long enough to generate widespread concern and move the subject into mainstream media, as was the case with the Monsanto Protection Act early in 2013. When President Barack Obama signed a spending package that prevented government shutdown, he also sparked outrage among food and environmental activists. The source of their anger was a rider that allowed genetically engineered crops to be distributed and cultivated despite any potential court injunctions. Nicknamed after biotechnology giant Monsanto (facing such a court case at the time), the provision was quickly denounced on Facebook and Twitter. Within weeks, the issue reached the mainstream media, including coverage on *The Daily Show*.

Further blurring the line between traditional news journalism and user-generated content, several popular news sites have blogs devoted exclusively to the environment. For example, the *New York Times* Web site hosts the Dot Earth blog (dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com) and the popular news blog *Huffington Post* has a subsection called HuffPost Green (huffingtonpost.com/green), both of which provide digital space for environmental issues to be presented and discussed. The blog format allows writers to avoid some of the limitations of traditional print news by offering readers more in-depth background information (particularly important when it comes to complex topics like climate change) and by giving them an opportunity to respond to entries in comments sections. Other environmental issue blogs represent various points of view that were largely unknown before social media, like the conservative environmentalist voices at Rightwaytobegreen.com and the Daily Green's Green Conservative blog.

Journalists and private citizens are not the only parties who use social media to disseminate information about the environment. On Mondays, environmentalists in the Twitterverse use the hashtag #EcoMonday to suggest green tweeters and topics for other users to follow. With increasing frequency, politicians and corporate leaders are using channels like Twitter and Facebook to share their perspectives on—and in some cases explain their involvement with—environmental issues. For example, immediately after the explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico, BP (@BPGlobalPR) used Twitter to keep people

updated about events as they unfolded, carefully sidestepping the issue of responsibility.

Political Campaigns and Causes

The second change in environmental politics has to do with the organization of campaigns and mobilization of support for environmental causes. Social media have proven useful in addressing environmental concerns, as a tool for both grassroots and national activist organizations. For decades, environmental activists spread information about their causes by reaching out to supporters through the mail or by localized, face-to-face networking. They relied on traditional news coverage to bring attention to their campaigns and events, and were restricted by its structure and limitations (e.g., events must coincide neatly with the news cycle, be timely, and be sufficiently dramatic). However, social media technology has also allowed organizations to mobilize support for their causes through digital networking. Activists can now post information about meetings and events on their Facebook pages and make educational videos available on their YouTube channels. From small groups in the Midwest fighting the mining of sand for large-scale hydraulic fracturing to larger networks pushing a measure to label genetically engineered food in California, environmental organizations have overwhelmingly embraced new digital tools in their campaigns.

Petition Web sites like Change.org and MoveOn.org also offer new possibilities for environmental activism by lowering the barriers to creating a successful petition. Rather than going door-to-door or circulating paper petitions at meetings and rallies, concerned parties can use these platforms to create an electronic petition designed to target government or corporate interests. Invitations to sign are then distributed through e-mail, along with a hyperlink that directs the recipient to the petition. Change.org

The Sea Shepherd Society is an example of an environmental group that has used social media extensively to spread its message. These society members were engaged in a skirmish with a Japanese whaling ship north of the Ross Sea off Antarctica on February 2, 2009, as part of their 2008 and 2009 campaign against Antarctic whaling. The activists, backed by their own helicopter, countered water cannons by flinging bottles of rancid butter toward the whalers in an effort to deter the ship from the hunt for whales.

and MoveOn.org petitions have addressed many different political issues, but environmental topics have included the labeling of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), removing toxic materials from consumer products, establishing limits on the release of greenhouse gasses, and ending the controversial practice of natural gas extraction by hydraulic fracturing.

Digital communities have grown around Web sites and blogs that focus on environmental issues, often with a common goal of fund-raising. For example, green economist Bill McKibben founded 350.org (so named for the estimated safe level of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere, in parts per million). The site allows visitors to learn more about the group's current campaigns and sign up to receive more news via e-mail. Supporters can also contribute to 350.org's goal of decreasing fossil fuel use by making a financial donation with a credit card or PayPal. McKibben also makes use of Twitter to inform and mobilize his followers (numbering nearly 90,000 in 2013). Another green site, Water.org, gathers microloans to fund water sanitation projects in less developed nations.

While 350.org and Water.org were both established as online communities, many older environmental organizations (e.g., Greenpeace, the Sierra Club, and World Wildlife Fund) have also made the transition to social media. Commonly, their sites look much like the 350.org site, offering information about current campaigns, links to connect via other social media channels like Twitter and Facebook, and a secure portal for monetary contributions. These organizations are large and well established, meaning that they have the necessary resources to present a polished and user-friendly Web site to members and potential donors. Some have even released applications for smartphones or tablets, like the Sierra Club's iPhone app that asks users to pledge to change their behavior in ecofriendly ways.

Other groups have made social media a cornerstone of their activism. One notable example is the anti-whaling group Sea Shepherd Society, which makes months-long voyages to the Antarctic in order to curtail whaling activity by Japanese fleets. Because the trips are lengthy and dangerous, journalists rarely accompany the Shepherds and coverage by traditional news outlets is limited. But Paul Watson, the group's leader, has been remarkably successful in getting information about the Sea Shepherd Society to the public. Along with a Web site, he has used Twitter and YouTube to publicize its campaigns and achievements. News outlets often use material that has been either produced or approved by Watson, giving him unique control over the type and tone of coverage.

Challenges

While social media seems in many ways to have expanded the reach of environmental activists by allowing them to draw attention to their campaigns, mobilize support, and even level the political playing field somewhat, there are also unique limitations and challenges to consider. People who hear about environmental issues online may feel that they have done enough to address the problem by reading a blog post and then signing an electronic petition or sharing a link on their Twitter feed. However, in most cases, such "clicktivism" is insufficient. Actual volunteering or activism in the traditional sense of participating in rallies or boycotts is required to make substantial progress. Critics of digital activism claim that real change relies on strong commitment and personal relationships, which may be lacking in online networks of people who do not interact offline.

Another challenge lies in ensuring that information about environmental issues reaches not just those who are already concerned with the problem, but also those who may be unaware of it, yet are likely to be sympathetic. Social media are often considered to be very efficient because users are able to select sources based on perceived relevance to their interests, rather than sifting through content that they may find uninteresting. However, when users are only exposed to voices with which they already agree, or only hear the concerns of those who share their interests, the result is an echo chamber that keeps dissenting ideas and new information out of view. Paradoxically, the efficiency of social media then becomes a limitation.

A final challenge that may limit the ability of social media to affect substantial environmental change is the phenomenon known as astroturfing, or the construction of fake grassroots campaigns. The problem is not a new one; polluting

or otherwise problematic industries have long employed the tactic of creating front groups or fake citizen organizations to counter claims advanced by environmentalists. The new reach of social media has simply expanded the practice and allowed certain corporations or other parties with antienvironmental agendas to build Web sites that refute the arguments leveraged against them. The U.S. coal industry used this tactic extensively during its push to rebrand its product as "clean coal," establishing front groups and Web sites like Americaspower.org and Cleancoalusa.org. Content from such sites, which may be misleading or even deceptive, can then be distributed via social networks, where its legitimacy often goes unchallenged (partially because of the existence of digital echo chambers, and because users tend to trust those who are in their social media circles). Another example of digital astroturfing is the 2006 YouTube video *Al Gore's Penguin Army*, which made fun of the former vice president and his documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*. The video appeared amateurish, but was revealed to have been produced by the DCI Group, a conservative lobbying and public relations firm.

The interactivity that characterizes Web 2.0 technology gives social media users the opportunity to participate in dialogs with those who are geographically distant and those who are socially removed (e.g., figures who occupy positions of economic or political power). News about the environment can now spread quickly through many digital channels. Eco-activists have taken readily to digital technology, hoping to raise awareness of environmental problems and to organize and mobilize support for green causes. Yet, while new cultural venues like Facebook and the blogosphere have perhaps created a more democratic space for political debate, these limitations must be kept in mind when considering the overall utility of social media networking to the environmental movement.

Alexandra Nutter Smith
University of Washington–Tacoma

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Advocacy Groups, Political Branding of; *Al Gore's Penguin Army*; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Virtual; Water.org.

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Estrada, Joseph

Joseph Estrada was the 13th president of the Philippines who was ousted among allegations of corruption in 2001. Social media was used to coordinate large protests that demanded that the president be held accountable for his crimes and that local media accurately report on the presidents' crimes and trial. The social media–driven protests led to the ousting of President Estrada.

On May 11, 1998, in the second set of general elections since Philippine democracy was restored in 1986, 28 million voters went to the polls to choose a president, a vice president, 12 senators, over 200 members of the House of Representatives, and more than 17,000 local officials. Despite being called a complete circus, it was the freest, fairest, and least violent election in Philippine history. Joseph Estrada won the presidency by campaigning to the lower classes with promises to narrow the widening income gap between the rich and poor. Estrada, who previously served as vice president of the country, won the election with 40 percent of the vote in a field of 11 candidates. Unlike most of his opponents, Estrada did not possess any legal or military expertise, nor did he speak fluent English. The Robin Hood roles he played in his 33-year-long career as a film star enhanced his image as a companion of the underprivileged. He served as president from 1998 until 2001.

In October 2000, Luis "Chavit" Singson, the governor of a province in the Philippines and a close friend of the president, alleged that he had given Estrada 400 million Philippine pesos (more than $9 million) as a payoff from an illegal numbers game commonly played in the Philippines, as

well as 180 million Philippine pesos (more than $4 million) in a scandal involving the cover-up of Singson's alleged misuse of millions of pesos from public funds. The allegations against Estrada resulted in an impeachment suit brought against him, in which he pled "not guilty."

On the evening of January 16, 2001, the impeachment court, composed primarily of senators, decided not to accept new evidence that would incriminate the president on charges of receiving millions in payoffs. That decision by the Senate confirmed what many Filipinos were afraid of—that the judges were leaning toward acquitting Estrada. Within an hour after the court had adjourned that night, citizens flooded the streets in protest, demanding Estrada's resignation. By midnight, thousands of citizens had gathered on a large road called Edsa (an acronym derived from Epifanio de los Santos Avenue, a major highway connecting five cities in metro Manila) to protest the Senate vote. Edsa was the site of the 1986 "people power" revolt against then-dictator Ferdinand Marcos. The protests lasted January 17–20, 2001, ending after Estrada was forced to resign when the Supreme Court declared that the seat of the president was vacant.

Estrada maintained that he never resigned, but the new government created a special court and arrested him in April 2001. Filipino supporters of Estrada marched on Edsa, demanding his release and reinstatement. However, this time mobile phones and social media brought protesters together. Short messaging service (SMS) messages were the key element in mobilizing protesters and keeping them informed. Although traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television stations were covering the events, they could not keep up with the speed in which information traveled from person-to-person via SMS. Nor were the traditional forms of media as interactive as SMS, which has the ability to link individual users to each other and present real time information about when and where the protests were occurring.

In addition to the SMS messages, the Internet was a key element used in the protests. Web sites and e-mail groups were set up, and organizers used these to reach agreements on issues and mobilize people to attend the rallies. Protesters continuously posted updates on the Web sites so that citizens who were unable to participate or were abroad were able to be involved and up-to-date. In addition to disseminating information, the Internet was home to virtual rallies. According to Sheila Coronel, it is estimated that as many as 70 million messages were sent during the weeklong protest, and it has been referred to as a "multimedia revolt."

Former president of the Philippines Joseph Estrada (right) with former U.S. Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen (left) at the U.S. Pentagon in July 2000. Estrada was forced to resign in 2001 after large protests fueled in part by text messages and social media.

With the help of SMS and the Internet to rally participants, protesters eventually made their way to the presidential palace, where police and the military responded with force. Violence erupted and many protesters were badly injured and arrested, including some politicians, before the protests came to an end. The uprising came to be known as EDSA III, but did not result in the release of Estrada. Instead, he was put on trial at a

special appellate court called the Sandiganbayan. After a lengthy trial lasting from 2001 until 2007, Estrada was found not guilty of perjury, but guilty of plunder. He was sentenced to *reclusión perpetua* (a replacement for the death penalty, synonymous with life imprisonment). All of the co-accused were acquitted. Later in 2007, Estrada was pardoned by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and released after almost seven years in prison.

After being pardoned, Estrada made a statement to the Filipino people explaining that he was once again willing and able to help improve the lives of citizens, especially the lower class. He admitted that he had made errors while in office, but again declared that he was innocent of any corruption. He then began touring the country, thanking people for their support and distributing food, medicine, and clothing. In the 2004 Global Transparency Report, Estrada was listed 10th on the list of the World's All-Time Most Corrupt Leaders in the World. However, that seemed to have little impact on public perception of Estrada, who in May 2013 was elected mayor of Manila.

Meghan R. Sobel
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Asia; Indonesia; International Unrest and Revolution.

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Ethics of Social Media in Politics

Politics has been reshaped in the era of social media. Today, every tweet, blog post, Facebook update, wiki entry, and YouTube video can determine how one is perceived. Social media make it possible for any user to act as a reporter, editor, message creator, and distributor. This is a significant change from the past, when a select group of trained media professionals had this power and operated within an institutional environment with clearly defined codes of ethical conduct.

Ethics is broadly defined as moral principles that govern human behavior, in other words, a system of values by which a person can determine what is fair, just, right, or wrong. Social media have tested traditional theories of media ethics. They have challenged accepted notions of privacy, identity, authorship, and credibility; they have blurred the distinctions between public and personal communications. These unique features of social media pose many ethical dilemmas and prompt the question whether established ethical standards are appropriate and adequate to address them. In terms of social media and their relationship to politics, two distinct sets of issues must be considered: The ethics of using social media to further political agendas and to achieve political ends, and the ethics governing news media coverage of these same activities.

Social Media for Political Activities

For decades, political campaigns have looked to new technology to reach voters and win elections. The race for public office now includes viral e-mails and text messages, constant updates on social networks such as Facebook and Twitter feeds, user-generated videos, YouTube debates, and creative online advertising strategies to generate attention and raise funds. These media also act as trust filters for people who seek to manage the deluge of information and find credible sources. Data from the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project show that 36 percent of social networking site users say that such sites are very important to them in keeping up with political news, and 26 percent of site users find them important avenues to recruit people to get involved in politics and to debate political issues.

Protests organized through the use of social media in Iran, Ukraine, Moldova, Egypt, and in other countries during the Arab Spring also highlight the power and dangers inherent to social media. In this environment, it is necessary to

revisit important questions of ethical conduct in using social media for political activities.

When people post something online, try to provide an accurate report, blog a fair commentary, edit video footage, or alter digital photographs, they are involved in making choices about what others will see or hear. While the moral nature of these choices may not always be apparent, ethical or unethical choices are inevitably made because some kind of ethical standards are being assumed, owned, applied, or avoided. Ethical conduct in relation to social media covers a wide range of issues such as privacy, surveillance, trustworthiness, and information rights.

Ethics in Communications

Questions about the role of ethics in communications date back centuries. Some of the earliest discussions are found in Aristotle's treatise on the role of morality, truth, and justice in rhetoric. Following in this tradition, it has been proposed that rhetoric involves a presentation of values. Over the years, political and communication ethics have drawn on a range of established philosophical principles of ethics.

Within philosophy, there are three broad areas of ethics: meta-ethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics. Meta-ethics encompasses discussions about the nature of ethics and moral reasoning. Normative ethics involves theories that seek to provide action guides for moral behavior and procedures to answer the practical question of what a person should do. Applied ethics is situated within specific disciplines such as business, bioethics, engineering, or communications. The Hutchins Commission's social responsibility framework is an example of applied ethics that relies on multiple perspectives and has been used to guide ethical conduct among journalists and other communication practitioners. Some of the most frequently used frameworks in media ethics are normative theories such as Aristotle's ideas about virtue and the golden mean, Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative, William David Ross's self-evident duties, John Rawls's veil of ignorance, John Stuart Mill's principle of utility, and the ethics of care.

Some theories such as virtue ethics have long histories; they have been advocated since the time of Socrates. Virtue ethics emphasize character over conduct. Aristotle created his principle of the golden mean based on the virtue of moderation: When confronted with a moral choice, moderation between the extremes of excess and defect is ideal. Virtue ethics is the foundation for urging media professionals to provide fair and balanced coverage of issues. Employing Aristotle's virtue ethics framework, one could argue that a virtuous individual should not lie or help conceal illegal acts for a political candidate, engage in deception online, or blog and tweet information that is misleading.

Instead of relying on virtuous character, theories such as Kant's categorical imperative, Ross's self-evident duties, and Rawls's veil of ignorance state that decisions should be made after considering one's duties and the rights of others. Kant's categorical imperative asserts that there are inviolable moral laws that are absolutely binding regardless of personal interest or desire. Kant's framework requires people to ask themselves how it would be if their rule of conduct became a collective law. This would allow them to discover their duty.

Ross agreed with Kant that ethics was a matter of doing one's duty. He assumed that people had an inborn standard of right and wrong and identified six self-evident duties ranked in order of importance: fidelity (to do no harm to others), reparation (make amends to those one has hurt), gratitude (repay those who have helped one), justice (to treat people as well as they deserve), beneficence (to help others when possible), and self-improvement (to better oneself). While Kant claimed all duty was absolute, Ross regarded duties as conditional and imagined times when, to fulfill one obligation, a person might have to violate another. In such cases, he argued that a person should act to fulfill the highest obligation.

Diverging from the above two approaches, Rawls held that moral acts are those that people would all agree to if they were unbiased. Rawls assumed that, given a fair procedure for reaching a decision, rational people would agree to give each other as much freedom as possible. In order to discover ethical rules that would promote such freedom, Rawls created the fiction of an ethical discussion held before people enter the world. Everyone would be required to agree on binding rules of behavior before they had any idea of which place in society they would occupy.

Social Media and Journalism

Using Kant's framework of duty without exception, it could be argued that journalists, individual politicians, and their campaigns and staff are bound by duty to be truthful, honest, and fair. Failure on their part to do so would destroy people's trust in the entire information environment. Political reporters have sometimes been advised to use Ross's category of duties to determine the most ethical course of action when faced with ethical dilemmas. Professional codes of ethics published by the Society of Professional Journalists, the American Advertising Federation, the Public Relations Society of America, and the National Communication Association often draw on multiple ethical theories to emphasize duties such as seek the truth, be honest, minimize harm, reject improper influences, and be accountable.

The Society of Professional Journalists guidelines, in particular, articulate a clear and comprehensive set of requirements for what constitutes ethical behavior in the professional press corps—and which do not apply, obviously, to the penumbra of new media nonprofessionals who populate Twitter, Facebook, and the blogosphere.

While these ethical theories and codes have traditionally been applied to mass media professionals, the rise of social media, the consequent democratization of journalism, and the message creation processes pose many challenges. The central dilemma is how to hold nonprofessional social media users accountable to ethical standards because they may not be familiar with or have much regard for such principles.

To address this dilemma, consequentialist theories have been used to argue that the morality of an action is contingent on the action's outcome or result. Mill's utilitarianism, which holds that an action is right if it leads to the most happiness for the greatest number of people, is one frequently used consequentialist theory. The Hutchins Commission's social responsibility ethics draw upon utilitarian arguments to argue that the media have a moral obligation to consider the overall needs of society when making journalistic decisions in order to produce the greatest good. Based on utilitarianism, moral conduct in the use of social media is identified as conduct that benefits the most number of people. This can be seen in justifications of cases such as Congressman Anthony Weiner's hacked Twitter account. In that case, the public's right to know was offered as a reason for violating the privacy of a public official.

Finally, the framework of ethics of care is seen as particularly relevant to moral conduct in the use of social media. Ethics of care, or relational ethics, asserts that morality arises out of the experiences of empathy and compassion and emphasizes the importance of interdependence and relationships in achieving ethical goals. In this context, social media users have to exercise their moral imaginations and place themselves in the position of others to decide whether a particular course of conduct would be ethical.

Given the multiplicity of frameworks, there is disagreement about what constitutes ethical action in the context of social media. This is particularly true within the realm of using social media for political activities. Some of the ethical questions that arise in this context are these: How can people balance the benefits and harms that arise from technologies that allow rapid and widespread sharing of information across networks when inaccurate information and lack of context is rampant? Do political figures have a right to privacy when they post images and information voluntarily to public sites online? Do such rights exist if politicians post morally compromising information using quasi-public sites such as Twitter? Is it ethical to hack into social media accounts of such politicians to share information that one believes the public ought to know? To what extent do public figures have a right to control the images and information available about them online? If public figures can control information on social media, would this limit the information rights of others? Should legislative candidates be friended by lobbyists on social networks such as Facebook, and can they be fined for improper fund-raising tactics if it involves just a link posted online? Popular protests organized through the use of social media raise issues about the ethics of encouraging people to voice dissent in an environment subject to state surveillance and the right of people to be able to choose how to act after freely considering consequences.

WikiLeaks

Some of the traditional tenets of ethical communication, such as maintaining accuracy, not citing or

quoting something out of context, not distorting by going beyond the facts, and not linking a person or idea with something that may induce unwarranted deprecation or loss of prestige, have been upended in an age when every reader, listener, and viewer can create mashups, link, like, forward, and retweet content to others. The case of WikiLeaks, an online, international, not-for-profit organization publishing secret information such as U.S. diplomatic cables, news leaks, and classified media from anonymous sources, has highlighted the challenges of controlling information. WikiLeaks has released a wide variety of information over the years, some of it aimed at exposing important government cover-ups and others that have embarrassed government officials and complicated diplomacy. The sources that provided information to WikiLeaks have used utilitarian arguments to justify breaking laws to circulate classified information. This case also raises issues about who has the right to control information and freedom of the press and what that means in the age of social media.

Blogs

The need for revisiting and formulating new ethical standards for accuracy, responsibility, and information rights is also highlighted in the case of blogs. Blogs began as an online setting for personal logs but have evolved into public avenues for political news and commentary, among other things. The collective domain of blogs is called the blogosphere. Blogs offer an opportunity for people who are not professional journalists to act as political reporters and commenters. This open, unedited blogosphere is just a link away from the public sphere of political news. In addition to issues of journalistic ethics, blogs also raise the issue of who is ethically responsible for comments made as blogs offer readers the unique ability to interact and dialogue with authors. Should a blogger be held responsible for libelous, plagiarized, or untruthful remarks made by commenters? If a blogger deletes these comments, is he or she restricting the free speech rights of the commenters? Should bloggers be able to control this information?

YouTube

Sites such as YouTube have altered the ability of campaigns and candidates to control messages. While unauthorized campaign videos and hard-hitting debate questions from YouTube users are changing the political scene, the ethical rationale is shaky for YouTube videos of "gotcha" moments. There are many videos of politicians speaking in unscripted moments that take on new life online.

From a utilitarian perspective, it can be argued that any views that public figures share should be widely circulated because they serve the greater good of educating citizens, who have a right to know the true views of their representatives. However, such acts do hurt the individuals featured in such videos; the ethic of benevolence demands that individuals respect the dignity of others and refrain from hurting them. Besides, few creators of such videos are transparent about the sources and context for such information or their purposes and motivations.

Because social media users can create false identities, the norms surrounding authorship and taking responsibility for content are also challenged. It is difficult to hold someone accountable when there is no real identifiable individual or organization claiming ownership. It is possible for journalists, bloggers, and fact-checkers to correct any mistakes through their own stories. However, there are many challenges to the established norms of verifying accuracy and removing erroneous content when such content can be instantaneously created and shared in an environment with no editorial control, where people feel compelled to be fast and be the first to post something online. Because such content exists for a long time in the public sphere, future audiences may not be able to judge the credibility of the source; they may not have the time or resources to assess the veracity and intent behind the messages.

Text Messaging and Twitter

These ethical problems are also prevalent in text messages and tweets. Twitter limits users to 140 characters per message. Though hashtags provide some context and the rich detail panes allow users to add photos, videos, and other content, a single message does not allow users to add qualifiers, express nuanced stances on political issues, offer explanations, or develop arguments. This can lead to misunderstandings or misrepresentation of comments. These issues were highlighted when CNN fired one of its Middle East political reporters,

Octavia Nasr, after she tweeted about the death of a Hezbollah leader. The limitations of Twitter as a medium lead to questions about how ethical it is to judge a message and its sender without adequate context, a basic tenet of media ethics.

Facebook

Social networking sites such as Facebook also pose many ethical dilemmas in relation to political advertising, privacy, and fund-raising tactics. Though social networking sites started as tools to build and maintain relationships, they have evolved into political communication tools. There have been ethical controversies about online entities offering user registration information to facilitate targeted political advertising. Facebook has been at the center of these privacy-related controversies.

Facebook allows campaigns to target advertisements on the basis of political beliefs reported by users. Data mining, harvesting location-based information from mobile devices, and complex algorithms allow political campaigns to combine voter lists, factors not publicly available such as income, and purchasing habits with anonymous cookies on particular users' browsers to target voters online. This raises ethical issues about informed consent, ability to opt out, and notifying users about tracking.

Social networking also blurs lines between personal and public lives and challenges the rules governing them. Recently, two Kansas legislative candidates who had been friended by lobbyists on Facebook were fined for improperly posting announcements about fund-raisers. Kansas prohibits elected officials and candidates from soliciting campaign contributions from lobbyists while the legislature is in session. The legislators claimed they did not know that the people who friended them were lobbyists. Some cities now require officials such as mayors to maintain three separate social media accounts: personal, city hall, and a political campaign account. The rapid evolution of social media and its expanding role in politics indicates that there will be more debates about ethical questions in the years to come.

Veena V. Raman
Pennsylvania State University

See Also: Blogs, Role in Politics; Facebook; International Social Media and Politics.

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Europe

Following innovative uses of social media platforms in recent election campaigns in the United States, various individuals and groups have started employing similar political communication technologies and techniques in Europe. Social media is thus becoming increasingly important in the communication between political candidates and the electorate, as well as between politicians and their constituencies, in many European nations and at many levels of the European Union. However, research shows that elections on the European continent are not becoming dominated by Web 2.0 practices, as traditional media still play the most significant role in conveying electoral messages. Moreover, studies document that while politicians across Europe are now relatively keen to utilize social media, they often remain in a broadcasting mode because social media is for them a way to provide information to the public, rather than a means for engaging with the public.

United Kingdom

In Great Britain, social media has been spreading into political life. In March 2003, Tom Watson, a Labour Party member of Parliament, was the first British politician to begin a blog to keep people informed about his legislative endeavors, and subsequently blogs have become a relatively well-established communication tool in the British political sphere. Meanwhile, political blogs have

become more dialogical, although some commentators assert that the interactive potential of such blogs has not yet been fully realized, largely because: many bloggers do not allow readers to comment on their posts; those that permit comments receive very few responses; and when public comments are made or questions are asked, these are rarely acknowledged or answered.

As Facebook has emerged as the most popular social media platform of the globe, it has also been used with greater frequency for political purposes in the United Kingdom. In 2009, only under a quarter of British members of Parliament were active on Facebook, whereas the number grew to one-third in 2010 and over half in 2011. However, as in the case of blogs, some observers contend that British politicians mostly use Facebook for one-way communication, to inform the public, rather than for two-way communication, to engage with the civil society. In March 2007, Alan Johnson, another Labor Party member of Parliament, was the first British politician to post on the microblogging site Twitter, and the number of members of Parliament posting on Twitter rose dramatically from two at the end of 2008 to almost 100 by the end of 2009 to over 200 by the end of 2010.

In 2011, the House of Commons voted to allow its members to tweet from inside its headquarters. In the 2010 elections in the United Kingdom, several candidates did question and answer events on Twitter, and since then, many members of Parliament, national and local public officials, and political advisors have followed. However, the utilization of Twitter by British political figures has been criticized as much as their blogging or Facebook activity. For example, in a 2012 report, Graeme Baxter and Rita Marcella affirmed that in the 2010 election campaigns in the United Kingdom, many candidates appeared more interested in discussing the weather than any important national and local issues raised by voters on Twitter and other social media, and stated that a large portion of the electorate expect parliamentarians, policy makers, and other political actors to have more, and more meaningful, exchanges through Twitter and other social media.

Germany

In Germany, social media and politics are also interrelated, with mixed results. On one hand, politicians are discovering the benefits of social media, and communication through social media is becoming increasingly important in political life. On the other hand, campaigning still takes place largely offline, much of it through television, and politicians still turn to social media mostly in attempts to appeal to younger voters, often with messages that do not have policy implications.

In the 2005 Bundestag election campaigns in Germany, approximately 300 political blogs were established by candidates, party organizations, politically interested citizens, or journalists, and over half of the electorate in Germany accessed blogs. However, as in Great Britain, few of the blogs allowed readers to comment, so they were active, rather than interactive. Additionally, as a 2007 study by S. Albrech, M. Lübcke, and R. Hartig-Perschke found, a year after the elections, only about 100 of these blogs were still functional, whereas the others had not been kept up-to-date since the elections, or had been discontinued.

By the 2009 elections, German political parties and their candidates shifted their attention to other social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, the German portal StudiVZ, and professional networks LinkedIn and Xing. The number of clicks that candidates' social media profiles received soared, and Angela Merkel, who was running for re-election as chancellor, led the field in social media popularity with over 15,000 friends on Facebook and almost 70,000 friends on StudiVZ, more than double as many as her challenger Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

Market research showed that early in 2009, within the German population over 70 percent were on Twitter at least once, but only 15 percent were on Twitter over three times; whereas later in 2009 (close to the elections), Twitter activity intensified; and in the last six weeks before the elections, over 100,000 tweets with political content were published by candidates, their advisors, party representatives, and the general public.

Today, Angela Merkel has nearly 250,000 social media followers, she frequently sends text and video messages on social media networks, and almost 90 percent of German parliamentarians have a social media presence. A majority of politicians in Germany recognize that social media provide important public communication tools, yet some experts still doubt that intense

social media activity represents an indicator of political success.

France

In France, social media was still of little importance in the 2007 presidential elections in which conservative Nicolas Sarkozy defeated his socialist opponent Ségolène Royal, with under 100 political blogs maintained mostly by political observers, and with most campaigning taking place through television and to some extent through candidates' Web sites. Royal, for example, launched her campaign by publishing on her Web site 10 chapters of her political manifesto *Désirs d'avenir* (Desires for the Future), whereas many of her opponents in the Socialist Party as well as Sarkozy were reluctant to use the Internet in their campaigns.

As president, Sarkozy went from declaring social media as detrimental to democracy for enabling infringements on intellectual property, and proposing heavy government regulation on social media in terms of online copyright and privacy, to having close conversations with Facebook Chief Executive Officer Mark Zuckerberg at the G-8 Summit in 2011, and starting a conjugated social media presence before announcing his intention to run for re-election in early 2012.

In February 2012, Facebook received public disapproval in France for deliberately helping Sarkozy boost his online image by creating for him not only a brand new Facebook profile, but also the first ever, among French politicians, Facebook timeline. This timeline was extensive, with over 700 pictures dating back to Sarkozy's birth, but also with many notable omissions, including the 2007 controversial visit to France at Sarkozy's invitation of then Libyan dictator Muammar Qaddafi, Sarkozy's 2007 speech in Dakar in which he stated that Africans had never really entered history, his relationship with his former wife Cecelia Attias, and his romance with his current wife Carla Bruni.

In February 2012, the new Twitter feed @NicolasSarkozy was also broadly publicized by the Sarkozy campaign, but it provoked additional critiques after the campaign attempted to silence spoof Twitter accounts, reminding the French public of Sarkozy's plans to censor social media. Meanwhile, Sarkozy's opponent François Hollande was said to have studied Barack Obama's social media strategies and to have put approximately 10 percent of his budget in his social media activity. This included social networking as an integral part of campaign communication, frequent responses to social media supporters, and intense mobilization appeals and fund-raising through social media. Hollande's social media strategy, in correlation with other strategies, played a role in his election as president of France.

Northern Europe

Social networking through such platforms as Facebook and Twitter is recording near explosive growth in northern European countries including Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Norway. People in these countries have quickly become accustomed to receiving and sharing information about entertainment, sports, commercial products, and job-related issues through social media. Major steps are also being taken toward using social media like Facebook and Twitter as an integral part of public and political communication. In February 2012, the first picture of Sweden's newborn princess was first published on Facebook, rather than in a traditional media outlet, creating a big buzz as within 24 hours it received almost 25,000 "likes" and over 5,000 comments and it was shared tens of thousands of times.

In Denmark, according to the constitution, the prime minister can call the elections at any date, providing it is no later than four years from the previous elections, and in 2011, the Danish prime minister shared the news about the election date on his Facebook profile before even announcing it live on television. Finland has the highest level of Internet penetration and usage among European nations, and many Finnish political candidates in the 2012 elections employed communication through social media sites to reach broad audiences at costs lower than for campaigning through traditional media. In the Finnish presidential race in particular, as Tarja Halonen had already served her maximum of two terms as president and all eight political parties represented in the Parliament had nominated a candidate, campaign teams strived to make use of all available means, including a strong presence on social media networks, to appeal to the electorate.

Pekka Haavisto of the Green League had an especially savvy social media strategy, including coordinated messages, responses to followers' questions, and fund-raising on social media platforms. This Obama-style strategy helped Haavisto to surpass six other candidates and gain second place in the first election round (thus becoming the first ever candidate of the Green League to make it to the second election round in Finland), but failed to lead to his success in the second round, as Sauli Niinistö of the National Coalition Party won the election. In both the 2009 and the 2013 elections in Norway, many candidates found blogging as well as a presence on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as useful tools in campaigning, although some issues regarding the use of social media by politicians also arose, for example, the rejection of a mayoral candidate by her party in 2013 after she posted racist comments on her Facebook page about a Eurovision contestant.

Southern Europe

Across southern Europe, social media networking is also making inroads into politics, although doubt still remains about its contribution to electoral success. In Spain, where the law determines the dissemination of political content in traditional media during electoral campaigns, social media have gained importance, especially for the representatives of new parties, regionalist parties, and minority parties. According to a study supported by the Barcelona Media Foundation, in the 2011 elections in Spain, parties with limited traditional media coverage such as United Left–the Greens (IU-LV) and Union, Progress, and Democracy (UPyD) generated more social media content and had higher content propagation within social media than parties with greater coverage in mainstream media, especially the People's Party (PP) and Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE). Although the two main Spanish parties (PP and PSOE) won the largest number of votes, the third parties (IU-LV and UPyD) won more votes than in past elections and are becoming established as a viable political alternative.

Most important, in the months before the 2011 elections in Spain, the 15M movement, or the Indignados movement, formed of various citizens' associations including Democracia Real Ya! (Real Democracy Now!), Juventud Sin Futuro (Youth Without a Future), and NoLesVotes (Don't Vote Them), employed social networking platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to mobilize Spaniards to protest against an unjust economic model which favors the rich, but in situations of economic crisis cuts opportunities for the poor, and an unfair political system in which governing parties are subordinated to economic power. The movement, comparable with those which prompted the Arab Spring, gathered an estimated 8 million people in street protests, and did not ask the electorate to vote one way or another, but rather called for manifestation of public distrust in the leaders of big parties and demand by the public of a true democracy beyond the electoral show.

Following the Spanish model, an Indignant Citizens Movement also emerged in Greece, organizing across the country, with the aid of social media networks, street demonstrations, and general strikes to oppose social cuts imposed by the government as measures against the economic crisis and to protest the corruption of mainstream politicians focused on protecting the financial elites that provoked the crisis, rather than the population affected by the crisis.

In Italy, comedian and blogger Beppe Grillo launched the Movimento 5 Stelle (Five Star Movement) or M5S through a powerful presence on social media with his anti-establishment message and through rallies across the country prompted through social media. Grillo announced through social media and at rallies that traditional political parties are dead because they are elitist, corrupt, and closed, and regular citizens do not trust them any longer. The M5S movement became a party with an electoral prospect, and in the 2010 regional elections it had four councilors elected, whereas in the 2012 local elections it received the third-highest number of votes overall and won the mayoral election for Parma. The party made further gains, and in the 2013 general elections it won over 25 percent of the vote for the chamber of deputies.

Central and Eastern Europe

In central and eastern Europe, social media activity has also been included among the communication strategies of political figures and among the means for political uprising. In recent elections

Protesters from the Spanish 15M, or Indignados, movement demonstrating in Valencia, Spain, on May 15, 2011. The movement, which benefited greatly from online organizing like the Arab Spring, turned out an estimated 8 million people in street protests in a manifestation of public distrust in the leaders of Spain's largest political parties.

in Bulgaria in 2009 and 2013, Romania in 2009, Hungary in 2010, and Poland in 2011, the global trend of employing social media in political campaigns has caught on. But in addition to the social media presence of political candidates and their staff, publishing reports and speeches, and appeals to donors and voters, there has been a strong social media presence of election monitoring groups aimed at offering access to statistics and providing opportunities for debates. Politicians in the region are also active on social media after the election seasons. Most presidents and prime ministers of the central and eastern European countries that are members of the European Union now have active Facebook and Twitter accounts, as do the highest officials in Russia and Ukraine. Dmitry Medvedev's 2 million Twitter followers are hardly a match for Barack Obama's over 25 million Twitter followers, but nonetheless represent a record for the region. Medvedev is said to tweet, both in Russian and in English, yet his tweets are mostly about state visits, and he raised criticism for using Twitter to congratulate Arnold Schwarzenegger on his birthday, rather than for answering questions from the public.

Most other officials in the region do not communicate directly through social media, but rather hire public relations professionals to manage their social media presence. Such experts typically disseminate uncontroversial messages, although there are exceptions, such as the message posted by the team of current president of Romania Traian Basescu, formerly Minister of Transportation and a marine officer, claiming that the *Titanic* would not have sunk had Basescu been its captain. Few officials in the region engage with citizens through social media, yet there are some like Hungarian President Viktor Orbán and Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk who have accustomed the public to holding "office hours" through Twitter. Some politicians have also used social media to direct public sentiment against their adversaries, for example, Serbia's Minister of Economy and Finance Mladan Dinkic, who in 2012 tweeted a picture of the empty

benches of the opposition forces during parliamentary discussions about economic measures, which led to civil society critiques of the opposition politicians but also to a more active involvement of the opposition in the economic discussions.

Protests against political corruption and social injustice, inspired by the Arab Spring and the various movements in southern Europe, and mostly fueled through the Internet and social media platforms, have also gained momentum in eastern European countries. In Romania in 2012 and in Bulgaria in 2013, following social media calls to action by various activist groups, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets in the capitals and in other parts of these countries, raising their voices about the economic difficulties of the majority of the population and the corruption of many of the politicians.

The involvement of social media in European Union elections and administration is smaller than in the elections and political processes of particular European nations. A recent study shows that under 30 percent of Euro parliamentarians participate in online forums, whereas over 50 percent of them have Web sites, and over 75 percent of them use the Internet for gathering information. While some European Union representatives and institutions keep Facebook and Twitter accounts, generally elected officials of the European Union engage much less with their constituencies on social media than elected officials of various nations of Europe, and people in Europe pay significantly less attention to online developments in elections and political decision making at the level of the European Union than at the level of their particular nations.

Social media have grown in importance for political processes in Europe, including for election campaigns, communication of elected officials with their various stakeholders, and public protests. However, while social media offer a cheap and flexible alternative to traditional media, traditional media still maintain primacy in political communication in Europe. Additionally, social media presence often involves one-way communication from politicians to their followers, rather than interactive two-way communication.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Virtual; Digital Government; E-Democracy; International Examples of Political Parties and Social Media; International Social Media and Politics; International Unrest and Revolution; Social Media, Adoption of; Spanish 15M Movement.

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Evolution of Social Media

Social media are Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0—the concept of the World Wide Web used as a platform where content and applications are continuously modified by users in a participatory and collaborative manner. Social media enables the creation and exchange

of user-generated content, or all forms of media content that are publicly accessible and created by end users. The social media landscape today looks significantly different from its humble beginnings; in the last few decades, it has undergone a marked evolution.

1930s

In 1935, new machines called Notificators, with "robot" message boards, were installed in the streets, stores, railroad stations, and other public places in London. These would aid persons who wished to make or cancel appointments or inform friends of their whereabouts. Individuals could leave messages for a small sum on these message boards, which appeared on a window for at least two hours so that the person for whom it was intended would have sufficient time to observe the note at the appointed place. Notificators are considered to be the first predecessor of Twitter.

1950s

The social aspect of social media was born on line, that is, on the phone. In the 1950s, technophiles and information addicts used telephone networks as rogue ways to mass communicate, and the first podcasts took place on hijacked corporate phone lines. These early social media explorers built boxes, or homemade electronic devices, that could generate tones, which allowed them to make free calls and get access to the experimental back end of the telephone system. They sniffed out telephone company test lines and conference circuits to host virtual seminars and discussions. The first blogs and podcasts were a result of hacked corporate voice mail systems called codelines, where phone phreaks would hack into unused mailboxes and set up shop until they were found and thrown out. Phone phreaking was not essentially motivated by fraud but rather a telecom monopoly that made telephone use expensive.

1970s and 1980s

Usenet is an online discussion system that was conceived by Duke University graduate students Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis in 1979 and was established in 1980. On Usenet, users read and post messages, articles, or posts, collectively termed *news,* to one or more categories known as newsgroups. It is mostly responsible for the development of newsreader clients, which are the precursors to RSS (rich site summary or really simple syndication) feed readers used to follow blogs and news sites today. Discussions are threaded with modern news-reader software, though posts are stored on the server sequentially.

Usenet is distributed among a large, constantly changing conglomeration of servers that store and forward messages to one another in news feeds. Individual users read messages from and post messages to a local server operated by their Internet service providers, universities, or employers. Usenet has no centralized server or dedicated administrator, setting it apart from most bulletin board systems (BBS).

The first electronic bulletin board system (BBS) was developed and made accessible to the public in the late 1970s by Ward Christensen. He coined the term *bulletin board system* as a reference to the traditional cork-and-pin bulletin board where people can post messages, advertisements, or community news. The first BBSs were small servers powered by personal computers attached to a telephone modem, where one person could dial in at a time and get access.

Until the mid-1990s, most BBSs were run free of charge by the system operator, or SysOp, while other BBSs charged their users subscription fees for access or were operated by businesses as a means of supporting their customers. The functions included social discussions on message boards, community-contributed file downloads, and online games. In the 1980s, the social media scene acquired an underground flavor. A fair percentage of bulletin boards had secret, adult, or pirate software rooms, and handles, or online pseudonyms, were the norm. BBSs can be considered the first social communities connected online.

1980s and 1990s

After BBSs came online services like CompuServe and Prodigy, the first large-scale corporate attempts to bring interactive, social, online experience to the masses. These services rose to popularity along with BBSs and catered to a more corporate and mainstream, home-user client. CompuServe was the first company to incorporate a chat program, CB Simulator, into its service in 1980 but was infamous for its high charges of $6

per hour, plus long-distance telephone fees, adding up to almost $30 per hour. Prodigy launched nationwide in 1990, growing quickly in popularity for its color interface and lower cost.

America Online (AOL) started as an online service too and gained critical mass with aggressive compact disc (CD) promotions and direct-mail campaigns. AOL also did one of the most epic product placements of all time in the 1998 film *You've Got Mail*, bringing social online culture and romance into the Hollywood mainstream.

Although the Internet existed as a network since the late 1960s, the World Wide Web became publicly available on August 6, 1991. Tim Berners-Lee, an English computer scientist, is credited for developing this global information medium that users can access through computers connected to the Internet. The term is often mistakenly used as a synonym for the Internet itself; rather, it is a service that operates over the Internet. At the beginning of the 1990s, Internet access was available only to those with legitimate university, government, or military connections, and to hackers.

Around the mid-1990s, private Internet service providers (ISPs) started shop in most metropolitan cities in the United States. This gave millions of home users a chance to enjoy unfiltered, unlimited online experiences. Usenet became the primary center for most high-end discussions. Also, the first online social media etiquette standards, or netiquette, were proposed to stop rampant flaming—hostile and insulting interactions between Internet users—and keep the online environment civilized. By the late 1990s, Internet forums grew in popularity and began replacing Usenet and BBSs as the primary nexus for topical discussions.

In 1988, Internet relay chat (IRC) was developed by Jarkko Oikarinen. It is a protocol for real-time Internet text messaging and chat or synchronous conferencing. It is mainly designed for group communication in discussion forums called channels. It also enables one-to-one communication via private messaging and is used for data transfer including file sharing. When IRC was first made available, many people stayed logged into it constantly, using it to share links and files and keep in touch with their global networks, the same way Twitter is used today. In 1996, ICQ was developed by four Israeli technologists and was the first instant messenger (IM) system for desktop computers. ICQ was quickly purchased by AOL and became a mainstream hit. It was partly responsible for the adoption of avatars, abbreviations such as LOL and BRB, and emoticons.

Napster was a peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing Internet service that emphasized sharing audio files, typically music, encoded in MP3 format. It was cofounded by Shawn Fanning, John Fanning, and Sean Parker and went live in June 1999. Napster transferred the power of distribution from record companies to the consumer. Music started to freely flow across the Internet, stripped of hype and payola.

Napster thrived through 1999 and 2000, until it was declared illegal and was forced to filter out all the copyrighted content. Competing P2P applications like Limewire took Napster's place until BitTorrent technology arrived and provided a robust, centralized way to share files without being blocked. BitTorrent was designed by programmer Bram Cohen. While the technology itself is perfectly legal, the legality of many of its uses is being litigated in courts worldwide.

1990s and Early 2000s

SixDegrees was launched in 1997 and was the first modern social network. It was named after the six degrees of separation concept—the idea that everyone is on average approximately six steps away, by way of introduction, from any other person in the world. MacroView, the company that developed the site, was founded by Chief Executive Officer Andrew Weinreich. SixDegrees allowed users to list friends, family members, and acquaintances both on the site and externally; invitations were sent to external members to join the site. Users could send messages and post items on a bulletin board for people in their first, second, and third degrees, and see their connection to any other user on the site. At its height, the site had around 1 million fully registered members. In 2000, YouthStream Media Networks paid $125 million to buy SixDegrees; it was around until 2001.

LiveJournal was launched in 1999 by American programmer Brad Fitzpatrick. It took a different approach to social networking from SixDegrees. While SixDegrees allowed users to create a predominantly static profile or page, LiveJournal was dynamic because it was built around constantly

updated blogs sharing the most recent thoughts and acts. LiveJournal encouraged its users to follow one another, create groups, and interact. This could be considered the precursor to the live updates feature in advanced social networks.

Massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGS) became popular in the early 2000s and have become social networks in their own right. They are a genre of role-playing video games in which numerous players interact with one another within a virtual game world. The most famous of these is World of Warcraft (WoW). Here, players interact both in the game world and on related forums and community sites. Social interaction within the game ranges from teams set up specifically for tactical reasons to friendships and romances.

2000s

Friendster was founded by Jonathan Abrams and Rob Pazornik in 2002. It was one of the first social networking sites to attain more than 1 million members at its peak. Friendster allowed users to contact other members, maintain those contacts, and share online content and media with those contacts. It was also used for dating and discovering new events, bands, and hobbies. Users could share videos, photos, messages, and comments with other members via their profiles and their networks. Friendster was acquired by MOL Global in December 2009 for $26.4 million. In May 2011, Friendster repositioned itself as a social gaming site, discontinuing support for existing users' social data; its new focus is on providing users with entertainment and fun.

The first mainstream social network devoted to professional networking, LinkedIn was founded in 2003. One significant purpose of the site is to allow registered users to maintain a list of contact details belonging to people with whom they have some level of relationship, called connections. LinkedIn can be used in a number of ways. Users can upload their résumés or design their own profiles to showcase work and community experiences; it can be used to find jobs, people, and business opportunities recommended by someone in one's contact network; and employers can list jobs and search for potential candidates.

Myspace is owned by Specific Media LLC and pop star Justin Timberlake. It was founded in 2003 and by 2006 had grown to be the most popular social network in the world. It gained novelty by allowing users to completely customize the look of their profiles. Users could post music and embed videos from other sites on their profiles. Originally, Myspace allowed communication through private messages, public comments posted to a user's profile, and bulletins sent out to all friends of the user. In 2006, Myspace introduced Myspace IM, an instant messaging client that enables users to chat with their friends.

Facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg with his Harvard University roommates. The Web site's membership was initially limited to Harvard students, but it quickly expanded, and by 2006, almost everyone could join Facebook. As of June 2012, Facebook had more than 955 million active users, most of whom access it on a mobile device. In order to be a user, one has to register; then one can create a personal profile, add other users as friends, exchange messages, and receive automatic notifications. Additionally, users may join common-interest user groups and categorize friends based on degree of intimacy or place of acquaintance. By 2005, the use of Facebook had become so ubiquitous that the generic verb Facebooking was introduced to describe the process of browsing others' profiles or updating one's own.

Other Social Networking Developments

As social networking grew, niche sites were launched for specific interest groups. There are now social networks for virtually every hobby, passion, interest, industry, and group. Ning is the first widely used platform for creating niche social networks. New users can either create social networks for any niche they choose or join any of the existing networks. Ning's biggest advantage is that it is user-friendly. A number of niche social networking sites have been developed by corporations; Autonomy is one example. It is a writers' network hosted by the United Kingdom division of HarperCollins that has attracted thousands of hopeful writers from all over the globe. While some of these niche networks have active groups, many do not and end up being shut down due to lack of activity.

Sharing photos, videos, and other multimedia content is a popular social media activity. Some

important sites associated with media sharing are Photobucket, Flickr, YouTube, and Revver. Photobucket was the first major photo-sharing site, launched in 2003. Flickr has groups and photo pools and allows users to create profiles, add friends, and organize images and video into photo sets or albums. It allows users to license their photos as well as retaining all copyrights. YouTube was the first major video hosting and sharing site, launched in 2005. YouTube's major social features include ratings, comments, and the option to subscribe to the channels of a user's favorite video creators. Revver took a different approach to video hosting and sharing. While other sites let users post videos for free and did not pay content creators any of the advertising revenue their videos generated, Revver shared revenue. It shut down in 2011.

The mid-2000s witnessed the advent of social news and bookmarking sites. Bookmarking is the method by which Internet users organize, store, manage, and search for bookmarks of news and resources online. Delicious, or Del.icio.us, was founded in 2003; it popularized the terms *social bookmarking* and *tagging*. Tagging enables users to organize their bookmarks in flexible ways and develop shared vocabularies. Digg was founded in 2004; its users share links to anything online, and other users can vote the content up or down (or dig or bury). The Digg Effect—when content makes it to the front page, thereby sending a huge influx of traffic to that site, overloading its servers—is a well-known phenomenon today and is often frustrating to those unprepared for sudden popularity.

Real-time Web is a set of technologies and practices that enable users to receive information in real time, as soon as it is published by its authors, rather than requiring that they or their software check a source periodically for updates. There is no knowing when, or if, a response will be received. The information transmitted is often short messages, status updates, news alerts, or links to longer documents. Some significant names associated in this category are Twitter, Posterous, and Tumblr.

With the advent of Twitter in 2006, status updates became the new norm in social networking. Twitter has developed a cult-like following and has a number of celebrity users. Twitter has also spawned a number of third-party sites and applications, turning it into more of a platform than a single service. Posterous is the newest major microblogging application, started by Y Combinator in May 2009. The content of a microblog is typically smaller in both actual and aggregate file size than a blog.

The microblogging site Twitter, founded in 2006, takes advantage of real-time Web technologies that have spread rapidly with the advent of the iPhone. The site had an estimated 500 million accounts and 200 million regular users as of 2013.

Tumblr, founded in 2007, is a cross between a lifestreaming application and a microblogging platform. There are mobile applications available for posting on Tumblr, making it ideal for lifestreaming. In fact, the iPhone can be largely credited for the rise in popularity of real-time updates. There are social networks only available on the iPhone, such as iRovr, launched in 2007.

In the context of social media, lifestreaming emphasizes the vast flows of personal information and exchange created by social network services. Lifecasting is a continual broadcast of events in a person's life through digital media. Real-time

updates have led to an increase in the number of people who are now lifestreaming or lifecasting virtually everything they do, while some opt to lifestream by aggregating their online activities in a single place. The Web site Ustream.tv, founded in 2006, allows users to broadcast from the Web site once logged in or from a mobile device using Ustream's mobile broadcasting application. Users can watch streams live on the Web site and on the Ustream iPhone and Android applications. It allows users to interact, such as vote in polls, rate, and chat. Justin.tv is a streaming video host, founded in October 2006, that lets lifecasters and live show creators broadcast to numerous Internet users. FriendFeed, launched in 2007 and recently purchased by Facebook, allows integration of most of one's online activities—Twitter, RSS feeds, Flickr—in one place.

Conclusion

This evolutionary account shows that social media has traveled far from its humble beginnings and intersects with nearly every aspect of people's lives today. It has transformed human communication, human interaction, and the human social experience.

Soumia Bardhan
St. Cloud State University

See Also: Innovation and Technology; Instant Messengers, IRC and ICQ; Internet Forums; Microblogging; Peer to Peer; Social Media, Adoption of; Social Media, Definitions and Classes of; Social Media Sharing, P2P, Bit Torrent; Social Networking Web Sites; Social Worlds; User-Generated Content; Web 2.0; World Wide Web, History of the.

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E-Voter Institute

The E-Voter Institute, founded in 1999, is a nonpartisan organization focused on helping political campaigns and advocacy organizations integrate online tools into broader campaign strategies. The institute conducts original research on voters and political consultants, develops resources for campaigns and organizations on the most effective use of online technologies, and publishes materials on the convergence of politics and the Internet. Through its Digital Politics Radio, campaign-guidance resources, research, and publications, the E-Voter Institute strives to help campaigns and organizations effectively reach constituents through digital technologies.

Digital Politics Radio

Launched in 2007, Digital Politics Radio is a weekly Web radio show that discusses current and emerging trends related to politics and technology. The weekly show connects listeners with research trends, companies, Web sites, constituent survey methods, products, and much more that can potentially benefit political and organizational campaigns. Guests of the show have included campaign strategists, policy and political trend researchers, media and political directors, geospatial analysts, advertising specialists, mobile app and social media experts, and even stress-management specialists. Weekly shows focus on issues that resonate with campaigns, such as how to best target online advertising, how to increase the value of social media activities, how to develop

and implement cross-media campaign strategies, the expanding role of mobile devices, and how voter behaviors are changing. Listeners can subscribe to weekly podcasts (digital media downloaded through Web syndication or streamed through a computer or mobile device) and easily connect to relevant topics through popular category tabs on the E-Voter Institute Web site. Digital Politics Radio brings a wide range of voices into the conversation about politics and technology, provides campaigns with cost-effective ways to allocate resources, and helps to level the playing field for smaller campaigns and organizations.

E-Voter Research

The E-Voter Institute conducts independent research and publicizes research conducted by other organizations. Annually, the institute produces a Survey of Voter Expectations. Data generated from this survey help to inform campaigns of voters' changing attitudes and of the nature of potential voters' online activities and behaviors. Key topics that are discussed through this research initiative include how the Internet has changed voter behaviors, where potential voters most likely get their news, how campaigns can get and retain voters' attention, how to talk to and with voters, and what trends are influencing voters' decisions. These topics are all geared toward helping campaigns successfully navigate the online environment, reach the most potential constituents, and make the most effective use of campaign resources.

Other research accessible via the institute's Web site includes an array of information from different organizations, Web sites, and advocacy groups. While the themes of available information vary, the central goal of the publicized research is to give candidates, campaigns, and organizations a thorough understanding of the digital political environment, the online options available to them, and also the legalities of navigating online politics. The institute provides a wide range of research on important campaign topics, such as the use of political humor to attract voters, microtargeting voters, online fund-raising tips and tactics, and strategies for empowering and engaging voters through online technologies.

Some of the most salient topics on the institute's Web site discuss strategies for using mobile apps and social media in campaigns. Critical information is provided about using mobile apps to recruit and organize volunteers, developing sharable content, creating viral success with YouTube, using online ads to drive traffic, and methods for reaching a critical audience mass. Other prominent topics involve strategies for campaigns to engage in community building and citizen empowerment. This research includes information on maintaining a prominent Web presence, promoting electorate advocacy, and using social media to not only engage voters but also to form transpartisan coalitions and voting blocs to influence agendas across party lines and geography. Other topics include information on the Federal Election Commission (FEC) rules for online ads, background on super political action committees (PACs), and regulations for accepting campaign contributions through mobile apps.

Conclusion

The E-Voter Institute focuses on providing political campaigns and organizations with information they need to be competitive in a developing and evolving online environment. Through creating resources, publicizing research, and hosting Digital Politics Radio, the E-Voter Institute provides candidates, campaigns, and organizations with the tools necessary to be competitive in digital politics.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Cyberculture; E-Democracy; Going Viral; Social Media Political Gaming.

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ENCYCLOPEDIA OF

Social Media and Politics

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF

Social Media and Politics

Volume 2

Kerric Harvey
George Washington University
EDITOR

SAGE reference

Los Angeles | London | New Delhi
Singapore | Washington DC

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Facebook

Facebook is the most popular social network in the world, ranked as the second-most visited Web site on Alexa.com (behind Google.com) and registering more than 1.11 billion users as of March 2013. Facebook was launched by Mark Zuckerberg and a group of fellow Harvard University students in February 2004. The founding of the company was dramatized in the 2010 Columbia Pictures movie *The Social Network*; however, the film's story is not completely accurate.

Facebook is designed to facilitate online communities and reinforce social ties. Facebook's functionality is driven by personal profiles, which include a user's real name, employer, and other identifying information. Studies show that users of Facebook and other social networks tend to congregate with individuals who share their tastes, values, and demographics, a characteristic that is sometimes referred to as homophily, which may limit opportunities for citizens to be exposed to competing ideas. However, several scholars have found that social media users may be compelled to be honest in their online self-representations because their online identities are tied to their real-world identities. Others have found fewer incidents of flaming, or ad-hominem attacks, within Facebook discussions when compared to other online forums.

Facebook first became involved in U.S. politics during the 2006 election, the same year that *Time* magazine named "You" Person of the Year, in acknowledgement of the emergence of personalized media. Conventional wisdom holds that Barack Obama used Facebook to significant advantage in the 2008 election, although the evidence is not complete. By 2012, Facebook was a factor in every political campaign. Facebook has also played a part in politics in other countries, and is often credited with contributing to the success of the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011.

Background

Facebook's membership was initially limited to Harvard students, but soon expanded to other colleges in the Boston area, the Ivy League, and Stanford University. It gradually accepted students at other universities before opening to high school students. In September 2006, Facebook became available to anyone aged 13 and older. Facebook is often blocked in countries where the government controls citizen access to information, such as the People's Republic of China. However, the Chinese social network Renren (meaning "everyone"), founded in 2005, offers similar functionality, and is popular with Chinese college students.

Personal profiling of real-life individual users is at the heart of the Facebook concept and its

ongoing success, although this has also led to the emergence of many serious privacy concerns about Facebook usage. Fake profiles are forbidden by Facebook's terms of use. The real-name aspect of Facebook has helped drive the popularity of Facebook Connect, an application that lets Facebook users log onto third-party Web sites with their Facebook identities. Nick Bilton estimates that 9 million Web and mobile services use Facebook Connect. As of October 2012, more than half of Facebook's users accessed the site from mobile phones. Although technological convergence with cellular telephony and with other social media significantly enhances Facebook's political clout by extending its reach in political discourse, it has also raised serious questions about the degree to which user identities may be increasingly trackable through these social media, which in turn raises concerns about dwindling personal privacy.

On May 18, 2012, Facebook launched an initial public offering (IPO) on the NASDAQ Stock Exchange (with the symbol FB) at an opening price of $38 per share. Uncertainty about the company's future, particularly about the future of advertising on Facebook, initially dogged the stock price, which fell below $20 during October 2012. General Motors pulled its $10 million Facebook advertising budget just days before the IPO, citing uncertainty about the effectiveness of Facebook ads.

Role in Politics

During the 2006 U.S. midterm elections, Facebook gave all U.S. national political candidates Facebook pages that the candidates could use to reach potential voters. Most campaigns, uncomfortable with ceding control of their campaign messages to the Facebook audience, used Facebook for one-way communication with voters. However, some campaigns embraced the challenge, and saw Facebook as a way to engage younger voters. Facebook also initiated a program called Election Pulse, where users could see how popular candidates were with other members of the Facebook audience. Election Pulse evolved into the Facebook Politics App during the 2008 election and the U.S. Politics Page beginning in 2009.

Pew research estimates that 10 percent of Americans used Facebook for political communication during the 2008 U.S. presidential election, which has been called the first Facebook election. On January 5, 2008, Facebook cosponsored the Republican and Democratic primary debates with ABC News, and invited Facebook users to submit questions to the candidates. By Election Day 2008, Democratic candidate Barack Obama had 2.8 million Facebook supporters, Republican candidate John McCain had 620,000 supporters, and 5.8 million Facebook users posted status updates indicating that they had voted.

Facebook created the U.S. Politics Page in 2009, where it now offers insights on how to use the site for political campaigns, contains links to reports on social media and politics, and provides information to voters. During the 2010 U.S. midterm elections, Pew research found that Americans who used Facebook were more politically engaged and more likely to vote than the general population. In 2012, Facebook and CNN started measuring Facebook audience discussion of candidates Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, displaying political chatter by region and gender.

By 2012, Facebook was a standard platform for campaign communication, but it was also effective at turning campaign events into Internet memes. A page titled "Binders Full of Women" generated hundreds of thousands of fans just hours after candidate Mitt Romney uttered the phrase during the second presidential debate. His stance on women's issues was attacked online. Facebook communication was also key in several noncampaign-related political actions. For example, in 2012, Facebook chatter fueled protests against the cancer philanthropy Susan Komen for the Cure Foundation after the organization withdrew funding from Planned Parenthood. The protests led to the resignation of several Komen staffers, and ultimately to the reinstatement of funding.

In 2011, Facebook helped popularize the Occupy Wall Street movement and its many national and international spin offs. Facebook has been an effective tool for grassroots mobilizing of nonpolitical causes as well. For example, more than 500,000 users liked a page called "Betty White to Host SNL (Please)," urging NBC to hire octogenarian actress Betty White to host the popular late-night comedy show *Saturday Night Live* in 2010.

This giant iPhone apps window display in an Apple store in San Francisco in 2009 featured the mobile version of Facebook. By late 2012, over 50 percent of the 1 billion Facebook users worldwide used mobile phones to access the site. Facebook is the most popular social networking site in the world, and has been a factor in U.S. presidential elections and popular uprisings in the Arab world.

Outside the United States

Facebook's impact on international politics is most noted for the role it played in the Arab Spring uprisings of 2011. The Facebook page "We Are All Khaled Said," named in honor of a 28-year-old man from Alexandria who was tortured to death by Egyptian police in front of witnesses, is credited with helping to mobilize forces against the Mubarak regime. Photos of Said's disfigured corpse were distributed to online communities in June 2010. Google employee Wael Ghonim saw the photo and created the Facebook page, which drew a lot of attention within Egypt and from the international community. Internet penetration was still relatively low in Tunisia, Egypt, and other countries where Arab Spring protests took place; therefore, Facebook was used mostly by organizers to coordinate actions within Egypt and to make photos, videos, and up-to-date information available to the international community.

Facebook has been part of political movements in other parts of the world since at least 2008, when a page called "A Million Voices Against the FARC" catalyzed the largest mass protests in the history of Colombia. In 2009, videos, photos, and textual accounts of clashes between Iranians protesting the outcome of the presidential election and government forces were published on Facebook and Twitter. In 2012, Iceland used Facebook to crowdsource ideas for its constitution. Facebook carried photos, videos, and other reports of the conflict in Syria, which in 2012 was considered one of the most censored countries in the world by the Committee to Protect Journalists. By 2012, politicians and governments all over the world used Facebook to communicate with citizens. Facebook also serves as an alternative news source in parts of the world where official information sources are not always reliable.

Political Communication With Friends

Social networking sites make it easy for people to seek out others with similar tastes and values, potentially increasing the polarization of political discussion. Some research suggests that the Internet may be an "echo chamber" controlled

by mainstream media, commercial interests, and powerful political forces. Political discussion on Facebook increased during the 2012 U.S. presidential election season, and there was much discussion in the popular press about whether it was proper Internet etiquette to post partisan political messages where friends of other persuasions might see them. However, Lee Rainie and Aaron Smith found that individuals who discuss politics with friends on social networks may reconsider their opinions when they encounter someone who shares most of their values, but disagrees with them on some issues, suggesting that social media like Facebook may be useful for finding common ground on contentious political issues.

Susan Jacobson
Florida International University

See Also: Arab Spring; Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Fan Page; International Online Communities; International Social Media and Politics; Internet Forums; Myspace; Social Computing and Social Information Processing; Social Media, Adoption of; Social Media, Definition and Classes of; Social Media Strategies and Tactics in Political Campaigns; Social Networking Web Sites; Web 2.0; Zuckerberg, Mark.

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Facial Recognition Technology

The uniqueness of the self, both physically and metaphysically, identifies only one specific person or thing. Biometrics, the automated method of recognizing an individual based on measurable biological and behavioral characteristics, is used to distinguish one person from another based on the unique features of each individual. Facial recognition is the identification of a person by scanning his or her face and matching the captured image with a gallery of images stored in a database. It was not until the latter part of the 20th century, when modern automated recognition systems began to be developed, that the face was employed as a key aspect of individual identity. Facial recognition technology developed from its origins as crude police sketches to a sophisticated computer-based face recognition system. Face recognition systems help find missing persons and help safeguard communities by identifying criminals and terrorists who pose a significant threat to the community. They can be used to monitor borders where illegal immigration, drugs, and drug-related crimes proliferate.

Historical Biometrics

Biometric applications have their roots in the 14th century when the Chinese used fingerprints created by ink on parchment as a form of identification. During the 17th and 18th centuries, modern countries developed police sketches as methods of identifying criminals, where artists hired by police agencies would sketch the likenesses of criminals using a witness' description of the individual. In the 1800s, India started using fingerprints as official seals on documents, and policing agencies in modern countries around the world developed a "top most wanted list" that posted police sketches, and later, photographs of wanted criminals and missing persons.

The first semi-automated system for face recognition was developed in the 1960s. This system required an operator to locate the facial features on a captured image of an individual, such as the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. After putting this data into a computer system, distances and ratios were calculated between the facial features,

and the findings were matched to a database of recorded facial ratio data. The uniqueness of the individual was evident in the distances between facial features; that is, no two persons had the same ratios. These automated systems allowed a facial image to be measured by 16 distinct features: the eyebrow and chin vertices, the tip of the nose and the eye, the lip corners, and the upper and lower middle points. These facial points and features, and the distances in relation to each other, could be translated into an algorithmic data set and then used to identify the individual.

In the 1970s, this earlier system was modified by adding extra distinct markers of the face, such as hair and eye color, and even lip thickness to more accurately indentify an individual. In 1988, facial features were coded into broken down structures called "eigenfaces." The eigenfaces were then stored in a one-dimensional format, where the image was compared against a gallery of database images, using the distance ratios between the facial features. The disadvantage of this system is that it requires a full frontal face image to be captured, without which scans are poor and matches with the database may be inconclusive. In 1991, this technology was employed in closed-circuit surveillance cameras, providing data from face images to be collected in real time. Later, these facial features data were broken down into nodal points on the face that the computer used to reconstruct a three-dimensional representation of the image. This meant that partial images of the face captured by cameras did not yield a full frontal image that could still be identified.

Modern Facial Recognition

State-of-the-art face recognition systems developed in the 21st century are currently able to capture real-time faces in streaming video, and then convert the facial images into data templates that are sent to workstations where a facial matching assessment is conducted. From workstations, alerts are made communicating the identification of an individual if a match exists, and nonmatching images are discarded from the system.

Although state-of-the-art face recognition systems have overcome the problems associated with attaining effective face scanning in earlier systems, a face match does not indicate a 100 percent correct identification because there are many factors that affect face identification. For example, if the target person wears eyeglasses, this can reduce the accuracy of identification. Similarly, the accuracy of identification is affected by lightning conditions, the angle of the face pictured, the facial expression of the persons, the camera position, and the motion of a person's face and head. The size of the database also affects the identification rate. A test conducted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in 2006, for example, found that while the test for the best face recognition system returned an 85 percent identification rate among the image gallery of 800 people, it returned a correct rate for 83 percent of 1,600 people images, and a rate of 73 percent for about 37,000 images.

Facial recognition has been an important tool to combat and deter crime by identifying humans at a distance. For example, facial recognition was a major component of the Human Identification at a Distance research program of the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), put into place in 2000 and tested at the 2001 Super Bowl in Tampa, Florida. Using the facial recognition system of Viisage Company, Tampa law enforcement officers scanned nearly 100,000 spectators' faces at the Super Bowl to locate criminals. The facial recognition system compared the scanned face images with the photos of criminals uploaded to the system by law enforcement officers, and detected the presence of 19 criminals among the crowd.

Facial recognition systems can be useful for law enforcement agencies in their fight against crime; however, there are some ethical concerns about their use in public places. Philip E. Agre discusses ethical questions concerning the use of facial recognition systems in public places. Agre believes that the use of facial recognition systems in public places should be outlawed because they can be too intrusive into people's private lives and can to violate basic rights of privacy. Opponents of this thought, on the other hand, claim that the use of surveillance cameras does not violate privacy because there is no expectation of privacy in public places. Another ethical concern is the accuracy of face recognition systems and their tendency to make false identifications.

A study conducted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology in 2000 found that

A U.S. soldier in Logar Province, Afghanistan, uses a biometric device called handheld interagency identity detection equipment, or HIIDE, to record information for a local man on May 9, 2011, to be added to a facial recognition system. Facial recognition systems are improving, but are still subject to significant error. A 2006 review found that while the best facial recognition system returned an 85 percent identification rate for an image gallery of 800 people, this fell to 73 percent in a larger pool of 37,000 images.

facial recognition systems tested a 43 percent false rejection rate for images of the same person taken one and a half years apart. In July 2001, in Tampa, Florida, a hidden government surveillance camera equipped with a face recognition system captured the facial image of construction worker Rob Milliron. Milliron's image was then misidentified for a criminal with child neglect charges from Oklahoma. Milliron was arrested, but was released soon after it was learned of the misidentification.

Face recognition systems are still an effective law-enforcement tool, despite their flaws in accuracy of identification. It is still a very new technology that is being developed, and researchers are constantly trying to optimize its efficiency in accurately identifying people. In the future, face recognition systems may be perfected and become more functional. They may help find missing persons, track down fugitives, and secure national borders. Face recognition systems could provide a more convenient and safe world in the future.

Hakan Aydogan
Emirhan Darcan
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Civil Rights; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Electronic Privacy Information Center; Facebook; Privacy.

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FactCheck.org

FactCheck.org, a nonpartisan project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania, describes itself as a nonprofit "consumer advocate" with the goal of monitoring factual accuracy in U.S. politics. The Web site, which combines journalistic and academic elements, points out confusing or deceptive messages in order to increase public understanding, and then presents evidence contradicting the misinformation. Philanthropist Walter Annenberg provided an endowment that established the Annenberg Public Policy Center (APPC) in 1993; his aim was to create space for a scholarly, academic community that would focus on public policy issues at federal, state, and local levels.

FactCheck.org does not employ an evaluative rating system, as do PolitiFact and other political fact-checking sites. Instead, an article presents a misleading or deceptive statement or story, and then rectifies it. This is done by pointing out the false information, partial evidence, or misrepresentation, and then providing the full original statement or accurate evidence. For instance, in the 2012 election, a political action committee (PAC) presented a radio ad featuring a statement from Republican Mitt Romney. However, the statement was taken out of context and did not include the entire statement, which cast a totally different perspective than the radio spot suggested. In another example, Wayne LaPierre, National Rifle Association CEO, incorrectly claimed that President Obama had flip-flopped on his position toward guns. According to LaPierre, Obama's campaign promise was to not take away anyone's guns, but once elected, he changed to supporting an assault weapons ban. FactCheck pointed out that the president is not attempting to take away anyone's existing guns, and he has consistently supported a reinstatement of the assault weapons ban that President Bush allowed to expire.

The homepage features a rotating picture gallery and the organization's newest stories. In addition, videos are embedded in the articles, and content is available through an RSS feed. The "FactCheck" mailbag presents readers' comments, and a feature called "Ask FactCheck" allows audience queries for quick answers to recent rumors or misstatements. The "Viral Spiral" section features endless viral rumors that are the subject of extensive repetition; readers are given a summary of the facts and links to full articles. The Web site also offers readers the opportunity to browse archived stories by month, tag (topic), or section. The latter includes a variety of divisions that represent the organization's different elements, including party lines (misleading talking points offered by political parties) and spin detector spotlights.

Director Emeritus Brooks Jackson established FactCheck.org in December 2003 after joining the APPC. A journalist who had covered national politics for three decades for the Associated Press, *Wall Street Journal*, and CNN, Jackson has won several national awards. While at CNN, he created both the adwatch and factcheck genres, reports that deconstruct false or misleading political statements. The current director, Eugene Kiely, is a government and political journalist who has held posts at *USA Today*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer,* and the *Record* (Hackensack, New Jersey). Managing Editor Lori Robertson, a journalist, editor, and writer for media watchdog *American Journalism Review,* joined FactCheck.org in 2007. Dr. Kathleen Jamieson, Elizabeth Ware Packard professor at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania and director of the APPC, is a highly regarded scholar in the area of political communication, particularly on the press, politics, and campaigns. Her pioneering research into deceptive political

TV advertisements serves as the basis of adwatch segments. Writers, researchers, and Web designers are also identified on the Web site.

Until 2010, FactCheck.org was financially supported by APPC funds, money from the Annenberg Foundation, and grants from the Flora Family Foundation. A change in 2010 allowed donations from individuals and instituted its first public appeal. In order to dispel any public concerns over influence, FactCheck.org began to publish its finances in detail, including identifying those who give $1,000 or more. They do not accept financial or other support from unions, partisan or advocacy groups, or corporations.

FactCheck.org is the recipient of a number of Webby Awards (known as the Internet Oscars), presented by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, which honor Internet excellence. From 2007 to 2010 and 2012 to 2013, it received the most public votes, garnering the Webby People's Voice Prize in the politics category. *Time* magazine named FactCheck one of its "25 Sites We Can't Live Without" in 2006, lauding it for its mission of picking apart speeches, press releases, TV ads, and other public statements by politicians to set the record straight. *PC Magazine* called it one of the "20 Best Political Websites" in 2008, noting that the media and the Web do not always provide the most accurate information. The article congratulated the extensive research team's efforts to squash political rumors and debunk myths. In particular, FactCheck was praised for answering reader questions on current policy and political issues.

In addition, FactCheck won a 2009 Clarion Award for its 2008 presidential election coverage. FactCheck.org also won a 2010 Sigma Delta Chi Award from the Society of Professional Journalists for its coverage of deceptive claims made about health care legislation.

Beth M. Waggenspack
Virginia Tech

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Lobbyists; Online Smear Campaigns; Political Parties; *Politico*; PolitiFact.com.

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Faith-Based Social Change

Charles Taylor has argued that the West lives in a "secular age." Yet, as Taylor also points out, this very claim—celebrated and lamented more than ever before—is ambiguous and often misleading. It leaves out much of the story. On the one hand, it is said that religion in the West has lost its power to counter the epistemic authority of modern science and the moral skepticism of the Enlightenment. From this angle, religion (seen as the relic of an undeveloped and naïve past) and new media technology (seen as the material and political counterpart of late, liberal capitalism) come to seem antithetical. Whereas religion finds itself tied to the past, new media find themselves synonymous with change, progression, and the brink of modern and advanced thought—especially when viewed through the lens of the digital revolution. Following this perception, religion and technology become ideologically and even morally opposed to one another, binaries that dwell at polar ends of the societal spectrum.

On the other hand, this easy bifurcation proves both historically dubious (religion and media technologies have been working hand-in-glove for centuries) and intellectually limiting when it comes to grasping with complexity the current state of affairs. Heidi Campbell has shown how this simple binary emerges in practice, and how misleading it can be upon closer inspection. For example, when Pope Benedict XVI delivered his 2006 Message to the World, it was reported that he "[condemned] contemporary technology

and [promoted] religion in its place." Campbell argues not only that was this an incorrect portrayal of the Pope's message, but—more importantly—she points out that the Catholic Church, among countless other religious organizations, has long encouraged and supported the advancement of communication technologies to spread its message and mission. In other words, contra assumptions that negatively correlate religious belief with technological and societal modernization, religion, and new media have always intersected (and continue to intersect) in varying ways that maintain and change communicative practices embraced by millions. This holds true, especially for the shape, character, and future of the diversification of individual religious practices and forms of expression.

Thus, in light of the extent to which religious followers have come to influence and be influenced by new media, religion has grown into an important and expanding field in the broader study of digital culture. Within this research, *faith-based social change* is a term that seeks to both describe and make visible how changes in religious communicative practices come to interact with trends and changes in the relation of new media and society. Studying the traditional practices of religion in new technologies and media, scholars have started to explore the (re)shaping of religion and spirituality as they emerge in digital culture.

Religion 2.0

Pauline Cheong and Charles Ess characterize faith-based social change as "Religion 2.0," or "the manifold interactions between, on the one hand, diverse expressions and institutions affiliated with religious traditions and practices around the globe, and, on the other, the equally diverse and rapidly changing affordances and possibilities of Web 2.0." Religion 2.0 is not merely confined to the notion of religion online, which provides information on Web sites regarding religious histories, theologies, and entities. Rather, it describes the features of something more profound and interesting: online religion, which encompasses how religious practices and rituals function in virtual sanctuaries. Cheong and Ess show how the assimilation of new media into religious spheres of storytelling, faith sharing, and symbolism facilitates the "spreadability of values," and ultimately contributes to social change.

Again, this is not a new story. Religion, like any social formation, circulates meaning through forms of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and communal interactivity. The many facets of religion (e.g., lay expression, prayer, ritual, faith, and proselytization) are thus discursive acts that draw upon the available means of communication. Throughout the ages, technological advancement has brought new affordances to the accessibility, production, and consumption of information. Religion has always dealt in the nature and use of information, both adopting and adapting to media technologies that provide increasingly powerful and precise means of communication. As technology progresses, religions adjust to the newest media, discovering new ways for praying, expressing faith, and identifying within a religious community. Not only does religion adopt new technologies, but history also illustrates how intertwined religion is to the journey of communicative innovation. The invention of the printing press, for example, made possible the circulation and greater translation of ancient texts, marking the move from a Church-governed education to secular-based institutions. It also enabled readers the chance to study the Bible individually and sidestep religious authority. The trend toward more independent thinking led to the Reformation. During the Reformation, religion thrived, adjusting to the new technologies, providing new means for people to participate in spirituality. With each new technology, religion maintained its presence in society, adapting and influenced by new forms of communication. Radio, television, the Internet, and digital media have each provided means for useful and powerful modes of spiritual expression and experience.

For example, Cheong has examined blogging, microblogging, and associated channels of user-generated content and social networking sites (SNS) to understand the perceptions and practices of modern modes of worship. She shows how some view the Internet as a sacred space, suitable for "information seeking, worship, and interaction with other believers." Blogging and microblogging allow individuals to express their interpretations of the Bible, and provide ministers a means to present doctrinal critiques of other

credos to the public, patterns that are consistent in the Protestant Reformation. Some bloggers revealed that they write as a form of documenting personal spiritual journeys and religious experiences. Others wish to share their faith, and feel a sense of duty to inspire others and give dialogue to current political and religious issues.

Thus, while social media supports a trend toward religious individuality, this movement, as with the Reformation, is not uniform. For example, social media enable the formation of communities of what might otherwise be disparate, if like-minded individuals. Cheong found, in one instance, that among those who have taken to the Web to practice direct scriptural interpretation are conservative Catholics. Because of the continued instantiations in the public sphere of scandals connected to the Catholic Church, Cheong found adherents entering into online conversations and producing an alternative site for advocacy in seeking change in the Church.

Social Media and the Religious Experience

Community and lay expression are an integral part of religion, and social media have also served to extend and modify these facets of religious practice. Twitter, for example, is an apt form of social media in which religious microbloggers are able to share faith-related content in a concise and quick manner. While the act of blogging becomes a religious practice of finding spiritual and sacred meaning in life experiences, tweeting is a real-time form of ritual that can be understood and lived as a religious experience. As users link to religious and nonreligious blogs, official online church sites, secular resources, and other sites of faith-based conversations and information, networks among bloggers and microbloggers establish identity, authority, community, and meaning, consequently fashioning a religious digital culture.

The (re)circulation of faith-based mini-narratives and messages has thus added to the development of an online religious "participatory culture," where believers prompt others to express their faith and assess such expressions by way of responding to, recirculating, or reconstructing the message. For example, the Twitter of Faith Challenge was created in 2008 by Minister Adam Walker Cleaveland after he virtually expressed his faith in a condensed statement of 140 characters on Twitter. He then encouraged his Twitter followers to do the same, asking them to write their own "Twitter of Faith" in 140 characters with the accompanying hashtag "#TOF." This meme quickly spread as Twitter users or "tweeps" responded to the call, providing condensations of theological truths or biblical passages. Tweeps were further encouraged to share the experiment on blogs or Facebook to continue the pattern of expressing faith.

Various Christian organizations now use digital media to imitate traditional patterns of worship and follow scriptural admonitions in new and innovative ways. Prayer chains—the Pentecostal practice of unified congregational praying focused toward particular persons or topics—have made their way into Twitter feeds. Church clergy and members submit prayer requests and recommendations that appear on prayer feeds, and written prayers can be seen on a tweetgrid, enabling users to "pray without ceasing" and "reinvent the century-old practice of praying set prayers from the Bible, hymns, and devotionals." Some churches have sanctuary screens that display congregants' live tweets, allowing members to virtually participate during sermons.

As technologies continue to advance, the ways in which individuals and groups express their faith, form communities, and engage in religious rituals will expand. Given the continual movement of individualization that most noticeably began in the Reformation, it would be expedient for scholars to continue exploring the tension and relationship between religious authority and autonomy in light of new technologies. Simultaneously, the inclination to form communities online is an important area that requires further investigation, particularly as religious and nonreligious persons make sense of spirituality across political and cultural dimensions of society. Furthermore, the perception and trends of secularism and religiosity continue to raise questions regarding debates about the separation of church and state.

Brian Heslop
Antonio de Velasco
University of Memphis

See Also: Blogs; Christian Right; Islam and Social Media; Judaism and Social Media; Social Networking Web Sites.

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Fan Page

Fan pages are Internet pages that are meant to represent a person or a group of persons, a company, a political party, a nongovernmental organization (NGO), or any other form of intellectual entity, and are aimed at uniting fans or followers of that entity. Such pages are mostly utilized on well-known and widely used social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, where they have become popular for both fans and marketers. The use of fan pages in relation to politics, both in official and unofficial manners, has grown exponentially within the past few years.

There are two different types of fan pages: those made on behalf of the physical or intellectual entity represented, and those made by the person or entity's fans.

Fan pages offer a variety of exclusive material on their subjects, such as photographs, accounts of recent events, notices of upcoming events, opportunities to get discounts for related products, and specifically for political or charitable use, instructions on how to become involved and help. Furthermore, unofficial fan pages can often offer a wide range of creations made by fans, such as drawings or music videos. Other activities such as fan fiction, cosplays, or video games can also occur but very rarely in relation to a political figure.

Antifan pages also exist to unite people through their hatred of a particular entity, often through the use of derision and criticism. Many comparable pages were, for instance, created by fans during the French and American presidential campaigns of 2012 in the hope of discrediting the adversary and convincing followers of these pages—as well as random viewers—to vote for the other candidate.

Here, the decision to create or follow a page either for or against a particular political figure can be seen as the strong and visible expression of a political belief and an identity choice made by the fans. The act of creating a fan page, however, goes beyond passively following an idea, and is an illustration of the level of conviction and commitment among individuals sharing the same set of values.

Besides offering the possibility to easily communicate with a vast number of people interested in the subject—and content—of the page, such profiles have a second function. The mere presence of numerous followers on a Twitter fan page or of many likes on Facebook vouches for the generated interest in—and, in case of a political use, the agreement with the values of—the person, entity, or symbolic attribute represented by the fan page. This public and instantaneous grading scale is therefore used to measure the collective infatuation for a given person: The higher it is, the more observers (whether they be, in this case, political commentators, political activists, or just members of the population) will believe that the views and persona of the individual portrayed in the fan page are supported by the people.

Furthermore, information such as fan page metrics (available on Facebook, but not on Twitter, for instance), including the location of the followers or their demographic splits, may also allow political parties or campaign managers to have an idea of who and where their followers are. Fan pages organized and maintained by fans, however, will not provide access to this specific information to official institutions, but still demonstrate a certain level of interest in the subject.

Finally, one must be aware of the limits of fan pages. More and more marketers are realizing the discrepancy between liking or following a page and the actual level of interest or involvement that fans may have, who may well be fans of the page without actually intending to become active supporters or even to vote for the person.

Benjamin W. L. Derhy Kurtz
University of East Anglia
Melanie Bourdaa
Université Bordeaux 3

See Also: Blogs; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Virtual; Facebook; International Online Communities; Pioneers in Social Media and Politics.

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Fax Machines and Tiananmen Square Crisis

The 1989 demonstrations for democracy in China took place in all 29 Chinese provinces and in 84 cities. In excess of 2 million students participated in these events and they represented more than 600 educational institutions across the country. Students from more than 80 distinct higher learning centers gathered in Beijing's Tiananmen Square to demonstrate. Not only college students demonstrated in Beijing: Citizens representing in excess of 700 separate organizations participated. Among the protestors were people from nontraditional adult learning centers and more than 100 trade schools and universities. Even high schools, middle schools, and grammar schools were represented in the demonstrations as their faculty chose to support the demonstrations. Employees of more than 100 government agencies participated, as did workers from hospitals, factories, and retail businesses. In fact, approximately 15 percent of all Ministry of Culture personnel demonstrated.

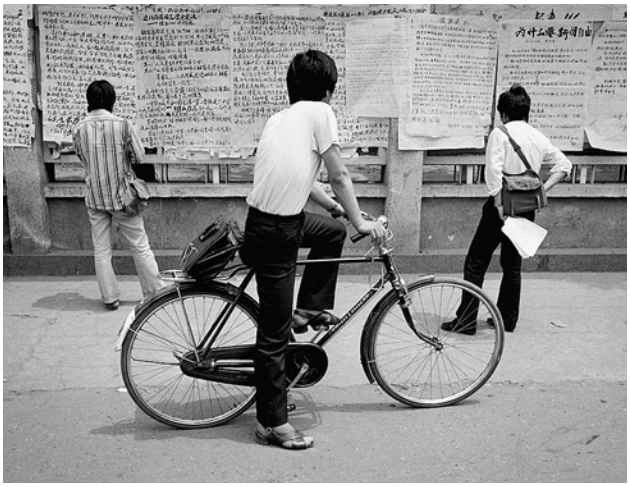
By May 4, 1989, estimates of the numbers of student demonstrators were as high as 100,000. Approximately 80,000 students converged on Tiananmen Square for Mikhail Gorbachev's May 15 visit. By the following day, the mass of demonstrators in the heart of Beijing grew to 300,000; and in the two days that followed, the square teemed with more than 1 million students.

Communications

By summer 1989, China's telecommunications system had advanced just enough to include the fax machine as a new technology. During and after the Tiananmen Square crisis, the Chinese government blacked out most means of communications and forbade all foreign news coverage. The government halted satellite transmissions and arrested noncompliant journalists. However, throughout these events, the fax as a new mode of communication was overlooked. Journalists evaded the ban as they transmitted their accounts using early mobile telephones, but these were not common.

Students and others in the prodemocracy camp maintained open lines of communication for news with fax machines and e-mail. In a strange reversal of information flow, Chinese citizens were dependent on daily reports from Western news sources. Photographs and reports of events unfolding in China were faxed from outside China back to businesses, government offices, hospitals, and schools in Chinese cities as part of an opposing viewpoint countering the local reports disseminated by the Chinese government.

As the crisis deepened, blind faxes to strangers were sent around the clock, particularly directed at hotels and businesses inside China. Private businesses like copy shops ran their faxes incessantly, sending news to anyone who could receive faxes. The hope was that information would leak out to the rest of the world through whatever channels



Passersby read a wall of protest posters outside of Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China, on June 2, 1989. News information transmitted by fax machines often appeared on posters like these.

proved to be available and willing. University of Michigan students faxed American and other Western news accounts to Chinese schools, hospitals, universities, and even government offices. It was in large part through the use of fax machines that protestors in Beijing knew that the world was watching and supporting them.

After the massacre, the Chinese government opened 15 controlled telephone lines specifically for members of the public to inform on student protestors and other leaders of the demonstrations who had survived the violence and had gone into hiding. Chinese citizens studying in America sought to foil this plan by flooding the informant lines with calls; the numbers of the lines were passed all over the world via computer and fax machines.

Fax machines also became one of the only remaining conduits for news between China and the rest of the world. Press stories from American sources, Chinese-language sources in particular, were transmitted via fax machine to citizens in China, while handwritten accounts of the events were faxed out globally. Faxed photographs played an especially important role within China given the problem of illiteracy, and multitudes of copies of these faxed photographs were made and distributed in the country. Posters papered walls throughout Chinese urban areas, and most of these were originally faxed.

Impact

The impact of this development was felt all over the world. At a 1991 conference in Prague sponsored by the American Foreign Policy Council, attendees from then Soviet republics received a "democracy kit" with great enthusiasm. This kit was a package comprising, among other things, a reproduction of the U.S. Constitution and a fax machine, which at that time was only recently affordable. Activists in the rest of the world had watched Chinese activists use fax machines during the Tiananmen Square events in 1989 to fight control by the Chinese government and distribute their accounts of the events to journalists abroad. This new technology was filled with potential for social movements and played a role in other movements in the years immediately after the Tiananmen crises because in large part of the example set in Beijing.

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Asia; China; CNN Effect; Evolution of Social Media; Great Firewall of China; Human Rights.

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Feb 17 voices

Considered one of the few windows into what was happening in many places in Libya during the Internet shutdown, Feb 17 voices is a social network experience to face information censorship via Twitter and an innovative experience in social media. The initiative followed a precedent called January 25 Voices, created by UCLA postgraduate student John Scott-Railton. As a result of the shutdown of the Internet accomplished by the Egyptian government on January 27, 2011, Scott-Railton built this project to tweet the information that he and his team received through a number of telephone calls. The uprising of the Egyptian revolution, two days before the start of January 25 Voices, was covered thanks to the witnesses who shared their experiences by telephone and published them on Twitter and in real time. The action kept up a steady flow of tweeted updates from the ground, as well as updates on what was appearing in Arabic-language print and TV news.

The same principle was applied by Scott-Railton to create the feed Feb 17 voices. This time, the account on Twitter was aimed to give voice to Libyans and Libyan diaspora after the events occurred. On this date, called the Day of Rage, the uprising and civil war in Libya started. Inspired by the Arab Spring, impelled by social movements of the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions, the National Conference for the Libyan Opposition made an appeal to all the opponents of the Muammar Gaddafi regime to take part in a demonstration. February 17 was the date of the commemoration of marches for democracy in Benghazi five years earlier. Protesters took the streets throughout the country in cities like Ajdabiya, Benghazi, Bayda, Derna, and Zintan.

Previously, in 2008, the Gaddafi government shut down the Internet in Libya through Eagle, a software program created by an affiliate company of Groupe Bull that allowed control of access to the Internet in the entire country. In 2010, this technology was improved, and access to media by telephone was forbidden under threat of arrest. John Scott-Railton decided to launch Feb 17 voices, adapted to Libyan circumstances, with the help of two Libyan American collaborators: Sarah Adurrahman, producer in the National Public Radio *On the Media*; and her husband Abdulla Darrat, a project manager and activist. The feed quickly received support from the HOPE Lybian Relief Fund, an American nonprofit humanitarian organization devoted to easing the hardships of the disadvantaged, displaced, and unfortunate people of different parts of the world.

After considering that tweets did not give a full explanation of context and lost the truthfulness and strength of the voices, John Scott-Railton began posting audio of calls to the application, sharing audio files via TwiTurm. Within a week, the audio had been listened to more than four million times, which crashed the servers several times. Moreover, the project tweeted messages and posted audio files through the application AudioBoo, making it possible to listen to the telephone calls and other witnesses' documents. Posts were in English and Arabic, or in Arabic

A protestor in a crowd of Libyan Americans takes a shoe to a poster of Gaddafi in Washington, D.C., on February 19, 2011, two days after protests began in Libya to mark the five-year anniversary of suppressed democracy marches in Benghazi.

with English voiceovers provided by Darrat and Abdurrahman. Other contributors helped to contact Libyan citizens by phone to obtain first-hand evidence of what they were living through, along with inspiring stories of desperation, commitment, and courage.

Even the zones of coverage of the media were reached, as the project progressed and the tweets and call files started to expand. A number of records were also translated and later tweeted by volunteers and observers that followed the coverage of Libya events offered by Al Jazeera Arabic and Al Arabiya. All of this information was translated and tweeted to help provide context to non-Arabic speakers. As soon as the media concentrated their information on the actions that took place in Benghazi, Feb 17 voices paid attention to Western zones that were still affected by serious conflicts. This nonstop coverage provided daily updates and audio calls from Jebel Nafusa, the Western Mountains, with some witnesses in Amazigh, the Siege of Misrata, the Battle for Tripoli and the final Siege of Sirte.

As the media explained how protesters torched a number of civil and government buildings, police stations, and security buildings and sacked public radio and television channels in Tripoli, Feb 17 voices gave voice to particular stories to complete information that did not receive coverage in the news. Some witnesses referred to how Libyan security forces fired live ammunition into the protests, while the media focused on more massive events such as the attack and burning of the Interior Ministry, the People's Hall, and the Revolutionary Committee offices.

The first tweet related to the uprising began on February 18, with the recording of a live phone call. The document gave voice to a woman in Tripoli, before joining the protests in Green Square. On the same day, police and army personnel withdrew from Benghazi after they were overwhelmed by protesters and joined them. Other tweets followed on the same date, explaining the actions of the security forces in Benghazi, who were completely overwhelmed by opposers, lured the protesters in and then fired on them; the violent measures of the regime, using foreigner mercenaries to stifle protesters; the camping out of the demonstrators; and the filling up of hospitals with casualties. More audio files reproduced protesters' chants or gunfights near Gaddafi's residence.

The comments echo other media like the *Guardian*, which published Al-Zahf al-Akdahr, a progovernment military officer, who asked for a violent response to protesters. It also quoted United Kingdom First Secretary of State William Hague's statement as "unacceptable and horrifying." The feed focused extensively on the aerial attack of the coalition forces and the missiles fired by the U.S. Army on March 19, while some witnesses explained how protesters were shot by helicopters and airplane bullets, and a number of doctors were executed by the government. The day after, some witnesses reported before and after that the dictator's son, Saif Gaddafi, spoke about an expected resignation that did not happen.

Feb 17 voices reached nearly 3,700 followers from the beginning of the project to Muammar Gaddafi's death on October 20, 2011, and attracted approximately 10,500 followers. Gaddafi's execution was extensively reported through videos, photos, and maps of his hideout. After the end of the conflict, a few more tweets were sent to the feed, especially to commemorate the events. The content of Feb 17 voices has been widely forwarded to other sources and Web sites and displayed on event-specific live blogs, such as Al Jazeera's Libya Live Blog. It has been uploaded and disseminated via YouTube, sent out of Libya, and provided to news organizations and televisions, some of them streaming the documents live as they were tweeted.

Manel Jiménez-Morales
Universitat Pompeu Fabra

See Also: Africa, North; Arab Spring; Libya; News Media; Social Networking Web Sites; Tunisia; Twitter.

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Federal Privacy Act

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the U.S. government increasingly relied on computer databases to track citizens' activities and transactions. As a result, the Privacy Act of 1974 [Public Law 93-579] was enacted because of the impact of incursions into individuals' right to privacy and free speech. The purpose of the Privacy Act of 1974 is to balance an individual's right to privacy and access to information culled by the government with the government's need to collect, maintain, and use private information.

The principal aim of the act is to safeguard privacy by instituting certain "procedural and substantive rights" in the government's use of personal data. This includes requiring federal agencies to follow particular principles, called "fair information practices," which act as guidelines when gathering and handling individuals' data. The most important of these principles are: (1) requiring federal agencies to reveal to the affected individual any records kept on him or her; (2) restricting how agencies share individuals' data with other entities; and (3) allowing individuals to sue federal agencies for violating the provisions set forth by the act.

In 1965, hearings were held by the U.S. House of Representatives Special Subcommittee on Invasion of Privacy. Congress was concerned with the increasing use of computers to collect and retrieve citizens' personal information, especially the social security number, as an identifier. Also, after the Watergate Affair, Congress determined that there was an urgent need to address illegal surveillance and investigation of individuals by federal officials. Numerous hearings were conducted, and reports were generated on such disparate topics as commercial credit bureaus, national data banks, and the effects of computers on personal privacy. These concerns seeded the formation of the act.

Creation of the Act

A significant influence on wording of the act was a report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Records, Computers, and the Rights of Citizens. At the heart of this report were five basic principles called a Code of Fair Information Practices (named after the Code of Fair Labor Practices). These principles became the foundation of privacy legislation as conceived in the act and in federal, state, and local privacy legislation thereafter. These codes are: (1) there must be no secret personal-data recordkeeping systems; (2) there must be a way for an individual to find out what information about him or her is in a record and how it is used; (3) there must be a way for an individual to prevent information about him or her obtained for one purpose from being used or made available for other purposes without his or her consent; and (4) there must be a way for an individual to correct or amend a record of identifiable information about him or her. After the release of this report, the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Automated Data Systems recommended that Congress enact a Code of Fair Information practice for automated personal data systems.

The act was borne out of compromise between two bills: one from the House of Representatives [HR 16373], and one from the Senate [S 3418]. Differences were significant, and a compromise was devised. This compromise included: the creation of the Privacy Protection Study Commission; a stipulation that certain violations must be deemed willful, arbitrary, or capricious before damages could be assessed; a guarantee that affected individuals be entitled to recovery of at least $1,000 in damages; the inclusion of the House's "routine use" exception regarding information sharing (where the use of a record for a purpose is compatible with the purpose for which it was collected); and finally, the inclusion of the Senate's provision that an individual can appeal in federal district court a refusal by a government agency to amend a record. The act was passed by the Senate on December 17, 1974, passed by the House on December 18, 1974, and signed and enacted into law on December 31, 1974.

Main Provisions

The act guards against misuse of individuals' records by the executive branch of the U.S. government. This includes cabinet and military departments, corporations controlled by the U.S. government, independent regulatory agencies, other branches or divisions of the executive branch, as well as agencies subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Excluded are records maintained by

state and local governments and those in the possession of privately held organizations. Exemptions from the act's protections are allowed for these agencies: (1) records maintained by the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Arrival and Departure Information System; and (2) records kept for routine uses (referring to external sharing of information outside the agency), archival purposes if the record has sufficient historical value, law enforcement purposes, congressional investigations, and other administrative purposes.

Only records that are maintained in a "system of records" fall under the purview of the act. Within the confines of the act, a record is defined as that which contains personally identifiable information about an individual, up to and including information regarding the individual's education, financial dealings, and medical, criminal, or employment histories. A "system of records" includes records where information may be retrieved by name, social security number, or other identifying symbols assigned to an individual. Information not kept in a system of records is not subject to the provisions of the act, and may be accessed under the Freedom of Information Act.

All citizens of the United States may seek to gain access to most personal information maintained on him or her and may seek redress in case of errors in or misuse of such documents. The act allows only aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States to seek and receive information regarding the collection, maintenance, utilization, and dissemination of records kept by federal agencies of the U.S. government. Nonresident foreign nationals are not eligible to use the act's provisions, but may use the Freedom of Information Act to request records about themselves.

There are five requirements relevant to most citizens and aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States. Each federal agency must establish a set of procedures for allowing individuals to examine their personal records for omissions, timeliness, relevance, and completeness. Individuals must be allowed to copy their personal records and correct any errors. This is the fundamental provision of the act. In order to prevent the maintenance of "secret record systems" (dossiers) and to promote transparency and good faith among the citizenry, each federal agency must publish notices of all "systems of records" it maintains. These notices must include complete descriptions of personal data recordkeeping policies, practices, and systems. Each federal agency must, to the best of its ability, maintain individuals' records in good order insofar as such records are accurate, relevant, timely, and complete.

Under the act, federal agencies are not permitted to maintain information on citizens' exercise of those rights guaranteed under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, unless that maintenance is specifically by statute, by consent of the individual, or relates to authorized law enforcement activity. Federal agencies must abide by rules set forth in the act for use and disclosure of personal information.

The act specifies that any information culled for one purpose may not be used for another without notice to or consent of the affected individual. Also, disclosure of individuals' personal information must be recorded and maintained by that federal agency. An affected individual may seek through legal remedy enforcements of the rights guaranteed by the act. Also, any employee of federal agencies may be subjected to criminal penalties should they fail to comply with the act's provisions.

Privacy Protection Study Commission

A final provision of the act created the Privacy Protection Study Commission (PPSC), which in 1977 issued the report Personal Privacy in an Information Society. This report noted that while the act represented a step forward in addressing the increasing privacy concerns of the U.S. government's use of citizens' data, the positive results intended by Congress did not materialize, in part because of the opaque language of the act, specifically regarding the act's definition of "systems of records." The act's definition of "systems of records" only encompassed databases that retrieved records by name, social security number, or other individually identifiable information. This omits from the provisions of the act any database that does not index by these attributes.

The PPSC also noted that although publication of federal agencies' personal data recordkeeping policies, practices, and systems in the Federal Register was helpful, it is of limited impact because of the citizenry's lack of awareness of such disclosures and the publication of the Federal Register. Also, the PPSC noted that the information disclosed in the Federal Registry lacked detail about how systems are used internally by federal agencies.

The report also noted that, at the time, few individuals had made use of the act's provisions (the only significant court case regarding a citizen claiming protections under any of the provisions of the act occurred in *Doe v. Chao* 540 U.S. 614, in 2004). The report attributed this to a lack of public awareness of the act and to the widerranging exceptions to the act's provisions of large-scale and prominent government agencies like the CIA and law enforcement. Finally, the report iterated that federal agencies were not applying consistent standards for compliance to the act's provisions, and attributed this lack of compliance to misunderstanding of the act's provisions by federal agency personnel.

Debra Glassco
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Digital Media Law Project; Electronic Frontier Foundation; Electronic Privacy Information Center; Freedom of the Press and National Security; National Center for Digital Government.

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Federal Shield Law, Bloggers and

The proliferation of online publishing by citizen journalists and bloggers has had a significant impact on the changing nature of journalism and news media, with mainstream media outlets not only encouraging such activities, but actively incorporating information from citizen journalists into their reports. The emergence of Wikileaks and other various legal challenges to journalistic privilege for bloggers has raised questions regarding the feasibility of federal (and in some cases state) shield laws that protect journalists from having to reveal their sources or confidential information in court. The question of whether bloggers and citizen journalists are among the protected groups remains at the forefront of this debate.

The Federal Shield Law (also known as the Free Flow of Information Act) was originally initiated in 1972 by Representatives Charles Whalen Jr. (R-Ohio) and William Moorhead (D-Pennsylvania), following the *Branzburg v. Hayes* case, when the Supreme Court refused to recognize the privilege for journalists not to be compelled to reveal their sources or confidential information in court proceedings. The original proposal sought to protect mass media outlets, their reporters, and freelancers, stating that in order to force a journalist to give up his or her sources or confidential information, the federal government must convince the judge that the information requested was of sufficient importance to outweigh the journalist's need to protect the privacy of his or her sources. Similar to lawyer/client privilege, reporter's privilege attempts to facilitate the free flow of information because compelling reporters to reveal sources or confidential information would make sources reluctant to provide information, thereby compromising the ability of journalists to effectively do their jobs.

Numerous versions of the law have been introduced and rejected over a 40-year period, with the most recent version reintroduced by Representative Mike Pence (R-Indiana) in September 2011 as H.R. 2932, the Free Flow of Information Act of 2011 (also called the Federal Media Shield Bill). The previous versions of the bill passed the

House of Representatives in both 2007 and 2008, only to be rejected by the Senate. The Free Flow of Information Act of 2011 (H.R. 2932) has stalled before the Senate Subcommittee on the Constitution. Although a federal law has yet to be passed, over half of the states have enacted shield laws, although state laws vary widely in their coverage and the definition of covered journalists.

Critics of the shield law maintain that enacting it will reduce the federal government's ability to uphold national security, although the 2011 bill includes special provisions for instances where the information is deemed necessary to maintain national security, to prevent death or injury, or where the information is deemed vital to a criminal or civil case. Other critics suggest that the existing law is too weak, pointing at the problematic definition of covered journalists, which generally only covers those for whom a majority of their income comes from regularly writing and reporting—a definition that excludes many bloggers and other citizen journalists who are not in a position to derive the majority of their livelihood from writing.

As new communication technologies have been incorporated into mass media, state courts have necessarily expanded the original scope of their shield laws; however, many still define privileged groups according to the medium for which they publish. As a result, electronic publishing is covered in some states, but not all. Some legal analysts suggest that when the original intent of the shield law is considered, citizen journalists such as bloggers should have the same right to invoke the reporter's privilege as reporters affiliated with established media outlets. These analysts argue that bloggers disseminate information to the public in much the same way as traditional journalists, and that they would benefit from the same level of protection, provided the information was obtained with the intent of disseminating the information for public benefit and/or knowledge.

Depending upon its focus, blog content may be used as a personal diary and opinion soundingboard, or a news platform. This blurring of intent, function, and purpose is problematic in regard to establishing shield law protection for bloggers because not all bloggers use their blogs solely as a news platform. Furthermore, opponents to shield law protection for bloggers and citizen journalists suggest that since they do not have to adhere to the same standards of ethical conduct expected of professional journalists, they should not be afforded the same legal protections. However, it has also been argued that bloggers and citizen journalists are under the same threat of defamation and legal threats as professional journalists. Therefore, whether they formally recognize the standards of professional ethical conduct or not, conscientious bloggers will follow general ethical guidelines that require a focus on presenting accurate facts.

Currently, there is no consensus among the states regarding what constitutes a covered journalist, with states defining journalists in a variety of ways, including official affiliation with an established media organization, making a majority of their income from writing and or publishing, and intent (where the information is gathered with the sole purpose of disseminating it to the public).

In 2011, the Oregon District Court ruled that bloggers are not covered by the state's shield laws; yet in 2012, an Illinois court found that according to their state shield law, bloggers were a covered class of journalist. This lack of consensus is not just an issue for citizen journalists and bloggers, but also for established media outlets that encourage and incorporate such journalistic products into their reports. For example, CNN, Fox News, and other news stations regularly solicit video, audio, and other information on breaking news from viewers. Under the existing interpretation of the shield laws, these citizen journalists might not be covered, but the news outlet might be, depending upon the interpretation of state shield laws.

Danielle Lawson
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

See Also: Blogs; Blogger Rights and Responsibilities; Citizen Journalism; Freedom of the Press and National Security.

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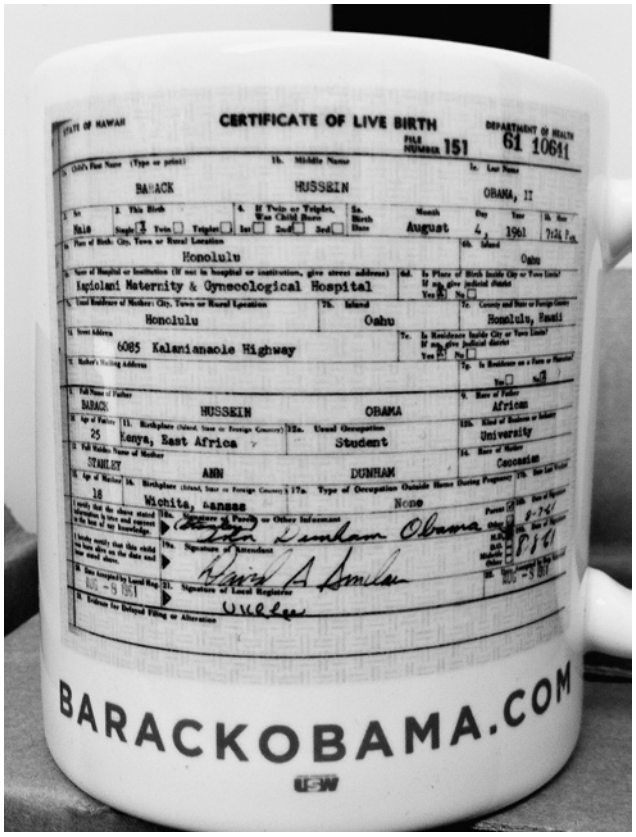
FightTheSmears.com

In response to widespread rumors about his personal and political life during the 2008 election, Barack Obama and his campaign launched FightTheSmears.com to describe and refute several accusations. The Web site was meant to give Obama supporters ways to respond to such criticism and help the news media reject lies about the candidate. Though the Web site was effective in offering a line-by-line refutation of major rumors—with supporting evidence—its overall influence has been questioned by critics. Nevertheless, while FightTheSmears.com was limited to the 2008 campaign, its power to track rumors driven by social media led to the development of similar sites used to manage the president's image.

From the early days of the 2008 Democratic primary, Barack Obama faced several rumors. In a variation of an e-mail titled "Who Is Barack Obama?" he was accused of being a closeted Muslim who attended a *madrasa* in his youth, which although the literal translation is simply "school," is now commonly misunderstood as a fundamentalist Muslim educational program that can serve as a training ground for future terrorists. Among other rumors were claims like these: Obama refused to recite the pledge of allegiance; he took his oath of office with a Koran after being elected to the U.S. Senate; he was not a U.S. citizen; and he was a black nationalist sympathetic to communism. Like other candidates, Obama initially ignored the rumors targeting his campaign. His strategy eventually changed after rumors began circulating that a video existed of his wife Michelle ranting about "whitey" during a talk at Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago. Although the video never surfaced, the claim was widely discussed online and was eventually repeated on radio and television.



In another example of the Obama campaign fighting one of the smears against their candidate in novel ways, this mug featuring an image of President Barack Obama's birth certificate could be ordered from the 2012 campaign Web site in fall 2011.

The Web site FightTheSmears.com was launched in June 2008 as an Internet-based rumor clearinghouse where the malicious stories about Obama and his family could be identified, traced to their origins, and refuted with evidence. Breaking from the traditional strategy of responding to preposterous lies with silence, the Obama campaign addressed the rumors head on. In so doing, the campaign recognized what political communication scholars like R. Kelly Garrett later confirmed: Rumors circulating through social media tend to have more power and need to be confronted. The novel approach asked users to e-mail the campaign's responses to popular rumors to their friends and to report any new rumors circulating online. In response to the rumor about Obama's wife, the site called the claim a lie and cited news articles quoting reputable conservatives who considered the story ludicrous. The

rumor that Obama attended a madrasa was also called a falsehood, and links were provided to a CNN story depicting his school in Indonesia as a regular elementary school. In response to rumors that Obama was not born in the United States, the site provided a PDF copy of his birth certificate.

While effective at providing Obama supporters and the news media appropriate responses to rumors, FightTheSmears.com was also the subject of significant criticism. According to some psychologists, listing rumors and then rebutting them can often lead readers to remember the rumors as true. Thus, naming false accusations can sometimes give such distortions credibility. Other critics complained that the Web site was often short on evidence, unlike the fact-checking portion of Obama's campaign Web site that preceded FightTheSmears.com. Additionally, the site's effectiveness was further questioned because there was little proof that users would actually forward links to those who believed the rumors. Finally, many conservatives complained that Republicans were too quickly blamed for spreading rumors that were actually started by Obama's opponents in the Democratic primary.

FightTheSmears.com ceased to exist after the 2008 campaign, but it evolved into other Web sites used by the Obama administration. In August 2009, the White House launched WhiteHouse.gov/realitycheck to counter rumors about health insurance reform. The site listed and refuted several rumors—ranging from claims that the Affordable Care Act would lead to rationing of health care services to lies about "death panels"—and asked users to forward suspicious e-mails to flag@whitehouse.gov. In September 2011, the president's campaign launched Attack Watch, along with a Twitter hashtag, to debunk misinformation about the administration. Obama supporters were encouraged to submit reports on smears against the president, mostly by fact-checking Republican presidential candidates. By February 2012, the Obama campaign launched a site for Truth Teams to fight misinformation about the president. Linked to Obama's campaign Web site, Truth Teams listed information by issue and allowed groups of fact-checkers to organize in several swing states.

Ryan Neville-Shepard
Indiana University–Purdue University Columbus

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Crowdsourcing; Health Care; Rumors; Truth Team.

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Findability

Though it has existed for years, findability in its common usage today is a concept popularized by Peter Morville in 2005 to refer to how easily a Web user can find online content using a search engine or by navigating within a particular Web site. To be findable means that it is possible and easy to locate online information known to exist in a general place. In its simplest sense, findability concerns how easy it is for people to find what they are looking for online. Far from a simple concept, though, findability calls upon Web designers and information architects to conceptualize and organize Web content in a way that maximizes its ability to be located, reached, and identified by those looking for it either from within or outside the Web site where it is kept. These organizational choices may have political implications because depending upon one's perspective, it is not always desirable to make certain information easy to find.

On today's Web, search engines play a powerful role in directing Web users toward information thought to be most relevant to a user's search. But search engines offer only limited attentiveness to the nuance of what one may be seeking. Peter Morville, for instance, writes that he was partly inspired to think about findability after searching online for information about his daughter's peanut allergy, only to find that search engines

typically directed him toward overtly commercial Web sites or other marketing material selling nut-free products, which was not the information he wanted. Findability is not just a matter of making it easy to find one's way toward certain information; it is also a matter of assuring the relevance of the information toward which one is directed. While search engine optimization techniques offer Web designers a way to increase the likelihood that their Web sites will appear more prominently in a search engine's results, findability goes further still.

For Morville, findability as a tenet of Web design or information architecture is concerned with three primary questions: "(1) Can your users find your Web site? (2) Can your users find their way around your Web site? (3) Can your users find your products and content despite your Web site?" These three questions might respectively be characterized as problems of locating, reaching, and identifying. In other words, ensuring maximal findability means that a Web user can easily locate the Web site where desired information or content exists, that the user can then navigate easily through the Web site to reach the specific place where this information is kept, and that a Web user can easily and accurately identify the pertinent information as such once he or she has located and reached it.

This last entreaty is especially difficult in a Web with organizational signposts structured with semantic cues that usually amount to key words intended to guide search engines toward particular content. Key words, however, do not always capture the complexity of the content that one may wish to find. Moreover, a clumsy presentation of content on a Web site may unintentionally conceal the relevant information contained therein. That is, it sometimes happens that Web users have arrived at the information they are looking for without realizing it. The desired content may be poorly worded, it may be visually messy, or it may be hidden among long paragraphs full of other information not relevant to the user's concerns. Any variety of reasons—aesthetic, grammatical, or contextual—might make desired content unidentifiable, even in plain sight. Maximizing findability in part means ensuring that information is identifiable for what it is, once a user has arrived at its door.

Findability is not just practical; it can also be political. The concept's political aspect becomes evident when considering that content providers do not always have a motivation to make their content easy to find. Sometimes, a content provider has a vested interest to deliberately hide information or otherwise make it not readily findable. For instance, disclaimers required by law, for example, about the side effects of medications or the dangers of cigarettes might deter consumers from buying those products, even though the law demands such disclaimers. Similarly, Web designers may find it necessary for a Web site to include some content that is unflattering, dry, uninteresting, or otherwise unappealing. In such instances, Web designers make decisions to privilege the visibility (and the findability) of certain classes of information over others in order to be more rhetorically effective. Though findability concerns the ease of finding content or information, its corollary concerns the opposite drive to make information more difficult to find. Nevertheless, findability is not a finite resource. The networked structure of the Web means that making some content findable does not necessarily make other content less findable. Strategic decisions, however, can operate to emphasize the findability of certain content more than others, and it is these decisions that bring findability into the realm of the political.

Far from limited to virtual environments, findability in its broader sense also refers to the intervention of technology as an apparatus to help any wayfinding experience. For instance, handheld or dashboard global position system (GPS) navigational systems, digital mapping of the real world on smartphones, or through applications like Google Earth all contribute to facilitating the ease of making one's way through the world. The concept of findability aspires to make easier what can sometimes be an exasperating process of sorting through an information-saturated world to find exactly what one wants at any given time.

Chris Ingraham
University of Colorado–Boulder
David Spiegel
Institute for Advanced Study

See Also: Information Aggregation; Search and Scrape Capability; Search Engine Optimization.

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FinFisher

The increasing pace of globalization and crime requires more effective methods of intervention. Advances in technology offer opportunities for law enforcement agencies to fight crime within national borders. For example, lawful interception is a crucial method used by law enforcement agencies to fight crime. Lawful intervention is the legally sanctioned access of law enforcement agencies of private communications. It provides crucial information regarding what criminal suspects are doing or are planning to do, and is one of the most important tools for law enforcement to fight crime. In some cases, after obtaining a judicial warrant to enter the offices of suspects, law enforcement agencies may have to insert an electronic transmitter called a "bug" into an object belonging to suspects, especially when they are otherwise unable to obtain valuable data about their operations from other sources. In addition, officers often use safe houses or observation cars to receive what is transmitted by these bugs. However, these traditional bugs began to be less functional because of the increased use of computers, smartphones, and tablets. Thus, bugs began to be directly inserted into the devices of suspects or criminals. Intelligence and police officers are currently able to obtain information from electronic devices using software or hardware-based information technology (IT) intrusion bugs to track suspects and criminals.

FinFisher is a UK-based company, a branch of the Gamma Group, which provides IT intrusion solutions for law enforcement agencies. In 2012 and 2013, slivers of information regarding FinFisher products and their unique covert surveillance abilities found their way into several newspaper stories on cyber security, bringing FinFisher technology into limited public view. For example, an analysis conducted by the University of Toronto Munk School of Global Affairs' Citizen Lab regarding five suspicious e-mail attachments obtained by Bloomberg News, which were sent to a Bahraini activist in 2012, exposed the name of FinFisher and its IT intrusion products.

The products that FinFisher provides can be summarized into two groups: those that provide tactical solutions, and those that provide remote intrusion solutions. The term *tactical* refers to the use of equipment by law enforcement officers in the area of operations. In a similar vein, tactical IT intrusion solutions produced by FinFisher are used by law enforcement officers when they are in the vicinity of their targets, or when they have the opportunity for physical access to the IT devices of the targets. *Remote* IT intrusion tools consist of executable codes acting as a Trojan that can covertly access private and personal data of targets and can send them to a remote location by taking remote control of their computers or smartphones. These executable codes are downloaded over the Internet without one's knowledge upon opening an e-mail attachment or text message, or by clicking a link on a Web site. Because they run in the background, they are not noticed by users, unless they are detected by an antivirus program; however, these types of professional codes can bypass many trusted antivirus programs.

These remote IT intrusion tools can secretly record all the text written by the users of a computer or a mobile device as they are striking the keys of the keyboard, and can later send the recorded keystroke history data to a remote location. Furthermore, these tools can access private data sections on the computers and mobile devices of the targets and transmit their private information, documents, and files to a remote location. In addition to taking remote control of the computers, these devices can also provide a means for turning on Web cams and microphones of the computers from a remote location to monitor what the user is doing. Moreover, the smartphone version of the IT intrusion tool can record voice calls and texts, and can track the geographical

location of the targets through built-in global positioning systems (GPS).

Citizen Lab has found a FinSpy malware communicating with a FinSpy command and control server in Ethiopia. According to Citizen Lab's findings, when the FinSpy malware is activated, it creates a JPG picture of members of the Ethiopian opposition group, Ginbot 7, with the same file name as the malware. Therefore, victims believe that the opened file is just a picture, not a malicious code. Furthermore, Citizen Lab has detected the presence of FinSpy Mobile for Android malware in Vietnam, which is capable of recording conversations and tracking the geographical location of targets through built-in GPS. It was also found by two Egyptian activists that a FinFisher quotation in Arabic letters was prepared for the Egyptian government regarding FinFisher products and their prices in 2010. As of March 2013, Citizen Lab identified FinSpy command and control servers operating in 25 countries. This global reach brings up ethical concerns about the use of such new technologies, which are aimed only for monitoring criminals and terrorists. These publicized examples of the use of FinFisher show that FinFisher was used against human rights activists and opposition groups, rather than criminals and terrorist. Therefore, there is the risk of abusing such technologies.

The use of new technologies is of utmost importance in the fight against crime. Information and communication technologies are always changing; therefore, keeping up with these new technologies is of high importance to law enforcement. Criminals, especially organized criminals, are adept at following and using new technologies to a greater degree than governments and law enforcement agencies. FinFisher IT intrusion tools can be useful for law enforcement agencies of governments in their fight against crime. However, the use of such new technologies by law enforcement officers in investigations and operations must not violate the privacy of individuals.

FinFisher IT intrusion tools have the potential of invading individuals' privacy. They can extract the private and personal data of individuals, break into their e-mails or social network accounts, intercept their conversations, and even take surveillance of them by turning on Web cams and microphones. Therefore, law enforcement officers have to use such new technologies after obtaining a judicial warrant upon probable cause, especially when they are otherwise unable to obtain data. Furthermore, it must be guaranteed that these kinds of tools are only sold to the law enforcement agencies of democratic governments. Otherwise, these tools can be a very dangerous weapon in the hands of totalitarian or repressive regimes, cyber criminals, identity thieves, or privacy invaders.

Hakan Aydogan
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Carnivore; Deep Packet Inspection; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Echelon; Firewalling; Keystroke Logging; Privacy; Search and Scrape Capability.

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Firewalling

Advances in information and communication technologies have vastly improved the connectivity of individuals and organizations and flow of information around the world. The arrival of the Internet specifically provided an unimaginable pace for advancing the process of globalization. It has linked people around the world who have never seen one another. People communicate with each other daily, for the most part without restrictions imposed by state sovereignty. However, these advances have also paved the way for criminals to commit crimes that are easier to carry out than traditional crimes. Every step of technological progress has increased the use of technology as a weapon of crime. For example, just as the

Internet has contributed to globalization by providing a cheap and reliable form of communication, it has opened the door to cyber crimes that can severely damage computer systems. In parallel with the extensive use of the Internet, cyber crime is increasing each year. Individuals, organizations, and governments should take several precautions to ensure that they are protected from the actions of cyber criminals. Firewalling is one of the precautionary measures that can prevent cyber attacks.

A firewall is a computer software device or piece of hardware that prevents cyber attacks derived from the Internet such as Trojans, viruses, and worms. They can prevent unwanted network packets from reaching their destination, and allow the desired packets to continue to their destination according to filtering rules. In this respect, firewalling can be regarded as a traffic control device that decides what will pass, and what will not. It ensures that computers are less vulnerable to cyberattacks and that the data on computers are more protected.

Configuration

Firewall filtering rules can be customized according to IP addresses, domain names, keywords, or phrases, ports, and protocols. In this respect, a firewall can block off certain IP addresses, it can restrict access to certain domain names or domain name extensions such as .gov or .org, and it can block the data flow on the network if it contains any keyword defined by the filtering rule. For instance, a person who is administering firewalling can prepare a list of Web sites that users are not allowed to access. Apart from limiting access to dangerous or malicious Web sites, a company can block its workers' access to social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or YouTube in order to prevent workers from wasting their time.

Similarly, a list of keywords or phrases can be prepared as part of a firewall filtering rule in order to block access to Web sites containing those keywords or phrases. Thus, users' access to harmful or unwanted Web sites can be prevented. Users can only see a message delivered by the firewall at their Web browser saying that the Web site that they are trying to access is blocked by a firewall. By this process, there is no available exposure to harmful content from the blocked Web sites because the connection between a user's computer and a targeted Web server is prevented before it can be established.

A firewall can also allow or block Internet traffic according to communication protocols such as an Internet protocol (IP), which refers to a Web surfing process carried out by Web browsing, an file transfer protocol (FTP), which is based on file transferring between computers over the Internet, and simple mail transfer protocol (SMTP), which is for e-mail trafficking. By filtering a FTP's access, for example, users can be prevented from downloading programs or files to their computers that can be embedded with malicious codes or programs.

Port blocking is another firewall filtering rule that can be defined by users. The Wi-Fi or LAN network cards of computers have about 65,000 different ports, or "paths" to establish data links with other computer systems over the Internet. For example, when a user opens a Web page using a Web browser, the 80th port of the network device is used to reach this Web page. However, for secure Web browsing, the 443rd port is used to reach an SSL certificated web page. In this respect, a firewall rule can be defined, for example, to block unsecured Web browsing by blocking the 80th port communication while allowing the 443rd port communication to remain open for purposes of secure Web browsing.

Limits

Although firewalling is an essential protection method of cybersecurity, it does not guarantee full protection from cyberattacks. Firewalls cannot prevent the transfer of malicious codes or programs. For example, if the access to a certain Web site embedded with malware is allowed according to the filtering rule, users can load the malware to their computers by unintentionally accessing this Web site. Second, hackers can masquerade as trusted users of a network secured by a firewall, and can bypass firewalling using the login names and passwords belonging to trusted users. Third, firewalling controls data flow, but it does not encrypt the data flowing through the firewall. Therefore, there is always the risk of compromising the crucial and confidential information sent over the firewall to the outside or sent between

the computers of a local network secured by a firewall. Fourth, firewalls are configured according to the filtering rules defined by trained users. If there is a problem in configuration, then there is a problem with security. Last, the failure of a user in the network can threaten everybody in the network, even if the network is protected by a firewall.

In light of the escalating use of all forms of online and social media platforms in virtually every aspect of both candidate and issue-oriented politics, the limits of firewalls suggest an entirely new type of threat to citizen privacy. These little-known and often misunderstood limitations on the protections offered by firewalling combine with overt tagging and tracking behaviors to further erode citizen privacy, unwittingly increasing the risk of malicious and/or destructive consequences of participating in digital age engagements.

Hakan Aydogan
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Deep Packet Inspection; FinFisher; Great Firewall of China; Keystroke Logging; 100Reporters Whistleblower Alley.

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Fiscal Cliff Crisis

The fiscal cliff crisis refers to a series of policies in January 2013 that might have resulted in tax increases and government spending cuts. The fiscal cliff would have led the United States toward a mild economic recession and higher unemployment. It was named by Ben Bernanke, former Federal Reserve Board chairman. This crisis occurred in part because of several Bush-era tax cuts and many other tax provisions. In order to prevent the fiscal cliff crisis from happening, President Barack Obama and the U.S. government came up with plans to help the United States survive the crisis. However, President Obama and Congress struggled to reach a compromise on this contentious issue.

At the end of 2012, intense debate and media coverage about the fiscal cliff crisis drew public attention throughout the country. The media paid close attention to this battle. President Obama utilized social media to propagate his fiscal cliff plan and drum up support from people. He called on Americans to use social media to pressure Congress and support his plan. On Obama's Facebook page, there was the quote: "When the American people speak loudly enough, lo and behold, Congress listens." This was what he had said earlier at the White House in front of television cameras and a select group of middle-class taxpayers.

In addition, Narwhal, an Internet marketing system, was used by Obama to help shape the public debate over fiscal cliff negotiation. It was used to coordinate e-mail lists, social media research, and old-fashioned campaigning. President Obama made full use of his campaign Web site, Obama for America, to send supporters e-mails that promoted his stance on the fiscal cliff and encourage recipients to spread the message. This e-mail listed Obama's fiscal cliff proposal: extending tax cuts for 98 percent of Americans and 97 percent of small businesses, ending the tax cuts for the top 2 percent of Americans, and enacting more than $3 trillion in cuts. Obama emphasized that his plan concerned "what is the best for the middle class." The e-mail declared, "The president is fighting for you," and, "Your voice and action helped reelect President Obama."

Moreover, a series of infographics that illustrated Obama's argument were displayed on the Obama for America Web site with large "share" buttons, which people could click to "spread the word on Facebook and Twitter."

In a survey that the Obama for America campaign conducted among its volunteers after the election, nearly 80 percent indicated that they would keep volunteering, especially around the president's legislative agenda, so the administration attempted to follow up on this promise and

President Barack Obama writing a tweet beside Twitter cofounder Jack Dorsey during the first Twitter Town Hall at the White House on July 6, 2011. President Obama later held Twitter sessions in 2012 to built support during the fiscal cliff crisis.

keep supporters engaged through social media and other methods.

In a speech, Obama urged people to send a tweet to their congressmen to express their favor for his middle-class tax cuts plan. Later, in December 2012, Obama participated in a brief Twitter question-and-answer session. The keyword or hashtag for this session was My2K, which stood for "my $2,000." This was the average amount of money that most people would have to pay if Bush-era tax cuts policy expired. The My2K campaign personalized a complicated fiscal debate. More than a quarter of a million people used the hashtag and addressed their concern. Obama picked up eight tweets to answer, such as the question: "What is your opposition to taking away deductions for the 2 percent rather than up the rate? Seems like a reasonable compromise." Most of the tweets and Obama's answers reinforce his position on taxes and address concerns about losing tax deductions in fiscal cliff negotiations.

However, Obama's use of social media as his public relations machine was called into question. From people's comments and opinions in social media, the fiscal cliff deadlock jeopardized people's faith toward the government. Some news reports pointed out the angry tone of many posts on social media. The analysis about "what people were saying and how they were expressing their political opinions about the fiscal cliff and the negotiation on Twitter" revealed that 22 percent of the conversation mentioned the fiscal cliff through jokes and wordplay, and 24 percent of the social opinions were "based on strong negative emotions, including anger, disappointment, and fear." In 18 percent of the conversation, social media users discussed their opinions about "who had the right ideas about the country's fiscal and tax situation, and who is to blame for the failure to meet the midnight deadline." Emotions took over during the fiscal cliff negotiation on social media. *Fiscal cliff* even topped the list of words that people wanted to ban in 2012 because it was overused by media outlets.

Ali Velshi, a CNN anchor, used the word *embarrassment* to describe the fiscal cliff negotiation. This battle was well publicized throughout the world. The coverage in foreign media not only critiqued this crisis, but also viewed this crisis as a sign of American decline. Although the fiscal cliff did not occur, and the U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, and President Barack Obama had achieved the consensus, the debt ceiling was not changed, and the budget sequestration was only delayed, which might bring more problems and debate in the future. President Obama received his class-warfare trophy in this battle because his social media weapons were powerful, but the fiscal cliff was just one battle in a long war.

Narissra Maria Punyanunt-Carter
Iris Shuang Xia
Texas Tech University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Political Information Opportunity Structures; Political Parties; Taxes.

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Flaming

Internet flaming is a phenomenon that has evolved with the emergence of the Internet in society's communication. It is thought that the term *flaming* first appeared in 1983 in the *Hackers Dictionary*. It was defined as rapid and incessant tangential communication, or speaking ridiculously. As the Internet's presence grew, so did the scope of the behaviors considered as flaming. In general terms, flaming is deliberate, computer-mediated messages that have the intent of insulting an individual or group. Flaming is provocative communication that is not intended to be conversational. As the Internet has expanded over the years and the use of technology has increased, so has flaming. Flaming can be found on newsgroups, mailing lists, forums, text messages, Web sites, and other forms of mediated communication. There are said to be several characteristics and types of flaming.

Characteristics

When thinking of flaming, the dominant feature is the strong emotional basis of the messages, including their aggressive nature. Messages are repetitive and usually insulting to the target. The tone of the messages is hostile. Scholars M. Parks and K. Floyd, in 1996, described flaming as "verbal aggression, blunt disclosure and nonconforming behavior." Because flaming is nonconforming behavior, it breaks the normative rules of discourse including appropriate use of language, expression of emotion, self-control, turn-taking behaviors in regulating conversation, and civility.

Flamers, or authors of flaming messages, often feel uninhibited, and this allows them to use coarse and often profane language. Flamers exhibit hostile emotions that are often expressed in great intensity. Feelings are communicated unedited and unfiltered. Because of the emotionally charged exchanges, flamers appear to lack self-control. Communicative episodes are no longer conversational in tone.

The original definition of flaming in 1983 makes mention of the tangential nature that flaming can possess; this tangential nature marks the lack of self-control to regulate interactions. An important aspect of healthy and effective communication is appropriate turn taking. In a nonflaming interaction, individuals almost naturally take turns talking or exchanging messages. When one person monopolizes the talk floor, the interaction loses its balance. When imbalance is present regarding talk-floor regulation, individuals tend to feel less satisfied with the interaction. Flamers appear to be less aware of the social cues or are uninterested in responding to them.

The last noteworthy characteristic of flaming messages is the lack of civility that the interaction creates. Communication creates and builds relationships, as well as reshapes and destroys them. Flaming does not seek to build community. Flaming thrives on negativity.

Motivation and Types

The motivation behind flaming is unclear. Individuals write flaming messages for various reasons; sometimes, flaming is the result of the degeneration of an emotionally charged topic. As in face-to-face interactions, new members to Internet communities can be hazed into the group via flaming. Sometimes, a person is trying to get attention or provoke angry responses from others, which is called trolling. Flame trolling occurs when one person posts a particularly offensive and aggressive message targeted at enraging a group. The initial message that a troll posts is referred to as flame bait. The purpose of this message is to cause an intense reaction among the targeted group members. It is thought that the intention of trolls is to disrupt the group's harmony and sense of civility.

Trolls can often, but not always, start what is referred to as a flame war. When trolls are successful in creating discord, often infighting among group members will emerge. Flaming is a particularly destructive element in social media and online political discourse because it tends to polarize participants and/or shut down meaningful conversation altogether by belittling opposing opinions and destroying the environment of respect required for mature political disagreement.

Diane M. Monahan
Saint Leo University

See Also: Chat Rooms; Evolution of Social Media; FightTheSmears.com; Online Smear Campaigns; Writers and Social Media in Politics.

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Flash Mobs as a Political Tactic

Flash mobs are a recent global, social phenomenon that involves the aggregation of people in a predetermined public space for a brief period of time in order to commit a performative act that can include dancing, singing, or even nonsensical activities.

Derived from smart mobs, wherein artists perform to publicize their work or a particular cause they support, flash mobs are similarly intended to capture public attention and are typically enacted in nontraditional venues. The dependence of flash mobs on social media and mobile technologies is apparent because these events are predominantly organized through various social media platforms and mobile devices, some in a very spontaneous manner. In many instances, flash mobs are video recorded and posted online for posterity.

While some believe these acts to be random, many of the choreographed spectacles suggest that they have been previously rehearsed. According to Georgiana Gore, the first flash mob took place on June 2003 inside of Macy's department store in New York City. Organized by the senior editor of *Harper's Bazaar* fashion magazine, the event consisted of more than 100 people gathering for 10 minutes around a carpet, which sold for approximately $10,000, and before quickly dispersing, discussing among themselves and with the salespeople purchasing of the "love rug" for use at their free-love commune.

Flash mobs range from the politically charged to the commercial. Flash mobs that denounce unfair labor practices are just as commonplace as those that sell a product. An example of a political flash mob involved the retailer Target. In 2010, Target came under attack when it was revealed that because of a Supreme Court decision known as Citizens United that allowed for unregulated political spending by corporations, the company donated $150,000 to an antigay and anti-labor-rights candidate for the state of Minnesota. Funded by the political action group MoveOn.org, a flash mob converged on a Target store, singing and dancing to the Depeche Mode–inspired song "Target Ain't People."

Commercial advertisements that incorporate the use of flash mobs to promote their products are increasing. A notable example involves the T-Mobile dance, filmed at London's Liverpool Street subway station in the United Kingdom. A brainchild of the advertising firm Saatchi & Saatchi, the T-Mobile dance flash mob was performed by thousands of people at 11:00 A.M. on January 15, 2009, accompanied by a medley of songs. Initially, a single male began dancing to the song "Shout" in the middle of the subway station. He was quickly joined by a few more individuals, and the number of dancers grew exponentially as bystanders appeared to spontaneously join in the dance for the duration of the two-minute and 41-second advertisement. At its peak, thousands of people of all ages actively partook in the dance and significantly outnumbered the onlookers before quickly dispersing as the music ended. The advertisement for T-Mobile, a European-based mobile communication service provider, was subsequently shown on television and uploaded to YouTube.

As P. S. Grant, A. Bal, and M. Parent suggest, flash mobs enhance connectedness, positive emotions, consumer arousal, and consumer-to-consumer interaction. The popularity of T-Mobile's advertisement should come as no surprise; as evidenced by well over 36 million views on YouTube, the T-Mobile dance clearly exhibits both the cleverness of the advertisement and the appeal of flash mobs.

Law enforcement officials are fairly unanimous in their opposition to flash mobs, which is typical of the reaction other youth-inspired movements have elicited in the past. Appearing disinterested in differentiating between flash

An example of a flash mob organized for political purposes on October 12, 2012. This group came together to dance in Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C., as one of at least 19 simultaneous Dance for Obama flash mobs that gathered that day to support the 2012 Obama presidential election campaign. Photographers then posted photos of the event like this one on the photo-sharing site Flickr.

mobs and flash robs—organized criminal acts of shoplifting, stealing, and robbing both businesses and individuals that are perpetrated by groups of criminals—the language and descriptors used by law enforcement officials to describe spectacles of flash mobs include the newest crime wave, criminal flash mobs, the dangers of flash mobs, a concern for law enforcement agencies and local governments.

In fact, partly as a response to the recent increase in flash robs, law enforcement leaders are now using social media and communication technologies to respond to criminal activities and help assist in preventing crimes in their respective communities. Perhaps the response by law enforcement to flash mobs should not be surprising. As Tom Vanderbilt suggests, authorities and elites have had a longstanding distrust of crowds and often equate these gatherings with panics and other irrational behaviors.

However, most important is the understanding that flash mobs are meant to be nonviolent spectacles that create publicity and awareness for political purposes. As such, the political use of flash mobs is equally well documented. In January 2012, more than 250 Israeli women participated in a flash mob to protest the segregation of women in public spaces, taking over the Old Beit Shemesh city square and dancing to "Don't Stop Me Now" by the rock group Queen. Another widely publicized flash mob occurred during the 2012 U.S. presidential election. Dance for Obama flash mobs spread across 19 cities on October 12, 2012, when at exactly 3 P.M. Eastern Standard time, supporters participated in a choreographed dance with music that incorporated the president's campaign logo, "Forward."

As these many examples illustrate, flash mobs are creative and energetic, bringing people together to express political passions and protest or to enjoy a comedic or farcical moment in public spaces.

Rhon Teruelle
Leslie Regan Shade
University of Toronto

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Avaaz; Mobile/Smartphone Messaging; Social Media, Adoption of; Web Mapping and Online Politics.

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Fleming, John

Congressman John Fleming M.D. is a family physician from Minden, Louisiana. He is the representative to the U.S. House of Representatives from Louisiana's Fourth Congressional District. The Fourth District covers much of northwestern Louisiana from Shreveport to Kinder, with the Texas border at its western edge.

John Calvin Fleming, Jr., was born July 5, 1951, in Meridian, Mississippi. He grew up in a poor, working-class home in Lauderdale County. The family has deep American roots, which enabled him to join the Sons of the American Revolution and the Jamestowne Society.

While he was still quite young, his mother became disabled and was unable to work. His father died of a heart attack shortly before he graduated from high school. Without family support, he had to work his way through college. He attended the University of Mississippi in Oxford, graduating in 1973 with a B.S. degree. From early childhood, Fleming had an interest in medicine. His grandmother was a hospital nurse who told him stories from her nursing work. The stories were exciting and gave him a desire to learn medicine. His questions to her and others were scientific questions, such as why patients bled and how doctors stopped the bleeding.

Medical Career

Soon after graduating, Fleming entered the University of Mississippi School of Medicine in Jackson, Mississippi. In 1976, he was awarded an M.D. by the University of Mississippi. Between graduation in 1976 and 1982, he served in the Navy Medical Corps as a medical officer. It proved a good experience for extending his medical education.

Fleming's medical service in the U.S. Navy began at Camp Pendleton, California, where he was the chief resident in family medicine. He also trained in drug and alcohol treatment at the Navy Regional Medical Center at Long Beach, California. He then practiced military family medicine in Guam. Between 1979 and 1981, he served as the chairman of the Navy's Family Advocacy Committee. He also was the director of drug and alcohol treatment. Transferred to Charleston, South Carolina, he performed similar duties in drug and alcohol abuse treatment.

In 1978, John married Cynthia Bishop "Cindy" Fleming, with whom he had four children. All are now adults, and the couple has two grandchildren. Cindy is associated with several family businesses, including Bishop Properties, Fleming Subway Restaurants, Fleming Postal Services, Fleming Franchise Development, Fleming Salons Development, Fleming Dating Development, and Fleming Leasing.

After completing his service in the Navy, Fleming moved to Minden, Louisiana, in 1982, where he established his medical practice. The American Board of Family Practice awarded him certification. He joined the staff of Minden Medical Center and the Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians. In the Minden Medical Center, Fleming worked with chemically dependent people in the New Beginnings program.

In 2006, Fleming published his book, *Preventing Addiction: What Parents Must Know to*

Immunize Their Kids Against Drug and Alcohol Addiction. It discusses the progressive and incurable nature of addiction. He offers hope that addiction can be treated, but recovery rates are very low, he concludes. So, prevention is the best insurance against a life of drug addiction and its associated family misery. Much of the focus of the book is on children and how to help them avoid drug abuse. In 2007, he was named Louisiana Family Practice Physician of the Year by the Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians.

In addition to his medical practice, he has been involved with several nonmedical businesses. These businesses employ more than 500 people. Among his businesses are 33 Subway sandwich shops, which are located in northern Louisiana. He also owns Fleming Expansions LLC, which is a regional developer focused on building for the UPS Store. An incident in one of Fleming's Subway shops brought the accusation that a Muslim couple was refused service because of their religion. A review of the surveillance tapes proved the accusation to be false.

Dr. Fleming is a member of the First Baptist Church of Minden. He has served there as a deacon, Sunday school teacher, and school department director.

The Webster Parish Coroner Office is located in Minden, Louisiana. Between 1996 and 2000, Fleming served as the Webster Parish coroner. It is an elective office. He had entered the race for the coroner's office in 1987 against incumbent Dr. Charles Hancock. However, Fleming withdrew when he found that it would require too much time away from his medical practice. In 1995, Dr. Carl A. Hines, the incumbent Webster Parish coroner and a local Minden Democrat, decided not to seek re-election. Fleming, running as a Republican, defeated Dr. Carlos A. Irizarry, who was running as a nonpartisan. Fleming garnered 7,842 votes (60.6 percent) to 5,143 votes (39.6 percent) for Irizarry.

House of Representatives

In 2008, Fleming learned that Jim McCrery, the Louisiana Fourth District Representative to the U.S. House of Representatives, announced his retirement. McCrery had held the seat for 21 years. Fleming entered the Republican primary, a closed primary. Both the primary and the runoff election that followed were delayed because of Hurricane Gustav. When the primary was held on October 4, 2008, Fleming led with 14,500 votes (35.1 percent) over Jeff R. Thompson, a lawyer from Bossier City, who had 12,693 votes (30.8 percent); and Chris Gorman, who got 14,072 votes (34.1 percent). The runoff primary election was held at the same time as the national election on November 2, 2008, in which President Barack Obama was elected.

Fleming won the runoff election. His vote total was 43,012 votes (55.6 percent) to Gorman's 34,405 votes (44.4 percent). His victory was solid because he carried 12 of the 13 parishes in the Fourth District.

Managing Fleming's campaign for the House of Representatives seat was Dewey Lee Fletcher Jr. (1966–2009), a well-known political consultant. He used a talk show host and blogger in nearby Monroe, Louisiana. He had previously been the chief of staff for Congressman John Cooksey of the Louisiana Fifth Congressional District.

The disruption caused by Hurricane Gustav in late August and early September 2008 delayed the campaign for the general election for the House seat until December. This gave Fleming time to receive support from powerful sources. Medical lobbying groups supported his campaign. These included the Louisiana Academy of Family Physicians and the American Academy of Family Physicians' political action committee. In addition, Vice President Dick Cheney came to Shreveport to support Fleming's campaign by speaking at a fundraiser. On December 2, outgoing Congressman McCrery spoke in favor of Fleming when he appeared on the *Moon Griffon Show* radio program, syndicated across many Louisiana media markets.

Campaign arguments used included the claim that, if Fleming's opponent won, his first vote would be for Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) to be speaker of the House of Representatives. Fleming supported the fair tax idea as a replacement for income tax. The fair tax would raise revenue on consumption, with a top level of 23 percent. Overall, he sought a sound economic policy, sound energy policy, and reduced taxes while upholding the U.S. Constitution.

In the general election held on December 6, 2008, Fleming defeated Democratic candidate

Paul J. Carmouche. His concession statement was not delivered until December 10, 2008, because the race was close. Fleming received 44,141 votes (47.69 percent), and Carmouche polled 44,141 votes (47.69 percent), while two other candidates, Chester T. "Catfish" Kelly and Gerard J. Bowen of Bossier City, received 3,245 votes and 675 votes, respectively. The final tally gave Fleming a district-wide margin of 356 votes. The victory made Fleming the second Republican to be elected in the district since Reconstruction.

In 2010, Fleming ran unopposed in the Republican primary. In the general election, he was opposed by the Democrat Party candidate, David R. Melville, a United Methodist minister from Bossier City. Reverend Melville's brother-in-law is former Louisiana Governor Buddy Roemer. The independent candidate in the race was a community organizer from Shreveport, Artis Cash. When the votes were counted, Fleming won re-election with 62.3 percent of the vote, while Melville won 32.4 percent, and Cash 5.3 percent. Fleming, as a physician, ran strongly opposed to Obamacare. He promised voters that he would work to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Fleming won the 2012 race on November 6, 2012. He had no opposition in the Republican Party primary, and in the general election was opposed by a Libertarian Party nominee, Randall Lord of Shreveport, a former chiropractor and a psychology student at Louisiana State University. Fleming carried the district with 187,790 votes (75.3 percent) to Lord's 61,587 (24.7 percent).

Committees

The standing committees are the little legislatures of Congress. They deal with permanent issues that the nation faces, from agriculture to defense. Assignments are very important to members of Congress and to their constituents. Fleming has been assigned to the House Armed Services Committee and the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Fleming is assigned to two of the subcommittees of the Armed Services Committee. The Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces has jurisdiction over the majority of U.S. Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps acquisition programs. In addition, the subcommittee is responsible for U.S. Navy and Marine Corps aviation programs and the U.S. National Guard, Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps Reserve modernization and ammunition programs. He is also a member of the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces with jurisdiction over strategic weapons, space programs, ballistic missile defense, national intelligence programs, and Department of Energy national security programs.

The House Committee on Natural Resources handles legislation about American energy, mineral lands, mining, fisheries, wildlife, public lands, and more. It is divided into five subcommittees. Fleming is chairman of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans, and Insular Affairs. This subcommittee is responsible for all issues pertaining to wildlife resources, fisheries, oceanography, and insular areas. The insular areas of the United States are its island territories. Having served in Guam with the U.S. Navy, Dr. Fleming is well qualified to encourage legislation benefiting the people as well as insular matters of interest to the Navy as well as to the people of the islands. The Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans, and Insular Affairs uses social media, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and e-mail.

Of importance to an oil and gas-producing state is Fleming's assignment to the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources. This subcommittee has legislative jurisdiction over energy and mineral resources located on lands and waters owned or managed by the federal government, including oil and gas leasing on lands in northwest Louisiana and the outer continental shelf. In addition, the subcommittee is responsible for the supervision of the government's collection of energy and mineral royalties. It also uses social media.

Social Media

Social media usage is a growing edge in Fleming's political work. He uses his official congressional Web page (http://fleming.house.gov) as a base. It has links to Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn, Digg, Tumblr, Reddit, and Stumbleupon. Individual icons allow a visitor to use Really Simple Syndication (RSS), YouTube, Flicker, and Facebook. All of these links enable people join with Fleming, inform him of their views, and support him in his legislative work. There is a search

function for the Web site as well as a search function for legislation and e-mail contact. Another link is to a news room. Beside it is a link to blogs, which is inactive. The news room link leads to both news items and to blogs. E-mail is also available. Photos and videos are also available via links on the page.

Fleming's official campaign Web page (http://flemingforla.com) is also filled with social media links. Besides e-mail and Twitter, Fleming's campaign Web page uses a survey link and invites visitors to sign up to take action by volunteering, donating, getting information on events, and e-mailing. There are videos available, and there are news and issues links.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: Bachman, Michelle; Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Candidate Image; Forbes, J. Randy; Pence, Mike.

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Flickr

Flickr is a photo-sharing Web site that was developed and launched in 2004 by Caterina Fake and Stewart Butterfield. Users upload photographs that can then be privately or publicly shared. The site was one of the early and important social media and social networking sources. Users posted photographs of major environmental disasters and other public events to the site. In 2011, Flickr announced that 6 billion photographs had been uploaded since its founding. In recent years, other social networking platforms have also integrated photo sharing, providing competition to Flickr.

The site was originally included as part of a massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORG) that founders Fake and Butterfield created, called Game Neverending. It was developed by Ludicorp in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. They hoped that allowing game users to upload photographs would make the game more popular and raise money. The year of its development, 2002, was a difficult time for raising money in the technology industry. Fake states that they did no research on photo sharing, but benefitted from the simultaneous popularity of camera phones. The first photograph on Flickr was a photo of Caterina Fake's dog.

Flickr was launched in February 2004 and started taking off later that year. The developers intended the site to be a money-making venture. It was initially an instant message site, but various elements were added over the course of six months, including tagging, open APIs, Web 2.0, gadgets, and the ability to blog posted photos. In 2005, Flickr was purchased by Yahoo! Inc. The site is free and supported by advertising, but also has professional-level accounts for pay. Users create accounts and now must use their Yahoo!

login IDs to upload digital photographs to the Web site. They create tags for each of their photographs. Photos are collected in sets, rather than in albums.

Flickr was one of the first photo-sharing sites where people could upload photographs in near real time so that photographs of current events and political and social activism might be shared worldwide.

The new media scholar Clay Shirky devotes a portion of his book *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations* to discussing the power of Flickr as a photo-sharing Web site. He argues that it creates the possibility for people to connect horizontally, without a top-down organizational structure. Because users choose how to "tag the photographs they upload, thereby creating entire categories of topics that multiple users' photographs will inhabit; the structure of the site is an important change in how organizing occurs. Older photo-sharing Web sites such as Snapfish do not offer tagging, and thus do not create aggregates of multiple users.

In its early years, Flickr served to make near real-time photographs of important events available to the public before traditional media outlets could publish accounts of the events. On December 26, 2004, dozens of photographs of the Indian Ocean tsunami were posted to Flickr. The tsunami was caused by the 9.0 Sumatra–Andaman earthquake off Sumatra, Indonesia, and more than 150,000 people were missing or killed within the first day. Shirky says that the way these photos were purposed illustrates that publicly sharing photographs through Flickr takes on multiple uses. They become a way to share information with those affected and the broader public—about missing people, available resources, damaged areas, as well as the overall impact of the disaster. Flickr is cross-embedded in other social media platforms such as blogging, which also shares information more quickly than mass media outlets.

Shirky notes that the July 7, 2005, London bombings of public transportation were captured by cell phone cameras and uploaded to Flickr. Three underground (subway) trains and one bus were hit by bombs placed by four British men who were members of fundamentalist Islamic groups. The photos related to this event are aggregated under the London Bomb Blasts Community pool with tens of tags such as london77 (referencing the July 7 date) or londonbombings.

This photo from Flickr shows a man surveying damage from the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami among ruined houses and flooded land in Aceh, Indonesia, on January 5, 2005.

The Library of Congress has maintained a Flickr site since 2007. It does so in order to broaden the audience for its collection of photographs. The library shares photographs that are high quality, that do not have restrictions placed on viewing, to gain additional identifying information on individual photographs from the public.

Although Flickr continues to be used as a photo-sharing site, its popularity has decreased as the social networking Web site Facebook has integrated photo sharing and as mobile phones have become more widely used. Facebook has a built-in option for taking and uploading photographs, and reports that its users upload more than 100 million photographs a day. Instagram is a mobile phone application that allows users to apply

different filters to photographs to change the hue, shading, and tone of photos, and was purchased by Facebook in 2012. In 2012, a writer for the technology blog Gizmodo questioned whether Flickr might be dead. However, it continues to serve as an archive for larger sets of photographs and as a site for professionals to pay to host photographs in large quantities.

Deborah Gambs
City University of New York

See Also: Aggregation; Disaster Relief; Facebook; Infographic; Peer to Peer; Picasa; Web 2.0.

Further Readings

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Flog

A flog, or fake blog, may have the same interface as a credible blog, but this blog's purpose and its author(s) are usually dissimilar. The purposes of flogs range from promoting a product to discrediting a person or company. The authors of flogs might range from a company, marketing agency, public relations agency, or individuals who seek to discredit others. Flogs usually look like legitimate blogs, but they might be registered to a service (discoverable through Whois), which hides the domain owner. Sometimes, these flogs are discovered and made accountable by actual bloggers on the Web. When these flogs are found to be fraudulent, bloggers oust them on their social media platforms.

A Flog might promote a spoof or parody or serve as a marketing tool, or it might have a larger purpose to mislead others. Generally speaking, a flog is a blog pretending to be something that it is not. Some flogs focus on positive product reviews for companies. These flogs usually rave about new products that do not warrant positive reviews and cause consumers to waste time and money on products that do not work as intended. Some flogs choose to use actual people's names as pseudonyms to make the content more believable.

Some flogs are health related and focus on supplements, procedures, or other health enhancements that others could adopt to enhance their lives. These flogs adopt astroturfing messages, which are public relations tactics through which the real sponsor of the flog is not identified and the "blogger" appears generally disinterested in the content. Health-related flogs give testimonials to the powers of supplements or procedures. They may even have fake comments asking if the assertions are true, to which another "visitor" would be able to add his or her experience to the conversation. Assuming the identity of a competitor to create a flog is also a form of brandjacking. An example would be creating a flog for a political opponent and posting lewd pictures or posts to mar the candidate's brand.

Flogs may have many posts, but a sure sign of a flog is the one-post blog. Sites with no contact info should be looked at with a critical eye. The flogger may not spend much time customizing the page, using standard templates with no personalization. Fake blogs could also have viruses or other malware.

Legal and Ethical Implications

In the case of public relations, flogging violates the tenets of the professional code set by the Public Relations Society of America. As a professional standards advisory the group reminds its members that "open communication is essential for informed decision-making in a democratic society." Blogs promoting or endorsing a product are also subject to Federal Trade Commission mandates on disclosing whether or not they were paid for their endorsements. Violating the terms of service from the hosting agent (like Google for Blogger and Blogspot) could result in suspension of service. Google's terms of service (as of

November 2012) state that the company may review content to determine if it violates Google policies or is illegal.

Famous Flogs

In 2008, an ad agency created a flog for Walmart titled Walmarting Across America. This flog highlighted the pseudo adventures of a couple (Laura and Jim), capturing stories about Walmart as they traveled across America in their recreational vehicle. These "adventures" were actually created by the company, and the real Laura and Jim never actually left home. Laura was a freelance writer hired by a public relations firm to create the flog, and Jim was a photographer for the *Washington Post*. This flog was criticized for its lack of disclosure to the public.

Other well-known flogs include examples created by McDonald's and Coca-Cola. McDonald's attempted to garner buzz for a French fry that was discovered to have a surprisingly similar appearance to President Abraham Lincoln's face. Another flog focused on Coca-Cola's sugar-free brand, Zero. This blog focused on the zero moments of life and how life might be enhanced by consuming Zero.

In June 2011, a fake blog called A Gay Girl in Damascus made CNN headlines when an American man was found to be blogging as a Syrian–American lesbian. The man posted as "Amina," and even posted that she had been abducted, starting an international incident. Traditional media outlets picked up the story about the abducted blogger, and the U.S. State Department uncovered the true identity of the blogger.

Flogs and Fake Political Web Sites

Flogs and fake political Web sites have a similar aim: deceit. Sites like DemocraticNationalCommittee.org or RepublicanNationalCommittee.org were set up by an individual with requests to support the "candidate" financially. The sites looked like an authentic site, complete with images of the presidential candidates. ABC reported that a fuel-truck deliveryman was operating the sites and keeping any "campaign" donations submitted. Fine print disclosed that the site was "not connected with any federal elections." In this case, the sites appear to have been created for monetary gain. Smearing another candidate's character or campaign could be motivating factors for other kinds of fake political Web sites, or decoy sites, possibly even operated by an opponent's camp. Free blog systems, which require no knowledge of coding, make it easier for someone with no Web skills to create a fake political Web site. For candidates, monitoring the digital landscape for such sites is necessary for reputation management.

Political flogs and fake Web sites of national, state, and local campaigns have long been popular on the Internet. The first famous fake Web site in a national campaign appeared in 1996 when Bob Dole ran for president. During his campaign, a Bob Dole Web site emerged during his presidential bid. This was one of the first times that a political campaign had to use public relations tactics to address a fake site focused on a political candidate.

After the Bob Dole incident, flog-based Web sites continue to emerge in various forms. These flogs have been used in the political arena to provide fake information to the public in both candidate and advocacy-based politics.

Microflogging

Flogs were generally created around 2005, but the concept is becoming more popular across new social media platforms like Twitter and Google+. Twitter, a microblogging platform, is attracting a wealth of floggers who create pseudo accounts for people such as President Barack Obama and Texas Governor Rick Perry. These flogs are creating a new movement known as microflogging.

Jennifer Edwards
Sarah Maben
Tarleton State University

See Also: Anonoblog; Astroturfing; Blogs; Blogosphere; Decoy Campaign Web Sites; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Splogs; Twitter.

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Focus Groups

Focus groups are a qualitative research methodology in which a small group of participants are led through a focused group interview about their attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of a message, product, service, idea, or concept. Focus groups are used when group discussion might provide unique insights or data that would not emerge in an individual interview or survey. Focus groups are common in advertising and message testing, product design and development, political campaign research, problem identification research, and academic research. Robert K. Merton is credited with originating the method when testing group reactions to wartime propaganda and military recruiting materials at the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University.

In a typical focus group, seven to 12 individuals are led by a single moderator through a series of questions and answers about a product, advertisement, or idea. For example, as part of the product development cycle, a restaurant chain may conduct a focus group with new menu items where consumers can test and discuss a new product before it is made available to the public. Moderators usually work off a common set of questions, but are trained to keep the discussion open, natural, and moving.

Focus groups are dependent on a moderator creating a permissive, nonthreatening environment within the group where the participants feel comfortable discussing their opinions openly and without ridicule. Moderators may also use interview techniques such as free association, mind mapping, product sorts, and visualization. While not a requirement, focus groups are often held in special focus group facilitates with double-sided mirrors to allow concealed observation, kitchens to prepare new foods for taste-test discussions, and media exposure rooms to show films, ads, or other media. Participants are usually paid a nominal incentive stipend for their opinions, and the sessions typically last between 60 and 90 minutes.

Advantages

The primary advantage of focus groups over other research methods is the emphasis on group interaction. Because communication is a collaborative and social process, researchers can benefit from observing the interaction and communication occurring among the participants. The group discussion can spark thoughts, memories, or ideas in the participants, and researchers can detect the vernacular language that the interviewees use to jointly construct a conversation.

Focus groups are considered a more naturalistic approach than one-on-one interviews. Participants are able to see and test products and messages, and are able to express their opinions in a natural and in-depth manner. The method also allows researchers to probe for additional information and ask follow-up questions to clarify a point. Focus groups are flexible and can be conducted more quickly and inexpensively than other forms of market or public opinion research.

Focus groups are often used early in the research process to gather preliminary information or to explore gaps in knowledge at the onset of a study. They are well suited to identifying problems within organizations or campaigns and to generate new product or service ideas by studying the inadequacies of current offerings. Focus groups are often paired with quantitative surveys to further refine the conclusions derived from focus groups with large numbers of randomly sampled participants. In this way, focus groups often serve as a source of preliminary data to develop a questionnaire. Similarly, focus groups can work in tandem with participant observation and individual interviews, when appropriate. Furthermore, focus groups may also follow quantitative procedures to help interpret quantitative results and suggest avenues of future study.

In marketing research, where the technique is common, focus groups are used to investigate what people buy and why they buy; how consumers feel about brands, products, or product

categories; and how products and services are used. More abstractly, focus groups are used to study various lifestyle questions, such as how people spend their time, what makes people happy, what are people worried about, and what goals people have. Because the method is qualitative, focus groups are appropriate for exploring issues related to memory, emotion, experience, and imagery. In addition to examining what people think and how they think, focus groups can investigate why people think the way they do about the topic. Focus groups are often called group depth interviews because the method provides rich and detailed insights and understandings of feelings, thoughts, and perceptions.

Political and Legal Focus Groups

Focus groups have also become essential tools in political campaigns. Political consultants rely on focus groups to test lines of argument and attack; evaluate the effectiveness of speeches, ads, and debate responses; and ascertain what voters are looking for in a candidate. Republican pollster Frank Luntz is known for using focus groups to develop words and phrases that help Republican candidates frame issues and move public opinion to their advantage. Luntz advocates that Republicans use focus group–developed language, such as *climate change* instead of *global warming, death tax* over *estate tax,* and *energy exploration* in place of *oil drilling.* Luntz has received criticism for his efforts; for example, PolitiFact gave him the 2010 Lie of the Year award for his promotion of the phrase *government takeover* to describe the health care reforms advocated by President Obama.

Focus groups are also used in other contexts. Lawyers hold pretrial mock juries with focus group participants matched to the profiles of potential jurors to discover what issues might come up in the trial and which arguments and pieces of evidence would be most persuasive to eventual jurors. Focus groups can reveal deficiencies in a case and allow lawyers to assess witness testimony and other elements of the case. Packaging and product design is another common use of focus groups. Through usability testing and discussions of packaging characteristics, designers can better understand what product elements need revision. For instance, a car maker may conduct focus groups after test drives of a new car model to see if the seats are comfortable, if the controls are easy to use, and if the dashboard is logical.

Disadvantages

There are several disadvantages of focus groups, and focus groups are susceptible to several external validity threats. The moderator may artificially influence the discussion, researchers may be biased in their analysis of the group, participants may vulnerable to social desirability bias and say what they believe the moderator or other participants want to hear, discussions may produce conformity of opinion or group think, and the results from a limited number of groups may not be generalizable to other contexts. Like other forms of market and social science research, focus groups are dependent on self-reported data, and some topics are not feasible for group discussion. Among many designers and artists, focus groups are seen as antithetical to the artistic process. For example, Steve Jobs, the cofounder, chairman, and chief executive officer of Apple, famously said, "It's really hard to design products by focus groups. A lot of times, people don't know what they want until you show it to them."

Virtual Focus Groups

Virtual focus groups are now commonplace. With this approach, prescreened participants log onto teleconferencing software at a predetermined time to participate in an online focus group. As with face-to-face groups, interviewees can see and hear each other and have a real-time discussion about the topic. Interviewees for online focus groups are usually recruited through online panels, and the method allows organizers to easily gather qualified participants from around the world to match the desired research criteria. This approach is normally less expensive than traditional focus groups because moderators and facilitators are not required to travel to the participants. Focus groups can also be held over social media platforms. Companies can create social media apps that allow them to survey and interact with their customers. Facebook and Twitter posts can be mined to identify emerging trends. This process, called social listening, is the next frontier of qualitative research, and is still under development.

Dial Focus Groups

Another type of focus group is a dial focus group. In a dial group, participants register their opinions confidentially on wireless, handheld dials. Participant opinions can be electronically gathered, aggregated, and instantly analyzed, after which the moderator can use follow-up questions to discuss why the group, or subsets of the group, responded the way they did. Dial focus groups are used for television, film, advertising, and other forms of media audience research. It is rare for a movie or television studio to release a film or television show without first evaluating the program with a dial group. Researchers can track the audiences' second-by-second evaluation of the message to see which elements receive a positive response and which sections are negatively evaluated.

Additionally, dial focus groups are prominent features of political news. During the 2008 and 2012 U.S. presidential debates, CNN used dial focus groups to provide viewers a real-time, on-screen reaction graphic showing undecided voters' reactions to the candidates.

Dan Schill
Southern Methodist University

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Digital Cultures Research Center; Polling; Social Listening; Survey Monkey.

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Folksonomy

Folksonomy refers to the ability of individuals to annotate and categorize content, particularly Internet content. The term is a combination of "folks," an informal reference to people in general, and "taxonomy," the science of creating categories. Also known as "social tagging," the creation of folksonomies is one of the central characteristics of many Web 2.0 services. Folksonomy refers to the complete body of user-created tags, but the word is also used to describe the act of users creating tags. Information architect Thomas Vander Wal is generally credited with first coining the term in 2004.

Folksonomies have been characterized as bottom-up, self-organizing systems that are idiosyncratic, rather than systematic. Empirical analyses of folksonomies find that shared vocabularies emerge from popular categorization. However, social tagging has been criticized for its potential to introduce key words and Internet metadata of doubtful quality that may inadvertently spread popular misconceptions.

Supporters state that folksonomies may increase the capabilities of the Semantic Web, a project by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to evolve the Web from a network of documents to a network of data by enabling systems of categorization based in social practice. To what extent the emergent thesaurus qualities of social tagging may replace or improve upon existing forms of classification remains to be seen.

The social bookmarking site Delicious and the photo site Flickr were the first Web sites to popularize social tagging, which has since become a standard feature on many sites with user-generated content, including Facebook and YouTube.

Uses of Social Tagging

A tagging system is comprised of the interaction of three elements: the users, the objects that are tagged, and the tagging key words. Social tagging systems are generally used in three ways: (1) as a tool for personal data organization, (2) as a platform for sharing information with friends and colleagues, and (3) as a method of crowd categorization.

Social tagging as a tool for personal data organization is most evident in sites like Flickr and

Delicious, where users tag photos and links with keywords that are saved to be reviewed later. The practice of tagging photographs with the names of friends on Facebook is a good example of using social tagging for sharing information with others in a social network. Professional or special-interest communities may use alternative spelling tags to differentiate their use of a keyword term from more casual uses.

Crowd categorization occurs on sites where individuals may apply keywords to resources, resulting in a collective system of organization. For example, on Flickr and Delicious, users assign tags, or keywords, to photos they upload or links to interesting Web sites they want to save. On Flickr, users may assign tags to photos taken by others, broadening the keywords associated with a particular image. On Delicious, many users may submit links to the same sites, assigning tags that are similar to or different from tags created by others. Delicious is a broad folksonomy because many people tag the same items. Flickr is a narrow folksonomy because although many people engage in tagging, individual photos are tagged by very few people.

Social tagging has the potential to improve a site's search engine optimization as more individuals who tag an Internet resource also help define it. Search engine algorithms are generally thought to give positive weight to social tagging when calculating page ranks, particularly to resources that are referenced in social bookmarking sites like Delicious.

Susan Jacobson
Florida International University

See Also: Crowdsourcing; Delicious.com; Facebook; Flickr; Geotagging; Search Engine Optimization; Social Bookmarking; StumbleUpon; Web 2.0.

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Forbes, J. Randy

J. Randy Forbes is the Virginia Fourth Congressional District representative to the U.S. House of Representatives. He is a Republican and is actively connected to many Virginia political social media accounts.

James Randy Forbes was born February 17, 1952, in Chesapeake, Virginia. He graduated from Great Bridge High School in Chesapeake in 1970. He was valedictorian of his class at Randolph–Macon College in 1974, graduating with a bachelor in political science. In 1977, he took a J.D. degree from the University of Virginia School of Law. He then worked in private law practice, specializing in work with small and medium-size firms. He eventually became a partner in a ranking law firm in Tidewater, Virginia.

Forbes continues to make Chesapeake his home with his wife Shirley. Together, they have four children. He identifies himself as a Southern Baptist. He attends Great Bridge Baptist Church, where he has taught adult Sunday school for more than 20 years. He is a member of the American Bar Association, Cancer Working Group, Chesapeake Bar Association, Chesapeake Farm Bureau, Chesapeake Fraternal Order of Police Auxiliary, Chesapeake Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Parents' Council, James Madison University, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, National Leadership Council of the New Majority Council, Omicron Delta Kappa, Phi Beta Kappa, and the Virginia State Bar Association.

First elected to public office in 1990, Forbes won a seat in the Virginia House of Delegates, which is the lower house of the Virginia General Assembly. He became one of 100 delegates meeting in the capitol building in Richmond, Virginia. Members serve two-year terms and are elected in odd-numbered years with inauguration occurring in the following even-numbered year. While in the House, Forbes served seven years as the House Republican floor leader.

From 1997 until 2001, Forbes served in the Virginia State Senate, where he became the Republican floor leader in his second year of service. He also served as the chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia from 1996 to 2001.

In 2001, Forbes won election to the U.S. House of Representatives in the 107th Congress

to fill the vacancy in the Fourth District. The incumbent representative, Norman Sisisky, a Democrat, died while in office on March 29, 2001. Sisisky was a very blue-dog Democrat. He was possibly the most conservative Democrat in the House at the time of his death.

In the special election to fill the unexpected vacancy, Forbes faced Louise Lucas, a Democrat serving in the Virginia Senate. He won with 52 percent of the vote to Lucas's 48 percent. His election was aided by campaigning in the district election for him by Vice President Dick Cheney, Barbara Bush, former first lady and the mother of President George W. Bush. Bush and Cheney used automated phoning as a campaign tool in order to promote Forbes's election. Forbes attributed his victory to the aid provided by President Bush.

Representative J. Randy Forbes speaks with Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Gary Roughead prior to March 1, 2011, budget testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, on which Representative Forbes serves.

2002–2010 Elections

In 2002, he ran for a full term unopposed by a Democrat. In 2004, he was opposed by Jonathan R. Menefee, a young U.S. marine who had been honorably discharged because of a service-related injury. Menefee was a 26-year-old law student in California when he attempted to capture his home district's seat. He was an inexperienced candidate whose stand on many issues ranged from progressive to libertarian. A Democrat, he was financially supported by the Chesapeake Democratic Committee. Nottoway Democrats also contributed to his campaign. He received 35 percent of the vote to Forbes's 65 percent. After his defeat, he left the district and eventually moved to Chicago.

In 2006, Forbes was unopposed in his re-election. The Fourth District had been realigned following the 2000 census, so it was more difficult for a Democrat to win. In the run-up to the election of 2008, Forbes raised nearly $1 million dollars for his campaign war chest. He defeated Andrea Miller in the election of 2008.

Andrea Miller, who some characterized as a very liberal political unknown, was a 54-year-old former college professor and a computer and homeland-security consultant to governments in Northern Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. She was a newcomer to the Fourth District who had moved into the Summerford subdivision off Winterpock Road in Chesterfield County just two years earlier. Her reason for moving was to escape the corrupting influences in Columbia, Maryland.

Miller had some political experience as a member of the Virginia Anti-War Network. She had been a regional coordinator for Ohio Representative Dennis J. Kucinich's campaign for the presidential nomination. In 2004, she worked as a regional coordinator for MoveOn.org.

Campaigning on a liberal or progressive agenda by Virginia standards, she wanted American troops out of Iraq immediately, to block drilling for oil off the east coast and in Alaska. Universal health care and a living wage along with limits on carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions and an end to the USA PATRIOT Act were part of her policy positions to be enacted if elected. She would also promote developing and marketing alternative energy sources such as wind or solar to create jobs. She opined that southside Virginia agricultural wastes (tobacco, peanuts, corn, and other vegetation) could

be used as fuels that would be renewable. She rejected the belief of Forbes that the federal government needed to institute an alternative energy source Manhattan Project.

Miller had difficulty raising campaign funds. She was so short of campaign funds that her campaign manager and her financial director both quit because they could not be paid. This action attracted some media attention to her campaign. She had hopes that she would be able to ride the coattails of presidential candidate Barack Obama and Democrat senatorial candidate Mark R. Warner. Even though she claimed to be a computer specialist, she relied on traditional campaigning tools—personal appearances, direct mailing, and door-to-door canvassing. She opened campaign offices in several places in the district. All was to no avail as she was defeated handily by Randy Forbes.

In 2010, Wynne LeGrow challenged Forbes for the Fourth District seat as the Democrat Party's nominee. LeGrow was a naturalized immigrant from Quebec, Canada. He had retired as a physician specializing in nephrology who made his home in Emporia, Virginia. He supported letting the Bush tax cuts expire, declared global warming real and anthropogenically caused, and held other positions that would be opposed by conservatives. Forbes refused to engage in debates or in a public forum on the issues. LeGrow was able to raise $100,000 in campaign funds, but was only able to get 38 percent of the vote to Forbes's 62 percent.

2012 Election

In the 2012 election, Forbes had his first Republican opposition from Bonnie Girard. She had been an exchange student in China and was concerned about the growing Chinese influence in Washington, D.C. She had developed a consulting company in China, the China Channel Consultants, to aid American firms seeking to do business in China. She unsuccessfully tried to make an issue of the defense contractors that had contributed to Forbes's campaign. In the open primary voting, in which anyone can vote by declaring themselves a Republican, she only received 10 percent of the vote to Randy Forbes's 90 percent.

Running for his sixth term, Forbes faced Democrat Party candidate Ella Ward in the general election. She had previously decisively won the Democratic Party nomination in the primary election by defeating Joe Elliot, an art teacher from South Chesterfield who was a first-time candidate. She was a retired teacher and administrator. She had served as a Chesapeake City Council member and as a state Board of Education member for eight years. Her victory party celebrated capturing 85 percent of the primary votes.

In 2012, the Fourth District had been realigned following the census of 2010. It is a sprawling district that stretches from the North Carolina border north to the suburbs of Richmond and includes the Atlantic shore, the city of Chesapeake, and much of Suffolk, as well as part of 13 other cities and counties as far west as Nottaway. Specifically, it includes Chesapeake City, Isle of Wright, Sussex, Emporia City, Dinwiddie, Amelia, Powhatan, Chesterfield, Petersburg, and Colonial Heights counties.

Many of the people in the district were not strongly devoted to either the Republican or Democratic Party. Participation in party races was often low. However, the issues of jobs and the economy were significantly important to many voters. Others were concerned about the growing national debt, not raising taxes, and the need for less government regulation. These issues were prominent in Forbes's campaigning. In contrast, Ward focused on bringing in new jobs, improving education, and not changing Social Security or Medicare, even if it required higher taxes or increasing the national debt.

Forbes had a good campaign chest of more than $427,000 to start his campaign, compared with Ward's $6,540. Ward had to deal with the fact that many Democrats did not want to contribute until after the primary election. She also had to run a low-tech campaign with door-to-door campaigning. Act Blue was used as an online form of social media to recruit supporters and donors to her campaign. Only two signed up to contribute $1,000. She also gained support from WarIsaCrime.org, an antiwar Web page. It castigated him for allegedly voting for the Bush agenda 98.8 percent of the time.

The progressive supporters of the page were bothered by the fact that Randy Forbes had been the founder and was chairing the Congressional Prayer Caucus, which encourages its members

to sponsor initiatives to "protect religious freedom in America and to preserve its rich spiritual heritage."

Committees

Forbes has been an effective speaker on issues that come before the Subcommittee on Crime. He has engaged in debates on issues of gangs and illegal immigration. He serves on the House Committee on Armed Services. He is a member to two of its subcommittees: the House Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces and the House Subcommittee on Readiness. He is also a member of the House Committee on Judiciary and serves on two of its subcommittees: the House Subcommittee on the Constitution and the House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.

Besides founding the Congressional Prayer Caucus, Forbes also founded the Congressional China Caucus. He also belongs to the following caucuses: Army, Navy/Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Special Operations Force, Children's, Congressional Modeling and Simulation, Congressional Pro-Life, Diabetes, Historic Preservation, House Republican Israel, Immigration Reform, International Conservation, Internet, Military Retiree–Veterans, and the Missing and Exploited Children's. He is also a member of the Alzheimer's Task Force, Cancer Working Group, Chesapeake Bay Watershed Task Force, and the Judicial Activism Working Group.

Social Media

Forbes has not had serious electoral competition since entering the House of Representatives; however, he understands the new media and is using it. His congressional Web page issues a weekly newsletter to 85,000 subscribers. The Web site has been recognized by the Congressional Management Foundation as one of the best Web sites in Congress. The Richmond *Times Dispatch* has recognized his Web site as commendable for its openness and clarity of purpose. It uses social media links to blogs, news sites, audio, video, and the China and Prayer Caucuses. In addition, there are links to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instapoll. Blogs are linked. There is a search function for the Web site as well as a search functions for legislation and for issues.

The House page Randy Forbes uses (http://forbes.house.gov/) is loaded with links to his life, to issues, to caucuses, and to news. It also provides a contact point for constituents to request constituent services. He has also used a campaign Web page, which give opportunities to join his campaign as a volunteer or as a contributor. Very prominent on his campaign Web page are videos, Facebook, and Twitter. A link to sign up for e-mail news is also available.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: Bachman, Michelle; Campaigns, 2012; Fleming, John.

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Forecasting Elections

To forecast an election means to declare the outcome before it happens. Scientific approaches to election forecasting include polls, political stock markets, and statistical models. Scientific forecasting offers estimates based on some scientific procedure, such as a simulation, market analysis, sample survey, or statistical model, providing information to leaders and followers about a likely outcome, allowing them to make adjustments they feel necessary.

There are three main components to a forecast: the raw information that is aggregated, the transformation of this information into probabilistic forecasts, and any bias that shifts the stated forecasts. The raw information used by the poll-based forecasts is public and hence should be in the information set of Intrade investors, and beyond this, prediction markets aggregate dispersed and unpublished information. As to transformations, the poll-based forecasts have sophisticated methods for transforming information into probabilities. In addition, it is now possible to correct for biases in reporting or look past the biases for the informational content of the forecast.

Currently, there is considerable interest in election forecasting, and a common goal for these studies is the development of a model inevitably based on aggregate time-series data, which predicts election returns. The resulting models, some of which are quite accurate, can differ a good deal in specification and estimation; also, they vary in complexity, making them more or less accessible to the engaged voter. Some forecasters suggest that such models should be relatively easy to understand and use so that citizens can utilize them.

Other things being equal, a model based on sound electoral theory will perform better than an empirically induced, atheoretical model. The steps for constructing a forecasting model are much the same as for any social scientific regression model: Consult theory, express the theory in an equation, gather good data on the variables, estimate the equation, evaluate the estimates, and judge the fit. Special attention must be given, then, to the question of model fit. Assuming that the model gives a good picture of the real world, the analyst can go on to forecast. Data on the dependent variable comes from a rather neglected item in national election studies: "Who do you think will be elected president in November?" is the question that has been posed in presidential pre-election surveys since 1956, and the answers allow us to estimate how well the electorate forecasted the winner in each of these presidential contests. What should we expect the estimates to look like? In some ways, the null hypothesis is most plausible; that is, citizens do not possess crystal balls, and therefore their guesses will be essentially random, with some having good luck and others having bad luck.

In Western democracies, guessing who will win elections is a long-standing tradition, and statistical forecasting models started to appear around 1980. There are now many such models for U.S. elections, and a forecasting instrument should be evaluated by four criteria: accuracy, lead, parsimony, and reproducibility. In forecasting, a necessary evaluation standard is accuracy. If a model routinely produces inaccurate forecasts, it is not good. However, accuracy is not a sufficient condition. Besides accuracy, a model must have lead; that is, the forecast must be made before the event: The farther in advance a model produces accurate forecasts, the better; little is gained from a model that forecasts a few days before the election. Such models may be theoretically tautological, not to say empty, and lack the anticipatory feel expected from a true forecast.

A forecasting model should also be parsimonious, as in the principle of Ockham's razor: A few well-specified variables will work better than many questionable ones. The standard of parsimony bears on the last standard, that of reproducibility. In general, parsimonious models are easier to understand and are therefore easier to reproduce. The criterion of accuracy deserves special attention. A model that fits better, forecasts better. For instance, in classical regression analysis, the two measures of goodness of fit are the R-squared (or adjusted R-squared) and the standard error of estimate.

Forecasting is widely used in economics and marketing, for instance. Some models assume the time-series data follows a stationary, stochastic process, including the autoregressive (AR) model and autoregressive moving average processes (ARMA) model, state researchers X. Jin, A.

Gallagher, L. Cao, J. Luo, and J. Han. They conclude that models (e.g., AR_Flickr, SAR_Flickr, and Bass_Flickr) extended to consider the Flickr features can achieve overall lower prediction error compared with traditional models (AR, SAR, and Bass), which only consider sales history. In general, considering the Flickr features gives more robust results, with comparable standard deviation with the SAR models and much lower standard deviation than the AR and Bass models. Social multimedia hosting and sharing Web sites such as Flickr, Facebook, YouTube, Picasa, ImageShack, and Photobucket, are increasingly popular around the globe. A major trend in current studies on social multimedia is using social media sites as a source of a huge amount of labeled data for solving large-scale computer science problems in computer vision, data mining, and multimedia.

Twitter

For instance, the successful use of social media in the U.S. presidential campaign of Barack Obama has established Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, and other social media as integral parts of the political campaign toolbox, according to scholars A. Tumasjan, T. O. Sprenger, P. G. Sandner, and I. M. Welpe. While some political analysts are already turning to the Twittersphere as an indicator of political opinion, others have suggested that the majority of the messages are pointless babble, and their study is intended to answer the question whether microblogging messages can actually inform about public opinion and the political landscape in the offline world by exploring whether: (1) Twitter is used as a vehicle for political deliberation by looking at how people use microblogging to exchange information about political issues, (2) Twitter messages reflect the political preferences and the political landscape offline in a meaningful way, (3) individual accounts show evidence of party bias, and (4) the content of Twitter messages can be used to forecast the election result.

User-generated content has experienced an explosive growth both in the diversity of applications and the volume of topics covered by users. Content published in microblogging systems like Twitter is thought to be feasibly data mined in order to take the pulse of society, according to scholar D. Gayo-Avello, and recently a number of positive studies have been published praising the goodness of relatively simple approaches to sampling, opinion mining, and sentiment analysis. Gayo-Avello attempted to play devil's advocate by detailing a study in which such simple approaches largely overestimated Obama's victory in the 2008 U.S. presidential elections. Twitter is a microblogging service, that is, a system to publish short text messages, or tweets, which are shown to users who are following the author. Many Twitter users decide not to protect their tweets, and hence, they appear in the so-called public timeline. Such tweets are accessible by means of Twitter's application programming interface (API) and they are easy to collect. Twitter's original slogan "What are you doing?" encouraged users to simply share updates about their daily activities with their friends; nevertheless, Twitter has since evolved into a complex information dissemination platform, especially during mass-convergence situations. Twitter users not only provide information about themselves, but may also publish real-time updates on current events.

Social networking is about people with similar interests building a virtual community, and its lynchpin is building trust that leads one to share what is valuable, engaging others to move from taking value to adding value by participating, thereby completing the cycle and creating true collaboration. Social networking can be used by agencies in a variety of ways, ranging from creating cross-government coordination and knowledge management to recruitment activities and supporting event announcements to the public.

Some scholars have found that Twitter is indeed used as a platform for political deliberation. The mere number of tweets reflects voters' preferences and comes close to traditional election polls, while the sentiment of political Twitter messages closely corresponds to the electorate's sentiment and evidence from media coverage of the campaign trail. However, the demographics of Twitter users may raise concerns that samples may not be representative of the electorate. Political heterogeneity and political disagreement are wholly distinct phenomena and within discussion networks they served dialectically opposing roles: Disagreement leads to attitude change, while heterogeneity discourages it. At the neighborhood

level, however, the degree of heterogeneity serves as a heuristic for the electoral viability of candidates, with greater heterogeneity increasing the chances that citizens will change their minds. Moreover, casual conversations among neighbors are a crucial venue of informational exchange about politics. Although a more definitive answer surely awaits future research, informal communications among neighbors and discussants may also play important roles in driving voter volatility and determining voter preferences in other new democracies where partisan cues and party roots in the electorate are weak.

Informal discussion with close confidants, casual acquaintances, and even complete strangers is a wholly rational way for citizens to adapt to the lack of standing information in systems without long-established political institutions or, as in Brazil, where elites have created a highly complex party system. This is not to deny, of course, that citizens in established democracies do not learn or gain exposure to persuasive information through discussion with peers. It is rather to reiterate that political discussion in new democracies is more meaningful and politically consequential because it can yield massive preference change during election campaigns that determines who governs. What does this suggest about the quality of citizenship in Brazil and other new democracies?

Political behavior scholars often portray political independents with volatile preferences, not as open-minded and inquisitive, but as unaware and manipulable. Comparativists favor stable institutions with deep societal roots. Social network theorists express concerns that deliberation can cause group think, voter cascades with the blind leading the blind, herd behavior, or stampedes. The alternative model, the media exposure thesis, paints an equally unimpressive picture of atomized citizens who are politically manipulable by the media, a scenario reminiscent of the pessimistic mass society model that was in academic vogue a few decades ago. Democratic theorists typically consider deliberation,

Members of the U.S. Navy watching the first 2012 presidential debate between President Barack Obama and former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney on October 4, 2012. Beginning with the 2008 U.S. presidential election, election forecasting has begun to more actively tap into the rich data provided by social media, especially such sites as Twitter and Flickr, with varying degrees of success.

especially in heterogeneous settings, as a public good, improving the quality of citizenship and democracy by promoting political tolerance, engagement, and knowledge. Summarizing, the use of Twitter users to predict the outcomes of elections is still a controversial topic.

As of December 2008, 11 percent of American adults online were using Twitter or analogous services. While that is an important amount, the vast majority of Internet users, not to mention people in general, are not using Twitter. Thus, Twitter users are just a sample and are probably a very biased one. In addition, another kind of bias permeates research: the tendency of researchers to report positive results while suppressing negative ones. These so-called conclusions from a few, selected positive experiments can be straightforwardly applied to any other conceivable scenario.

In short, the 2008 U.S. presidential elections could not have been accurately predicted from Twitter by applying the most common current methods, says Gayo-Avello so the problem with predicting the outcomes of these elections was not in the data collection. Instead, the problem occurred in minimizing the importance of bias in social media data and by ignoring how such data differs from the actual population. Until social media becomes regularly used by the vast majority of people, its users cannot be considered a representative sample, thus forecasts from such data will be of questionable value at best and incorrect in many cases.

Social media is not a representative and unbiased sample of the voting population: Some strata are underrepresented, whereas others are overrepresented in Twitter, and demographic bias should be acknowledged and predictions corrected on its basis, states Gayo-Avello. Simplistic sentiment analysis methods should be avoided, and political discourse is plagued with humor, double entendres, and sarcasm, and this makes determining political preference of users hard and inferring voting intention even harder; remember, one cannot consistently predict elections from Twitter.

Other scholars argue that information on Twitter can be aggregated in a meaningful way. Their results demonstrate that Twitter can be seen as a valid, real-time indicator of political sentiment. Little research has yet been conducted in this area, leaving many questions unresolved. Further research should test whether text analysis procedures, which are more closely tailored to the political debate, reflecting both the specifics of microblogging and the political issues, can produce even more meaningful results. Researchers should also try to capture the context of a particular statement in a more comprehensive manner, including threads of conversation and links to information beyond the tweet.

Social Multimedia Patterns

Jin, Gallagher, Cao, Luo, and Han take a new path to explore the global trends and sentiments that can be drawn by analyzing the sharing patterns of uploaded and downloaded social multimedia. In a sense, each time an image or video is uploaded or viewed, it constitutes an implicit vote for (or against) the subject of the image. This vote carries along with it a rich set of associated data, including time and (often) location information. By aggregating such votes across millions of Internet users, social multimedia may demonstrate its usefulness in serving as an information platform for social science studies, such as politics, economics, and marketing.

They propose several Flickr features considering images, tags, and users for building prediction models and monitoring trends; they studied the 2008 U.S. presidential election and showed that Flickr provided hints that indicated the winners of the party presidential primaries and the presidential election. Based on Flickr features, they proposed the three new models (AR_Flickr, SAR_Flickr, and Bass_Flickr) to extend widely used traditional prediction models in economics and marketing. Experiments on popular products show that these models produce much better prediction performance, both in terms of lower error rate and higher robustness.

The forecaster, in formulating a model of election outcomes, should include variables that are well-measured proxies for individual voter decisions as they aggregate, and statistical modelers compete among themselves and with pollsters (and possibly other approaches) for the better forecasting instruments, scholar M. S. Lewis-Beck states. Questions to be answered are the same as elsewhere. Which forecasting instrument, from

which approach, has more accuracy, lead, parsimony, and reproducibility?

In the world of forecasting, close attention is needed. Forecast is news, and as such, the media may wish to manage it a bit. Says Lewis-Beck,

> Once, in France, a leading conservative daily declined to publish the article they had commissioned from me, because they did not like its forecast of a Socialist win. It takes work to explain to them that the forecast comes out of the calculations in the model, not out of my own personal political calculations.

Jaime Raúl Seixas Fonseca
Technical University of Lisbon

See Also: Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Data Mining; Evolution of Social Media; Focus Groups; Innovation and Technology; Media and Communications Policy; News Media; Polling; Predictive Analytics.

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Foreign Policy

The rise of digital resources, particularly social media, has had a profound impact upon the practice of foreign policy, and has introduced a number of issues that influence the policies of nations in international affairs. New digital communication technologies have introduced a number of new foreign policy considerations, including issues that relate to state sovereignty, the rise of nonstate actors, and the possibilities of cyber warfare and increased surveillance. At the top of the list, however, are considerations as to the presumed democratization function of social media, global Internet governance, and issues related to state control of sensitive information, as embodied in the Julian Assange/WikiLeaks controversy.

Early analysis of the Internet focused attention on the supposed democratizing nature of the Internet, and particularly the advent of reciprocal, user-generated content. One of the first analysts to argue that electronic networks had a democratizing effect was Christopher Kedzie, who wrote as early as 1993 about the "dictator's dilemma," or the choice that repressive governments faced when creating information technology networks, which would spur economic growth, but also create space for public criticism of the regime. Kedzie argued that the reciprocity in e-mail, or the ability to respond to messages easily via the same medium and to the same audience created an inherent democratic virtue embedded within the technology, and that this ability to rapidly send out messages would play the same role in challenging nondemocratic states as other types of information had played in the former Soviet Union.

Later policymakers and analysts followed Kedzie's lead, although with a broader understanding of the development and potential of information technologies. U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright spoke of the difficulty in controlling information networks, using the metaphor of "nailing Jell-o to the wall" to illustrate the difficulties in controlling user-generated messages. This assumption carried through several U.S. administrations, including those of Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, although the technologies and capacities of social media continued to change. In fact, the U.S. government,

through a number of agencies, gave significant funding to spur technological innovation aimed at creating a safe space for Internet activists, particularly those from repressive regimes.

During Barack Obama's administration, the elevation of social media specifically continued as a focus of foreign policy. After she was named secretary of state, Hillary Clinton named Alec J. Ross as senior advisor for innovation. Ross spearheaded the 21st Century Statecraft initiative, which sought to adapt the practice and consequences of statecraft by deploying information technology in innovative applications. In addition to encouraging the adoption of social media in public outreach, Ross also advocated the development of new technological tools to meet a variety of political, developmental, and criminal problems. For example, Ross encouraged the leadership of Twitter to delay an upgrade scheduled immediately prior to the 2009 Iranian presidential election, which allowed Twitter users to use the service as a form of mass protest against the Iranian government.

Clinton's emphasis on social media took on two additional distinct dimensions that moved social media closer to the center of U.S. foreign policy. The first was further engaging social media for enhanced public outreach, particularly to foreign publics, or "digital diplomacy." The second, however, was Clinton's Internet Freedom initiative, which she articulated in a speech in early 2010. In her speech, Secretary Clinton argued that information technology networks were creating a "new nervous system" for the globe, in which information about global events is translated in real time around the world. As part of the policy, Clinton committed the United States to financing programs to further develop circumvention tools and training around the world for social media activists to skirt official governmental controls. Although freedom of information had long been a key plank of U.S. foreign policy, Clinton's extension of this to the specific technologies of social media committed the U.S. government, some argued, to a technological utopianism that was unrealistic.

Internet Governance

Because the Internet and social media rely on international electronic networks that are not constrained by national borders, one critical foreign policy issue that arose around the development of the Internet was that of Internet governance, or the mechanisms and policies by which global technological networks are governed. This has created a significant foreign policy issue because governments and other organizations attempt to develop policies that give them a greater stake in the development and deployment of the Internet.

A number of nations argued that the United States' almost exclusive control over the technical structure of the network wasn't justified, given the global importance of the network. As a result, there were calls for alternative models for governance that would diminish the United States' role, expressed primarily through its control of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). Attempts to generate global consensus on Internet governance structures, however, led to little progress. In 2005, the United Nations sponsored the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS), and in a series of subsequent meetings, explored the possibility of developing alternative modes of governance, involving institutions such as the International Telecommunications Union. Ongoing disagreements over policy issues, such as whether Internet activists or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) should be considered "stakeholders," for example, kept such a consensus from emerging.

Thus, there are a number of specific questions that emerge from concerns over global governance. For example, should NGOs be considered legitimate stakeholders, thus putting them at the level of nation-states issues of Internet governance? Should the UN assert some authority over the Internet, or should some global code of governance be developed, governing not just technical standards, but also allowable content? What sanctions should exist for states that undermine the laws of other states regarding the Internet? For example, U.S. attempts to create circumvention software that could be used by activists in nations such as Cuba, China, and Iran are viewed by those governments as illegitimate and encroaching upon espionage. Likewise, the United States encouraged the use of Twitter in the 2009 Iranian election and the 2011 Arab Spring movement to undermine existing governments.

Given this example, should other states also use social media to undermine other governments? Should commercial enterprises, such as ICANN, be able to maintain the technical control over networks, which in theory, would allow them to cause widespread disruption to networks in specific nations? Who should assume responsibility over international hacking, such as the alleged hacking of the U.S. Defense Department by Chinese military interests?

Control of Critical Information

A third critical foreign policy controversy that emerges from social media is that of crowdsourced social media formats that facilitate sensitive information, such as WikiLeaks. Although WikiLeaks is not the only such disruptive site, the issues raised by WikiLeaks illustrate the collision, at least in the United States and western Europe, between governmental commitment to an open Internet and social media networks, and the values of state secrecy. Although WikiLeaks had been releasing a variety of information, including corporate data, since its founding in 2006, it came to geopolitical importance with the release in 2010 of two sets of data: classified government and defense documents concerning the Afghan and Iraq wars, and later that year, U.S. State Department diplomatic cables.

These two releases led to immediate condemnation from the U.S. government, which argued that the release of the war documents might endanger operational security and ultimately aid the enemy, and that the release of the diplomatic cables might endanger innocent lives and embarrass numerous governments. One allegation is that the 2011 overthrow of the Tunisian government was attributable at least in part to the corruption documented by the cables. Later releases included information that was considered embarrassing to a variety of other governments, including Peru, Russia, Syria, as well as the private global intelligence consultant Stratfor.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton promised to ensure that such a breach (as the U.S. diplomatic cables) would not happen again, and severely criticized the organization for endangering innocent people and sabotaging the peaceful relations between nations, vowing to punish those responsible. Although some argued that Clinton's Internet Freedom agenda would support the rights of organizations such as WikiLeaks, she and the U.S. government saw no contradiction, and numerous commentators argued that her stand on Internet freedom was hypocritical. Arguments on the other side of the issue maintain that Clinton's reaction was consistent with the basic requirements of national security as it relates to the uncurated publication of sensitive and classified material characterizing the WikiLeaks incident. Perhaps more than anything else, the WikiLeaks episode illustrates the classic "double-edged sword" nature of the Internet in foreign affairs.

It was not just the U.S. government, however, that saw WikiLeaks as a threat and took action. Governments such as China, Australia, Iceland, and Thailand all reacted strongly to the organization, and Assange was charged with rape in Sweden, a charge that many considered to be politically motivated, and intended only to keep Assange in custody while the United States prepared prosecution on espionage charges. As of May 2013, the Assange case was unresolved. Controversies such as these highlight the policy issues associated with organizations such as WikiLeaks, which might be seen as a sort of crowdsourced intelligence agency. Another example occurred in early 2013, when North Korea was made aware of the visit of a U.S. aircraft carrier to South Korea by amateur photographers who posted the pictures of the carrier to online photo sites. Governments continue to seek solutions to maintaining state secrecy while encouraging technological diffusion. Social media's impact on foreign policy has also affected diplomatic practice.

Digital Diplomacy

Digital diplomacy is a term that has come to refer to the practice of governments to directly engage foreign publics using social media technologies. There are several key perceived advantages in developing digital diplomacy efforts. First, digital diplomacy provides a relatively cost-effective way to develop connections with foreign publics within tighter budget environments, and is certainly less expensive than traditional outreach mechanisms. Second, digital diplomacy also extends the reach of diplomatic staff, who can effectively engage larger publics than would traditionally be reached

through normal diplomatic channels. Digital diplomacy is typically considered a form of public diplomacy, which seeks to engage foreign publics, rather than just political elites within a nation. Finally, digital diplomacy allows diplomatic staff to better monitor public opinion toward a foreign government, political leaders, and policies, in ways similar to the manner in which corporations use social media to monitor public opinion.

Given how new digital diplomacy efforts are, there are few indicators of effectiveness beyond gross measurements of the activity of key officials and diplomats on social media platforms and the number of followers those officials garner. The practice of digital diplomacy typically involves two primary activities: policy communication and cultural connection with key foreign publics. One of the primary activities that embassies engaged in digital diplomacy undertake is the communication of governmental policy to communities of foreign publics beyond traditional audiences. This allows diplomats to effectively bypass the gatekeeping function of host governments, press outlets, or other elites. Depending upon the platform used, this can range from tweeting key quotes from administration officials to videos of policy statements posted on platforms such as YouTube. This can be a valuable way to help contextualize key moments, such as state visits or question-and-answer sessions via Web chats to ambassadors or other key actors. This might be particularly useful in situations where a host government would openly oppose a nation's policies and limit the ability of diplomatic staff to adequately explain them.

Fostering cultural understanding is a second focus of digital diplomacy practices, and it is ideally suited to social media. Following the line of traditional public diplomacy activities, digital diplomacy is also concerned with enhancing the appeal of one's culture to foreign publics. For example, Australian engagement with Indonesia on Facebook has highlighted collaboration between the two nations on key health initiatives. Cultural exchange works in the reverse as well, with descriptions of topics that are popular and relevant to local followers featured on social media platforms. Exchange takes place digitally, eliciting participation from members of the community. For example, the United Kingdom (UK) targeted Somalis in the UK and the Somali diaspora to follow and comment on the London Conference on Somalia via Storify and other social media platforms. In following topical trends of social media, posts are also outside of the policy or cultural exchange realms, featuring unrelated, fun topics.

With the rise in prominence of digital diplomacy practices, one consistent struggle that states have encountered is that of guaranteeing consistency of message. A tenet of diplomacy is the consistency of messaging released from the top of the organization, senior level leadership (e.g., ambassadors), and lower-level staff. Doing so in a coordinated fashion has been a fundamental part of the discussion of how social media is incorporated into public diplomacy because the technologies introduce greater potential for "rogue messaging," or inconsistent messages to foreign publics via social media. States have begun to create policies on control of information for both official governmental accounts and personal accounts. These policies typically involve parameters for what types of information can be posted without approval, and the types of information that should be posted in consultation with embassy leadership. Still, discretion is often left to the embassy in the posting of content. Policies will likely continue to evolve because there have been instances in which embassies have posted content that violate unwritten rules concerning digital diplomatic engagement. For example, before, during, and after the September 11, 2012, attacks on U.S. facilities in Benghazi and Cairo, diplomatic officers in Cairo tweeted and posted to the embassy Facebook page a series of messages out of step with broader organizational narrative about the attack, leading to significant criticism of the individual staffers and the Department of State.

National Exemplars

The United States has spearheaded digital diplomacy efforts, both through the creation of unique Web 2.0 platforms such as Exchanges Connect, and through traditional platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. Similar to Facebook's interface, Exchanges Connect was designed to connect potential participants in U.S.-coordinated cultural exchange programs around the world. Initially, the State Department encouraged each embassy

to devote equal attention to creating virtual communities across all of the dominant social media platforms. Increasingly, each embassy tailors its digital diplomacy strategy to the particularities of Internet access in the region in which it seeks to create engagement. For example, the Internet is accessed in Southeast Asia primarily through mobile phones, thus embassies in the region focus digital diplomacy efforts more on Twitter than on Facebook, which is more difficult to access on mobile phones in the area.

One interesting example of digital diplomacy was the development of Virtual Presence Posts (VPPs) by the U.S. State Department to provide a low, but formal level of diplomatic engagement with regions that could not be served by a physical location, such as an embassy or consulate. For example, the Beijing Embassy staff developed VPPs for important Chinese cities where it was impractical to establish consulates, but still wanted to be able to engage the public of those cities on issues regarding U.S. policy. Other VPPs were developed to provide an outreach to countries where there was no U.S. embassy, or to provide information for other U.S. government agencies working in a region. Many of these VPPs were originally developed on Facebook, but were moved to servers maintained by the State Department, probably because these efforts have been reclassified as e-diplomacy.

Other nations have followed suit in initiatives toward online diplomacy, using similar formats. The United Kingdom has engaged in digital diplomacy efforts designed to connect with specific publics of interest, focusing for example on Chinese publics in the UK and in China through extensive use of the Chinese messaging service Weibo because Facebook and Twitter are currently blocked within China. Russia has also begun to invest time into the creation of a robust digital diplomacy campaign, reclaiming the term and calling it "innovative diplomacy." Though engaged extensively with soft power efforts on other media platforms, China has not adopted online diplomacy to the same extent that other nations have.

A number of smaller states have developed significant digital diplomacy initiatives in an attempt to gain more geopolitical influence, such as Kuwait, Israel, and Singapore. One particular initiative is that of the Israeli government, which has engaged in social media efforts to make government-to-people connections to improve Israel's image within the international community and bypass institutions such as the United Nations.

In order to capture the real-time dynamics and change inherent in digital diplomacy efforts, the AFP created an e-diplomacy hub, including rankings of relative influence and current issues under discussion via social media. As of May 2013, the United States' influence far exceeded that of other nations, with approximately 68 million followers of an index of officials and experts. Other nations demonstrating significant influence were Turkey, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, each with between 15 and 17 million followers.

Although the term is often used in place of digital diplomacy, "e-diplomacy" has been conceptualized differently by the United States and other diplomatic communities. Whereas digital diplomacy initiatives are targeted toward foreign publics, e-diplomacy efforts are focused on using digital communication technologies to improve the daily workflow of diplomatic officers. Although e-diplomacy initiatives rely more on in-house platforms and servers designed to improve knowledge management within foreign ministries, there are also significant social media dimensions to these efforts. These initiatives facilitate knowledge sharing (e.g., Diplopedia, the U.S. State Department's internal wiki), aggregate complex consular information in easy-to-access interfaces, and encourage diplomats to create blogs to share ideas and spark discussion with diplomats stationed around the world.

Randy Kluver
Jacquelyn Chinn
Texas A&M University

See Also: Digital Diplomacy; International Social Media and Politics; International Unrest and Revolution; Twitter Diplomacy; WikiLeaks; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring.

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Foursquare

Foursquare is a location-based social media service that allows registered users to check into venues by selecting from a list of global positioning system (GPS)-generated locations within close proximity of a mobile device. In November 2012, Foursquare reported that more than 25 million people worldwide were part of its user community. Founded in 2007, it now has had more than 2.5 billion check-ins. The primary use of Foursquare is to check in and share location and opinion information about specific venues. It is also used for collection of points, prize badges, and coupons or discounts at businesses. Users can create to-do lists for their private use and add tips for other users regarding specific venues or locations. Users can also browse their check-in histories, which categorize visits by month, year, and other users they were with at the time.

Incentives for Using Foursquare

Foursquare has two strategies for encouraging users to check in. The first strategy is directly related to financial revenue (that is, the company partners with businesses to offer users coupons and specials for checking in and sharing information with their friends). For example, using the Foursquare app, a user might see that, if she or he selects Chili's for lunch and uses Foursquare to check in, free chips and salsa will be provided. Likewise, companies like JC Penney's offer their Foursquare customers discounts on merchandise for a certain number of check-ins. In addition, some check-ins are fund-raiser related and result in funds raised for local charities. Foursquare has effectively leveraged the power of local advertising with regard to the intersection of customer interests and their readiness to purchase based on physical location.

Foursquare also offers incentives related to the collection of points, prize badges, and "mayorships." Points are accumulated each time a user checks in to a new place; they earn from one to five points. All points expire every Sunday at 11:59 P.M., so users can challenge each other to get more points within a week's timeframe.

Badges are also earned by checking into various venues and serve as milestones for multiple check-ins using Foursquare. For example, you can earn your Gym Rat badge for checking into the gym at least 10 times in a 30-day period. The BFF (best friends forever) badge is earned when a user checks in 10 times to any location with the same person. The Swarm badge is earned when a user checks in with at least 50 other people at a location. This badge is one of the most challenging badges to obtain because the user has to have at least 50 people checking in at the same location at the same time. Swarm badges can be obtained by organizing a Swarm badge party focused on a common cause, issue, or politics. A SuperSwarm badge party incorporates 250 or more people. These badges are displayed on the user's profile to enable others to know how many places the user visited.

A mayorship is awarded to a user who has checked into a venue on more days than anyone else in the previous 60 days. The mayor receives a badge to commemorate his or her achievement, and this badge is displayed on the user's page. In addition to the badge, if the users have their Twitter profiles linked to Foursquare, then both users will receive a message stating that one person has been ousted as mayor. Another user can take away a mayorship by checking in more times than the previous mayor. This mechanism has been used as a way to promote businesses and events by giving people an incentive to check in as often as possible. Some businesses like Pei Wei restaurant offer free meals for their mayors.

Foursquare and Politics

Political candidates at the local, state, regional, and national level use Foursquare to check in during their campaigns. On a local level, some politicians leave tips for others on discussion boards at various places in their jurisdictions. Some tips from local politicians usually include compliments for local merchants or items in their shops, along with the politicians' positions (for

Foursquare pins, some modeled on the online badges users earn, being given away along with temporary tattoos at the SXSW 2010 gathering in Austin, Texas.

example, candidate for state senate in District 1). In addition to posting tips, some local political candidates use social media to tell others about the neighborhood where they personally canvass. Some politicians choose to post the names of the neighborhoods instead of the actual street names. Other politicians choose to post follow-that-candidate maps to let others know about their physical positions and how they are traveling to their future positions. This might be important to the candidates' constituents, supporters, and the press. When politicians are elected to office, some choose to maintain connections with their constituents through Foursquare by letting them know about town-hall meetings, conferences, or fund-raising events.

Foursquare Voting App

In addition, through Foursquare, the public is provided with opportunities to participate with one another in real time through a voting app. On Election Day, users can use http://election.foursquare.com/ to gain an "I Voted" badge and join the other Foursquare users in a real-time voting display. Through this app, users discover the locations of their local polling places and learn about the candidates and their political positions on the ballot, potential forms of identification needed for voting, and new or revised requirements for voting. This Foursquare-based app was formed in a partnership between the Pew Center for the State, Voting Information Project, and Google.com.

2012 Presidential Election

During the 2012 presidential election, NBC Politics added three new badges to the Foursquare collection: Political Wonk (one check-in), Campaign Advisor (two check-ins), and Chief of Staff (three check-ins). To earn one of these badges, users had to follow NBC Politics on Foursquare and check into political landmarks, debate halls, and campaign hot spots. During time spent at the hot spots, users had to complete tasks, like saying the word *vote* out loud, to gain a badge. The locations ranged from the Tampa Bay Times Forum and Hofstra University to Palm Beach County Convention Center and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. At each location, NBC Politics left tips for the visiting users. Most locations featured photos about the significance of the location to either the Republican or Democratic parties.

Another prominent Foursquare partnership exists between the organization and *Time* magazine. During each political convention, *Time* provided the attendees an opportunity to gain access to unique *Time*-based Foursquare badges after checking in at the convention venue and surrounding venues. Convention attendees and followers of *Time* gained access to a list of must-attend events and a list of event-related tips from the team members from the *Time* political reporting team. In addition to check-in tips, convention attendees also gained access to timely updates from reporters and others as they checked in on Foursquare. This method helped to contribute to social presence among in-person convention attendees and virtual attendees.

Jennifer Edwards
Sarah Maben
Yvonne Mulhern
Credence Baker
Tarleton State University

See Also: Geotagging; HootSuite.com; Instagram; Mobile Media User Data Collection and Privacy Protection; Social Media Political Gaming; Twitter; Ushahidi; Web Mapping and Online Politics.

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Framing Theory, Social Media and

Framing is the process of selecting, organizing, and editing information for distribution through a medium. Framing theory is based on the idea that how information is presented can influence the way an audience perceives, interprets, and reacts to it. Traditionally, framing theory refers to the way the news media organizes a news story, but starting in the 2000s, the idea was expanded to include the way that information and opinions are presented by users in social networks. Framing theory is important in the realm of social media and politics because the way information is presented influences public opinion and knowledge.

Framing theory is based on the idea of issue salience and priming, concepts described by Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald Shaws's work on the mass media and agenda setting. Issue salience and priming suggests that the public's knowledge and perception of a topic's importance is influenced by the media's treatment of that topic. For example, a news story that appears on the front page of a newspaper or a story that receives the most space or time in a news broadcast is generally of greater importance than the rest of news content in that publication. Framing is the process of the news outlet deciding what stories should receive the most attention, and what stories should be minimized or left out.

Framing is often called a theory of media effects because of the constructed information's influence on a reader. Dietram A. Sheufele argues that media frames influence public opinion through telling the viewer what topics are important and what they should know about each topic. Frames serve as independent variables, meaning that they exert influence on the opinions and knowledge of the audience. Further, because the news media is often one of the only sources the public has on many topics, the way information is presented in the media is a primary contributor to the public's awareness. This gives the news media a powerful role in influencing public opinion.

William Gamson and Andre Modigliani investigate the institutional approach to framing theory, advocating that the presentation of information requires the source to engage in frame building. Rather than focus on issue salience, frame building requires the consideration of how a message is constructed. When analyzing the way information is framed, a researcher can consider the way frames are built, such as the types of language, tone, and evidence used to convey information. Robert Entman argues that framing analysis should have four goals. First, researchers should identify the frames throughout a publication. Second, researchers should study the institutional conditions that produce frames. Third, researchers should look at how the audience or reader interacts with the frames. Finally, researchers should look at how frames affect public opinion or policy.

David Russell Brake studies the way that social media users frame online postings in Web 2.0 technology such as blogs, Facebook, and Twitter. He has found that bloggers frame topics very similarly to news organizations, designing messages by tailoring them to appeal to specific audiences. Topics written about most frequently or given the most space are deemed by readers of more importance. Additionally, bloggers design messages to convey a specific tone by using language, examples (including images and video), or metaphors. Readers who see information presented similarly across many blogs are most likely to adopt a similar orientation to a topic.

Jackie M. Street and colleagues emphasize that frames are most powerful and exert the most influence on the audience when they are repeated across many sources. In social media or Web 2.0 commercial media outputs, topics are deemed the most important when they are discussed by many participants. Further, when a topic is similarly framed by many participants, onlookers are most likely to adopt similar frames. The scholars suggest this is because of the illusion of congruency and consensus generated when a topic is addressed by many people in a similar way. Onlookers will adopt prevalent attitudes surrounding the topic because of the perceived popularity of the frame.

Shannon L. Bishard's study of John Kerry and President George W. Bush campaigns' framing of issues on official blogs found that consistency is vital in social media and Web 2.0 strategy. Over time, candidates strive to consistently frame issues with their platforms, recent speeches, and debate performances. The study also concludes that the majority of content framed on candidates' Web sites and official blogs focus on current issues, rather than on the past or future. Similarly, the study's conclusions also demonstrate the use of framing to create the illusion of closeness between the candidate and the reader. Postings are framed as personal communication, using words such as a "you." Because of the frequency of this tactic, Bishard concludes that this is an important element to both candidates' social media strategy.

Sharon Meraz and Zizi Papacharissi examined tweet frames during the Egyptian uprisings in 2011. The study found evidence of networked framing, or the negotiation of frames between cultural gatekeepers (those who produce an original tweet) and the public (those who retweet content produced by gatekeepers). While gatekeepers framed the events of the Egyptian protests using many frames, the public tended to only retweet content that was consistent with framing the protests as a citizen uprising of righteous protesters. The study reveals that frame negotiation exists in social media between gatekeepers and the public. While gatekeepers create the frames, the public decides which frames become popular and well known.

Alison N. Novak
Ernest A. Hakenan
Drexel University

See Also: Blogs; Campaigns, Presidential (2004); News Media; Twitter; Web 2.0.

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Franken, Al

In 2008, former *Saturday Night Live* writer and performer Al Franken narrowly defeated incumbent Norm Coleman for Minnesota's second seat in the U.S. Senate. Coleman triumphed in 2002 when his opponent, popular two-term Minnesota progressive Paul Wellstone, unexpectedly died in a plane crash right before the election. Concerned about being taken as an erstwhile politician, Franken, like Wellstone before him, campaigned on worker and consumer rights. Franken's brief tenure in the U.S. Senate is notable for his involvement with social media and privacy issues while serving as chair on the Privacy, Technology, and the Law Subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee. What is perhaps most noteworthy about Franken's involvement with social media is not how he uses them to promote his celebrity backstory. In fact, Franken does not cultivate a following by force of personality, much like fellow Minnesotan politician Michele Bachmann. Franken does not even personally post to or update his Twitter and Facebook accounts. Among social

media scholars, Franken is best regarded for the innovative way he used social media platforms to target and mobilize voters during his Senate election campaign.

Democratic strategist and social media advisor Natch Greyes observes that too often political campaigns fail to effectively target niche audiences through social media. Instead, campaigns overlook social media's ability to target and interact with micro-audiences, and instead try to import one-way messaging strategies typical of telephones, e-mail, and snail mail communication onto social media platforms. Social media users are not a mass, undifferentiated audience. Greyes points out that social media users who follow political campaigns and elected officials are accustomed to receiving personalized communications, not impersonal messages addressed to a wide audience. Such broad messages—common to expensive radio and television spots—are expensive and offer diminishing returns. In part because he lacked the resources available to an incumbent, and because he was not a fixture of the Minnesota Democratic Farmer Labor Party, a state affiliate of the Democratic Party, Franken needed to employ a highly efficient means of targeting voters. Franken's team calculated that the best way to target voters was by issue, not by demographic. The key for the Franken campaign was not to form new networks, or coalitions of likely voters, but instead to tap into existing online networks formed around particular issues that overlapped—or could be made to appear to overlap—with Franken's overall message and campaign theme.

Long-Tail Nano-Targeting

New media advertising expert and Franken campaign consultant Josh Koster termed Franken's strategy "long-tail nano-targeting." The Franken campaign strategically advertised using Google AdSense in order to target many online groups—or niches—instead of broadcasting a large campaign ad targeting a general, unknown, unidimensional audience. These advertisements targeted users based on keywords in their Google searches. The Franken campaign bought certain keywords—words and names—and when users searched for those words or names, their searches triggered an associated Franken ad. Greyes explains that Minnesotans who searched for information on gas prices or hybrid cars encountered ads detailing Franken's plan for lowering gas prices. Franken's campaign identified several keywords that might be used by Minnesotans in order to strategically place advertisements outlining Franken's specific plan regarding that issue. In this way, the Franken campaign tapped into existing niche audiences that shared an identity around a particular social or political concern. Greyes notes how an online niche audience tends to circulate a candidate's message to friends and allies on other new media sites. In a nutshell, nano-targeting relies upon a successfully targeted, small-niche audience to do the work of reaching increasingly larger targets through recirculation of a strategic campaign message.

Not only is nano-targeting highly effective at using social media platforms to help circulate a message, but it is significantly cheaper than advertising through direct-mail campaigns, television, or radio. Though digital advertising that relies upon social media will not replace effective television ads, it will likely continue to serve as a powerful tool for campaigns that need to strategically manage resources to compete with traditional media advertising. Josh Koster notes that Franken's Google search strategy (which was only a part of his campaign's larger social media nano-targeting strategy) cost the campaign less than $20,000 for 20,000 individuals to read campaign literature, more than 5,000 to join a campaign e-mail list, and more than 2,000 individuals to donate directly to the campaign. The return on investment, reports Koster, was "staggering."

Franken's long-tail strategy worked because an Internet audience is highly fragmented. Nano-targeting works to collect small niches into a larger coalition. Koster observes that "universally persuasive" messages do not resonate like they used to with audiences familiar with digital and social media. In this way, it is difficult and inefficient to target a wide audience. The long-tail strategy focuses on isolating issues and nano-targeting them to the right online niche that already has formed a small coalition around the issue. Franken's strategy linked those values, positions, and commitments that already inhabited a niche and invited those nano-targets to identify their commitments with his campaign. Franken did not

build a coalition so much as he sutured very small coalitions together through digital and social media targeting practices.

Koster explains that Franken's strategy involved identifying and targeting two different kinds of niches: persuasion and acquisition. When targeting a persuasion niche, a campaign team identifies the most persuasive content they have available, such as video of a key endorsement, a carefully choreographed image or tableau, or a supportive news article, and then try to determine who might be persuaded by that content. Koster notes that potential voters who searched for a particular union or a particular newspaper would trigger an ad reflecting content directly related to the search. Franken's campaign generated keywords that people might enter and that could be easily linked to targeted content. The campaign carefully monitored which keywords were the most popular and accordingly updated and bolstered their content.

In addition to targeting persuasion niches, Franken's campaign also appealed to acquisition niches. Campaigns target acquisition niches by identifying the types of voters they want to recruit and trying to locate them in the virtual world of digital and social media. If campaigns target persuasion niches to bring content to particular voters, they reverse course when targeting acquisition niches. According to Koster, Franken wanted to target skeptical Democratic donors, activists, and college students. By "advertising to the long tail," Franken's campaign extended their possible donor and voter base. Anyone on Twitter who used topical liberal hashtags—a word, acronym, or abbreviation included at the end of a tweet to signal its topic—is a relatively easy target for a Democratic candidate. Twitter users use hashtags to indicate niche affiliation. This allows campaigns to target donors from outside the contested district to contribute campaign funds. Franken's campaign piggybacked off the Obama campaign inasmuch as they parsed key staff members associated with Obama and linked their ads to those names in Google and Gmail, its affiliated e-mail service. With long-tail nano-targeting, it is easy to measure where audiences are accessing content and which keywords are triggering those exposures. It is more difficult to measure how many and to what extent nano-targeted voters then recirculate campaign content. What is known, however, it that the long-tail strategy relies as much on targeting as it does on targets subsequently targeting other potentially allied voters within their already-formed networks. With this strategy, Franken assembled a large-enough coalition to win a tightly contested Senate seat, initially by less than 400 votes.

Online Privacy

Franken's focus in his first term in the Senate has been on consumer advocacy, especially on the issue of consumer privacy and control over user-submitted online content on social media sites. Facial recognition technology is an issue that has caught the attention of Franken in his role as chair of the Privacy, Technology, and Law Subcommittee. In a committee hearing named "What Facial Recognition Technology Means for Privacy and Civil Liberties," Franken, well established as a critic of Facebook privacy policies, led the Senate committee members in questioning Facebook privacy manager Rob Sherman about the potential issues of facial recognition software. Franken brought to light the issue of Facebook's privacy settings document, which he claimed, makes it difficult to opt out of facial recognition. Facebook's facial recognition technology recommends the identities of people who a user has classified as a friend in a photo. Facebook's competitor, Google Plus, has their facial recognition turned off by default. Users have to voluntarily elect to have a faceprint made of themselves, whereas Facebook automatically generates faceprints.

Jeffrey Rosen has noted that Franken's public concern with Facebook and user privacy is timely because it draws attention to how difficult facial recognition technology makes reputation management in a digital age. Rosen notes how Facebook permits applications that employ facial recognition software to allow a user to locate any photo of him- or herself or a friend, regardless of whether that photo was tagged by the user. Rosen points out that people will be able to record video or photos of anyone, run them through Google, and in so doing, access all the photos that exist of the person on the Web. In part because of the negative attention gained during Franken's committee hearing, Facebook soon after amended its privacy policy, making it simpler and easier to navigate.

Franken's questioning of Sherman, in addition to his interrogation of law enforcement leaders and an FBI director, brought attention to the issue of how facial recognition software might lead to unwanted violations of privacy and civil liberties by making it easy for political organizations, law enforcement agencies, and even stalkers to use facial recognition to access personal information like a user's address, friends, and affiliated groups on social media sites. Kashmir Hill notes that Franken's questioning brought up key free speech questions regarding whether police could use facial recognition technology to identify people involved in protests or rallies, despite pledges to only maintain databases of mug shots of known criminals.

Franken has also established himself as a consumer advocate concerned with protecting online consumers from businesses that want to market their personal data. To this effect, Franken helped stop a partnership between popular video streaming Web site Netflix and Facebook in early 2012. The two media companies wanted to be able to share user data, but are legally unable to do so because of the Video Privacy Protection Act that requires a video company to gain a customer's written consent in order to share that client's personal information. Franken noted that the proposed bill to permit consumers to give a one-time blanket permission for a video company to share their information (presently a user needs to give written approval) weakens consumers' ability to control information collected about them, even as it enables companies' increased access to consumer information, viewing habits, and so on. Though music-streaming services can partner with Facebook, video services cannot. At issue are a user's viewing habits, which some privacy advocates argue reveal more about a person's personality, sexuality, and values than music or any other media form. As a result of Franken's and other committee members' privacy stance, the United States remains the only country in which Netflix cannot share user data with Facebook.

Franken is noteworthy for his defense of net neutrality, the notion that service providers should not be able to privilege the accessing of certain content over others. Somewhat controversially, Franken supported the Protecting Real Online Threats to Economic Creativity and Theft of Intellectual Property Act (PIPA) as a way to protect creative copyright and curtail infringed content like bootlegged movies and software. It is not surprising that Franken, a former comedian and author, supported legislation to protect creative copyright. Franken addressed his progressive skeptics by noting that much union labor goes into the production of creative properties, and that data that infringes on the copyrights of those creative properties must be prevented from circulating freely and openly on the Web. Franken insisted that protections for intellectual property offered by PIPA protect millions of jobs. The point of PIPA, he contended, was not to protect corporate influence, but to preserve American creative labor from piracy. PIPA, and its House version, the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA), were relatively obscure until the blogosphere and the social media world caught wind of them. Franken noted that most of his Minnesota constituents who contacted him did so through social media sites like Twitter and Facebook. Consideration for both PIPA and SOPA was suspended due to outcry from Web advocates concerned about how each might threaten net neutrality.

Franken's cutting-edge election strategy minimized costs while successfully nano-targeting niches through digital and social media in ways never before attempted. It is noteworthy that

A screenshot of Al Franken's 2008 Senate campaign Web site. Franken used innovative methods to build a base of supporters, including long-tail nano-targeting. In the Senate he has acted as both a consumer advocate and online privacy advocate.

Franken, after relying so heavily on social media strategies to get elected, would be one of its greatest critics—at least of Facebook and its privacy policies—as subcommittee chair in the Senate. The implied Franken ideal—empowering media users while limiting social media's ability to undetectably exploit user data—suggests a grassroots, user-centric model of using social media for social and political expression.

Samuel Boerboom
Montana State University–Billings

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Campaigns, Digital; Facial Recognition Technology; Hashtag; Long-Tail Nano-Targeting; *Saturday Night Live;* Social Media, Adoption of; Twitter.

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Freedom of the Press and National Security

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees that the press has the right to operate without government interference. However, in wartime, there are often calls by both elected officials and the public to suppress the publication of information that may damage national security endeavors. Generally, U.S. courts have broadly interpreted the First Amendment, rejecting the ability of the government to restrict the press in wartime. At times, national security and press freedom come into conflict. The First Amendment guarantees that the U.S. government may not limit political speech. It holds that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." In the view of the founders, the press would serve as an additional check on elected officials, promoting transparency and accountability.

The First Amendment has resulted in two types of legal protections for the press. First, courts have generally granted journalists broad freedom to publish information on foreign and security policy, even if the government deems that information a threat to national security. With the exception of different levels of legal action against journalists occurring during times of war, or relative to espionage, sedition, terrorism, or treasonous acts or affiliations, since the post-Reconstruction era, no American journalist or news organization has been criminally prosecuted for publishing government information on national security policy. Moreover, courts have rejected government demands for permanent injunctions to prevent the publication of news stories that may damage national security; this is termed "prior restraint." In such cases, courts have put the burden of proof on the U.S. government, requiring officials to identify a "compelling interest" in stopping publication, and further demonstrate that the restriction is "narrowly tailored" to advance that interest, without unduly compromising freedom of the press.

In addition to protections for members of the press, sources for news stories have generally enjoyed protection from criminal prosecution. As legal scholar Jonathan Peters notes, there is no one law that makes it a criminal act to disclose or disseminate classified information, although there have been sporadic government attempts to implement criminal punishments for leaking information. The 1917 Espionage Act represents the clearest legislative attempt at this; passed in the run-up to U.S. participation in World War I, the broadly worded act made it a crime to disseminate information that could harm U.S. security or aid U.S. enemies.

Despite the ostensibly broad scope of the Espionage Act, the government has only successfully prosecuted a handful of leakers; in addition, the government has declined to prosecute any journalists, even though the act makes it a criminal offense to receive classified information. Although it remains theoretically possible for the

government to pass and enforce additional laws punishing both journalists and their sources, there has been little sustained effort by elected officials in this area.

Pentagon Papers Case

The dispute over the *New York Times* publication of classified information about the Vietnam War led to one of the most famous Supreme Court cases on press freedom. The conflict began when Daniel Ellsberg, a researcher at the RAND Corporation, gained access to a top-secret report commissioned by former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara in 1967; the 47-volume report was titled History of U.S. Deicisionmaking on Vietnam Policy. Although Ellsberg had been a supporter of the war, he became disillusioned with the conflict, and decided to publically release the papers in an attempt to expose the misperceptions characterizing past Vietnam policy. After photocopying and smuggling the report out of his office, he turned the report over to the *Times*; in June 1971, the paper used the nearly 4,000 pages of documents as source material for a series of front-page stories about past Vietnam policy.

Although the news stories did not contain any classified information about the Nixon administration's policy, and did not disclose any ongoing military actions, after the first story appeared on June 13, Nixon's Justice Department requested that the paper terminate publication of the article series. When the *Times* refused, the attorney general obtained an injunction from a district court to prevent the publication of any additional articles that were sourced from the Pentagon papers. The *Times,* along with the *Washington Post*, challenged the district court's decision, appealing to the Supreme Court. The core issue in the case was prior restraint, with the administration asserting that the publication of additional stories would cause damage to U.S. security interests. The *Times* countered by arguing that the Pentagon papers provided a valuable contribution to the ongoing public debate about the Vietnam War.

On June 30, 1971, the Supreme Court handed down the decision in *New York Times v. United States*. By a vote of 6 to 3, the justices held that the *Times* had the right to publish the information, and that the government had failed to make the case for prior restraint. The justices noted that the government had not established any evidence of concrete harm to U.S. security interests. Ellsberg and another individual who assisted him, however, were charged under the Espionage Act; the charges were eventually dismissed. Nixon's subsequent attempts to discredit Ellsberg, including breaking into his psychiatrist's office, were a component of the Watergate scandal, which resulted in Nixon's resignation in 1974.

Progressive and the H-Bomb

In the wake of the Pentagon papers case, the decision by a Wisconsin-based magazine to publish a controversial story on thermonuclear weapons led to a second case of a court injunction against the publication of national security information. In April 1979, the *Progressive*, a small left-wing publication, gathered enough publically available information to provide a detailed overview of the construction of a hydrogen bomb; at the time, only five countries possessed the weapon. All of the information had been obtained legally, and was supplemented by expert interviews. The magazine took an antinuclear stance; in publishing the story, the *Progressive*'s editors hoped to spur public debate about the necessity of thermonuclear weapons.

In a bid to generate interest in the story, prior to publication, the editors of the *Progressive* sent a copy to the Department of Energy; subsequently, the U.S. government requested that the magazine halt publication until any classified information could be excised from the story. The government relied on the 1954 Atomic Energy Act; this act contained a clause making it a crime to receive and publish any information about the construction of a nuclear weapon. The *Progressive*, however, refused to stop publication; at the request of the Carter administration, a Wisconsin judge granted an injunction against publication, citing the dire consequences of nuclear proliferation. In this instance, although the government asserted that publication of the story would aid U.S. enemies in gaining a thermonuclear weapon, the magazine countered that all of the source material was already publically available, and thus the injunction was invalid. The government dropped the case after another news outlet published the information.

Washington Post and Ivy Bells

Although the relationship between the government and the press is often seen as adversarial, there are instances when journalists have voluntarily refrained from publishing stories in the name of the national security. One such instance occurred in the early 1980s, when Bob Woodward, one of the *Washington Post* reporters responsible for breaking the Watergate scandal, gained information on a secret government intelligence-gathering program dating from the 1970s. The program was code named Ivy Bells, and was designed to tap undersea Soviet communication cables.

Initially, Woodward and his editor, Ben Bradlee, decided not to publish the story, fearing that publication would jeopardize an important intelligence-gathering operation. In 1986, however, Woodward learned that the Soviets had discovered and disabled the program in 1981. At this point, the *Post* informed the Reagan administration that it would proceed with publication.

The paper encountered strong resistance from top Reagan officials, who offered an array of arguments against disclosing the now-defunct program. In an effort to assuage the government, Woodward and his editors had more than 20 conversations with Reagan officials; moreover, multiple officials, including the National Security Agency (NSA) director, the secretary of state, and sectary of defense, reviewed a draft of the article. Prior to publication, Reagan contacted Katherine Graham, the CEO of the *Post*, and implored her to stop publication. Ultimately, in the midst of these deliberations, on 21 May 1986, NBC aired a report on the Ivy Bells operation, and the *Post* published its story soon after.

New York Times and the War on Terror

Tensions between the press and the government continued during the U.S. War on Terror. Most notably, the *New York Times* and the George W. Bush administration came into conflict on two separate occasions, with the paper rejecting the administration's requests to withhold stories about clandestine antiterror programs. The first conflict occurred in 2005, when two reporters at the paper, James Risen and Eric Lichtblau, gained information about a NSA program that allowed the government to wiretap U.S. citizens without judicial oversight. The program was implemented by executive order and was designed to circumvent existing federal laws prohibiting the government from monitoring phone conversations inside the United States. Risen and Lichtblau also discovered that the implementation of the program had provoked intense debate inside the Bush administration, with several top legal advisors questioning the constitutionality of domestic wiretapping.

Prior to publication, Lichtblau and his editor, Bill Keller, met with White House officials, who attempted to dissuade them from publishing the story. Members of the administration cautioned that if the *Times* exposed the program, the administration would have to terminate a valuable intelligence-gathering operation. Although the paper held back the story for more than a year, eventually Keller decided to publish the piece; it appeared on the front page on December 16, 2005. In 2006, Risen and Lichtblau received a Pulitzer Prize for the story. The second dispute occurred in 2006. At this point, Risen and Lichtblau discovered the existence of the SWIFT Banking Program, developed jointly by the CIA and the Department of Treasury. The program monitored international banking transactions through a Brussels-based clearinghouse in an effort to detect and terminate funding sources for Al Qaeda.

For several months prior to publication, the Bush administration lobbied the *Times* to withhold the story. In conversations with the *Times*, the administration argued that the program had resulted in the successful detection of funding for terrorism, and if disclosed, would become ineffective. Keller did not believe the program was illegal because it enjoyed congressional oversight; he asserted, however, that the public's right to know about this expansion of executive power justified the *Times*' decision to publish. On April 22, 2006, the story appeared on the front page of the paper. The reaction from elected officials was overwhelmingly negative; the president and vice president publicly castigated the paper for disclosing the program, and the House of Representatives passed a condemnatory resolution.

WikiLeaks

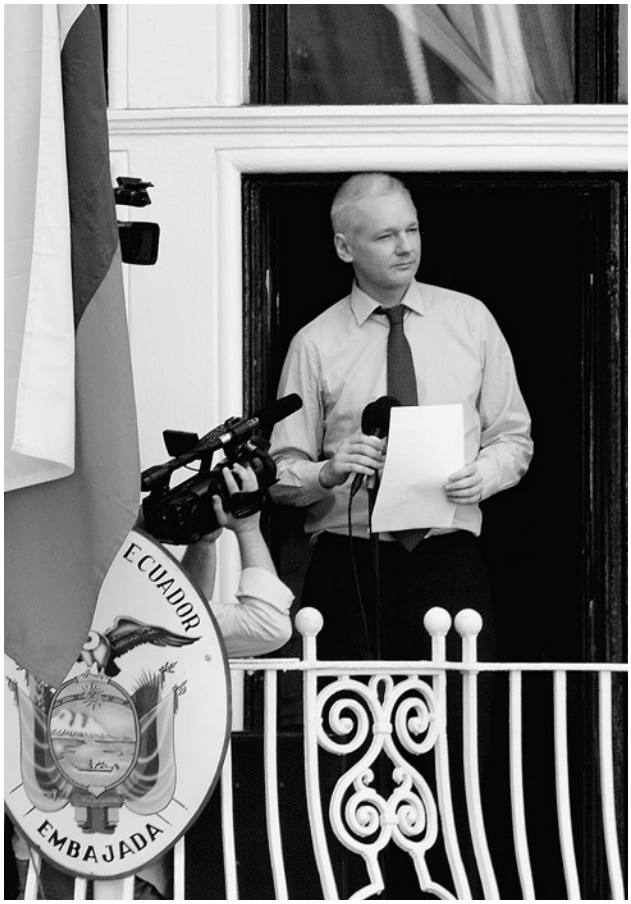
In 2010, the Web site WikiLeaks released more than 400,000 classified U.S. national security

documents. The ensuing debate over the release raised many questions about freedom of the press in an age when the Internet has changed the nature and boundaries of journalism.

Julian Assange, an Australian national with a background in computer programming, founded WikiLeaks in 2006. Assange's stated goal was to use the site to publish classified material in order to promote transparency in government. During its first years, WikiLeaks released a variety of documents, even garnering an award from Amnesty International for disclosing extrajudicial killings by the Kenyan government. Beginning in 2010, WikiLeaks engaged in the dissemination of controversial material on U.S. national security; this included a classified video and the release of several caches of documents. This information was obtained from Private Bradley Manning, a U.S. Army intelligence analyst who held top secret security clearance.

In April, WikiLeaks posted a video titled *Collateral Murder*; it showed several individuals, including Reuters journalists, being killed in 2007 airstrikes in Baghdad. In July, Assange released 77,000 documents on the war in Afghanistan, granting exclusive access to the *New York Times*, *Der Spiegel*, and the *Guardian*. Subsequently, WikiLeaks released more than 400,000 documents on the Iraq war. Finally, in November 2010, WikiLeaks released more than 250,000 cables transmitted from U.S. embassies. The U.S. government's reaction to the final release was overwhelmingly negative. Vice President Biden and Secretary of State Clinton claimed that the release of the cables undermined U.S. alliances. Members of Congress initiated hearings, and several Senators proposed the Securing Human Intelligence and Enforcing Lawful Dissemination (Shield) Act; this act would amend the Espionage Act, criminalizing not just the leaking of information gained from human intelligence, but also the publication of it.

Although the Justice Department initiated an investigation, Assange has not been charged with any criminal offense. He is, however, facing extradition to Sweden on sexual assault changes. Assange claims that the charges are politically motivated, and in 2012, the Ecuadorian government granted him political asylum; he currently resides inside the Ecuadorian embassy in London.



Julian Assange preparing to deliver a statement on August 19, 2012, from a balcony in the Ecuadoran embassy in London where he has been allowed to stay to avoid extradition.

For his part in releasing the documents, Manning was charged with multiple offenses under the Espionage Act and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. In February 2013, he pled guilty to 10 of the 22 charges against him; he is awaiting trial.

Although the relationship between the press and the government is inherently conflictual, when national security interests are involved, both sides face a complex set of calculations. Despite the fact that many members of the media take an absolutist view of the First Amendment, the historical record demonstrates that journalists are acutely aware of the potential consequences of publishing classified national security information. As such, decisions to publish stories sourced from classified material are often preceded by months of deliberation, with members of the press actively consulting with government

officials. For its part, the government has also evidenced discretion. While elected officials have often vociferously objected to the publication of stories on national security, this has rarely been accompanied by legal proceedings against news outlets or their sources. In addition, in the rare cases where the government has sought a legal injunction, courts have placed the onus on the government, setting a high bar for restricting press freedom in the name of national security.

Kelly McHugh
Florida Southern College

See Also: International Social Media and Politics; Media and Communications Policy; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security; WikiLeaks; World Press Freedom Index.

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FreeRepublic.com

Free Republic is one of the best known and earliest manifestations of political community online, as well as one of the most influential conservative voices on the Web. A discussion forum that originally emerged in 1996, the site has played a role in political scandals, including the Clinton impeachment scandal and the controversy involving CBS and Dan Rather during the 2004 presidential campaign. A lawsuit by major newspapers against the site was an early battle in the Internet copyright wars. Free Republic has all the hallmarks of "thick" community as described by Bruce Bimber and others, employing inside jokes, longstanding traditions, and celebrating a shared history. In the early days of the discussion forum, the site attracted participants who were influential actors in the Bill Clinton/Monica Lewinsky scandal, including Lucianne Goldberg, who is credited with coining the term *Freepers* to refer to members of the community. Free Republic was also linked from the front page of the Drudge report during that site's rise in influence among conservatives.

As the community gained a measure of publicity, it also attracted the attention of two major newspapers, the *Los Angeles Times* and the *Washington Post*. The practice of copying and pasting articles from major media Web sites into Free Republic prompted a lawsuit by the newspapers, which ultimately established a precedent in copyright law and the Internet (*L.A. Times v. Free Republic,* 1999). After the lawsuit, Free Republic agreed to impose rules for excerpting and linking articles. More recently, members of Free Republic were involved in challenging Dan Rather's credibility during the George W. Bush National Guard controversy. The charge of "forged documents" ultimately led to Rather's exit from the anchor position at CBS in 2004.

The Web site was founded and is still owned by Jim Robinson of Fresno, California, a private citizen who operates the site as a sole proprietorship with assistance from his brother and a small number of paid moderators. He accepts no advertising, but conducts quarterly fundraising campaigns. In 2013, the "Freepathon" goal was approximately $85,000. In 2008, the quarterly goal was $70,000. In appearance and in technical affordances, the site has remained virtually unchanged for more than a decade. Personalizing homepages and posting images on Free Republic requires a rudimentary grasp of HTML. There is a sidebar featuring "breaking news" with other categories that can be customized by the user. Behind the public channels of communication, participants are also provided with an e-mail feature, and use this feature to create "ping lists." The ping lists notify a group of subscribers when a thread is posted in a particular category.

For example, longtime participant "wagglebee" maintains a "moral absolutes" ping list. Topics include homosexuality, abortion, and euthanasia.

On all posts, hovering over the screen name of the poster generates a pop-up that reveals the account sign-up date. This information is used as a kind of hierarchy, especially to challenge "newbies" who post messages that are not in line with the ideology of the site. Failure to meet conservative standards results in "zotting," the Freeper term for suspension of a user's account. Moderation at Free Republic is quite strict. New members go through a probationary period, during which moderators must approve their posts before they appear on the site. If a particular story generates a raucous, relatively risqué, and/or contentious conversation, or has a provocative title, it is often moved to the "Smoky Backroom." Some examples from this category include "Study finds woman (sic) have thicker skulls," and "Paraplegic man dumped in gutter sues L.A. hospital." Regularly posted threads such as the "Freeper Canteen" and the "Sunday Morning Talk Show Thread" provide a sense of continuity and are faithfully maintained by long-term members of the community.

Posting conventions are strictly enforced. Threads that contain links must be titled exactly as they are in the original source, although posters will sometimes add comments as parenthetical statements. These statements are expected when a story features a positive angle on the opposing ideology. In these cases, participants include a parenthetical warning in the form of a "barf alert" or "mega barf alert" or some other variation. The parenthetical "Dinosaur Media Death WatchTM" accompanies stories about declines in newspaper readership or low ratings for broadcast media. Posts that do not contain a link to an external source, but are instead entirely the work of a member of the site, are labeled "Vanity," and are rarely posted in "News/Activism."

In recent years, the number of participants at Free Republic has decreased, as during each election cycle members of the community who support candidates who are not considered conservative enough are purged. During 2008, supporters of Rudolph Giuliani were purged. Early in the 2012 primary season, some supporters of Mitt Romney were purged. Jim Robinson addressed this issue in a thread posted January 19, 2011. In his essay, he vowed to hold the line against "homosexualists, abortionists, big spenders, big taxers, big government solutions advocates, gun grabbers, pacifists, isolationists, environmentalists, open-borders lobbyists, etc." The evolution of Free Republic over almost two decades online reflects a growing dissatisfaction among some conservative citizens with the elected officials who represent them. During the campaigns of John McCain and Mitt Romney, members of Free Republic were reluctant supporters of the Republican nominees, declaring them "RINOs" (Republican in Name Only). Still, despite purges and often contentious discussions, Free Republic is also evidence of the power of Web-based political communities to endure over time and influence both mainstream media and online political discourse.

Jeanette Castillo
Ball State University

See Also: *Huffington Post*; Influence on Elections; *Onion, The*; Political Parties.

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Friendster

Friendster was one of the original social networking sites. It was a free site that allowed users to interact with friends and to use those friends to meet new people. The concept was based on a social networking technique used in networking virtual communities called Circle of Friends. This

allowed people to reach out and meet other people with whom their friends were linked. As users became acquainted with more people, they could add them to their circles and expand their networks. This allowed for social networking within relatively safe communities because of shared connections.

Friendster was founded in March 2002, in Mountain View, California, by Jonathan Abrams, Peter Chin, and Dave Lee. The name Friendster was based the popular peer-to-peer file-sharing site Napster. As one of the first social networking sites, Friendster is often credited with opening doors to other popular social networking sites such as MySpace, which launched in 2003; and Facebook, which launched in 2004. Friendster's contribution to social media and politics is that it broke ground for these later organizations, which continue to play an escalating role in the digital-age political arena.

The founders envisioned the site as a safe environment in which users could make new connections, both online and in the real world. A primary premise of the site was to establish dating connections by focusing on extended social circles. It was assumed that friends of friends offered better romantic partners than strangers.

The focus on Friendster was the individual profile. Within the individual profiles, users could install widgets and customize the layout of their pages. Profiles also featured photo albums and video sections and allowed for the use of avatars and the creation of blogs. Users were able to contact other users and share online content and media with their contacts.

Profiles included tags that provided hyperlinks to others with similar interests. Originally, users could connect with other members who were separated by no more than four degrees. Thus, users could connect with friends of friends of friends of friends. Some users sought to expand beyond these four degrees of separation by creating Fakesters. Fakesters were made-up personas, usually centered on fictional characters or broad topics. In this way, a user could create a profile for Harry Potter, and then fans of the book could connect with other fans, even though they had no other association.

The site found quick success and achieved more than 3 million users in less than three months after its launch. It was so successful that Google offered to buy the site for $30 million in 2003. The site declined this offer, a move that many critics still believe was a major mistake. The site was so successful that it maintained its position as the number one social networking site until April 2004, when it was surpassed by Myspace in number of page views.

Competition and Acquisition

Myspace and Facebook were both able to take users away from Friendster. One reason for this was Friendster's status as a pioneer; the latecomers were able to improve on the weaknesses of Friendster. Whereas the focus of Friendster was one's individual profile, the competitors created sites that were more interactive. The competitors were also able to offer more functionality and cleaner pages.

While other sites surpassed Friendster in terms of popularity in the United States, Friendster was able to build a strong presence in Asia. Tapping into this market allowed Friendster to reach peak popularity in 2008, when it tallied 115 million members. By 2009, it was available in 11 languages and allowed users to enter content in any language. Friendster became the first global online social network to support Asian and other languages on a single domain, which made it possible for people from all over the world to communicate with each other.

Friendster also found success with the venture capital community. It launched with an initial round of $12 million from Kleiner Perkins Caufield and Byers, Benchmark Capital, and private investors. These investors increased their support by providing an additional $3 million in 2006. Friendster received another round of funding later in 2006, securing $10 million in a round led by DAG Ventures. This was followed by another round of funding in 2008, in which the company sought to raise $20 million in a round led by IDG Ventures. Finally, in 2009, Friendster was acquired by MOL Global, Asia's largest Internet company, for $26.4 million.

An often-overlooked strength of Friendster was the wealth of patents the company held. Because it was a pioneer in social networking, it developed a vast array of patents related to this growing industry, including technology that

gauges similarities between users, compatibility scoring, storage of social data relationships, content management, and the web-of-friends programming that allows one to see connections between friends. Friendster sold many of these patents in 2010. At this time, it was rumored that Facebook bought 18 of these patents for an estimated $39.5 million.

The acquisition by MOL Global solidified Friendster's focus on Asian markets. Now, the vast majority of Friendster users come from Asia, where its two biggest markets are the Philippines and Indonesia. In June 2011, Friendster transitioned to a social gaming platform with a new slogan of "Living the Game." While accounts remained active and retained contact lists, this transition resulting in the removal of user profiles. This included removing all photos, messages, blog posts, user forums, and groups. Although the company announced the move and provided tools to export content, the change was met with a great deal of controversy.

Now based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the new focus of the site is on entertainment and games as Friendster seeks to reposition itself from a competitor to a complementary service to sites such as Facebook. The site is now working with game developers and publishers to create content. By combining this content with MOL's payment channels, the company hopes to monetize Friendster's user base.

Carolyn Popp Garrity
Birmingham-Southern College

See Also: Asia; Facebook; Myspace; Social Networking Web Sites.

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Friend-to-Friend Strategies

Friend-to-friend and peer-to-peer networks form distinct topologies of exchange on the Internet based on the distribution of activities, tasks, and resources among the members of a relational community. Usually, all members are assigned the same role, and they have the same power and privileges. On the other hand, each participant shares part of his or her resources, and they contribute at the same time as suppliers and consumers.

Both friend-to-friend and peer-to-peer topologies are examples of network decentralization dynamics, a type of social media communication paradigm that is of growing interest in both candidate and advocacy politics. From social network theory, centralization refers to the degree to which a network adjusts to a star graph topology. A star graph is the most centralized model of a network, in which all members of the network exchange information or resources through a central node. Taking the example of the Internet, the central node could be a server or the administrator of a forum.

On the other hand, the maximum level of decentralization takes place in a network where all the nodes are connected to each other. In this case, information can flow between members, without the restriction of necessarily passing through a central node. All members are simultaneously sending and receiving information and resources, deploying equivalent roles and positions. Although the maximum level of centralization/decentralization is infrequent in real networks, friend-to-friend topologies are more akin to the second model.

Friend-to-friend networks are based on a collaborative exchange strategy within a relatively bounded network. This topology has been the base for file sharing, information exchange, document editing, and Wiki collaborative work, among

other activities through the Internet. Friend-to-friend strategies are frequently based on peer-to-peer computing networks, and have been applied to research, marketing campaigns, crowdfunding, and fundraising activities.

In 2000, Dan Bricklin differentiated between friend-to-friend and peer-to-peer networks. Large peer-to-peer networks frequently suffer from spam, invasion of privacy, and other trust problems that are common in environments without a central authority or administrator. Bricklin contributed to the creation of smaller networks, where a higher portion of the members knew each other, which were called "friend to friend networks" because they were based on strong relationships between participants. The resulting structures are usually more flexible, and more easily allow for the introduction of changes in access and operating models. However, Bricklin observed that some problems of trust and invasion of privacy could still arise when connecting with friends of a friend, anticipating some of the difficulties currently observed in social networking Web sites.

Applications for Marketing

Recently, friend-to-friend structures of social networking Web sites have been used to spread marketing messages by brands. For instance, brand "likes" on Facebook may be useful to reach a high number of potential consumers, with the expectation that recommendations coming from a friend can have more impact than direct messages from the brand to the consumer. People who like some brands and publicly share their opinion are potential recommenders of those brands to their friends and could become staunch brand advocates.

Viral marketing is also an example of friend-to-friend strategies. Companies and organizations use this approach to increase brand visibility or to introduce a product in the market. For this purpose, marketing campaigns are based on word-of-mouth dynamics. Network topologies are used to understand the passing of information from person to person and to design an effective diffusion process. The spread will be faster if the key players in the network are reached; these are the most or better connected individuals. For instance, centrality has been successfully used for optimizing information spread in the network. Additionally, effective campaigns are able to reach a critical mass, or "tipping point," in the terminology popularized by Malcolm Gladwell.

Keller and Berry proposed six rules for developing an influential strategy and achieving a multiplier effect: (1) to target media that is information oriented; (2) to listen and to be reactive to consumers that complain, as far as influential individuals tend to criticize; (3) to support local causes, addressing community needs; (4) to focus on practical services; (5) to take into account special products; and (6) to take advantage of loyalty to the brand. The main approach for marketing campaigns consists of identifying local opinion leaders and promoting network diffusion dynamics in the community.

Some electronic applications, such as Wrapp, are inspired by friend-to-friend strategies. Wrapp offers free or paid gift cards that are sponsored by brands, which people can use in their everyday communications with friends by adding those gift cards to their messages, mainly on social networking Web sites. This way, companies gain a presence in thousands of communications and information exchanges that occur daily on Facebook. Consequently, brands are part of the contents of the interactions among users of social networking Web sites. Although these strategies are based on traditional word-of-mouth processes, they take advantage of social media for augmenting and accelerating the diffusion process.

Fundraising

Crowdfunding is an application of a friend-to-friend strategy for fundraising. Traditionally, organizations engaged supporters to raise funds through their personal networks of friends, family, and colleagues. At present, certain organizations use social media tools to raise funds. For instance, organizations may create donation Web sites or widgets located in personal blogs to directly reach family, friends, and acquaintances of engaged members and volunteers.

Through friend-to-friend dynamics, nongovernmental organizations access the networks of their partners, supporters, or sympathizers to more easily raise funds and resources. Some

online tools used for this purpose include: Razoo, Firstgiving, Amicus, and CauseVox.

Finally, grid computing consists of a distributed system of computer resources from different locations with a common goal. This has been widely used in research projects that require a large storage and processing capacity, as in the case of cryptography, physics, astronomy, mathematics, and artificial intelligence. Individuals and institutions share their computing capacity in peer-to-peer networks to participate in ambitious research projects.

One of the earliest and more famous examples of grid computing is the SETI project, which seeks evidence of extraterrestrial life analyzing radio frequencies coming from space. SETI uses more than 200,000 interconnected computer units around the world.

Friend-to-friend strategies are interventions that are based in exchange dynamics that take place in decentralized networks. Trust, reciprocity, and personal relationships facilitate fundraising, brand dissemination, scientific research, and the change of social norms. The identification of key players, application of friend-based recommendation systems, and promotion of network diffusion processes are effective strategies to achieve a multiplier effect, to reach the tipping point for change at the community level.

Isidro Maya-Jariego
Daniel Holgado Ramos
Universidad de Sevilla

See Also: Crowdfunding; Going Viral; Network Influentials; Peer to Peer; Social Networking Web Sites; Viral Marketing.

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Functionality

In general terms, "functionality" refers to what hardware and software can do for a prototypical user. Functionality in the context of social media, can be said to refer to a set of functions or capabilities associated with a particular social networking service. Thus, when elaborating on functionality, it becomes important to recognize that it has a substructure consisting of self-contained units of computational code, or functions. In computer science, a function is an independent part of a program's entire code that instructs the computer to perform a specific assignment.

Functions can be standardized to a certain degree because many functions will be reusable throughout an entire program or service. The idea behind this reusability is, apart from reducing the intellectual effort of programmers, also a reduction of redundancy, that is, to make the program as small and effective as possible. As Derek Robinson explains, functions are usually designed to perform a delimited task as efficiently as possible. As such, a small function is logical and deterministic—it always produces a predictable result. However, a complex program will consist of many functions. As mentioned, this larger aggregated set of functions is what can be referred to as functionality.

Additionally, in order to provide overview and control of functionality, a graphical user interface is usually necessary. So, while functions are mechanic in the sense that they must generate a consistent result when invoked, a complex program or service can be used and experienced rather differently depending on the user, task, and context. Thus, when discussing functionality, it is necessary to also widen the perspective to include concepts from interaction design and user-experience research.

An abstract model of functionality can consist of a code layer, feature layer, and user experience layer. The code layer entails a source code in some form. The source code has been ordered into processes, operations, and functions that instruct a machine to perform in a certain way. Inbetween the code layer (which is an underlying structure usually hidden from the user) and the user-experience layer (stories, feelings, and values connected to the use of a certain product, system,

or service), there is the feature level. A feature is made up of a general function and its interface instantiation. The reason these two concepts need to be connected is that a function can be instantiated in many different ways in an actual interface (and the interface is an important part of the user experience). The feature is often the level referenced by users when communicating about or referring to specific aspects of a certain software package or online service.

On a pragmatic level, users may refer to both the material aspects of information technologies as well as the more humanistic or experiential aspects (what it does and how it looks). As such, the feature level is a material and discursive composite that shows how code can come to form meaningful abstractions that are then used, interpreted, and referred to by everyday users. The user-experience layer entails the full range of aggregated features and how these work (or do not work) together in a product, system, or service. It also includes the way users feel, make meaning of, and value aspects of the human–machine interaction, including user perceptions of the general utility, ease of use, and efficiency of the product, system, or service.

Conclusion

In summary, functionality in social media refers to the interaction between the user and the social networking service, particularly with reference to the performance of this interaction. An analysis of functionality can be performed on several levels, including the code level, feature level, and user-experience level or ideally, as an intersection of all these levels.

Jörgen Skågeby
Stockholm University

See Also: Platform; Social Media, Adoption of; Social Networking Web Sites; Technological Determinism; Technological Relativism; Topology of Social Networks; Value.

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Fundly

The recent increased popularity of crowdfunding—a way for organizations or individuals to share their ideas with communities to garner support in the form of donations and investments—is generating distinct modifications in the way that individuals and organizations relate to donors.

Fundly is leading this fundraising renaissance with its unique SaaS based platform, which renders potential donors 10 times more likely to donate than with other fundraising platforms. With many different crowdfunding platforms available, Fundly sought a unique edge—the use of social media and highly integrated software. Unlike many other crowdfunding Web sites, Fundly supports a simple java-based platform that allows donors to give directly from the organization's or individual's Web site, instead of being redirected to an entirely different Web page to donate.

This simplifies the donation process. Fundly also offers members the option of creating a new page if they do not already have a Web site. Once donors have given to the organization or individual through Fundly, they are then prompted to tell their friends via Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, or other form of social media. The concept of friends asking friends for support gives Fundly its edge among other online fundraising platforms. Fundly has become an important fundraising tool, employed by political figures during the most recent elections, and likely will continue to provide greater fundraising potential for candidates who decide to utilize Fundly's potential in future elections.

Fundly has been dubbed the world's number one crowdfunding platform for social good. The fundraising platform allows individuals and organizations to leverage the power of their social networks and the social networks of their supporters to broaden their donation base. Combining peer-to-peer interaction with online fundraising creates a sense of community support around giving. This system of connections leads to the success that clients experience when using Fundly. Fundly keeps the connection going by automatically notifying others in the donor's network when they make a donation, and by keeping them up-to-date on the latest news or milestones surrounding the cause. This process of friends asking friends to donate is believed to be more effective, generating up to 52 percent higher funds than traditional cold calling.

The "social multiplier effect" that Fundly creates combats the "one and done" mentality that accompanies online giving by making contributors feel that they are connected to the cause. Instead of just a name and donation amount that an organization would typically receive from an offline donation, they receive far more information from Fundly. Receiving this additional information, such as an e-mail address and social media connections, allows causes to keep connections going with their funders. A supporter gives to a cause because they believe in it, so they will want to share this cause with others in a simple, quick way. People are becoming increasingly attached to social media, so they can connect with donors through the sites they use most.

Online fundraising is still relatively new, with only 13 percent of donations provided over the Web in 2009. This lack of utilization was one of the driving forces behind the development of Fundly. For people to give online, the process must be simple, quick, and secure—three of the key characteristics of Fundly. Fundly entered the world of online giving in 2009, under the name BlueSwarm, but began to see increased popularity in 2010 when it relocated its headquarters to California after receiving new investment capital and changed its name to Fundly. David Boyce, CEO of Fundly, knew that he was onto something when online charitable giving grew by 55 percent in 2010. Since their launch, Fundly has helped over 30,000 individuals and organizations collect over $305 million in donations. While the organization has already made great strides toward its mission of "helping more people give more," it continues to develop partnerships that will further increase the fundraising potential of its clients.

Two of these recent partnerships have been with Charity Dynamics and Bloomerang. Charity Dynamics, a leading online marketing agency, will assist Fundly clients in creating and launching customized crowdfunding campaigns. Bloomerang, a customer relationship management software company, will provide Fundly's clients with advice and tools for increasing donor retention and loyalty. This partnership will also help resolve any hassle currently associated with data transfers and information sharing between Fundly and donor-related software. These unique partnerships will now combat common fundraising problems of both donor acquisition and retention through social media. Fundly allows organizations and individuals to collect all donated funds, whether or not the fundraising goal has been met.

This places responsibility on the individual or organization to ensure that a project is completed. This makes it easier for organizations and individuals to receive their funds, but could potentially create problems for funders who want reassurance that the cause they are funding will be completed. Fundly takes 4.9 percent of each transaction, generally less than other crowdfunding platforms. This is ideal for individuals or small organization because it allows them to begin fundraising online with no start-up costs. Fundly also offers fundraising packages, including online support and additional resources that may appeal to larger organizations willing to pay a monthly fee. Fundly appeals to organizations of all sizes as well as individual campaigns with its diverse fundraising options that fit the needs of heterogeneous groups.

Fundly has helped a variety of individuals and organizations fundraise since its launch, including the Red Cross, Teach for America, the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and political figures such as Meg Whitman. During her 2010 campaign for governor of California, Meg Whitman raised over $20 million using Fundly's online donation system. The ability of her supporters to share her cause with friends via social media expanded her donation base, allowing her

to reach a higher fundraising potential. Fundly and crowdfunding will never replace traditional fundraising plans, but it offers an innovative tool in expanding online donations for both organizations and individuals.

R. Bruce Anderson
Florida Southern College
Charlotte Garraway
Texas A&M University

See Also: Campaigns, Grassroots; Crowdfunding; Friend-to-Friend Strategies; Fund-Raising.

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Fund-Raising

Social media have changed the political landscape in the United States and globally with their power to organize new types of civic and political participation. Social media fund-raising can be defined as funds donated in response to a solicitation sent via at least one social media outlet. Fund-raising by political campaigns and advocacy organizations through social media applications is an increasingly important component of these groups' overall strategies for mobilizing new pockets of donors and supporters online. Social media fund-raising differs from earlier Web site-based fund-raising because of the ways that social media messages can be used to drive traffic to specific donation Web sites, repost e-mail messages, or quickly communicate to users the importance of fund-raising as an expression of commitment to a candidate or issue. The use of social media for this purpose has led to the development of fund-raising mechanisms that have empowered previously disadvantaged candidates and organizations.

Two important themes provide a foundation for understanding this topic: What are the techniques with which social media have been harnessed for fund-raising purposes? What groups are the most effective at using this fund-raising technique?

There is mixed evidence on the adoption of social media fund-raising techniques, depending on the type of organization in question. Three important types of political groups use social media and related fund-raising techniques: candidate-supporting organizations, nonprofit advocacy organizations, and political campaigns. These three types of organizations together represent the large number of ways that social media have allowed citizens to participate in the political process.

Candidate-Supporting Organizations

Among independent, candidate-supporting organizations, left-leaning and progressive causes in the United States have benefited from the use of social media for fund-raising purposes. DailyKos.com, a major political blog, has demonstrated considerable influence in raising funds for liberal Democratic candidates endorsed by the site. In the 2006 midterm election, the blog raised funds for 17 candidates. This effort resulted in more funds raised for five candidates than the official Democratic Party. These funds helped nearly half of the Kos slate gain election.

By far, one of the most influential advocacy organizations in terms of social media fund-raising is MoveOn.org. This organization has successfully mobilized fund-raising and grassroots action in the United States for both political candidates and political issues. MoveOn's online communications blend Web site and social media formats and seamlessly combine the mobilization of local groups (or councils) with coordinated fund-raising appeals. Most importantly, MoveOn has demonstrated a sustained ability to financially

support the election of candidates friendly to its policy positions.

However, the social media fund-raising sphere is not without some important conservative examples. More recently, the Tea Party movement also reflected an ability to use social media to harness decentralized social networks in order to mobilize support (volunteer and financial) for endorsed candidates. Additionally, J. McNutt and others have found that there is no meaningful, consistent partisan difference in the use of social media by Republican and Democratic legislators and their constituent relations networks.

Nonprofit Advocacy Organizations

Social media fund-raising is not limited to organizations that support candidates. Issue advocacy organizations, such as environmental groups and organizations that engage in both charitable work and advocacy activities, such as organizations that serve the disabled or other target populations, also use social media for fund-raising in conjunction with community-building messages and content.

Only recently have scholars begun to understand exactly how political advocacy groups use social media to advance their agendas. In one study, Chao Guo and Gregory Saxton analyzed the Twitter messages of 188 501(c) 3 nonprofit advocacy groups in the United States. They found that messages requesting donations were among the least common types of messages, which they interpret as a natural result of the fact because certain relationships must be in place before action can reasonably be requested.

Despite the difficulty of specifying an exact number of organizations that use social media for fund-raising purposes, some research suggests that the use of social media may differ across type of issue advocacy organization. D. S. Bortree and T. Seltzer find that environmental organizations do not make great use of social media other than to share information. H. R. Edwards and R. Hoefer argue that social work advocacy groups are still struggling to adequately get beyond the information stage with their Web sites, and have not begun to systematically adopt social media technologies. In general researchers have found that most nonprofit use of social media focuses on conveying information, rather than on mobilizing funds and volunteers for advocacy. This finding seems to apply across different types of nonprofit advocacy organizations.

Political Campaigns

With the well-known role of the Triple O online fund-raising team of Barack Obama, the study of social media fund-raising in political campaigns has become a topic of serious practical importance. In reality, however, the use of social media in political campaigns began at the end of the 20th century. The fund-raising aspect of these uses has become more sophisticated than among most advocacy organizations, but the pattern of use closely coincides with that of advocacy organizations. Social media fund-raising plays a role in political campaigns at all levels, but for the sake of simplicity, examples in this section will be limited to American presidential campaigns.

George W. Bush and John McCain both received attention for accepting donations online during the 2000 presidential campaign. President Bush became most widely known for encouraging online donations after the September 11 attacks. In terms of fund-raising for election, however, the Republican strategy remained connected to its traditional grassroots networks.

The first point at which the use of social media fund-raising became a topic of mainstream discussion was the success of the Howard Dean presidential campaign online in the 2004 presidential election cycle. More than half of Dean's fund-raising was from small donations (under $200) online. This phenomenon led to a dramatic change in the role of small donors in the political fund-raising process. Conventional wisdom had held that only large donors could have a sustained influence on elections. Dean's use of social media helped his campaign, but in the longer run, it demonstrated the influence that ordinary citizens could have on a national election.

The 2008 campaigns were a milestone and perhaps a permanent turning point in the use of social media for political fund-raising. It has been well documented that Barack Obama and his team raised around $500 million online. It is estimated that around one-third to one-half of these donations were from small donors.

During the same election cycle, in stark organizational contrast, U.S. Representative Ron Paul's

2008 presidential campaign produced a netroots fund-raising effort surpassed in grassroots influence only by President Barack Obama's. One distinct difference, however, was the relative lack of influence exerted by Representative Paul's official campaign on this social media-based movement. Unofficial campaign logos and unsanctioned social media–based fund-raising events became the norm for activists. The term *moneybomb* was first used to describe agreed-upon dates when these activists would coordinate their donations. Despite the vast difference in the total amounts raised (only tens of millions for Paul, versus hundreds of millions for Obama), both cases demonstrate the relationship between community-building activities and fund-raising in the social media arena.

The sustained influence of Obama's online organization was evident in the 2012 re-election campaign. The Triple O operation undertook sophisticated message-targeting efforts. This culminated in the claim that, with amounts unspecified by the campaign, October 17, 2012, was the most lucrative single day of fund-raising in Obama campaign history. This result was fueled entirely by online donations. This result came on the heels of September 2012, when Obama and the Democratic Party raised $181 million, the largest month of fund-raising in presidential history.

Supporters of Ron Paul's presidential campaign on November 25, 2007. Some of Paul's donors created grassroots fund-raising campaigns in which many small donors would contribute simultaneously in a so-called moneybomb.

Social Media to Raise Funds

The Pew Internet and American Life Project has documented, through years of polling, that the number of people who donate online has consistently grown over the last two decades, as has the number of political campaigns and advocacy groups that have developed online fund-raising mechanisms. While earlier research focused on how much these organizations used social media, more recent research has turned to the important question of how and for what purpose these media are used. In the same vein, the emphasis of this research is on the dynamics of organizational communication, rather than on the specifics of current social media because these technologies are constantly evolving.

K. Lovejoy and R. D. Saxton identify three key communicative functions that are reflected in social media messages sent by nonprofit organizations. These authors suggest that the content of social media and other online communications be categorized as information, community, and action. As the names imply, information messages share information about the organization, its activities, or matters of potential interest to stakeholders; community entails messages that aim at fostering relationships with stakeholders, creating networks, and building communities; and action messages give stakeholders the chance to participate in the cause, either through some type of action or through donations.

Guo and Saxton further argue that these three types of social media communication should be viewed as dependent upon each other. Extending the information–community–action typology,

they propose a three-step pyramid model of social media–based advocacy. The first step is to reach out to stakeholders and communicate the message of the organization. The second step is to deepen the knowledge of stakeholders and sustain their interest in the organization. The third step is to mobilize engagement in the organization's cause. This pyramid model follows the general framework of traditional political and nonprofit fund-raising. The unique aspect of social media is the way that short messages on Twitter, online petitions, and hyperlinking can be used to create engagement opportunities unique to cyberspace. These engagement activities can then be linked directly to donation requests.

While the three-step framework has not been explicitly applied to political campaigns in scholarly research, studies of the behavior of candidate campaigns and online campaign activities clearly demonstrate that the same phenomenon is at work. As a result, the information, community, and action categories can be used to study social media messages across different types of organizations. It is also useful because it can help one interpret the relative importance of social media fund-raising (action) messages within an organization.

In practice, this framework is consistent with the finding that organizations and movements that adequately build online communities are the most effective at social media fund-raising. Specifically, the lasting influence of social media fund-raising has been to allow small donors to be counted in the political process. A small donation to a political campaign or issue advocacy group allows an ordinary citizen to join with other like-minded persons in a way that has a tangible influence on the political process. In particular, the 2008 presidential campaign demonstrated that small donors were no longer negligible. Additionally, as Guo and Saxton suggest, one lasting influence of social media is the ability of advocacy groups and campaigns to cultivate an active network of supporters who feel connected to the mission of the organization to a degree out of proportion to the amount of funds donated.

Conclusion

Social media fund-raising follows a common pattern of requiring that constituents be adequately invested in the social network of the organization before contributing funds to a cause.

In order to raise support from followers and friends on social media, organizational communication needs to do more than simply provide information. The general relationship between community-building and action-motivated communications on social media applies to both advocacy organizations and political campaigns. It is likely that the role of social media fund-raising will only increase as more organizations begin to understand and harness the financial power of these media.

Michael Hammer
University of Georgia
Chao Guo
Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

See Also: Campaign, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Clickable Calls to Action; MoveOn Effect; MoveOn.org.

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G

Gate Keeping Theory and Social Media

Gate keeping theory is often related to mass media and organizations, explaining why certain stories are selected and become news, and others are not. The concept of "gate keeping" was, however, not primarily conceptualized to explain a phenomenon pertaining to communication and media studies. It was created in 1947 by Kurt Lewin, a psychologist and pioneer in social psychology, who was interested in studying leadership and group dynamics. Lewin observed that certain individuals retain positions that allow them to decide what to pass to a group of people through each gate section, of which, in any process, there are several. These powerful individuals are known as gate keepers, or the "guards of the gate." Based on personal or social influences, the gate keepers select and pass only certain commodities—materials, goods, and information—that they believe can help individuals to make sound decisions and secure social order.

Today, the concept of *gate keeper* has an extended meaning. Individuals, bloggers, media, political institutions, professional codes of conduct, company policies, and even computer algorithms can be considered gate keepers when they have control over diffusing information. In politics, gate keepers are individuals who can control the access to powerful positions and regulate information flow, and thus control political influence. Many companies have precise policies for disclosing information that set specific guidelines on what should be communicated to external publics, and those policies function as gate keepers. Google uses algorithms to select the news items that readers can view in the dedicated news section of Google's Web site, and this process is considered gate keeping.

Since the 1950s, gate keeping theory became one of the milestones of subsequent studies in communication and media fields. The theory provides a framework for analyzing, assessing, and knowing how news selection occurs, and why certain elements are selected or rejected. Most people rely on journalists to transform information into a manageable set of sound bites. Journalists' selection of information contributes to the construction of social reality. Because gaining information often means gaining knowledge, and knowledge is power, gate keepers are considered very influential and powerful. It is therefore important to understand journalists' processes of news selection to understand what people consume and how this may eventually affect their opinion on social reality. The first pioneer in using this concept in mass communication was David Manning White, who applied Lewin's gate keeping idea to newspapers'

processes of news selection. White observed that journalists often filter unwanted, sensible, and/or controversial information, and publish only information that conforms to the journal's editorial standards and agenda, and/or information that is not against the news organization's policy. Because of this, White considered journalists the gate keepers of information.

The process of gate keeping in a news organization can occur at different stages of news production. At the initial stage, gate keeping takes place when news gatherers, such as reporters, writers, and local editors block certain messages coming from the external news environment and allow others to enter the news room; the role of news gatherers is to select certain stories and discharge others, not letting them pass the "gate." Journalists receive a large amount of stories and information on events by numerous organizations, institutions, companies, and politicians. They need to select what it is relevant from what is not, before transforming the selected stories into news copy. Gate keeping does not only occur within the newspaper environment, in the news room, but it can also happen at an early stage when reporters collect stories on the street. At the final stage, news processors, such as editors, copyreaders, and translators modify and integrate news copies and decide how it should be transmitted to the audience. This process is also gate keeping because news processors are in the position to filter, shape, and change the priority and format of the stories that they want to transmit to their audience.

Studies concerning the gate keeping role of news media have initially focused on the decision process for selecting the news events to publish—what to include or exclude. Later, scholars became more interested in understanding other variables related to the selection procedures, for instance, the processes of decisions related to the time/space allotted to a news event, the number of graphics and stories about the event, where the news event was placed within a publication or program, and to which extent the event was covered by subsequent news stories, also called "news circularity." Gate keeping theory contributed to the development of successive theories, such as agenda setting and framing theories. Several scholars believe that the concept of gate keeping is vital in any type of communication planning.

The event of Internet and digital media has, however, substantially changed the identity and role of gate keepers, as well as the process of gate keeping. The Internet has made information more easily and readily available, which means that time has become a great restraint for checking truth and accuracy of the information reported. Additionally, in democratic societies, the controlling and/or blocking of information is limited to specific online contents, for instance, pertaining child pornography, hate speech, defamation, or theft of intellectual property. The new digital era has also introduced a new stage in the gate keeping process, whereby digital audiences participate as secondary gate keepers on the Internet.

Today, bloggers and digital citizens are increasingly the gate keepers of world news. Multiple news stories about events are available online, and the credibility of the source posting that content has become a major issue in online news reporting. Critics of citizen journalism point out that such journalism undermines the essential role of journalists as organizers and makers of sense of what is happing around the world. While newer communication technologies have facilitated the creation and diffusion of online content, the content offered may be biased and/or unrestricted from judgments, and thus can deteriorate the quality of news. On the other hand, the presence of information gate keepers outside news rooms has put pressure on journalists to be more transparent in their news selection processes, and indirectly this is positive because it reduces the power of media organizations in setting public agendas.

Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University

See Also: Citizen Journalism; Digital Citizen; Framing Theory, Social Media and; News Media.

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Gender

When speaking about gender as a socially constructed phenomenon, one usually refers to the duality of two major social categories: women and men. Sociologists differentiate between more than two gender identities, though it is still a rather common stage of analysis in the social sciences to discover whether any significant differences exist between the behavioral patterns, opinions, value orientations, and intentions between female and male respondents. A similar approach might be applied to the sphere of social media: gender particularities in the use of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other platforms. People of any gender identity use social media for different reasons: for making and keeping social contacts, supporting informal learning practices, reflecting on daily life events, and sharing and discussing the continuously increasing body of information available over the Internet. However, recent studies discover that women and men demonstrate slightly different patterns of using social media.

When studying male–female performance in social media, it is necessary to consider that gender identity is not predetermined from birth, but is (re)constructed in representing oneself and interpreting others according to time, place, and audience, in ways that are influenced by community. Within this approach, construction of gender is an interactive process in which individuals are both objects and subjects of gender definition through their physical and textual performances. The character and influence of an individual's contribution within this interaction process are affected both by available cultural representations that compose the sources of meaning-making, and by existing power structures. Therefore, social media can be considered a potential agent of social change with respect to gender oppression and discrimination on different levels.

That leads to another aspect of interconnection between gender and social media, the actual representation of various individuals and groups using social media engines. This becomes essential when the profiles and activities of politicians are studied. Also, gender minorities such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) groups should be considered when analyzing the representation and activity of minorities in social media. For the latter, it becomes even more crucial when it is necessary to provide wide audiences with up-to-date information about LGBT politics to disseminate news and generate discussion.

Gender Differences in Using Social Media

When social networking sites spread in the Internet, women as well as men quickly adopted the new type of mediated communication. Results of a recent study by Kimbrough and colleagues in 2012 indicate that women, compared to men, are generally more frequent mediated communication users. Women prefer and more frequently use text messaging, social media, and online video calls. They also use Facebook more for maintaining existing relationships, whereas men follow an agentic pattern, using the sites more for making new relationships and finding job leads. The authors also refer to a study from 2008 that found equal shares of men and women among Facebook users, and to a 2009 study, which demonstrated that 57 percent of Facebook users were women and 43 percent were men. This change could be because of the rapid growth that occurred between 2007 and 2009, from 50 to 300 million Facebook users. During this period, women over 40 years old were the fastest growing demographic on social networking sites.

In a study conducted by the Center for the Digital Future, nearly half of young women reported having met offline with an online community contact, whereas barely a third of young men reported having done so. A global study conducted by ComScore Inc. in 2010 found that social networking sites are used by a higher percentage of online women (76 percent) than online men (70 percent). A study of college students in the United Kingdom conducted in 2010 revealed that the driving factors behind joining a social network differ substantially by gender, with female participants joining to be generally sociable and

A Haitian woman works with Twitter during a technology training session on September 10, 2011, with a local rape crisis center called KOFAVIV (Commission for Women Victims for Victims) and an independent U.S. nonprofit called Digital Democracy. The training was part of preparations for the launch of a free hotline to allow women in Port-au-Prince to report rapes and other violence.

keep in touch with friends, and male participants joining based on peer pressure from friends and to make new friends. Another survey conducted among U.S. university undergraduates in 2012 aimed to explore gender differences in social networking, particularly for Facebook use.

According to the findings of the survey, 80 percent of respondents reported that Facebook was a part of their everyday activities. Almost 9 of 10 undergraduate women "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with this survey item (females: 88 percent "strongly agree" and "agree"; males: 71 percent "strongly agree" and "agree"). The study findings also proved that both genders use social media, but women far exceed men in the time they spend on social media. In other results, females reported spending almost 62 percent of their Internet time on Facebook, compared to 44 percent for males. Furthermore, there were significant differences in the share of women compared to men who were "heavy" Facebook users (more than one hour per day) and in the minutes spent daily examining others' Facebook profiles (females: 24 minutes; males: 10 minutes). It is possible that males utilize social networking sites other than Facebook, and females are primarily drawn to Facebook.

Another nationwide survey of 600 adults (296 men and 304 women) in the United States about social media site use was conducted by United Sample Inc. (uSamp). Among the top findings, uSamp found that "striking differences" exist between men and women when it comes to sharing personal information on sites such as Facebook (used by 81 percent of respondents), YouTube (46 percent), Twitter (33 percent), and Myspace (32 percent). While almost three-quarters of men and women were willing to share their relationship status—and 62 percent were willing to share their religious affiliation—only 20 percent

of women would share their location, compared to 35 percent of men, reports uSamp. In addition, 55 percent of men say they wouldn't mind revealing their e-mail address, but just 41 percent of women would do so. In all, just 8 percent of respondents were willing to share their physical address. Among the segments by age, those aged between 18 and 24 are the most active, with 86 percent of men and 86 percent of women visiting social media sites daily.

Gender differences observed using social networking sites are also found in other online environments. In Second Life, a virtual online community, people behaved according to traditional gender role expectations. Specifically, the results of the study indicated that women were engaged in more communal activities, such as meeting people and shopping, while men reportedly engaged in more agentic activities, such as building things and owning property. Thus, even when men and women have the freedom to behave in any way they want, they still prefer to behave in a way that is consistent with social gender role expectations.

Constructing and Reproducing Gender Identities

There are also a number of studies of how social media can impact construction of gender identities and reproduction of gender stereotypes. First, it was hoped that a multiplicity of widely distributable first-person performances might enable the destruction or destabilization of constraining accounts of gendered identity and undermine the regime of shame used to enforce them. It was also supposed that social media would empower young women to counter mainstream media stereotypes and provide them with the discursive power to intentionally construct new and more vibrant definitions of what it means to be a "girl." Social media have been theorized as a space for female users to expand not only the scope of their engagement and influence, but also the strength of their influence on constraining understandings of gender.

Women are not only better enabled to exchange comments, build relationships, and exchange social capital via social media, but they are also empowered to engage in discussions telling their personal stories. As a result, women could experience an enhanced sense of expressive autonomy. More broadly, widespread dissemination of diverse and multiple narratives about female lives written by girls might begin to trouble dominant, stereotypical definitions of "girl" and gender-based constraints that inhibit the achievement of social equality.

However, the narrow presentation of "woman" as sexually self-objectifying and focused on looks in order to "get a man" is widely spread in all forms of mass media and advertising, and a number of scholars argue that such media stereotypes powerfully influence the self-formative processes of youngsters. Since girls and young women tend to use the mainstream corporate sites that contain high levels of advertising on their pages, these same stereotypes are deeply embedded in social media platforms. Some studies reveal that girls spend a great deal of time selecting pictures of themselves that make them "look good" according to media standards of female beauty for further posting in social media.

The use of "glamour shots" is common because it facilitates the presentation of an idealized self as sexually attractive. Some studies of female avatars found seductively posed, partially undressed representations of girls are common on teen chat sites, and that sexualized images of girls are pervasive on Myspace. Other studies argue that the vast majority of female profiles feature pictures of them partially clad and seductively posed with their heads tilted, bodies angled sideways, and eyes looking up or at the camera, mirroring the shots common in printed magazines. Scholars conclude that such positioning of the self as always "up for it" and the "performance of confident sexual agency" has shifted to become a key regulative dimension of idealized femininity across mainstream media and advertising, and that there is now a visual rule for young women to display a sexy self on social networking sites.

The research conducted by Bailey and colleagues and published in 2013 indicates that stereotypical representations of girls as sexualized objects seeking male attention are commonly found in social networking sites. The authors present the results of a qualitative study that examined how young women "read" these stereotypes. Respondents understood social networking sites as a commoditized environment in which stereotypical kinds

of self-exposure by girls are markers of social success and popularity. As such, these images are "socially facilitative" for women.

However, the gendered risks of judgment according to familiar stereotypical norms are heightened by the intense surveillance enabled by social networking sites. While the respondents indicated that celebrity culture inculcates girls with messages that they must be attractive, have a boyfriend, and be part of the party scene, girls are much more likely than boys to be harshly judged for emphasizing these elements in their online profiles. Girls are also open to harsh criticism for their degree of publicness. The risk of being called a "slut" for having an open profile, too many friends, or posting too much information suggests that continuing discriminatory standards around public participation may effectively police girls' capacity to fully participate online and complicate their ability to participate in defiant gender performances.

Finally, another form of reproducing stereotypes and dominating feminine identities is blogshops, online sites in which young women model and sell apparel via social media that have exploded in many countries. As an extremely popular form of e-commerce, blogshops have catapulted their owners and blogshop models to wealth and fame. The success of blogshops trades on commercial intimacies cultivated by blogshop models and the involvement of blogshop consumers in practices which some scholars also identify as "value (co-) creation." Researchers who study this phenomenon of blogshops consider value (co-)creation as not focused on products.

Rather, it takes place around the online "micro-celebrity" of blogshop models and senses of homosocial intimacy between the persona of models and their audience of readers-cum-consumers. This focus on blogshop models' persona implicates both models and consumers in a homosocial discourse around emphasized femininities, in which women's bodies are subjected to a refracted male attention carried out by women in the absence of men. This discourse within the commercial sphere produces powerful and disciplining effects for both blogshop consumers and the models, thus highlighting deeply gendered intersections of femininity and commerce in online processes of value (co-)creation.

Representation of Female Politicians

Female candidates and politicians ought to attract more attention and become more visible within the social media so that affirmative measures such as quotas may positively affect women's involvement in politics and change women's role models. This concerns the role of elite communication in shaping and changing public opinion. In particular, in the modern media-dependent society, a great responsibility is entrusted to the media system because coverage of women politicians (or the absence of coverage) has the potential of challenging or reinforcing women's marginalization in public life. One of the obstacles that women politicians perceive as the hardest to cope with is their restricted access to the media.

Recent studies of social media and electoral campaigns of male and female candidates discovered the relationship between using digital media in a candidate's political campaign strategy and voter support factors such as a candidate's use of the Web and social networking sites in conjunction with other traditional influences such as candidate gender. Having a robust Web presence and using social media, holding other factors constant, can be a significant contribution to the popularity of a candidate on the day of election. Tactics of active social media representation might be specifically beneficial to traditionally disadvantaged candidates in bridging the gap of their under-representation in national and regional political institutions.

The importance of studying female politicians' representation in social media is especially striking, taking into consideration the recent research results on the successes of male candidates in presidential elections because of active campaigns in social media. Additionally, social media plays an important role in outlining a politician's activity after the election. A good example is the active use of social media by 2008 presidential candidate and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. However, there is a gap in available case studies that focus attention on female candidates, despite the numerous studies of male politicians' representation in Facebook or Twitter.

Gender Minorities' Representation

The expansion of technological access has led to substantial shifting in opportunities to connect

geographically dispersed members of marginalized groups. Social media engines offer less powerful individuals access to challenging the social order. They address the central problems impeding the effectiveness of organizing gender minority groups: isolation, repression, resource restriction, and lack of community cohesion. The relatively inexpensive social media offer a virtual public sphere open to a wide range of actors and expressions. This range is restricted by traditional sources of exclusion, such as race and ethnicity, gender, class, and geographical location. But the increasing accessibility of travel within cyberspace helps to mediate restrictions. As a result, the Internet and social media specifically can be especially important to marginal groups with limited finances or expectation of mainstream support for their views.

Studies from various countries demonstrate that the Internet and social media are used to overcome the social isolation of homosexuals because they can express the behavior patterns that can be socially labeled as deviant and fulfill personal and political needs online.

One comparison of LGBT Web sites in the United States, Germany, China, and Japan claimed that "there is no other forum in which so many people of so many different backgrounds have safely disclosed, and felt comfortable disclosing, their sexual identities." Cyberspace is crucial for sexual minorities, according to legal scholar Edward Stein, because of social and legal discrimination that either compels them to be closeted, or punishes them should they emerge. In sharp contrast to mainstream society, cyberspace is an ideal environment and a "virtual lifeline."

Scholars who have studied the lesbian community and its representation in Latin America emphasize that lesbians can find each other via the Internet, even if they are isolated in their daily lives; and if they can find a reasonably private place to go online, they can be "out" without fear of stigma or violence. Compared to the often-transient spaces of "women's nights" at bars or cafés, or the expense of keeping up an office, Web sites offer a more stable and inexpensive platform for socializing and activism. E-mail, distribution lists, and social media are relatively accessible sources of alternative information, and are crucial for communities ignored or criticized in traditional media channels. Finally, the Internet in general and social media in particular cannot end contentious regional debates over political practice, but they provide new possibilities for communication within and across national boundaries.

According to some scholars, the benefits of social media include the expansion of queer communities within and across national boundaries. Whereas homophobia and political subjugation have isolated LGBT individuals from others in their societies, and geography and politics have kept them separated from others, social media enable an emancipatory and community-building realm that transcends international borders. This potential globalization of communication and connection may allow a virtual escape from the repression and rejection of real-time interactions into a place of acceptance and solidarity.

Tetiana Kostiuchenko
Tamara Martsenyuk
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Age; Avatars; Clinton, Hillary; Economic and Social Justice; Human Rights; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights.

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Geo-Locational Enabling

Geo-location enabling has received growing attention by political campaign strategists, particularly in the past decade. Collaborative interactive online tools that track the geographical nature of information, most notably demographic data and voting trends, have numerous practical applications in political campaign strategy. Geo-location enabling has been used by political campaign strategists to identity and target potential voters in very specific geographic locations and encourage them to vote, to track candidates' campaign trails, and to analyze how national and international issues and concerns have local consequences for political campaigns.

History

While geo-locational enabling strategies have been used with increasing intensity in political campaigns, most notably since the 2008 U.S. presidential election, researchers and experts in the area of spatially aware mobile applications have recognized for decades that nearly all information relates to or can be traced back to specific places. Security and intelligence specialists have focused their information and communication technology development efforts on location-specific data gathering to enhance the national security efforts of government bureaus such as the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation, the French Direction Centrale du Renseignement Intérieur, China's Ministry of State Security, and the security and intelligence services of the United Kingdom Home and Foreign and Commonwealth Offices, commonly known as MI5 and MI6, respectively.

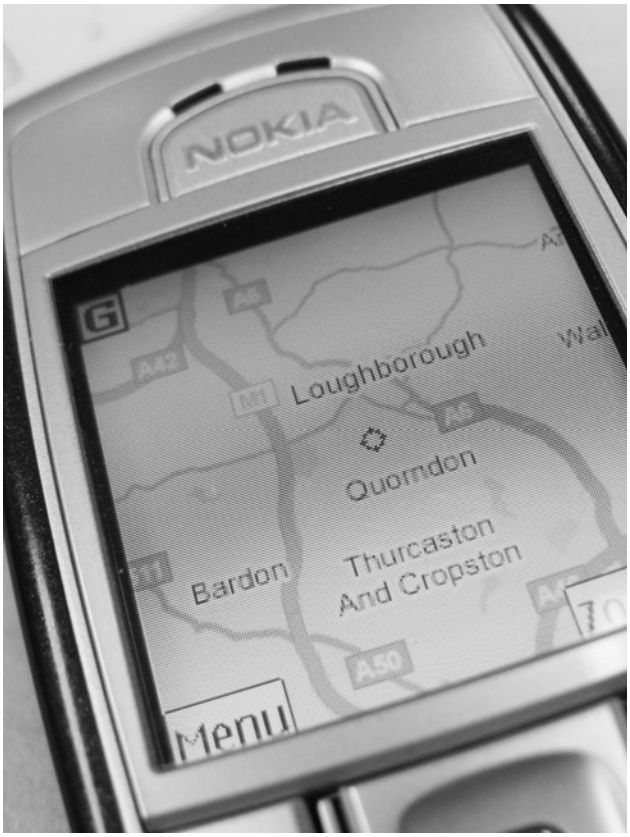
Since the turn of the new millennium, software developments in geospatial data visualization have increased attention to location-specific information and communication for many other practical applications than national security and intelligence. A major breakthrough in geo-location enabling occurred in 2001, with the founding of the geospatial data visualization company Keyhole Inc. After Keyhole Inc. was acquired by Google in 2004, the company's most promising software development, the satellite mapping application suite named Earth Viewer, re-emerged in 2005 as Google Earth. Other Keyhole Inc. software developments survive in Google services such as the Keyhole Markup Language, Google Maps, and Google Mobile. Since that time, given the widespread use of Web-delivered applications such as Google Earth and NASA World Wind, geospatial data and geo-locational enabling have been used extensively in a diverse array of applications and topical areas, ranging from entertainment to education.

Elections

One year after the launch of Google Earth, Google released the Google Earth Election Guide, a resource that was designed in preparation for the November 2006 elections. The Google Earth Election Guide was conceptualized and designed by Google Earth engineers who found it challenging to seek aggregated election information online. The guide provided geo-specific election information, including voter registration, voting locations, and campaign financing statistics from the Center for Responsive Politics and Federal Election Commission. An interactive element to the guide allowed users to click on each of the 435 U.S. Congressional districts that link to information and live feeds from Google Web, Image, and News Search for each district's candidates.

The years following the launch of the Google Earth Election Guide saw a vast increase in the use of Web-enabled mobile communications for political campaigning, issues awareness-raising and other political topics. A survey conducted by the Pew Internet and American Life Project reported that during the 2010 U.S. mid-term elections, 26 percent of U.S. citizens used their cell phones to find out where to vote, follow campaign developments, get polling results, and on election night, get election results as quickly as they were determined and announced.

The Pew survey also found that 12 percent of respondents reported using their cell phones to keep abreast of election news coverage, 10 percent sent texts related to the election to personal contacts, 6 percent used their cell phones to receive information about voting locations and "voting conditions," 1 percent relied on mobile delivered applications related to the election, and 1 percent made financial donations to various



Google Maps on a mobile phone in 2006, the year after the launch of Google Earth. By 2010, 88 percent of Americans who registered to vote owned cell phones, and 26 percent of U.S. citizens were using their phones to find information about voting.

political candidates and political causes through text messaging applications.

By 2012 geo-locational enabling was touted as the "game-changer" for the U.S. presidential election. Given that at the time of the 2010 Pew survey, 88 percent of registered voters in the United States had a cell phone and of those more than half were smart phones, mobile-delivered information generally and geo-locational enabling specifically offered immense prospects for political campaign strategy. Strategists used geo-location enabling to contact people within a one-to-two-mile radius of specific events like campaign rallies with targeted, mobile-delivered advertisements and candidate updates.

Privacy Concerns

With the increase of geo-locational enabled applications, privacy advocates, legislators, consumer rights groups, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Federal Trade Commission have called for guidelines about how online marketers, application developers, and even law enforcement authorities collect and share individuals' geospatial data that they can retrieve from GPS-enabled mobile devices.

In August 2012, the ACLU filed a lawsuit under the Freedom of Information Act that would require the FBI to reveal its use of geo-locational enabling devices. One result was the U.S. Congress' consideration of the Geolocation Privacy and Surveillance Act, which would require law enforcement to obtain a warrant in order to access citizen's geospatial location data through cellphone and other geo-locational enabling device tracking.

Lara Lengel
Bowling Green State University

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Data Mining; Microtargeting; Mobile Apps; Mobile Connectivity, Trends in Politics; Selective Exposure; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; Voter Identification; Voter Privacy; Voter Turnout; VoterVault.com; Web Mapping and Online Politics.

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Geotagging

Tagging is one of the defining characteristics of Web 2.0 services and platforms. Tagging techniques allow users to collectively annotate, classify, and categorize content. Social tagging systems are a mix of two standards: one based on user actions, and another based on the system architecture that defines the rules and relationships between users and resource tags. Geotagging is a feature that is presented individually to users. The users can share locations and add geolocated data to content. Adding geographical identification metadata to an information resource attaches value to the content by making it more searchable.

Geotagging is the process of adding metadata with geographical identification to content. It is also defined as a form of geospatial metadata. The geotagging process derived from global position systems (GPS), which are based on a latitude and longitude coordinates model. Thus, the positions assumed by geotagging-enabled information services stem from this pattern.

Geotagging enables the spatial indexing of content. Therefore, it is a process of recognized geographic locations that enhances the development of geographical databases, geo-referenced Web resources, and geo-referenced multimedia content. Consequently, geotagging is a practice that completely modifies how the user interacts with content and other users in digital space. Systems with geotagging features usually add to media content latitude and longitude coordinates, distance, and place names. The data added consists of textual and visual features.

Geotagging standards in electronic file formats are embedded in the information in metadata. However, for each type of media, there are different protocols to attach geospatial information because geotag information can be read by several media systems. The main options of geotagging systems are the capture of GPS information at the time of publication or local position added by the user. Location-based services have different approaches to privacy, but most present default settings.

There are no industry standards. However, there are a variety of techniques implemented by diverse services with different purposes including to (1) propagate to friends a specific location; (2) suggest commercial and cultural information based on local position; (3) locate discount coupons for stores in the user's geographical area; (4) aggregate data for a location; and (5) provide real-time, location-based searches. There are also several other geotagging applications in different contexts and business, such as event or object recognition, geolocation, media visualization, services and products recommendations, social networking, and mapping.

The adoption of geospatial features allows tracking content or users by associating it with GPS. The presence of geographically relevant metadata can help users to find a variety of location-specific information, which generates geo-awareness across the Web repository and within computer-mediated communication. Geotagging-enabled information services can be used to find location-based resources on news Web sites, multimedia content, and other platforms. Social media platforms often present content relevant to a given location.

Geotagging systems have complex dynamics to present content-derived location information. Proximity and sibling features are the most common, and are used to present places based on geographic distance and similar places and points of interest that share a parent in a geographic hierarchy.

There are several social media platforms with tag-based systems, such as Flickr and Facebook, which enable content to be found through a location search. These platforms allow users to add metadata to an information resource in an automatic or manual procedure.

Content indexation through geographic components emphasizes the location argument. The variety of geo-enabled features allows location-based, personalized information services targeting regional publics. Mobile applications and

social platforms can benefit from the use of geographical information, which is based on a GPS and Wi-Fi triangulation. Several online services collect, provide, and analyze geo-information as a business. Geo-information is an important value for corporations, and it can be a market opportunity for business, for example, the social platform Foursquare. The business model of various mobile applications and Internet services is based on geotagging. Such features have also been the basis of the evolution of communication and interaction in the context of the social Web.

The practice of geotagging is a technique of managing information on the social Web and an example of collective intelligence that provides insight into human social structures. Technological innovation in recent years and the proliferation of the Internet, GPS devices, smartphones, and tablets suggest that the availability of geotagged content will continue to expand.

Inês Amaral
University of Minho

See Also: Data Mining; Folksonomy; Foursquare; Geo-Locational Enabling.

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Get Out the Vote Drives

Political organizations often use get out the vote (GOTV) drives in an effort to increase voter turnout in elections. These drives are carried out by a variety of political organizations, both partisan and nonpartisan. Some focus solely on voter identification and registration; others aim to mobilize these voters, getting them to cast early, absentee, or Election Day ballots. GOTV efforts have traditionally included activities like canvassing, phoning, and mailing campaign literature. In recent years, campaigns have incorporated a variety of new media strategies in their GOTV drives.

Political parties, specific campaign organizations, and other partisan groups are chiefly responsible for GOTV efforts during each campaign cycle. Especially in the thousands of local elections held each year, these organizations opt for a more personal, scaled-back approach to mobilizing voters. National elections are more likely to see increased involvement of nonpartisan organizations like Rock the Vote and the League of Women Voters. Although each organization varies in partisanship and intent, they hold some of the same goals: identify, register, and mobilize voters.

Regardless of the method chosen for mobilizing voters, the first step in a GOTV effort is always identifying potential voters. First-time voter programs and organizations like Rock the Vote identify and target young voters. Other organizations specifically target women, minorities, religious groups, and others according to a variety of demographic traits. Campaigns will typically identify several populations to target as potential voters. They may compile lists of potential voters from registered voter lists by reaching out to other organizations (e.g., churches and civic organizations), or through other means. Campaigns can then refine those lists by seeking further information on individuals. As technology has progressed, some companies have merged voter data with commercially obtained information to create comprehensive voter databases. When resources allow, campaign organizations may use these databases to reach very specific target audiences.

Donald P. Green and Alan S. Gerber found that more personal approaches to mobilizing voters are typically more successful than the impersonal. Personal interactions like door-to-door canvassing are more likely to turn out voters than impersonal strategies like prerecorded phone

calls and mass e-mails. However, each GOTV strategy has advantages and disadvantages for campaigns based on cost, time, efficiency, and available resources.

Strategies

Door-to-door campaigning is a traditional and popular form of getting out the vote. Local parties, limited in financial and other resources, still tend to favor this strategy. Canvassing may be done by volunteers, paid staff workers, allied group members, or candidates. During a visit, a canvasser talks to a potential voter and may also distribute campaign materials, such as a yard sign or pamphlet. Door-to-door canvassing is effective because it helps potential voters make personal, qualitative connections to a campaign.

However, this GOTV strategy also entails certain risks, and can quickly consume an organization's time and resources. In addition to potential weather and safety concerns facing the canvassers, a campaign risks losing control of its message through this form of voter mobilization. Untrained volunteers or representatives of supportive organizations may not be dependable messengers for a candidate's positions or a campaign's central theme. National campaigns, seeking standardization of their messages, often shy away from this campaign form because of its decentralized nature. Additionally, the time- and resource-consuming nature of door-to-door canvassing leads organizations to favor other methods that require fewer workers and less time.

Other GOTV strategies similarly engage potential voters in direct, face-to-face, personal interactions. Candidates meeting individuals at campaign events, at local stores and restaurants, and at other events and locations may be another simple way to influence voter turnout. Similarly, campaigns holding rallies, forums, debates, and seminars may also encourage voter turnout. People at campaign events are sometimes even encouraged to register or take part in early voting on the spot. Organizations may register voters, bus people to early voting locations, or direct them toward absentee ballots. Barack Obama's 2012 presidential campaign did much to encourage early voting in states like Ohio, with the candidate calling on supporters to leave his rallies and vote.

Organizations with the aim of turning out voters also frequently turn to phone banks. Less personal than door-to-door canvassing, phone calls can still be effective if the caller comes across as conversational and authentic. Meanwhile, callers who hurry through scripts are unable to make a personal connection with the potential voter and are less likely to influence that individual's decision to vote. Robocalls, or prerecorded messages from candidates or key supporters, also fail to make personal connections; however, Green and Gerber note that some voters may enjoy receiving a phone message from a favorite politician or celebrity. Robocalls can also easily be specifically tailored and sent to certain audiences. The overuse of phone calls from campaigns, telemarketers, and others make this GOTV method bothersome for many potential voters. The increased number of cell phones and decreased number of landlines, the prevalence of caller ID technology, new regulations on do-not-call lists, and other related issues make the future of phone campaigns complicated and uncertain. However, Lisa Garcia Bedolla and Melissa R. Michelson conducted an extensive experimental analysis, concluding that the use of phone banks, like the use of door-to-door and other interpersonal methods of voter mobilization, were likely to change people from low-propensity voters to regular voters.

Another traditional GOTV material is the circular, distributed either by mail or canvassing. Easier and less time consuming than having door-to-door conversations, circulars are also less likely to have great effect on potential voters because of their impersonal nature. Campaigns may choose to distribute door hangers, flyers, and pamphlets to different houses when they want to reach a wide audience in a short amount of time. Direct mail makes it easier for campaigns to target certain populations because they may send specific material to certain sets of voters.

GOTV drives also employ radio, television, and newspaper advertisements and appearances. The abundance of negative television advertisements are often designed to suppress voter turnout from those who might support a candidate's opponent. Other advertisements that highlight the importance of upcoming elections have a more positive effect in turning out the vote. A 2012 Obama campaign ad did this by recalling

the 2000 presidential race in Florida, where a 537-vote difference determined the outcome of the election. Representatives of campaigns and other GOTV organizations also appear or seek coverage from traditional media sources in order to influence potential voters. On Election Day, candidates and their families often gain media attention by voting and saying words of encouragement for the viewing audience to do the same. Obama became the first major candidate to cast his vote early in the 2012 elections, and gained media attention that day for encouraging viewers to do the same. Comprehensive GOTV campaigns also use interviews and a variety of other media appearances to communicate their messages.

Social Media

While GOTV campaigns are still reliant on long-established methods and traditional media, technological advancements are drastically altering the ways these campaigns operate. E-mail allows organizations to reach a large number of people at a very low cost. Organizations can be flexible with the content of their e-mails and can also choose how many to send out. As with direct mailings and robocalls, organizations may also send specific messages to certain target groups with e-mails. E-mail recipients can easily forward these messages to friends and families, making e-mail an even more attractive GOTV campaign form. Unfortunately for GOTV campaigns, e-mails may often be discarded as spam and junk mail by recipients or by some e-mail servers. People may not always read their e-mails, and may become annoyed by an organization's overuse of the channel.

The constantly evolving landscape of social media can also play a prominent role in GOTV efforts. First, many new media tools are used to supplement more traditional methods of turning out the vote. Phone apps have been used to help campaign volunteers register voters and participate in door-to-door canvassing. Interested viewers can watch television advertisements on YouTube and other video-sharing Web sites. Political campaigns can collect information about potential voters from Facebook and other social network sites in order to aid their micro-targeting efforts.

Campaign supporters' abilities to share statuses and updates on Facebook, to retweet messages on Twitter, and to similarly promote messages on blogs, Web sites, and other social networks is also an advantage for campaigns relying on new media. Supporters have an easy way of involving themselves in campaigns, and can easily pass along GOTV messages to those they are connected to online. It has never been easier for individuals to publicly express their support for a candidate or to encourage others to vote. Simply liking a status, sharing a video, or retweeting a comment can turn someone into an important GOTV campaign tool. Unfortunately, little research has been done concerning the effectiveness of social media GOTV efforts so far. Unfortunately also, many limitations exist on how GOTV messages might be received. A campaign is unable to control its message once out in social media—it has little control over which meme becomes popular or how people disseminate their messages. Also, while social networks continue to grow, there remains a portion of the population that is not reachable through this channel. Others on social networks may ignore or respond negatively to political messages. Finally, there are many who share privacy concerns over how campaigns may access and use their personal information. GOTV campaigns could risk alienating potential voters by using too much of their gathered data.

In summary, GOTV efforts will continue to grow and expand in numerous, unpredictable ways. Political campaigns and other GOTV organizations will continue to use social media in order to gather information and mobilize voters. Some of these ways will be entirely new, while others will supplement more traditional GOTV methods. Meanwhile, traditional methods like canvassing and telephoning will likely continue to thrive as campaigns attempt to reach potential voters with personal messages and through as many channels as possible.

Jefferson Walker
Jason Edward Black
University of Alabama

See Also: Campaigns, Organizing; HeadCount.org; Nonprofit Organizations; Rock the Vote; Voter Turnout; Youth Engagement.

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GetUp.org.au

GetUp.org.au is a nonprofit Australian Web site that facilitates grassroots community advocacy. Fashioned after the U.S. site MoveOn.org, GetUp! Action Australia seeks to give average Australians the ability to have their voice heard within the Australian political scene while holding politicians accountable on issues that are important to Australians. The core functions of the organization are based on its Web site, which allows members to post petitions, virtually sign petitions, and send pro forma e-mail letters to members of parliament. In addition to its Internet-based activities, GetUp! also promotes causes important to members through participating in relevant events, releasing television advertisements and radio announcements.

As a nonprofit organization, GetUp! does not support any specific Australian political party. GetUp!-oriented campaigns are varied, and include social justice issues, economic fairness, and campaigning for sustainable environmental policies. Although GetUp! has had a significant impact on Australian politics, it has received widespread criticism for its motives and methods. Launched by Jeremy Heimans and David Madden on August 1, 2005, GetUp.org.au combined Internet advocacy with television advertisements in a bid to encourage voters to "keep the Howard Government accountable," in reference to John Howard and the coalition government of Australia, when the Liberal-National coalition assumed control of both houses of parliament in August 2005, something that had not happened since 1981.

As their first campaign, GetUp! encouraged Australians to send e-mails to senators and representatives in the Howard coalition government to remind them that the public was watching and would hold them accountable for their campaign promises and the decisions they made while in office. Since then, the organization and its members have supported a variety of campaigns since 2005, including issues both within Australia and of international importance. It lobbied the Howard government to push the American government for the unconditional release of David Hicks (an Australian who had been detained in Guantanamo Bay after taking combat training at al Farouq, an Al Qaeda–affiliated training camp in Afghanistan); it opposed Rudd government efforts to implement Internet censorship; it took out advertisements in support of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange; it stood against China's treatment of Tibet; and it has spent many years campaigning for marriage equality legislation in Australia.

GetUp! does not support any particular Australian political party, taking as its goal to broadly hold politicians accountable for its decisions. While it accept donations from the general public, private organizations, unions, and community groups, it does not accept donations or funding from political parties or the Australian government. Although its campaigns have generated positive feedback from the Australian public for the impact that it has had upon governmental policy, GetUp! has garnered a significant amount of criticism leveled at its motives, questionable facts and figures, and its selective campaign processes.

In August 2005, GetUp! was criticized by Andrew Robb, an Australian Liberal Party politician, who claimed that the site was partisan because of its outspoken opposition to key Liberal Party policies and legislation. When speaking on *The 7:30 Report*, an Australian current affairs television program on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Robb accused GetUp! of being a front for the Labor Party, suggesting that it was not upfront and honest about its motives or political affiliation. The organization repeatedly rejected the idea, pointing to a number of its campaigns that criticized the Labor Party as well as the Liberal Party.

Following from this, Australian Special Minister of State Eric Abetz petitioned for the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) to investigate GetUp! to determine whether there was a conflict of interest regarding donations and its affiliation with political parties. Abetz's petition was rejected by the AEC for a lack of sufficient evidence supporting a full enquiry.

The organization has also met criticism for the use of questionable facts and figures. For instance, GetUp! maintains that it has over 600,000 members; however, this number is questioned because anyone who signs a petition on the site is automatically considered a member, whether they have officially joined the site or not. Additionally, the membership application process is open to manipulation and falsification. In addition to claims of exaggerated membership numbers, GetUp! has been accused of overestimating attendance numbers at its rallies. At a rally for gay marriage in 2011, then Director Simon Sheikh said that there were tens of thousands of people in attendance, while police estimated that no more than 5,000 people attended. At a 2011 rally regarding the proposed carbon tax, GetUp! claimed that over 8,000 people attended, while others put the attendance at no more than 4,000.

In 2012, the group was criticized again, this time for presenting misleading facts in their No Harvey No campaign. No Harvey No campaign materials claimed that the timber used in manufacturing the furniture sold by Australian furniture retailer Harvey Norman was contributing to the deforestation of Australia's native forests. The campaign was met with criticism by both the Furniture Industry Association of Australia and then Minister for Manufacturing Kim Carr, both of whom argued that the group was discouraging people from purchasing Australian-made furniture and supporting Australian jobs, when the timber came from sustainably harvested Australian native forests.

Danielle Lawson
Edinboro University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Advocacy Groups, Political Branding of; Campaigns, Grassroots; Transparency.

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Ghost Blogging

Political figures can use blogs to develop a personal sense of connection with supporters and engage in conversations with them. Blog readers enjoy a behind-the-scenes view from the political figure's perspective and a sense of getting to know the person. Reporters also follow political figures' blogs as sources for news. Blogs, however, are time consuming to write and require strong writing skills. Given these constraints, there is substantial debate about whether political figures should engage in ghost blogging. In the context of politics, ghost blogging occurs when a staff member writes blog posts on behalf of a political figure who is stated as the author. There is substantial debate about the ethics and effectiveness of ghost blogging.

The ethical question regarding ghost blogging is whether it should occur without a disclosure statement that explains how the blog is written. A disclosure statement could explain, for example, that the political figure shares his or her thoughts each week with a particular staff person (who would be named) for the blog, and this person writes the blog based on these conversations. The disclosure statement could also include that the political figure reads each blog post and makes it his or her own before publication, and this person responds to comments personally. The idea that a political figure would have assistance with editing a blog for grammar and spelling is not controversial because these types of changes are not considered important to the authenticity of the communication.

Although ghost blogging with disclosure is a rare practice, some politicians adopt a philosophy of radical transparency. This philosophy refers to unprecedented amounts of disclosure, and is commonly used to build trust. An example of a

radical transparency practice is a disclosure statement on a Twitter profile. Barrack Obama's Twitter profile explains that tweets written by Obama are signed "-bo."

Critics of ghost blogging without disclosure argue that there are heightened expectations for authenticity in social media; however, advocates counter that audiences today are savvy enough to believe that a political figure is not the actual author of his or her blog. T. D. Gallicano, Y. Y. Cho, and T. H. Bivins conducted a national study of 500 readers of politicians' blogs and found that a little more than half of the readers believed that a staff person drafts blog posts for politicians, about a third of the readers were unsure, and the remaining respondents expected that politicians wrote their own blogs.

The effectiveness of ghost blogging can be assessed based on whether blog readers approve of the practice. Gallicano, Cho, and Bivins asked readers of politicians' blogs whether it was acceptable for a politician to have someone else write the blog posts, provided that the content came from the politician and the politician gave final approval of the blog posts before they were published. A little less than a third of the readers of politicians' blogs expressed approval of ghost blogging, less than a quarter were not sure, and a little less than half of the readers did not approve of the practice.

Based on this research, respondents were more likely to expect ghost blogging than to approve of it. Also, T. D. Gallicano, K. Brett, and T. Hopp found in their survey of approximately 300 communications professionals that more than two-thirds of respondents thought that ghost blogging was acceptable, provided that the content came from the stated author and the stated author gave final approval of each blog post.

Alternatives to ghost blogging include having a blog that is written and publicly authored by one or more staff members of the political figure. Another option would be to use only social media that the political figure has time for, such as a microblogging site (for example, Twitter).

Tiffany Derville Gallicano
University of Oregon

See Also: Blogs; Blogs, Role in Politics; Campaigns, Digital; Ethics of Social Media in Politics.

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Gillibrand, Kirsten

Kirsten Elizabeth Rutnik Gillibrand has been New York's junior U.S. senator since the start of 2009; she replaced Hillary Rodham Clinton in that position when Clinton became secretary of state under Barack Obama. Gillibrand is a member of the Democratic Party and formerly represented the 20th Congressional District of New York in the United States House of Representatives.

Gillibrand was appointed to the Senate seat she now holds initially, according to New York law, by the governor. In 2010, she was required to run for the position in a special election, which she easily won with about 63 percent of the vote. In 2012, she was re-elected for her first full, six-year term, and in that election, Gillibrand garnered the highest margin of any New York statewide candidate in history—72 percent of the vote.

Early Career

Upon graduating from law school in 1991, Gillibrand began her practice as an associate with David Polk & Wardwell in New York. In 1992, she took leave in order to be Judge Roger Miner's law clerk in Albany in the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Back at David Polk after her clerkship, Gillibrand represented Philip Morris

Tobacco for purposes of both the civil lawsuits involving the company and in the racketeering investigations launched by the U.S. Department of Justice. During the tenure of this representation, she was promoted to senior associate within the firm.

Gillibrand's work with Philip Morris has proven controversial for her, especially given her liberal leanings. During her representation of the tobacco interest, she also represented abused women and their children in pro bono cases, as well as tenants in lead-paint housing cases. Also during her time at David Polk, Gillibrand became a leading member of the Democratic National Committee's Women's Leadership Forum.

After leaving Davis Polk & Wardwell during the Clinton presidency, Gillibrand worked for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Secretary Andrew Cuomo as his special counsel. In that position, she worked on labor and new markets initiatives for HUD. She also worked toward strengthening enforcement of the Davis-Bacon Act.

Beginning in 1999, Gillibrand worked for the 2000 U.S. Senate campaign of Hillary Clinton. Her efforts on the campaign centered upon working with young women to enlist them in the campaign effort. Many of these women would later become active in Gillibrand's campaigns. Clinton became a mentor to Gillibrand during these years, and Gillibrand has personally donated to Clinton's campaigns.

In 2001, Gillibrand moved to New York's Boies, Schiller & Flexner as a partner, where she represented the Altria Group, the parent company of Philip Morris. In 2002, she moved from the Manhattan office to the Albany office and notified the firm of her interest in running for office. In 2005, she left the firm in order to launch her 2006 congressional campaign.

Public Office

Her first campaign in 2006 was against John Sweeney, a four-term congressman and member of the Republican Party. The 20th Congressional District in New York was traditionally conservative and had elected almost exclusively Republican candidates since 1913. Sweeney himself had been quoted asserting that the Republican Party could never lose the 20th District. During this race, Gillibrand ran on the Democratic and working families party lines; Sweeney ran on Republican, conservative, and independence party lines. The Republican Party had an advantage of more than 82,000 enrolled voters at the outset of the campaign. During a race that saw Gillibrand stand somewhat more to the right on certain issues than she would later do, and that saw Sweeney accused of domestic violence, Gillibrand eventually won. Gillibrand was also reelected in 2008 when she was challenged by former secretary of state for New York Sandy Treadwell. Gillibrand won by a margin of 24 points, significantly more than in 2006.

At the outset of her congressional tenure, Gillibrand published her official schedule for each day, including who she met with, alongside her personal financial statement and all earmark requests she made. Gillibrand called this dossier of information the Sunlight Report, and she was the first member of Congress to publish such a statement. During her first year in office, Gillibrand opened the earmarking process to the *New York Times*. Also, during her years in Congress, Gillibrand voted against the Immigration Reform Act of 2007 and the Wall Street bailout proposed by George W. Bush.

In December 2008, Barack Obama chose Hillary Rodham Clinton, then New York's junior U.S. senator, to fill the role of secretary of state. When she accepted, the duty of appointing her replacement fell to Governor Paterson of New York—an appointment that by law would be followed by a special election in 2010 for the duration of the full term. Paterson chose Gillibrand in January 2009 after she lobbied for the position, among others. She was 42 years old when sworn in that month and was thus the youngest senator in the 111th Congress.

Once she was appointed to the Senate, Gillibrand's positions reflected the more progressive bent of New York State as a whole, compared to her more moderate positions for her representation of the conservative 20th District. On April 9, 2009, Gillibrand, along with Chuck Schumer, issued a press release lending strong support to the nomination of a Latino to the Supreme Court upon the next vacancy. They proposed their first choice, Sonia Sotomayor, and introduced her at the July Senate confirmation hearing.

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand drew the ire of Internet freedom activists when she cosponsored the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and Protect IP Act (PIPA) bills. These protestors stood outside of Gillibrand's office in New York City on January 18, 2012.

Before the special election in 2010, Gillibrand faced only Gail Goode, a New York City lawyer, in the primary and won easily with 76 percent of the vote. In the 2010 election, Gillibrand faced former congressman and Republican Joseph DioGuardi. Although the election was at the outset predicted to be a close race, in the end Gillibrand took 54 of the 62 counties in New York. Those counties that Gillibrand lost were carried by DioGuardi by margins of 10 percent or less. This was her first statewide election, and it gave her the Senate office until January 2013.

Gillibrand was a supporter of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act and fought to repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" military policy. These were probably her two most notable achievements during this latter half of the 111th session. In the aftermath of the 2011 shooting of Congresswoman Giffords in Tucson, Arizona, Gillibrand visited Giffords in the hospital. The two were friends, and Giffords opened her eyes for the first time during the visit.

In 2011, the *National Journal* announced that Gillibrand, tied with Jeff Merkley, was one of the two most liberal members of the U.S. Senate. Only one year earlier, in 2010, the *National Journal* ranked her 10th, tied with Chuck Schumer. In early 2012, Gillibrand was the cosponsor of the Protect IP Act (PIPA), a controversial piece of legislation intended to fight theft of intellectual property and illegal downloading. IPA was attacked by many critics and free-speech scholars who argued that it allotted far too much censorship power to the federal government. Ultimately, PIPA and its counterpart in the House, the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA), were stopped.

Gillibrand has been an advocate for educational reform and received an "A" from the National Education Association (NEA). She voted in favor of expansion of the Head Start program and opposed vouchers for private schools, instead advocating for better public-school funding. Gillibrand authored the Keep Our Educators Working Act, which didn't get past the committee stage, and also the Undergraduate Scholarships Awards in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Act (US STEM), which made it to committee. US STEM would award 2,500 full-tuition grants to undergraduates through the National Science Foundation (NSF) for their last two years of school. Gillibrand also voted to reform the No Child Left Behind Act. Gillibrand supported numerous other educational initiatives and increased funding for Pell Grant scholarships.

2012 Election

In the 2012 election, Gillibrand was challenged by Republican Wendy E. Long, an attorney. Long also ran on the Conservative Party platform, while Gillibrand ran on the Democratic platform with the backing of the *New York Times* and the *Democrat and Chronicle*. The 2012 election was a major victory for Gillibrand, who took 72 percent of the vote—the largest margin of victory in the history of New York.

Gillibrand is a liberal, particularly in the realm of social issues. At the end of 2012, she supported same-sex marriage and gun control, receiving a 0 percent rating from the NRA in 2012. In the area of health care, Gillibrand supported reform, a public option, a Medicare-for-all system, and publicly funded abortion. An ongoing advocate for transparency in government operations, Gillibrand continues to publish significantly more financial, personal, and scheduling information than most of her peers. In 2012, Gillibrand was rated 8 percent by the American Conservative Union and 90 percent from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

Social Media Use

Kirsten Gillibrand is known in part for her social media presence. With nearly 55,000 followers and a Klout score of 85 (ranked 14th in the Senate), she has a considerable online presence. Social media is of special import to the Gillibrand campaign and office because, as a very liberal Senator, her constituency is younger than average in the United States. Social media use among voters increases as age decreases, so maintaining an active online profile is crucial for Gillibrand's reach toward the voters who will support her issues.

As the StarCount page on Gillibrand demonstrates, in any given day, there will be several Facebook posts and tweets on her profiles. Gillibrand also maintains a YouTube channel and liberally posts her video appearances. This works especially well for her, given that her appearance and attractiveness are common topics of discussion among her peers and in the media. According to Socialbakers, Gillibrand gains approximately 700 fans on Facebook each month.

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

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Glee

The Fox Network musical comedy *Glee* is an example of the successful integration of old and new media and the use of social media to sell mass media to younger generations. From its debut in the fall 2009 season, *Glee* has supplemented its marketing with social media aimed at reaching a target audience of teens and young adults.

The network has innovated and popularized new media tactics, including cross-platform loyalty games that reward points for fan activity on different networks including Facebook, Twitter, and Myspace. This type of integration leverages television viewers' increasing preference for using multiple screens at one time, rather than focusing on a single activity. Created by prominent television writer and outspoken gay rights advocate Ryan Murphy, the program is also notable for its self-conscious social commentary and equitable depictions of a gay teenage romantic relationship in a way that parallels its portrayal of straight couples.

Television Audiences and Social Media

Glee's integrated old and new media strategies exemplify best practices in response to larger trends. Cross-platform media use has become increasingly common, according to the Pew Internet and American Life Project. In 2012, 20 percent of Pew survey respondents said that they had visited a Web site that they had seen mentioned on screen. An even larger proportion, 38 percent, reported using their mobile phones during commercial breaks. Rather than suffering the ongoing loss of viewers and divided attention, this type of social marketing engages TV viewers, using on-screen prompts that invite them to join real-time online discussions about the show on the most

popular social networks, take polls, answer trivia questions, and check into the experience via apps like Foursquare and GetGlue. As a result, rather than losing the audience to competing media, while people are watching *Glee,* they are interacting with a community of fellow fans (or even antifans) and other people watching on a variety of connected devices from mobile phones to laptops and iPads. In one contest, *Glee* fans vie to be named Gleek of the Week, a title that comes with on-air and online recognition. In 2011, *Glee's* creators employed a similarly integrated campaign to successfully launch the competition spin-off program *The Glee Project* on an even greater number of social media networks, including Tumblr, Facebook, Twitter, and GetGlue.

Carole V. Bell
Northeastern University

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Clicktivism; Musicians and Social Media in Politics; Television and Social Media.

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Global Center for Journalism and Democracy

The Global Center for Journalism and Democracy (GCJD) promotes the free press by working with journalists, governments, organizations, and associations to foster healthy working ". . . relationships. Being housed within the Mass Communication department at Sam Houston State University, the Center offers training programs for journalists at all levels, from students to citizen journalists and beat reporters. GCJD staff, and its partners," according to the Center Web site, ". . . also work with political parties, law enforcement officials, corrections officers and civil organizations in an effort to assist them in understanding the role of the press in a civil, democratic society, and how to develop more effective and productive communication relationships with mass media."

Founded at Sam Houston State University (Huntsville, Texas) in 2012 by former CNN justice correspondent Kelli Arena, the Global Center for Journalism and Democracy the mission statement for the Center is to ". . . provide resources and training to journalists from around the world, in addition to working with governments, organizations and associations to help them better understand the role of journalists and how to build better working relationships with the press." Additionally, the GCJD offers specialized training programs for journalists across a range of topics, including: interactional and criminal justice, gender equity, health, politics and elections, energy issues, and public health concerns. The GCJD also offers specialized assistance and mentoring for female journalists and journalists in areas of conflict.

The global training activities of the GCJD are also used as a means of providing opportunities for Sam Houston State University mass communication students to travel, gaining both international and training experience. In addition to the travel opportunities available through the GCJD, the center also offers students internship opportunities. Additionally, as part of its mission to foster healthy press relationships on a global scale, the GCJD brings international journalists and experts across a range of topics to the campus to speak to students about issues related to press freedom, and political and controversial issue reporting.

The GCJD has developed working partnerships with a range of organizations, including: the National Democratic Institute, Samir Kassir SKeyes Center for Media and Cultural Freedom in Beruit, and UPI Next. In addition to offering training, the GCJD is committed to identifying appropriate cutting-edge communication technologies that can help journalists communicate in complex situations. The organization promotes the use of social media platforms like Facebook,

Twitter, and YouTube as useful tools for journalists to share information, even in situations where communication is difficult.

Danielle Lawson
Edinboro University

See Also: Gender; Human Rights; International Intervention; News Media; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security; Syria.

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Global Voices

Global Voices is an online community of over 800 volunteer authors and part-time editors who aggregate, translate, and amplify the online work of citizen journalists from around the globe. Global Voices is different from citizen journalism sites like Ground Report and Indymedia because it does not post first-hand accounts. Instead, its editors and authors aggregate, contextualize, summarize, and link to first-hand accounts found on Web sites, blogs, microblogs, podcasts, and online videos. Global Voices focuses on stories from countries other than North America and Europe, especially developing countries. Often, stories from these countries receive little or no coverage in international mainstream media, and Global Voices seeks to change that. Global Voices' primary goals are to call attention to important stories by citizen journalists to facilitate citizen journalism by providing needed training and tools and to advocate for free speech around the globe.

Global Voices was founded in 2005 by Rebecca MacKinnon and Ethan Zuckerman while both were fellows at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society, a Harvard University research center. The idea for Global Voices grew out of an international blogger's conference in 2004 at Harvard. Before joining the Berkman Center, MacKinnon was the Beijing and Tokyo bureau chief for CNN. Zuckerman helped found Tripod .com, an early online community Web site, and Geekcorps, a nonprofit that sent Internet technology experts to help companies in developing countries. Zuckerman, now the director of the Center for Civic Media at MIT; and MacKinnon, now a fellow at the New American Foundation in Washington, D.C., both remain on the Global Voices board of directors.

The Global Voices community consists of a board of directors, a group of advisors, project directors, part-time editors, and volunteer authors. The group of advisors is made up of activists, technology experts, and writers, including technology journalist Xeni Jardin and John Palfrey, the director of Berkman Center. The day-to-day work is handled by the management team of project directors, editors, and authors. Project directors lead special projects, for example, in free speech advocacy and citizen journalism training. Subject editors manage stories related to such subjects, for example, sports. Regional editors manage stories from nine regions, ranging from the Caribbean to sub-Saharan Africa. Language editors work with volunteer authors to translate stories from their respective languages into English.

Lingua editors work with a group of more than 600 translators to then translate English-language stories into various other languages. Volunteer authors, who often blog about events in their countries, serve an important role. Many help bridge the gap between cultures. Most blogging is done intraculturally, written by a member of a cultural group for other members of that cultural group. What allows Global Voices to work well are bloggers who work interculturally; they write about what is happening in their culture for an outside audience in the language of the outside audience. For example, a Chinese blogger in China will write in English for his or her audience in English-speaking countries.

Before a news story appears on the Global Voices Web site, there is a process. The process begins with a news event in a country, for example, a national revolution or a sporting event. Citizen

journalists in the country blog, tweet, and post video about the event. Volunteer authors, and Global Voice editors, monitor the posts, aggregate, summarize, link to first-hand accounts, and post the stories in English on the Global Voices site. Interested readers can access the stories via RSS feeds, e-mail, Twitter, or Facebook. Lingua editors may select some of these stories for translation into other languages.

In addition to the Global Voices Web site that calls attention to citizen journalism from around the world, Global Voices has other Web sites and projects that address other goals. The Raising Voices project addresses Global Voices' second goal, to provide citizen journalism training and tools. Raising Voices, launched in 2007, aims to empower underrepresented communities by awarding microgrants, developing tutorials on citizen journalism, and cultivating a network of citizen journalism activists. The Global Voices Advocacy project addresses Global Voices' third goal, to advocate for free speech around the globe. The advocacy project seeks to raise awareness about online freedom of speech issues, including censorship by governments. The project also maintains databases of past and current abuses of online rights around the world.

In a 2012 article by Zuckerman, he laments that while Global Voices has gained recognition, it has had "only modest success" in gaining an audience. The truly interconnected, postnational world has not come about as predicted. The Internet greatly aids in communication, but as Zukerman notes, Internet users often communicate online with people they already know in their community. Zuckerman's research shows that 95 percent of the news consumed by Internet users in the United States is published in the United States. To push for a more interconnected world, Zuckerman calls for designers of the next generation of online tools to help connect disparate voices from around the world. As Zuckerman notes, Facebook notifies users when they have not friended a high school classmate; Facebook and other social media companies could possibly connect people to new friends on the other side of the globe.

William Hart
Norfolk State University

See Also: Berkman Center; Blogs; Citizen Journalism; Developing Nations.

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Global Warming and Climate Change

The term *global warming* refers to the gradual increase of the average temperature of the Earth's atmosphere and oceans. It is an expression of seasonal changes in the weather patterns of the Earth as a whole or of its individual regions, which lead to a statistically significant deviation in the values of long-term weather parameters. The periods of reference for climate change range from decades to millions of years. Most frequently, the term *global warming* is used in reference to the phenomenon observed in the 20th and 21st centuries. The term *climate change* is used in narrow and wide senses. In its narrow sense, it refers restrictively to climate change taking place in the present, and in this use, it is synonymous to global warming. In the wide sense, it also includes the phases of global cooling and changes in precipitation patterns. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) uses the term *climate change* in its narrow sense and mainly in reference to anthropogenic climate change, reserving the term *climate variation* for climate changes generated by natural causes. In some cases, in order to refer specifically to climate change caused by human activity, the term *anthropogenic climate change* is used.

In referring to climate change and global warming, politicians and the media often use the scientific data or explanations and hypotheses supplied by scientists in order to support a

political stance on the problem. The scientific approach to climate change must consider issues relevant to many different scientific fields, such as meteorology, physics, oceanography, chemistry, astronomy, geography, geology, and biology, as well as many interdisciplinary branches. The issues related to climate change have profound influences on society, which mainly confront its economic and political aspects.

According to scientific assessment by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), supported by the national academies of science of the Group of Eight, the average temperature on Earth has risen by 1.26 degrees Fahrenheit (0.7 degrees C) since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the middle of the 18th century, and a large proportion of observed climate warming over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities, specifically the emission of gases such as carbon dioxide (CO_2) and methane (CH_4), which causes the greenhouse effect. According to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the United States is the largest source of global warming pollution because with only 4 percent of world's population, it produces 25 percent of the carbon dioxide pollution from fossil fuel burning, thus emitting more carbon dioxide than China, India, and Japan combined.

Estimates obtained from the climate models in the IPCC Assessment Report of 2007 indicate that by the beginning of the 22nd century, the average global temperature of the Earth's surface might rise by 3.24 to 6.12 degrees F (1.8 to 3.4 degrees C), with a possible slight decrease of temperature in some regions. In addition to the rise of sea level, the increase in global temperature will cause changes in the amount and distribution of precipitation. This might result in an increased frequency and magnitude of natural disasters such as floods, droughts, and hurricanes. Among other possible consequences of the increase in global temperatures is the decrease of crop yields in the less-developed countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America; and increased yields in developed countries because of the increase in carbon dioxide concentration and longer growing seasons. The warming of the climate will probably lead to a shift in the areas populated by plant and animal species toward the polar zones, and increase the probability of extinction of indigenous species of the coastal areas and islands that are now endangered.

However, some scholars believe global warming to be a myth, whereas some researchers recognize climate change, but reject the possibility of human influence on this process. There are scientists who do not deny the fact of warming and its anthropogenic nature, but do not agree with its particular aspects, such as the notion that the greatest impact on climate results from industrial emissions of greenhouse gases.

Global Warming and Traditional Media

Over the past five years, global warming has consistently been one of the most debated and divisive subjects in social media, particularly in the blogosphere. However, the importance of media in developing public awareness and concern with global warming and climate change has been evolving over the decades. Global warming began as a topic of scientific inquiry in the 1960s, but it was not widely recognized until the 1980s, the warmest decade on record, when serious journalistic and political interests were drawn to the weather conditions and climate. Journalists reporting on global warming and related issues cultivated the growth of public awareness. A study found that in 1981, only 38 percent of Americans had heard of global warming; by 1987, this number increased to 41 percent; and by 1990 to 86 percent. Another study examined opinion trends in global warming in the past 20 years, and found a strong correlation between patterns of media coverage of global warming and changes in public opinion concerning the issue. The connection is clearest between media attention and public awareness of global warming as a problem. In 1990 and 1992, two large groups of scientists received prominent news coverage when they petitioned President George H. W. Bush to take action to prevent global warming.

The issue of global warming received renewed political impetus in 2006 from the documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth,* directed by Davis Guggenheim, featuring former U.S. Vice President Al Gore's campaign to educate citizens about global warming via a comprehensive slide show. The creators of the film do not intend to provide new or previously unknown information, but rather to popularize scientific knowledge that was

previously established by scholars. In the film, Al Gore explains in accessible terms the anthropogenic aspects of climate change that are commonly believed among scientists, as well as the scientific and political aspects of global warming and its consequences in the near future if the carbon dioxide emissions caused by human activity are not limited. The film also contains a narrative of Gore's life. His story about the tragic death of his sister, who was suffering from cancer, serves as a metaphor for the possible fate of humanity if the short-sighted exploitation of nature continues. *An Inconvenient Truth* was first released in New York and Los Angeles on May 22, 2006, and by November, its revenues exceeded $20 million, which is unusual for a documentary. The film received many accolades, including the 2007 Academy Award for Documentary Feature. In the same year, Al Gore was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (together with the IPCC) for studying the effects of global climate change caused by human activity and the development of measures to prevent them.

Global Warming and Social Media

The rapidly developing social media of today provide more options for social marketing campaigns aiming at the promotion of the awareness of global warming and climate change. Social media have been widely used in dealing with questions of climate change, global warming, and related issues as a platform for both information exchange and opinion dissemination. They serve as a main platform in debates between climate change believers and skeptics. The engagement of the social media in this and many other polarizing issues can be explained by the perceived grassroots nature of social media that stand in opposition to mainstream media because the powers that be presumably have less control over the former. Social media are also a very flexible and fast means for disseminating an idea and gathering supporters. The powerful means offered by social media are used by both nonconformist environmental activists and well-established environmentalist groups such as Greenpeace.

In some instances, social media can stand in opposition to mainstream media, such as when the traditional media become more skeptical toward the theory of anthropogenic global warming, while social media keep proliferating with a variety of opinions and calls for action based on the recognition of global warming as a human-generated phenomenon. This divergence between mainstream and social media about global warming may reflect the shifts in public opinion in the larger context of growing skepticism toward both authorities and U.S. environmentalists, who have suffered several devastating losses in their decades-long political struggle against global warming. Lack of progress in domestic legislation to cap greenhouse gas emission found its external expression in the lack of political will of the United States in the world arena. In May 2012, the United States, together with Japan, Russia, and Canada, indicated that it would not sign a second period of the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC, an international treaty that sets binding obligations on industrialized countries to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

In light of their failing diplomatic and legislative efforts, U.S. environmentalists try to refocus on grassroots activism that lies at the core of social media, thus making the latter an important medium in their environmental efforts. One of the most prominent examples of a successful implementation of social media in spreading the message of anthropogenic climate change and campaigning against global warming is 350.org, an international environmental organization with goals to build a global grassroots movement that raises awareness of anthropogenic climate change, to confront climate change denial and cut emissions of one of the greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide, in order to slow the rate of global warming. The mission statement of 350.org reflects the role of social media: "to organize in a new way—everywhere at once, using online tools to facilitate strategic offline action." 350.org positions itself as a science-based, single-issue organization. It takes its name from the research of Goddard Institute for Space Studies scientist James E. Hansen, who posited in a 2007 paper that 350 parts-per-million of CO_2 in the atmosphere is a safe upper limit to avoid triggering catastrophic climate change.

350.org emerged after the environmentalist author Bill McKibben and a group of Middlebury College graduates organized the 2007 Step It Up campaign directed to climate protection, where they collaborated with existing environmental

organizations such as Greenpeace. The campaign was conceived as the "first open source, web-based day of action dedicated to stopping climate change" and proved to be successful in reaching a wide audience. On April 14, 2007, tens of thousands of Americans held simultaneous rallies in some 1,400 places across the country, telling Congress to "step it up" and reduce carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050.

After the success of this campaign, 350.org was created. Since then, it has been active in an established Web presence and social media. Social media such as Skype, chat, and text messaging, as well as previously established activist networks such as change.org, were essential in organizing the International Day of Climate Action on October 24, 2009, in the wake of the 2009 United Nations Climate Change Conference, commonly known as the Copenhagen Summit. The group 350.org claims to have mobilized over 5,200 actions in 181 countries.

In the wake of the Copenhagen Summit of 2009, another social media–driven event with strong political repercussions occurred. An unknown hacker attacked a server of the Climatic Research Unit (CRU) at the University of East Anglia (UEA), which led to surfacing of thousands of computer files, including e-mails pertaining to scientific aspects of climate change. This leak was immediately popularized by climate change critics on their blogs that named the event Climategate. According to the critics of the global warming issue and deniers of anthropogenic climate change, the spilled files contained e-mails evidencing that global warming was a scientific conspiracy in which scientists had allegedly manipulated climate data with the purpose of suppressing critics. These accusations were rejected by the CRU, which stated that the e-mails had been taken out of context and merely reflected an honest exchange of ideas. Both mainstream and social media were actively involved in covering the

A Boston-area group creating one of 350.org's approximately 5,200 actions that have spread to 181 countries, largely through an extensive social media presence. This event was organized by Occupy Boston's Climate Action, Sustainability, and Environmental Justice Working Group; its protestors filled the bandstand on Boston Common on May 5, 2012.

story, which had an impact on the development of the negotiations over climate change mitigation in Copenhagen. In response to the controversy and to its development in the media, U.S. scientific organizations released statements reaffirming the scientific consensus that global warming is a growing threat to society. Rapidly evolving social media, with its mobility of information exchange, increasing accessibility, and attentiveness to current events will continue to play a major role as a communication and action platform for different opinions concerning the issues of global warming and climate change.

Alexander E. Pichugin
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; *Al Gore's Penguin Army*; Cause-Marketing Campaigns; Environmental Issues; World Without Oil.

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Going Viral

Much like the viral spread of diseases, when something goes viral, it spreads throughout a population very quickly in near-exponential fashion. The viral phenomenon is made possible when a piece of information can be replicated, reproduced, or spread by individuals to other individuals. The advent of the Internet has led to the use of "viral" to describe the rapid spread of nonmaterial entities through communicative channels. Information can spread via a directed or broadcast message system, meaning that one can send the information to a group of designated people, or simply post the information to a location that many other people can access. In either case, a piece of information can very rapidly spread through entire populations of people. The viral spread of information was catalyzed by the increased use and speed of information and communication technologies (ICT). Many forms of information have been able to go viral, from videos to rumors, and the speed at which people can access and share information via ICTs is directly related to the speed by which something can go viral.

The phenomena known as "going viral" is, at its core, an element of social networks. A social network is a series of individuals connected to each other via some phenomena, which can be material or nonmaterial. Because people are connected to other individuals in their social networks via several different forms of media, there are many channels through which information can spread to reach other people. Additionally, social networks tend to overlap, so there are redundant ties or connections to other people. When an individual shares information with other people or posts something to a publicly viewable Internet site, that piece of information can then diffuse through the social networks of anyone who has access to the information. Tony Sampson has discussed the spread of information through networks as a form of contagion, and expresses the deep connection between the connected age and network contagion.

Preferential attachment and information cascades are two of the ways that a piece of information can go viral. Some analysts have discussed preferential attachment as a rich-get-richer type of phenomenon, where the more popular the information becomes (e.g., how frequently an online video is viewed), the more likely that information will continue to become more popular or go viral. The trajectory of the original popularity can stem from a number of sources. One such source that has frequently been the start of something going viral is when an opinion leader, such as a famous or important public figure, draws attention to some form of information, which then can

be extensively shared through social networks. Once the information begins to attract increasing attention, it can then appear as most viewed or trending on a particular Internet site, thus attracting increasing attention.

Information cascades, on the other hand, don't necessarily require an opinion leader to start the viral spread of information. Duncan Watts explains information cascades in that anyone can be a key player in a cascade because anyone can be connected to others who are willing to be influenced, and with the ease of sharing information via ICTs, the threshold of willingness can be fairly low. In a social network, each person has a set of connections that they pay attention to and a set that pays attention to them, and this variability is important for something to go viral in an information cascade.

One form of ICT that has amplified the speed at which something can go viral is social media. Social media allow people to share information with a large group of other individuals very easily; social networking Web sites support the sharing of information with one's social network, where microblogging and social tagging Web sites allow for a more broadcast form of propagation. Further, the richness of social media allows users to either share or embed media-rich artifacts such as videos very easily. As a result of the ease of sharing a variety of media with anyone who is connected to the Internet, information can go viral very quickly.

Although there are several ways that information can go viral, the predictability or creation of viral phenomena remains one of its most elusive characteristics. Unexpectedness is one of the trademarks of the viral spread of information, and as such, there has been little success in forcing or harnessing the ability to go viral.

An example of a video going viral is the "Kony 2012" video, which was viewed 34 million times on the first day that it was uploaded, and 94 million times within eight months.

Devan Rosen
Ithaca College

See Also: Social Network Analysis; Strong-Tie Social Connections Versus Weak-Tie Social Connections; Trending Topic; Viral Marketing.

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Google AdWords/ AdSense in Campaign Strategy

AdWords is a Google service for buying advertisements that are placed on Google or other sites in Google's content network. One of the company's major revenue streams, AdWords brought in the bulk of Google's $42.5 billion income in 2012.

AdSense, Google's contextual advertising program, matches advertisers in the Google Display Network (GDN) with consumers based on their search keywords and phrases. Unlike traditional advertising in which advertisers pay a flat fee regardless of whether or not viewers see ads, and hope for exposure to those who happen to come across their Web site while searching for something, however related or unrelated, contextual advertising is a type of targeted advertising that displays ads relevant to users' interests.

AdSense differs from AdWords in that, while advertisers pay to run their ads through AdWords, Web site owners/publishers with an AdSense account do not. Rather, Google pays AdSense account holders for each click originating from its Web sites.

When people visit AdSense-activated Web sites they see square- or rectangular-shaped advertisements deemed relevant to their interests, usually located on Web sites' sidebars or at the bottom of blog posts. Ad content is controlled by several criteria, including the geophysical location of the person visiting the Web site and users' individual browsing histories.

Web site owners apply for an AdSense account for their site(s). Upon approval by Google, a

"pay-on-performance," or "pay-per-click," agreement is instituted, whereby Google compensates AdSense account holders for the number of clicks placed on GDN advertisements appearing on owners'/publishers' Web sites. Once AdSense account holders determine the types of GDN ads they would like displayed on their sites, a Javascript that routinely finds and displays GDN advertisements determined relevant by account holders is added to their sites' HTML code. Through an Internet Protocol address exclusion, holders can exclude specific GDN advertisements, topics, individuals, or organizations they consider unfavorable to their sites. Thereafter, GDN advertisements, in the form of text, image, video, or rich media, appear on Web sites enrolled in AdSense. Account holders track performance statistics on AdSense's Web site.

Use of AdWords and AdSense for Elections and Issue Advocacy

Although AdSense was launched in 2003, it wasn't until the lead-up to the 2008 elections that many political campaign strategists discovered its potential. By late 2007, political strategy bloggers called AdWords and AdSense the "new political battle field." Perhaps the most intense battle occurred shortly before election day in November 2008, when numerous Web sites that had no connection to politics or marriage equality debates were inundated with AdSense-generated ads encouraging voters to vote for Proposition 8, which would eliminate the right for gay couples to marry in California. Responding to objections by Google users and equality advocates, Google's founder, Sergey Brin, CEO Eric Schmidt, and other Silicon Valley illuminaries took out a full-page ad in the *San Jose Mercury* newspaper urging readers to vote no on Proposition 8. The following week, on the company's public policy blog, the Google Elections and Issue Advocacy Team attempted to defuse the "Prop 8 AdSense debacle" with a reminder of Google's political advertisement policy.

The policy requires political ads to meet the same editorial guidelines as all other AdSense advertisements: no copyright violations, and no promotion of violence against anyone or advocacy against a protected group (including, but not limited to, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation/gender identity, or veteran status). The policy articulated Google's commitment to fairly promote advertisements for all political candidates regardless of political affiliation or viewpoint. The policy also necessitates statements that donations for political candidates or parties are not tax deductible; forbids misleading ads, such as those claiming to be for an opposing candidate; and prohibits attacks on candidates' personal lives.

Policy Challenges, Surges, and Negative Campaigning

Google's political advertising policy has been challenged on several occasions. An example involving issue advocacy emerged in May 2011, when Google cancelled the AdWord advertisement purchased by the Dublin-based sex worker rights group, "Turn Off the Blue Light" (TOBL). Erroneously assuming that TOBL's AdWord purchase was for "selling adult sexual services," Google rejected the purchase, saying that it was an "egregious violation" of its advertisement policy. Although TOBL responded to clarify that the ad was to raise awareness about sex worker rights, Google didn't budge. Two months later, TOBL members organized a protest at Google's European headquarters in Dublin, after which time Google conceded, and after determining its content to be advocating a political position, ran TOBL's advertisement.

The following year, during the lead-up to the July 12, 2012, byelection for the state seat of Melbourne, an upstart political party in Australia made a formal complaint to the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) against Google. Invoking the DOJ's Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, the Australian Sex Party claimed that Google engaged in "unlawful interference in the conduct of a state election in Victoria with corrupt intent." The complaint was lodged after the Australian Sex Party's AdWords account application was rejected by Google on the grounds that the party's Web site neglected to exhibit language regarding its tax-exempt status, which was required in order to solicit donations.

The party amended the Web site to include the required language; however, Google continued to ban its advertisements. On the eve of the election the party's ads were reinstated, likely the

result of media reports that the party was planning on taking Google to U.S. federal court.

Despite the protection of Google's political advertisement policy, some strategists are concerned about the vulnerability to negative campaign tactics from their opposition because even the appearance of an opponent or a competing cause would be problematic to a political campaign. This is particularly the case with a strategy known as a Google Surge, Google Blast, or Network Blast, a large marketing expenditure that aims to create a substantial amount of targeted short-term advertising, "the Google equivalent of putting a campaign sign in every yard in the city," as stated by Cristian Guasch. The first widely reported political campaign surge occurred in March 2009, just before a special election for New York's 20th Congressional District. Democrat Scott Murphy's campaign ads flooded AdSense-enrolled Web sites targeted to his district's voters.

Surges are also used for issue advocacy. For example, the *Daily Kos* launched a weeklong surge campaign calling attention to the "cronyism and hypocrisy" in the hiring of 26-year-old Republican aide, Valerie Cass. On February 7, 2011, Cass, identified by Alysia Hopper as the mistress of her husband, Wisconsin State Senator Randy Hopper, was hired on the recommendation of Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker's cabinet, at a 36 percent raise compared to her predecessor. Four days later, claiming that the state was broke, Walker released his budget repair bill that enacted major layoffs, cut benefits, and eliminated nearly all collective bargaining rights for public workers.

Some political campaign strategists avoid AdSense, arguing that it is confusing at least, damaging at worst, if a problematic GDN advertisement would appear on their campaign sites. Further, they suggest that AdSense revenue is not worth the potential exposure to unfavorable messages. Such strategists prefer the relative control of buying and placing AdWords ads. Nevertheless, AdWords ads may appear on sites disagreeable to strategists. For example, a John McCain campaign strategist reported that a 2008 AdWords purchase resulted in McCain ads featuring the statement, "Surrender Is Not an Option on Iraq" to appear on the *Daily Kos*, resulting in negative impact to the campaign. In the following election cycle, Mitt Romney's ads appeared on Gay.com and PlanetOut, to the dismay of his strategists.

Lara Lengel
Bowling Green State University
Ann Warmuth
AVM Design and Multimedia Studio

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Congressional 2010; Campaigns, Presidential 2008; Campaigns, 2012; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Virtual; Data Mining; Get Out The Vote Drives; Google+; Identity Politics; Microtargeting; Online Smear Campaigns; Web Mapping and Online Politics.

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Googlearchy and Politics

As the Internet has continued to grow in usage and capability, political scientists have hypothesized that the ready availability of news would lower the cost of political information and reduce inequalities of attention for less-attentive Americans. Computer scientists, on the other hand, believe the opposite. Their research has suggested that the Internet is actually antiegalitarian. Rather than equalizing opportunity, there is instead a winner-take-all power distribution, where a very small number of popular sites

receive a disproportionate share of traffic. In a departure from this general paradigm, however, political scientist Matthew Hindman, in *The Myth of Digital Democracy*, writes about the idea of Googlearchy. Hindman argues that there is a strong search engine bias that directs Internet users to certain sites far more often than others. Hindman bases his work on a large survey of political content available online. His study uses "iterative crawling away from political sites easily accessible through popular online search tools, and it uses sophisticated automated methods to categorize site content." He finds that, in every category examined, a small handful of Web sites dominate. While the Internet may lower the cost of finding some information on a topic, it actually limits the impact of the vast majority of political Web sites. In short, the Googlearchy determines what one is exposed to.

The Myth of Digital Democracy was published in 2008 by Hindman, and contends that the belief that the Internet is democratizing politics is wrong. He focuses on two main myths: that the Internet has extended political voice to previously voiceless precincts, and that it has facilitated deliberation. To examine his points, he focuses on five careful categories of limits of online politics in the American context. First, Hindman's research reminds readers that political traffic is only a miniscule portion of Internet usage. He points out that pornography has well over 100 times more Internet traffic than political Web sites. Second, Hindman points out that the link structure of the Internet limits what citizens are exposed to. Users are taken to the most popular sites, which tend to only link to themselves or to other equally popular sites. Third, search engine use is particularly shallow. Consumers are taken to the most familiar sites, rather than those that are best or the most relevant. Further, sites are able to purchase the ability to be listed higher through search engine optimization or paid ads. Fourth, Hindman discusses the expense of digital content. While it is relatively cheap to have an online presence, successful marketing, capacity, and software development are all quite costly. As a result, those who have been on the Internet the longest tend to dominate. Fifth, social hierarchies quickly emerge. Once someone is established as a blogger or subject expert, he or she quickly gains near monopoly power.

Googlearchy and the Average Citizen

Hindman argues that people actually have a significantly smaller public sphere on the Internet. When the digital world narrows political discourse, it results in Googlearchy. Hindman is not a hopeless optimist who believes that the Internet has the capability of entirely transforming governance. Instead, he notes that the average American is far more likely to check the weather or a sports score than to closely follow politics. This, Hindman argues, is caused by the inability of search engines to return rich, flavorful political Web sites that are less well known or regarded by search engine optimizers. Political blogs are huge on the Internet—especially ones related to American politics. Yet, the only way to find them is typically from word of mouth. These blogs thrive because of the boring and editorially narrow foci of mainstream American media.

Even if an average citizen happens to stumble upon a provocative blog online, odds are that it is written by someone with an advanced degree and trained under the traditional institutions of media. The top 30 blog sites (measured by daily hits), for example, are dominated by those who have advanced degrees from elite educational institutions, even more so than was true a decade ago. Hindman shows that only about a third of op-ed columnists have advanced degrees, whereas 75 percent of the top 30 bloggers have advanced degrees. The powerful drive even the allegedly egalitarian Internet. Whether these sites are the best at what they do is a different question, but people keep coming back to them. Part of the reason is a general lack of sophistication. Most search engine users fail to ever click past the initial page of results. It is likely that they never select a result not listed in the top three slots. This shows why search engines play such an important role in determining whether the Internet is truly equal.

Hindman's study suggests clear impacts on American politics. Online search browsers provide users with a point of entry to the Internet, but if users continually select only the first or second options, they are missing other potential sources—sources that could in fact be better suited to their needs. The high degree of overlap between the results obtained with the Yahoo! and Google seed sets, particularly among heavily

linked sites, underlines this point. Any site that is more than three clicks away from any of the top 200 Google or Yahoo! results on a given topic is off the beaten track and highly unlikely to have any substantial impact on mass politics. Google's "I'm Feeling Lucky" button only makes this more so. Now, consumers do not need to consider which site to go to. Google will allow its private algorithm to decide for the consumer and then automatically open that page.

Social Media

Social media has inserted a new variable into Hindman's idea of Googlearchy. Now, with any individual having the ability to publicize his or her views or beliefs, some argue that the Internet has reached a state of complete openness. Yet, the approach of social media suggests that this is not the case. While one can post a political message on Facebook, it will only be visible to friends. A Google search will not return the message. The same is true for Twitter or any other social media site. One may have an audience, but it is entirely composed of individuals who have self-selected to read one's work. It is not available for anyone to stumble upon. In this sense, social media is in many ways even less democratic than the traditional Internet.

Hindman's theory has not been met with universal acceptance. Micah Sifry has made the most comprehensive set of arguments against Hindman—most notably during the 2009 Digital Democracy Debate at Yale. Sifry argues that while access may not be entirely equal, it is no longer fully dependent on having money or connections. Anyone can have a blog, Web site, or Twitter account, and grow an audience. Blogs in particular, Sifry claims, are equalizing because bloggers have a continual conversation with readers. Bloggers may be more educated, but that does not mean that their readers are. While Hindman tries to claim that the Web, as a whole, emphasizes sound bites far too much, he neglects the many ways that content is directly rewarded. No one—Sifry claims—seems to notice that the second most popular Obama video on YouTube is 37 minutes in length.

Clay Shirky (backed by Evgeny Morozov) adds another point of contention with Hindman by stating that when political data becomes available online, it actually shifts the information balance toward ordinary citizens. Instead of having to travel to government, government is accessible through a home computer. Hindman fails to speak to this point. Matt Bai argues that Hindman's data is old, and "the political impact of the Internet is spreading so quickly that it's almost impossible to capture and quantify." He disparages Hindman's graphs and equations and prefers anecdotes about Internet activists from modest backgrounds. And Manuel Castells points to the power of the Internet generally in helping citizens at the point where people look to "take matters into their own hands, engaging in collective action outside the prescribed institutional channels, to defend their demands and, eventually, to change the rulers and even the rules shaping their lives."

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Blogosphere; Google+; Search Engine Optimization.

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Google+

Google+ is a social network launched by Google in summer 2011. During its initial soft launch it used a user-to-user or an invitation-only basis. Then in fall 2012, Google opened Google+ to everyone, and the Web site quickly became one of the most popular social networking Web sites after Facebook and Twitter. Google+ can be accessed on a computer or on iOS or Android mobile device through apps. The site has attracted more than 400 million accounts, with more than

359 million active users in May 2013. Individuals over age 18 with Google accounts can become users of Google+. These users can follow people and organizations of interest and group these individuals and organizations into circles. Google users have the ability to organize other users in one or more circles. These circles can be public or private, and certain circles can receive specific content. Google+ has a variety of features, including Google+ Hangouts and Google+ Events.

Google+ Hangouts allows users to communicate synchronously using audio and video. Users can share and view Google Docs or watch YouTube videos within the hangout. A maximum of 10 users can participate in a Google+ Hangout. Hangouts can be recorded (Hangouts on Air). Hangouts on Air are streamed to YouTube. Others can watch the YouTube stream synchronously or asynchronously. The link to the YouTube video can be embedded in a post on Google+, so users can watch the stream synchronously or asynchronously in Google+.

Google+ Events can be used to schedule events inside or outside of Google+. Google+ Events are synced with users' Google Calendars. Users can create an event to schedule a hangout or an event when the users will be at the same location. Users can also share photos associated with an event.

Communication on Google+

Google+ users can communicate their interest in content across the Internet by the +1 button or Share button. When a user utilizes the +1 button, this click represents an endorsement for news or controversial articles. The share button is generally utilized for news articles, videos, and so on.

Google+ is integrated with other Google products. For example, YouTube videos can be embedded into posts or viewed by all members of a Google+ Hangout. Users can share and view Google Docs within a hangout. Users can employ Google Messenger to chat with other users. Google+ users can use hangouts within Gmail to chat with other users. Google+ users can post pictures in Picasa Web albums in Google+. Google+ can be integrated with Blogger.

Users can also create pages for organizations. For example, businesses can use pages to interact with customers. Small businesses can take advantage of the Local features to interact with customers in their area. Local takes advantage of the Zagat rating system. Colleges and universities can use pages to interact with current students and recruit prospective students. Professors can create pages for their classes and host office hours or record lectures with Google+ Hangouts.

Google+ and Politics

Google+ was utilized in the 2012 presidential campaign by President Obama. He used Google+ Hangouts to communicate with the public through the White House Google+ Hangout event. This event was automatically streamed to YouTube, and viewers could interact directly with the president. The White House Google+ Hangout was the first virtual presidential interview held in the White House. This event provided viewers with opportunities to ask very candid questions focused on the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA), and Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA). Through this social media Web site, Obama received questions from viewers across the nation, and one viewer provided Obama with an opportunity to find her husband a job because he was out of work.

During the 2002 presidential election, a Google Politics and Elections 2012 page was launched on Google+. Using the hashtag #googlepolitics, the Google+ page focused on politics featured infographics such as the top five rising search terms in the United States. This infographic featured the following most popular search terms: Popular Vote 2012, FL Election Results, Stock Market, Diane Sawyer Drunk, and Puerto Rico Statehood. Viewers were encouraged to provide comments on each infographic through a text window on the right-hand side of the screen. During the final presidential debate, Google+ published an infographic titled The Top 4 Search Terms During the Final Presidential Debate. This infographic was divided by the following terms: With Obama and With Romney. The four top search terms under With Obama were: Apology Tour, Bin Laden, 2008, and Horses/Bayonets. The four top search terms under With Romney were Auto Bailout, What Is on Flag Pin, Budget Plan, and What Kind of Car Does Mitt Drive. Seventy-six Google+ users gave the infographic a +1 (endorsement), 19 Google+ users forwarded the article, and 34 people provided comments below the infographic.

Google+ provided infographics related to search terms during and after each presidential debate.

During the weeks leading up to the election, Google+ created a Voter Information Tool and Civic Information API. These tools were utilized to find voter ID requirements, early voting sites, sample ballots, and polling places. More than 600 Web sites embedded the tool into their sites, including the *Huffington Post,* CNN, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and the Republican Congressional Campaign Committee. Following the presidential election, Google+ made plans to provide the same service for other countries, including Italy, Kenya, the Czech Republic, and Ghana.

Jennifer Edwards
Anthony C. Edwards
Tarleton State University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Facebook; Networks, Political; Social Networking Web Sites.

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Grassley, Chuck

Charles (Chuck) Grassley is a Republican senator from Iowa. Grassley has served in the U.S. Senate since first he was elected in 1980. He is known for his low-key style, work ethic, and ability to work across partisan lines. In the Senate, Grassley has advocated cracking down on government waste, more government accountability, and whistleblower protection. He sits on a number of committees including those for judiciary and finance. His hometown newspaper, the *Des Moines Register,* recently ranked him the member of the Iowa delegation with the most political pull.

Charles Grassley was born September 17, 1933, in Iowa. He attended the University of Northern Iowa, where he received a bachelor's degree in political science in 1955. Grassley continued at the University of Northern Iowa, where he graduated with a master's degree in political science. He began, but did not finish, a Ph.D. in political science at the University of Iowa. In 1958, he was elected to the Iowa State Legislature, where he served until 1975. In 1974, Grassley won election to the House of Representatives, serving there until 1981. While serving in the Iowa State Legislature, he also farmed and worked in a factory.

U.S. Senate

In 1980, Grassley challenged and subsequently beat incumbent John Culver (D) from Iowa for a seat in the U.S. Senate. In election after election, Grassley won re-election by comfortable margins. Since 1980, he has received at least 60 percent of the vote in his re-election bids. Most recently, Grassley was reelected in 2010, easily defeating his opponent, Roxanne Conlon. Many attribute Grassley's political success to his work ethic. Over the years, he has repeatedly visited Iowa's 99 counties. Almost every weekend, Grassley returns to Iowa and holds meetings with his constituents. Grassley's constituents also appreciate the fact that he has not missed a vote since 1993 (the only vote he missed was because of inspecting the damage from a flood in Iowa that year).

Grassley also portrays himself as an unassuming, down-to-earth Iowan. He likes to portray himself as just another Iowan who still works on his farm with his family when he travels home every weekend.

In the 1980s, Grassley demonstrated his independence from the policies of Ronald Reagan. Throughout the decade, he voted against the Reagan administration's farm policies, which were unpopular in Iowa. Throughout his Senate tenure, agriculture has been one of Grassley priority issues. He has championed aid to farmers throughout his Senate career. In 1996, he supported the Freedom to Farm Act, which

reformed agriculture policy. In the Senate, Grassley has unsuccessfully sought to limit farm subsidies to smaller farmers. For example, in 2002, he failed to put into a farm bill a measure limiting farm subsidies to farmers making no more than $275,000. Grassley has also supported ethanol subsidies for farmers.

An issue where Grassley departs from many of his Republican colleagues in the Senate is defense. He is a frequent critic of defense spending and often highlights cases of Pentagon waste. Grassley stood out from the rest of his Republican colleagues by voting against the Gulf War in 1991. He has established a reputation for being a dove on defense issues. On the other hand, Grassley voted to authorize the use of force in Iraq in 2002.

Throughout his career, Grassley has been passionate about exposing waste and fraud in government agencies. Grassley has exposed fraud and waste in the Defense Department, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and many other government agencies. He has supported legislation protecting whistleblowers who reveal waste and fraud in government agencies. Grassley succeeded in passing legislation that required that Congress follow the same laws that it passed. More recently, Grassley has criticized the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms for Operation Fast and Furious—an undercover operation that provided guns to Mexican drug dealers and led to the death of a border patrol agent.

Senator Chuck Grassley talks with Federal Emergency Management Agency Congressional Representative Jodi Bruckner before attending a town hall meeting in Waverly, Iowa, to hear from local residents affected by a severe flood in 2008.

Committees

Grassley has served on a number of committees in the Senate including agriculture, judiciary, and finance. From 2003 to 2007, he was chair of the finance and judiciary committees. Today, he is the senior-ranking member on these committees.

Over the years, Grassley acquired the reputation as a politician willing to work across party lines to achieve his goals. While considered a conservative, he is not perceived as a confrontational figure in the Senate. For example, he was known for his close working relationship with Senator Max Baucus of Montana. Baucus is currently the chair of the Finance Committee, and from 2003 to 2007 he was the ranking committee member when Grassley was the chair. Grassley and Baucus worked together on a number of issues, including tax cuts, tax reform, and health care. In 2009, it appeared that the duo would forge a compromise on health care, but the negotiations ultimately collapsed.

Obama Administration

In recent years, Grassley has been criticized for taking a more partisan tone. He voted against President Obama's stimulus plan in 2009, and the Affordable Care Act in 2010. Grassley was condemned for alleging that there were death panels in President Obama's health care bill and for walking away from health care negotiations. On the other hand, Grassley contends that President Obama and the Democrats walked away from health care negotiations. In addition, Grassley has voted against many of President Obama's judicial nominees and has blasted the attacks on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi and the botched Operation Fast and Furious.

Critics also note Grassley's use of cutting-edge media to attack the Obama administration. Over the last few years, he has utilized Twitter to send

short, pithy tweets criticizing President Obama and his policies.

Critics see political opportunism in Grassley's attack on President Obama pointing to the rise of a strong Tea Party movement in Iowa. Grassley's supporters reject this charge, arguing that Grassley is merely upholding longstanding values in opposing President Obama's policies. They argue that President Obama's taxing and spending policies clash with the fiscal conservatism of Grassley.

In his career in the Senate, Grassley has a conservative voting record of 86 percent. He frequently votes with Republicans on issues such as the budget, tax cuts, and abortion. On the other hand, he has broken from his party in his opposition to the Gulf War and his support for alternative energy. While accumulating a conservative record, Grassley has won over independents and Democrats in the state of Iowa. This has primarily been because of his pleasant demeanor, work ethic, and perception that he is a bipartisan political figure (though that image has been challenged by critics since 2009). Grassley is one of the longest-serving senators in Iowa history, and with reelection in 2016, he may have the distinction of being Iowa's longest-serving senator.

Jason Roberts
Quincy College

See Also: Bachman, Michelle; Campaigns, Congressional 2010; Coburn, Tom.

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Great Firewall of China

The "Great Firewall of China" (GFW or GFC) is a phrase coined by Charles R. Smith in 2002 to describe Internet censorship in China, where foreign "harmful" ideas are prevented from invading the authoritarian state to safeguard its one-party rule through filtering content as well as monitoring users online. The metaphoric term draws parallels between the world's most complex Internet control system and the Great Wall, a magnificent ancient fortification built to protect China proper from intrusions by nomadic groups. A firewall is a network security system that controls the flow of information that travels through a node. A common interpretation of the GFW refers narrowly to the inspecting, filtering, and blocking technologies deployed in the international gateways of Chinese Internet service providers (ISPs). Nevertheless, some use the term loosely to imply

the whole set of legal, regulatory, and technical measures China has put in place for Internet censorship and control.

CNCERT/CC

The GFW is operated by the National Computer Network Emergency Response Technical Team Coordination Center of China (CNCERT/CC) under the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT). The chief designer of the project, Binxing Fang, dubbed as the father of the GFW by Chinese Internet users, is the president of Beijing University and a professor of posts and telecommunications. The GFW is often confused with the Golden Shield Project (GSP), a public security information technology project aiming to establish a nationwide computer application and communication system for the police force. Both projects started in late 1990s, but the GFW is a tool of ideology control, whereas the GSP is primarily used for crime prevention and investigation by the Ministry of Public Security (MPS). Because Internet crime investigation and monitoring constitute a part of the GSP, it is possible that the GFW and the GSP overlap to a certain degree, but the relationship remains ambiguous.

While CNCERT/CC oversees the daily operation of the GFW, CNCERT/CC is merely a technical and research organization that has little influence over censorship decisions. Orders of censorship (for example, which Web site to block, which keyword to filter) primarily come from government institutions that wield stronger political power, such as: the Central Propaganda Department, the State Council Information Office (SCIO), and the Public Information Network Security Supervision Department of MPS.

The hardware of the GFW is mainly produced by domestic information technology companies such as Sugon (Shuguang) and Huawei to ensure information security and to protect state secrets. However, quite a few American companies, including Sun Microsystems, Cisco, Nortel Networks, 3COM, Websense, and Bay networks of California have all been implicated in sales of Web filtering and monitoring technologies to China. The OpenNet Initiative's 2004–05 report on Chinese Internet filtering claims that the backbone of China's Internet relies on Cisco technology.

The general philosophy of Internet control in China is to territorialize domestic computer networks into a large national intranet with connections to the rest of the world funneled through a few major Internet service providers. The international gateways are located in three metropolitan areas: Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou. The largest two Chinese ISPs are CHINANET and CNCGROUP, owned by China Telecom and China Unicom, respectively. According to findings from a series of empirical testing conducted by researchers from University of Michigan in 2011, CHINANET possesses 79.4 percent of the filtering interfaces, and CNCGROUP possesses 17.4 percent.

CHINANET has a mature filtering capability, whereas CNCGROUP has continuously strengthening its infrastructure. Most of the filtering devices are concentrated at border routers, but a small proportion are internal autonomous systems. This leads observers to suspect that the GFW also has the capability to monitor and filter domestic traffic. CNCGROUP places most of its filtering devices in the backbone, but the majority of CHINANET's filtering devices belong to provincial networks.

Targeted Content

Legislation has been introduced since the mid-1990s to restrict the flow of Web content that could endanger the rule of the Chinese Communist Party. The claimed purposes of Internet censorship in China are always vague and broad. Laws and regulations prohibit the production and dissemination of information containing content that endangers national security, divulges state secrets, subverts the government, undermines national unification, harms the honor and interests of the state, defames government agencies, instigates ethnic hatred, preaches cults or feudal superstitions, disturbs social order, encourages gambling, and shows pornography and violence.

In practice, the blocked Web sites roughly fall into eight categories: foreign social media platforms; foreign news sites; file sharing sites; overseas Chinese portal sites and discussion forums; dissident, prodemocracy, and human rights sites; circumvention and anonymizer tools sites; sites maintained by Falun Gong; and pornography and gambling sites.

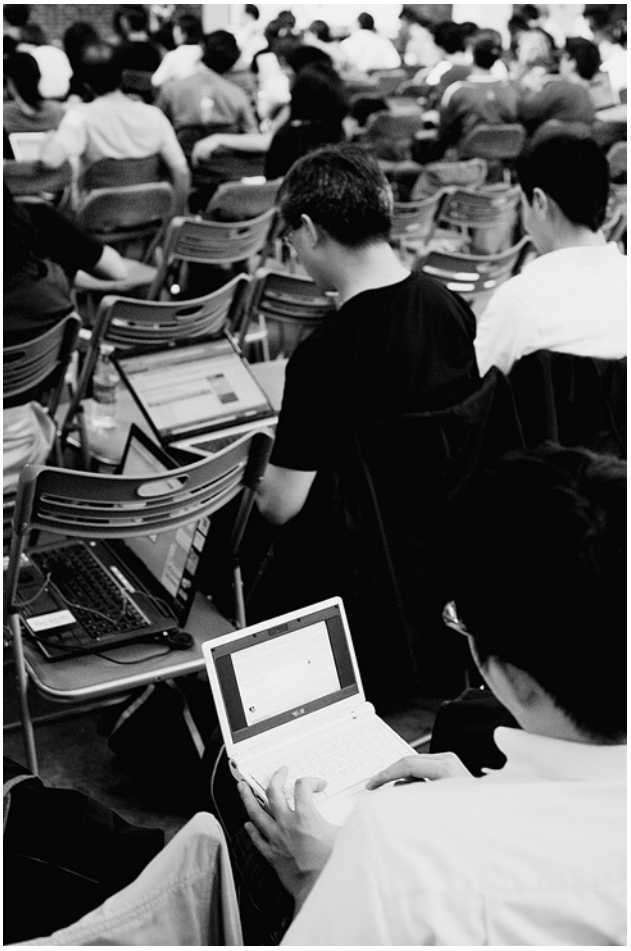
The most heavily censored keywords are the names of top leaders and dissidents, Falun Gong, and the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown. The blocked sites and filtered keywords are not fixed, and tend to vary across time. For example, during the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the government loosened Internet control by unblocking a number of sites, including China Times, Mingpao, Wikipedia, and BBC. In contrast, during politically sensitive periods such as the "two meetings" (the annual meetings of the National People's Congress and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference), the government tends to tighten up the control.

Technical Measures

To control the domestic network, the government has a large variety of legal and administrative measures at its disposal, including promoting self-regulation, deploying human censors and Internet police force, recruiting paid commentators, or even shutting down regional Internet connections when needed. Nonetheless, when it comes to dealing with content from international Web sites, blocking and filtering are the only feasible choices. The Chinese authorities have never publicized any technical details of the GFW, but researchers worldwide have conducted various empirical and technical studies of the GFW. The most frequently mentioned techniques are Internet protocol (IP) blocking, DNS manipulation, URL filtering, and keyword filtering.

IP blocking is the earliest form of filtering mechanism used in China. All international gateways of the Chinese network are configured with a list of banned IP addresses—numerical labels assigned to computers connected to the Internet to indicate where the computers are located. When users try to access a blacklisted address, the packets will be routed to a black hole server, which then ignores the connection request. IP blocking is easy to implement, adding only a tiny workload to the gateway routers; however, it tends to "over-block" innocent Web sites. When a target is hosted on a server with multiple sites, all Web sites will be blocked because they share the same IP address. However, if a banned Web site moves or copies its content to another server with a different IP address and keeps the domain name unchanged, the blocking can be circumvented (assuming the site is not banned through DNS manipulation) until the Chinese authorities spot the new IP address and update their list.

Most people visit a Web site through typing its domain name into an Internet browser, and few would remember its IP address. The domain name system (DNS) is a database used to translate textual hostnames (for example, www.facebook.com) into IP addresses (for example, 173.252.110.27). In addition to the IP address list, the GFW maintains a list of banned domain names. When a router detects any predefined domain name queries passing through network traffic, the GFW will inject a forged IP address so that users will not be able reach the desired Web site or will be redirected to a wrong site. Almost all the DNS servers in China are polluted.



Some computer users in China have found ways around the Great Firewall. These bloggers were visiting social media sites at the November 2008 Chinese Blogger conference in Guangzhou.

When Google's search engine service was blocked in 2002, domestic requests to access Google.com were directed to Baidu.com. A uniform resource locator (URL) is a string of characters representing a Web address, which usually consists of a protocol name, a domain name or IP address, and a path (for example, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Falun_Gong). A requested URL string can be scanned for blacklisted keywords.

Keyword filtering (packet filtering), which occurs at the protocol level, rather than at the network level, is more technically complex. When a connection between two computers is established through a three-way handshaking process, information wrapped in TCP segments will flow through a series of routers to reach its destination. Routers use intrusion detection system (IDS) technology to inspect content contained in TCP packets for predefined keywords. When blacklisted keywords are spotted, multiple forged TCP reset packets (RST flag) will be sent to both ends to terminate the connection. Once activated, the blocking can last for a few minutes to an hour.

Relying upon a set of keywords, packet filtering is more flexible than other measures because it can dynamically cut out a connection without locating the originations of the information (e.g., domain name, IP address, or URL) or blocking the whole Web site, regardless of the content on individual pages. For example, both English and Chinese Wikipedia homepages are accessible in China. However, when one tries to access the page of Wikipedia entry for Falun Gong, it takes a long time to load a part of the page. When the "refresh" or "reload" button is clicked, the connection is terminated.

Circumvention and Countermeasures

Despite its technical sophistication, the Great Firewall is not invincible. The two basic requirements to bypass the GFW are reliable proxy servers and encryption. A proxy can serve as an intermediary to relay information from the otherwise blocked sites and filtered pages to end users, while encryption keeps keyword filtering from identifying "harmful" content in traffic streams. The common tools of circumvention include anticensorship software, virtual private networks (VPN), and secure shells (SSH). Most anticensorship software (e.g., FreeGate, GoAgent, GTunnel, Ultrasurf, Psiphon, and Tor) relies on open, free proxies, but VPN and SSH use private hosts outside of China. Only a small fraction of tech-savvy Chinese users know how to climb to the other side of the GFW. According to a nonrepresentative online survey conducted in 2010, Internet users who use circumvention tools were predominantly young males with high levels of education, and FreeGate, Ultrasurf, and Psiphon were most popular in China because of their nontechnical features.

Circumvention tools are not invulnerable. The GFW can detect and block proxy servers used for circumvention via analyzing Internet traffic; and recently, more sophisticated technologies have enabled the GFW to recognize encrypted protocols. Thus, all circumvention tools have to seek technology innovation to stay up-to-date. The tug of war between Tor and the GFW serves as a good example. Tor started as an anonymous communication tool in 2002, and was used for circumvention by many Chinese Internet users. Tor used a centralized directory server, which maintains a list of proxy nodes. However, when the IP address of the directory server was blocked by the GFW, Tor became useless, and lost its Chinese users. Tor came back to life through developing hidden "bridge" nodes that are not listed in the directory server, but the GFW learned the way to block hidden private bridge nodes in 2011.

In 2012, Tor launched a new product named obfsproxy, which can transform Tor traffic into innocent-looking traffic so that the GFW cannot differentiate the use of Tor from other Internet activities. It is possible that the GFW will soon find a way to defeat obfsproxy. The arms race between blocking and circumvention will not end until China aborts the mission of Internet censorship.

Fei Shen
City University of Hong Kong

See Also: Artists and Social Media in Politics; Asia; China; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Deep Packet Inspection; FinFisher; Firewalling; Gate Keeping Theory and Social Media; indexoncensorship.org; Iran; Syria; Tor; Virtual Private Networks; Weibo.

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Gun Control

Gun control is an issue that regularly rises to the top of the public agenda in the United States. Since the mass shooting in Columbine, Colorado, in 1999, similar incidents have reignited the discussion of gun control. Social media provide an outlet for immediate reaction to these events, as well as a venue for actors on both sides of the debate to maintain a level of constant surveillance and awareness. Gun control advocates monitor incidents involving mass or accidental shootings, whereas gun control opponents monitor and share stories about laws and proposals to restrict gun ownership. Existing Internet memes, as well as events, both expected and unexpected, provide points of synthesis for advocates on both sides, tying the issue of gun control to issues of race and immigration. Misinformation and exploitation are also part of the public discourse. The networks of actors in the debate are distinctly different in structure and in the rhetorical substance of their arguments.

The social media presence of pro-gun forces is both centralized and prominent across social media platforms. By contrast, citizens and organizations who support stronger gun control regulations are disbursed across numerous organizations, both gun focused and not. While many are joining in on the conversation, few maintain a singular focus in the manner of pro-gun forces.

The National Rifle Association (NRA) provides a centralized hub that connects gun manufacturers, gun enthusiasts, and politicians who support the NRA agenda. With a Facebook page boasting more than two million followers, they are the dominant voice in the debate. Another, albeit smaller organization, Gun Owners of America (GOA), was founded in 1975 by a former NRA board member, and positions itself to the right of the NRA. GOA proudly features an endorsement by Ron Paul on several of their social media profiles that reads: "The only no-compromise gun lobby in Washington." This group has fewer members, but is quite active in lobbying Congress, and has a frequent presence on political television talk shows when the topic is gun control, clips they proudly feature on their YouTube channel. Within the network are large industries that manufacture firearms and accessories.

Proponents of gun control are present in a more disbursed network, which includes large organizations such as the Brady Campaign to End Gun Violence and other organizations formed by families and allies of victims. The Newtown Action Alliance emerged after the 2012 school shootings in Sandy Hook, Connecticut. Another group that quickly gained a relatively high level of support is Americans for Responsible Solutions, the organization formed by Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, who was seriously injured in a mass shooting in Tuscon, Arizona, in January 2011. Other groups in the network include Moms Demand Action, which is organized at the state level, as well as groups with religious affiliations that campaign against violence.

Another longstanding and very active organization is Mayors Against Illegal Guns, founded by Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York with hundreds of other U.S. mayors. During the 2012 legislative battle over background checks on gun purchases, Mayors Against Illegal Guns set up a Web site at DemandAction.org to encourage citizens to put pressure on congressional representatives, calling on them to support the Manchin-Toomey bill. Despite their efforts, the bill was ultimately defeated in the U.S. Senate on April 17, 2013, prompting the establishment of ShameOnCongress.org.

Facebook

Beyond its homepage on Facebook, the NRA maintains other Facebook pages targeted to

specific demographics such as veterans, women, youth, and sportsmen. These related pages often have subscribers numbering in the tens of thousands. The official NRA page "likes" all these pages, as well as a number of politicians and firearms manufacturers, establishing a large network of individual enthusiasts, corporations, and politicians. The homepage also promotes meetings of the Friends of NRA through the Facebook "Events" feature, and facilitates online donations through a quick link to their membership enrollment page. "Profile Badges" allow other Facebook users to affiliate themselves with the NRA brand through a downloadable profile image. Gun Owners of America maintains a Facebook page with almost 240,000 subscribers. A lobbying organization, in May 2013, it partnered with Congressman Steve Stockman, the recipient of campaign donations from GOA, in promoting the giveaway of an AR-15 rifle, which it billed as "the Gun (sic) Obama doesn't want you to have!" Other pages such as "Women Against Gun Control" share blueprints for weapons and an image of an attractive woman with a gun accompanied by the text, "Random Fact: Shooting a gun causes the same chemical reaction in the brain as a passionate kiss."

In contrast to the two major pro-gun organizations, none of the organizations working to restrict access to firearms have a comparable number of subscribers on Facebook. The Brady Campaign to End Gun Violence has a little over 50,000 subscribers, and Americans for Responsible Solutions has more than 80,000. The congresswoman's personal page, however, has almost 180,000 subscribers, an indication of the diffuse nature of the network of gun control supporters.

Twitter

The advantage that pro-gun organizations enjoy on Facebook is not as prominent on Twitter. The @NRA Twitter account has slightly more than 160,000 followers, whereas Congresswoman Gifford's account has nearly 130,000 followers. The account for the Brady Campaign has far fewer followers, but a search reveals that many other Twitter users tweet news about their legislative and legal activities in the form of press releases and other publications.

The #NRA hashtag has been appropriated by the organization's opponents, although sometimes #guncontrol is also used. Other hashtags trend when incidents make news headlines (e.g., #SandyHook, #Aurora, and #NOLA). #DemandAction was used by Mayor Michael Bloomberg's group to bring pressure on behalf of gun control legislation in Congress. Gun enthusiasts use the "right to keep and bear arms" (#RKBA) hashtag, as well as other conservative hashtags (e.g., #2a #tcot, and #tgdn). They also use #molonlabe, a term popular with gun enthusiasts that translates to "come and get it." Most notably, gun enthusiasts who are motivated by a mistrust of government have adopted this term, which can be found on numerous social media Web sites and blogs. Within this community of interest, the keywords and hashtags are used to sell merchandise as well as to share links and information of interest. The same connection can be seen with "shit hits the fan" (#shtf), a hashtag used by gun manufacturers and other marketers to reach out to "preppers" who purchase and stockpile goods in preparation for an anticipated societal collapse.

A phenomenon that appears in both pro-gun and anti-gun networks on Twitter is the maintenance of a low level of surveillance at all times, interrupted by spikes in activity and trends in response to larger-scale events. For those who support gun control, daily monitoring of deaths from gun violence or accidental shootings, along with tallies of the number of gun deaths since the last mass shooting, are common. The progress of legislation restricting gun ownership is also monitored. As for gun enthusiasts, they monitor stories they regard as evidence of infringement on their Second Amendment rights, such as any legislation limiting ownership or requiring background checks for gun purchases.

Tumblr

Tumblr is primarily a visual microblogging site that is popular among the younger demographic of digital natives. Animated GIFs are a common form of content, and many users curate threads that use the "scrolling" affordance of Web pages as the primary storytelling technique. While content by both pro-gun and anti-gun activists is present on Tumblr, it is less well organized, and

search results turn up messages from both sides, as well as numerous visuals without comment, including still-life arrangements of guns and ammunition and images of attractive women posing with various types of weapons. There are also messages in support of gun control in the form of text, editorial cartoons, and links to external content. True to its name, Tumblr presents a mash up of the sexualization, deliberation, moralization, and celebration of U.S. gun culture and weapons, with some messages that present clear opinions on the issue, whereas others are marked by ambiguity.

Pinterest

Although it is a relatively new site in the social media genre, Pinterest has quickly attracted a large following. Like Tumblr, the site is image focused, with users "pinning" images to "boards" based on various themes. It is a popular site for home improvement do-it-yourselfers, recipe exchangers, and those interested in fashion. Many retailers are successfully using Pinterest as a marketing tool, with links directly to pages that allow users to purchase the "pinned" item. The NRA has created a network of organizations that pin their interest groups and consumer groups together. Large online gun retailers are found on Pinterest via links from the NRA homepage, and these companies prominently feature products and organizations that represent outreach to women interested in sports, self-defense, and gun fashion. Gun Owners of America is not officially present on Pinterest, but a search for its name reveals other users pinning their logo and memes to boards with names such as "We the People," and "Self Defense."

Advocates of restrictions on gun control are difficult to find on Pinterest. The Brady Campaign has a board that has seen very little activity. Congresswoman Gifford's organization is not present, except through pins posted by other users. Mayors Against Illegal Guns is also present, only as content pinned by individual users to boards with names such as "issues, causes, etc." and "gun control issues." Gun control content primarily takes the form of infographics and other visual/text combinations.

Arguments about gun control and restrictions on ownership of guns predate the rise of social media and the Internet. The argument has continued on social media, which allow for a constant level of awareness and surveillance. Gun manufacturers, related industries, and organizations such as the NRA have a well-established, highly centralized, extensive network of social media accounts.

These accounts have only two purposes: to oppose restrictions on gun ownership, and to market guns and gun-related products to sportsmen, enthusiasts, and survivalists. On the pro-gun side of the argument, the messages often associate guns with sexual attractiveness, masculinity, personal independence, "American family values," achievement, and patriotism.

Among supporters of gun control, there are no groups currently arguing for legislation beyond limitations on the capacity of certain weapons or restrictions on access to certain groups via background checks. The network of pro-gun control advocates is highly diffuse, disbursed among a large number of organizations, none of them with the reach of the NRA. They are primarily organizations founded by the families of victims, or in the case of Gabrielle Giffords, the victims themselves. These groups may be at a disadvantage in a medium that prefers positive messages, as indicated in a study conducted by the Pew Research Center on the tone of social media.

There was an outcry among the public for more restrictions on gun ownership after the Newtown, Connecticut, elementary school shootings. In December 2012, an online petition to the White House calling for restrictions on gun ownership set a record for support, and public opinion polls consistently recorded 90 percent support for increasing requirements for background checks.

After the failure of the Manchin-Toomey legislation, one Bloomberg News writer wrote a story with the headline: "The Internet Declares War on the NRA." Despite the hurricane of traditional coverage and social media conversation on both sides of the issue, in April 2013, the U.S. Senate rejected a compromise gun control bill that would have prohibited private ownership of some types of military-style assault weapons and expanded the federal requirement for background checks on firearms sales. In the absence of meaningful national legislation, the

gun control debate continues to be thrashed out on state and local levels.

Jeanette Castillo
Ball State University

See Also: Documentaries, Social Media, and Social Change; Facebook; Gillibrand, Kirsten; Lobbyists; Pinterest; Special Interest Campaigns; Tumblr; Twitter; We the People.

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Gutiérrez, Luis

Luis Vicente Gutiérrez is the U.S. representative for the 4th Congressional District of Illinois; he has served in that office since 1993, when he became the first Latino to represent a midwest constituency in Congress. Gutiérrez represented the 26th Ward of Chicago on the city council from 1986 until he was elected to Congress. He belongs to the Democratic Party and the Congressional Progressive Caucus. An outspoken champion of immigration reform, Gutiérrez entered the 113th Congress in 2012 as the Illinois House delegation dean. Gutierrez is a supporter of many liberal political causes. Of Puerto Rican ethnicity, he supports independence for Puerto Rico. A major advocate on behalf of rights for workers, women, and gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (GLBT) rights, Gutiérrez's biting oration and strong support for the disenfranchised have earned him the nickname *El Gallito,* the little fighting rooster.

City Political Career

Gutiérrez, a teacher and social worker by training, left his position with the Department of Children and Family Services of Illinois in 1983 to run for office. In order to fund his campaign, he drove a taxi for seven 14-hour days a week; this gave him $6,000 for his challenge of Dan Rostenkowski for the 32nd Ward Democratic committee position. With a campaign staff of friends and family supporting him, Gutiérrez personally collected more than 75 percent of the 2,200 signatures that his qualification demanded. Rostenkowski defeated Gutiérrez by a strong margin.

In 1984, Gutiérrez went on to help establish the Cook County Coalition for New Politics, a grassroots means for a progressive, multiracial challenge to the traditional Democratic Party in Chicago. Gutiérrez's activist work made him a new and impressive leader for Latinos in Chicago, and this was noted by Chicago Mayor Harold Washington. Washington was the first African American mayor of the city, and he appointed Gutiérrez deputy superintendent for the Department of Streets and Sanitation in 1984. Gutiérrez accepted that role and served on the Mayoral Committee on Infrastructure when he became an administrative assistant to Mayor Washington.

In autumn 1984, the Gutiérrez home was firebombed with a Molotov cocktail. The family stayed in hotels for several months, but the attackers were never caught. In an effort to generate political reform in concert with the efforts of Mayor Washington, Gutiérrez created the 26th Ward Independent Political Organization (IPO) in 1985. Another grassroots effort including citizens of many races, the organization raised $5,000 and signed on 100 new members at its first event.

In 1985, the wards of Chicago were remapped, creating a new Latino majority district, the 26th Ward. This ward and six others were the subjects of a special election ordered by a district court judge. The existing alderman in Ward 26 chose not to run for the spot, and Gutiérrez announced his candidacy with the endorsement of Mayor Washington. This one space on the city council would change the balance of power in favor of the mayor if Gutiérrez was successful, and opposition to Washington in Chicago was still vehement. As a result, the race was heated.

The vote between Gutiérrez and his opponent, Torres, went to a runoff based on the closeness of the initial vote. Their final debate aired on Spanish-language television, and Gutiérrez chose to debate partly in Spanish in contrast to Torres, who used only English. Gutiérrez's grassroots approach and his use of Spanish are generally thought to have won the vote for him.

Gutiérrez quickly became a leader on the floor and among Latinos on the council. He was a primary supporter of the gay rights ordinance of 1986 banning sexual orientation-based discrimination. Gutiérrez also promoted affordable housing and local development. In 1987, Gutiérrez was reelected to his seat over five opponents. Upon Mayor Daley's 1989 election, Gutiérrez became city council president *pro tempore* and chair of the Housing, Land Acquisition, Disposition and Leases Committee.

Congressional Career

In 1990, a new Latino majority congressional district was formed by court order. Gutiérrez ran for Congress in this district in 1992 with the endorsement of Mayor Daley and defeated his Mexican American opponent in the Democratic primary, Juan Soliz, despite the majority Mexican American population of the district. Gutiérrez went on to defeat Republican candidate Hildegarde Rodriguez-Schieman in the general election of 1992, and began his tenure in Congress in 1993.

Gutiérrez was reelected in 1994 with 75 percent of the vote. This was the lowest general election winning percentage Gutiérrez ever showed. From 1996 through 2008, Gutiérrez was continually reelected, never with less than 80 percent of the vote. In 2010, he was reelected again, this time with 77 percent of the vote, technically a low percentage for him, albeit a remarkably large number generally speaking.

Issues and Advocacy

Gutiérrez has been a consistent and outspoken advocate for immigrants' rights and immigration reform. Nancy Pelosi appointed him chair of the Democratic Caucus Immigration Task Force in 2009, and was also the chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Immigration Task Force in 2012. He also served on the Judiciary Committee on the Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law Subcommittee. Gutiérrez has also worked to assist immigrants in his district to access English-language programs and to become U.S. citizens.

Gutiérrez was the first in Congress to sponsor the Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act in its first incarnation in 2001. The DREAM Act was designed to allow undocumented minors brought illegally to the United States a means to gain citizenship. Gutiérrez introduced the Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America's Security and Prosperity Act (CIR-ASAP) in 2009 as a means for undocumented immigrants without criminal records to gain U.S. citizenship. CIR-ASAP was defeated, and Gutiérrez backed the latest incarnation of the DREAM Act in 2012, which was ultimately passed.

In addition to his legislative activity for immigrants, Gutiérrez also partook in two separate nonviolent demonstrations outside the White House. The first took place in 2010 in response to Arizona's SB 1070, allowing police to engage in racial profiling to enforce immigration laws at the state level. Gutierrez made a speech and marched with other activists that day, refusing to leave until President Obama acted or he was arrested; like other activists, he was arrested that day.

In 2011, the number of deportations during the Obama administration's tenure reached 1 million, a record. In response to this and Obama's refusal to extend the DREAM Act to covered youth, Gutiérrez was arrested outside the White House along with 11 other leaders, with more than 2,500 supporters looking on in solidarity.

During Gutiérrez's time on the Veterans' Affairs Committee, he introduced legislation providing sexual trauma victims with counseling and treatment. He also fought to extend health insurance coverage to veterans exposed to radiation and Agent Orange during service. Gutiérrez also helped disabled veterans access more funds for health care and prosthetics.

Gutiérrez also advocated for consumer rights by backing the creation of the U.S. Consumer Protection Bureau and striving to stop predatory lending by capping annual percentage rates (APRs) on payday loans. As chair of the Financial Services Subcommittee on Financial Institutions

and Consumer Credit, Gutiérrez helps to oversee all financial regulators, including the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the Federal Reserve (the Fed), the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Office of Thrift Supervision, and the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA).

Gutiérrez has a record of advocacy on behalf of Puerto Ricans. He was very active in the fight to stop the U.S. military from using Vieques, a populated island, as a testing ground for bombing, and in 2000 was arrested for refusing to leave the bombing range. In 2011, Gutiérrez was a vocal advocate on behalf of students victimized by police brutality as they protested government restriction of freedom of speech. He also opposed a planned pipeline as an environmental danger and physical hazard to residents of the island.

An advocate for workers' rights, Gutiérrez has assisted labor unions with sit-ins and negotiations. He voted against the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) because of its failure to protect jobs and rights on both sides of the border.

Use of Social Media

Luis Gutiérrez is widely recognized as one of the most effective users of social media in Congress. First introduced to social media by his daughters, the younger of whom was in college at the time, the Congressman quickly appreciated the ways that social media were bringing people together politically and socially.

Soon after discovering Facebook and Twitter, Gutiérrez started a social media profile, and his online presence began to grow. Although he does not maintain his own profiles or post on them himself, he is very attentive to the sites and pays close attention to the interactions in those spaces. He considers them an excellent resource for connecting with his constituency.

In many ways, Gutiérrez is a natural for use of social media. With his advocacy on behalf of liberal goals and on behalf of Latino people, social media provides an ideal place for him to gain leverage. Latinos in the United States are heavy users of social media, and the Latino population in the United States is youthful. In addition, liberal voting trends toward younger voters regardless of ethnicity.

With the hot-button issue of immigration as one of his most important battlegrounds, social media provide the right place for Gutiérrez to reach those who are passionate about the issue. Social media also provides a forum for opposing viewpoints and, therefore, a crucial window into the anti-immigration perspective.

As an activist and spirited debater, Gutiérrez is a natural for the video clip in the social media universe. Footage of his arrests on behalf of political causes garnered a huge amount of attention and made his work feel more immediate and relevant to activists struggling all over the United States.

Gutiérrez has mastered the Internet meme. His sense of humor and lack of fear have caused at least one clip of his debate tactics to go viral. When he compared photographs of Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez, who were dating at the time of Arizona's SB 1070, and asked on the floor of the House rhetorically which of them was more likely to be profiled and stopped in Arizona, that image spawned several memes. The example of Bieber, a white immigrant from Canada and Gomez, a Latina born in America, reflected criticism of the Arizona legislation. This act gained national fame in the social media realm, as did the offshoot memes that arose comparing William Shatner (Canada) and Edward James Olmos (America) and Geraldo Rivera (America) and Ted Koppel (a British-born naturalized American citizen).

OhMyGov gives Gutiérrez a media power rank of 58th among his 541 congressional peers. According to that site and others, he generates around 800 tweets in a typical week. Poleet reports Gutiérrez's Klout score as 54.

Gutiérrez also reacts to the social media actions of others. He called for the immediate dismissal of Puerto Rican official Heidi Wys for her racist birther tweet in response to a photo of First Lady Michelle Obama in which she directed President Obama to take his wife to his "homeland" of Kenya for her birthday.

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

See Also: Campaigns, Grassroots; Civil Rights; Immigration; Klout Score; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights.

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H

Hacktivism

Hacktivism is a portmanteau of "hacking" and "activism" that describes the use of computers and computer and online networks as a means of activism or protest. The term is attributed to a collective known as Cult of the Dead Cow, where it was reportedly first used on a mailing list in 1996 as a tongue-in-cheek way to describe the group's activities.

Hacktivism is commonly used to refer to a number of specific hacking methods for social or political means, including Web site defacements (whereby one obtains unauthorized access to a Web server and replaces or alters a Web page to convey a different message); denial of service (DoS) or distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks (whereby a server is intentionally overloaded by saturating the machine with requests using one of several methods); uniform resource locator (URL) redirects (whereby a user is redirected to a different site than the one they intended to access); and information theft.

Techniques and Methods

The various techniques used by hacktivists are often compared to traditional, offline forms of civil disobedience. For example, Web site defacement is compared to graffiti, while DoS attacks have been compared to the lunch counter sit-ins of the United States' civil rights movement. Like many traditional forms of civil disobedience, many hacktivist activities are illegal.

History

The first known use of a DoS attack for political means occurred when, in an effort to oppose the United Kingdom's (UK's) Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994, a San Francisco–based group sent huge volumes of e-mails in an effort to overwhelm UK government servers. Their act was effective and resulted in government Web sites being unavailable for more than a week.

Another early prominent example occurred in 1998, when a group known as the Electronic Disturbance Theater conducted DoS attacks on the Web sites of the Pentagon and the Mexican government to bring attention to indigenous rights in the Mexican state of Chiapas.

More recently, Anonymous—a collective of loosely associated hacktivists—brought hacktivism to the fore of mainstream discussion with a series of activities targeting a range of actors. Among the collective's numerous targets are the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit System (targeted for its perpetuation of a telecommunications ban amid local protests); the Tunisian and Egyptian governments during the Arab Spring protests; payment processors Visa and MasterCard (for enacting a blockade on financial

transactions to WikiLeaks); and U.S. government Web sites (on several occasions). Anonymous is often associated with WikiLeaks, though the two groups are separate.

Anonymous has also claimed responsibility for developing a tool known as Low Orbit Ion Cannon (LOIC), which enables individuals to conduct a DoS attack without much technical skill or knowledge.

Law

In Europe and the United States, hacktivist activities typically fall under laws pertaining to cybercrime. In Europe, the relevant statutes fall under the European Convention on Cybercrime, whereas in the United States, the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 2006 (CFAA) governs cybercrime. A number of other countries also have laws dealing with cybercrime.

Individuals engaged in hacktivism have been prosecuted in several countries. Raids resulting in the arrest of individuals associated with Anonymous and similar groups have been conducted in countries including Spain, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, the United States, and France.

In one known instance, a court ruled that in the context in which it was conducted, a DoS attack was legal. In 2001, several groups coordinated an attack against the German airline Lufthansa to protest the company's participation in deporting asylum seekers. The first criminal chamber of the Frankfurt appellate court later ruled that the demonstration was targeted at influencing public opinion, and its perpetrators could therefore not be charged with coercion, according to *EDRI-gram*.

Controversy

The tactics of hacktivists are a matter of debate among academic, hacker, and digital rights–promoting communities. Critics argue that certain tactics, such as DoS attacks, are in fact attacks on free speech. Methods used by hacktivists for political means are also used for other means; for example, during the conflict in Syria that began in 2011, a group calling itself the Syrian Electronic Army hacked and defaced numerous Web sites perceived to be in support of the Syrian opposition. In 2006, a company known as Blue Security used DoS in an attempt to rid itself of spammers, resulting in a retaliatory attack against the company, destroying its business.

Those who are supportive of hacktivist tactics typically frame them as civil disobedience in an electronic environment, comparing online tactics with traditional, offline ones. Some supporters have argued for changes in laws to separate malicious forms of hacking from those associated with political protest.

Jillian C. York
Independent Scholar

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Anonymous; Arab Spring; Clicktivism; Cyber-Vigilantism; Internet Gathering; Tor; United States; WikiLeaks; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring.

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Hagan, Kay

Kay Ruthven Hagan, who was born on May 26, 1953, is the junior senator (Democratic) for North Carolina. Considered a political centrist, she is a member of four Senate Committees for: Armed Services; Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; and Small Business and Entrepreneurship. As the chair of the Senate Armed Services Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee, her priority has been to ensure that federal policies

work for active-duty military, veterans, and their families, including the issues of veterans' health care and employment.

In recognition of the extensive military presence in North Carolina, Senator Hagan has traveled to Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Kuwait to meet with military personnel. Senator Hagan, the mother of two daughters, also cosponsored the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which reestablished a fair rule for filing claims of pay discrimination based on race, national origin, gender, religion, age, or disability.

Constituent Services and Social Media

Since her Senate tenure began, Senator Hagan has made constituent services a trademark of her office. She opened five offices across North Carolina to serve constituents and hosts in-person "Conversations with Kay" town halls across the state. Each Wednesday, when the Senate is in session, she hosts North Carolinians in her Washington office for "Carolina Coffee," where constituents can discuss concerns and issues with Senator Hagan and her staff over coffee and Krispy Kreme doughnuts.

According to press secretary Chris Moyer, Hagan extensively utilizes Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube on a regular basis to provide her constituents with legislative updates, personal insights, and behind-the-scenes visual content that might not be available elsewhere. She has used Twitter to post breaking news, such as her votes on upcoming bills or nomination confirmations. Hagan's support of marriage equality was announced on her Facebook page, which also features other means of engaging her constituents, such as asking for feedback on topics such as "Who was your favorite teacher?" to daily updates on Senate work, to inviting viewers to her Senate offices.

She has held "Twitter Town Halls," with the first in June 2012 focusing on North Carolina jobs and the economy, and one in April 2013 centering on military affairs. Anyone following @SenatorHagan can submit questions by including #AskKay with their tweet. Hagan's Senate Web site has added a badge designed to link veterans to the eBenefits Web site, providing them easy access to information about military benefits.

In February 2013, Hagan released a free constituent services app, which allows North Carolinians additional easy contact with her offices (she maintains five local offices), video and photo feeds, and real-time social media updates. All of this social media activity allows Hagan to extend constituent content in a daily, up-to-the-moment, personal way that may not be covered on the evening news or front page of local papers.

Policy Positions

Senator Hagan has articulated several key policy positions. The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, on which she serves, has come up with a public option—the community health insurance option—that assures that people with pre-existing conditions can still get access to health insurance.

She supports a balanced budget, favoring the pay-as-you-go principle, which requires that any increased spending be paid for, rather than burdening future generations for current spending. She has advocated the creation of a bipartisan deficit commission. As a member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee, she is working on the Financial Literacy for Students Act, educational reform that provides states incentives to incorporate financial literacy into grade 6–12 curriculums. This bill reflects similar work she successfully passed in North Carolina. She has supported an increase in Pell grants for higher education, as well as increased investments in historically black colleges and universities. She is a cosponsor of both the Safe Schools Improvement Act and the Student Nondiscrimination Act, both designed to promote safe schools and prevent student discrimination.

A member of the congressional National Guard Caucus, Senator Hagan is working to provide support and training of citizen soldiers. As vice chair of the congressional Sportsmen's Caucus, she works to protect the interests of America's hunters, anglers, and trappers, including wildlife management. Hagan voted for the controversial Republican-created amendment that would have mandated the Keystone oil pipeline. The amendment failed to pass the Senate after heavy lobbying by the White House. Senator Hagan is a co-chair of the new Clean Energy Innovation Project, which is supporting research and

development investments in focusing on building a clean energy economy. She has also supported legislation that would require all registered sex offenders to register all of their Internet aliases with a federal database that would link with social networking sites.

Career

Before entering politics, Hagan worked for 10 years at North Carolina National Bank (a predecessor of Bank of America), rising to the vice presidency of the estates and trust division. She left the bank after the birth of her first child, becoming involved in local charities and active in Guilford County (NC) Democratic politics. Hagan directed Governor Jim Hunt's (D) local gubernatorial campaigns in 1992 and 1996.

Prior to her U.S. Senate run, Hagan was a member of the North Carolina State Senate from 1999 to 2008. In 1998, Hagan was elected to the State Senate from the 32nd District, defeating the incumbent. Because of redistricting, she later represented the 27th Senate District, with Democratic Senate President Marc Basnight as her mentor. Hagan secured money for several projects in her district, including funding for the International Civil Rights Museum, the International Furnishings Market, and Center City Park.

She cast votes in favor of a state lottery, a two-year moratorium on executions, and financial incentives for corporations to create new jobs. Her opposition to a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage was based in her belief that there was already a state law in place against it. She co-chaired the Budget Committee, where she helped to generate five balanced state budgets.

Hagan's five two-year terms were exemplified by the creation of economic development tools and predatory lending laws and the filling of gaps in underfunded federal homeland security and law enforcement programs. Under her leadership, North Carolina extended health insurance to uninsured children, expanded preventive and primary care for uninsured patients in rural North Carolina, and fought to end insurance discrimination against mental health care. She provided strong support for the military, and was named by the nonpartisan North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research as one of North Carolina's Ten Most Effective Senators three times in a row.

The 2008 U.S. Senate race pitted Hagan against heavily favored, one-term incumbent Senator Elizabeth Dole (R), the first woman elected to the Senate from North Carolina, a state that did not ratify the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote until 1971.

Early on, there were no strong Democratic candidates to challenge Dole, and it appeared that she would win handily. Former Clinton White House Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles, who had lost two previous Senate races, Democratic Governor Michel Easley, Representative Brad Miller, and Attorney General Roy Cooper all chose not to run.

In early October 2007, Hagan announced that she would not run; however, later in the month, she reversed her announcement because of the urging of Hunt and Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Chair Charles Schumer (D-NY). In the five-way May 2007 primary, she was the only candidate who ran ads, and she won with 60 percent of the vote. Supported by former Governor Jim Hunt and then Governor Mike Easley, along with other establishment Democrats, she was also endorsed by the state chapter of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), EMILY's List, the *Winston-Salem Journal* and *Charlotte Observer*, the Durham's People's Alliance, and the North Carolina Association of Educators.

With the two major party candidates now set, Dole was the early favorite, with a much larger fund-raising effort and greater visibility and name recognition. However, Dole had also been gone from the state as chair of the National Republican Senatorial Committee for 2005 and 2006, supporting Grand Old Party (GOP) candidates.

Hagan attacked her for spending so little time in North Carolina, accusing her of being a Washington insider because of her husband's (former Republican senator and presidential candidate Bob Dole) connections, saying that Dole was in the pocket of big oil companies because of their financial contributions, and too closely aligned with the Bush administration.

Attack ads by both sides played important roles. The national Democratic Senate campaign ran an ad with two elderly men seemingly

debating Dole's age (72); they were actually debating whether she was a 92 (her voting percentage for Bush positions) or 93 (her Senate effectiveness ranking according to Congress.org.) With a not-too-subtle age issue, the ad stuck.

At the same time, Dole attacked Hagan, calling her "Fibber Kay," a pawn of national Democrats (the Democratic party spent more on Hagan's senatorial campaign than any other in the 2008 cycle) and accusing her of supporting higher taxes. In the final week, Dole ran an attack ad that asserted Hagan had attended a Massachusetts fund-raiser in the home of a leader of the "Godless American Political Action Committee," which was a group that opposed declaring Christmas a national holiday. The ad questioned Hagan for taking "Godless" money, and wondered what promises she had made to the Godless Americans.

In retort, Hagan, a Presbyterian elder and Sunday school teacher, chided Dole for bearing false witness against a fellow Christian, and that said she should be ashamed for allowing such an ad to run. The Dole ad resulted in an increase of more than 3,000 people contributing to Hagan's campaign. Dole, initially favored, ran a controversial campaign that was marked by a negative association with the Bush White House and advertisements that falsely questioned Hagan's Christian faith. Hagan enjoyed a lead in October, which she never lost.

Hagan was also positively impacted by President Obama's strong statewide appeal. The large increase of younger voters and African American voters, prompted by Obama's campaign contributed, but Hagan garnered a larger percentage of votes than the majority of North Carolina Democratic candidates. Kay Hagan was elected to the U.S. Senate, winning by an unexpectedly strong margin of 53 percent to 44 percent. Hagan also garnered 100,000 more votes than President Barack Obama, running 3 percent ahead of his total. She won 71 percent of voters under 30. Dole won 67 percent of white evangelicals, but 7 percent less than McCain within the same group.

The *Washington Post* called Hagan's the best Senate campaign in that cycle, noting that she entered the race a virtual unknown who had charisma, a no-nonsense approach to what needed to be done to beat Dole, and the ability to stay on message despite attacks.

Early Life

Hagan's public service passion was impacted by her early life. Her maternal uncle is Lawton Chiles, the former Florida governor (two terms) and U.S. senator (three terms). According to various reports, Hagan has many early political memories placing bumper stickers on cars in support of her uncle's campaigns. In the 1970s, as a Senate intern, Kay Hagan operated the elevator that carried senators to the chamber. She also has deep military roots, her husband is a U.S. Navy Vietnam veteran, her father-in-law was a two-star Marine general, her father and brother both served in the U.S. Navy, and two nephews have served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Senator Hagan earned her B.A. in American studies from Florida State University (1975) and her J.D. from Wake Forest University (1978). She is married to Charles Tilden "Chip" Hagan III, and is the mother of three children (Jeannette, Tildon, and Carrie).

2014 Campaign

In November 2012, Senator Hagan announced that she would seek re-election in what is projected to be a hard-fought campaign, given the changing tenor of state politics. North Carolina shifted its 15 electoral votes to Republican Mitt Romney rather than Democrat Barack Obama in the 2012 presidential election, despite the Democratic National Convention being held in the state. It was only one of two states that switched back to Republican after supporting Obama in 2008. Since the 2008 campaign, North Carolinians have elected Republican governors and three members of the House of Representatives. Just prior to the November election, the Democratic polling group Public Policy Polling reported that only 35 percent of Democrats approved of the job that Hagan was doing, but in December, that had risen to 40 percent.

Crossroads GPS ran radio spots following the election that targeted potentially vulnerable Democratic Senators up for re-election in 2014 in five states, including Hagan. The ads—all running in states President Obama eventually lost—hit the president on "massive tax increases," "even more debt," and a "one-sided plan" on the fiscal cliff before telling listeners to call their senators and tell them "Washington needs to stop the

spending and give us a balanced plan." Political science professor and pundit Larry Sabato also noted that, in North Carolina, incumbency does not mean much; the Senate seat has a history of going back and forth between parties. However, in late 2012, Public Policy Polling showed Hagan with a lead of 46 to 34 percent over potential leading candidate and North Carolina Speaker of the House Thom Tillis (R).

Beth M. Waggenspack
Virginia Tech

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Congressional 2008; Campaigns, Presidential 2008; Campaigns, 2012; Candidate Image; Influence on Elections; Polling.

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Hard Place Theater

The brainchild of Clay Shirky, Hard Place Theater was a New York City theater company designed as a vehicle for Shirky's unique projects. Each piece produced by Hard Place Theater was nonfiction and composed entirely from actual, found historical materials. Government documents, cultural records, and transcripts from a wide variety of official proceedings were all fair game for Hard Place Theater productions.

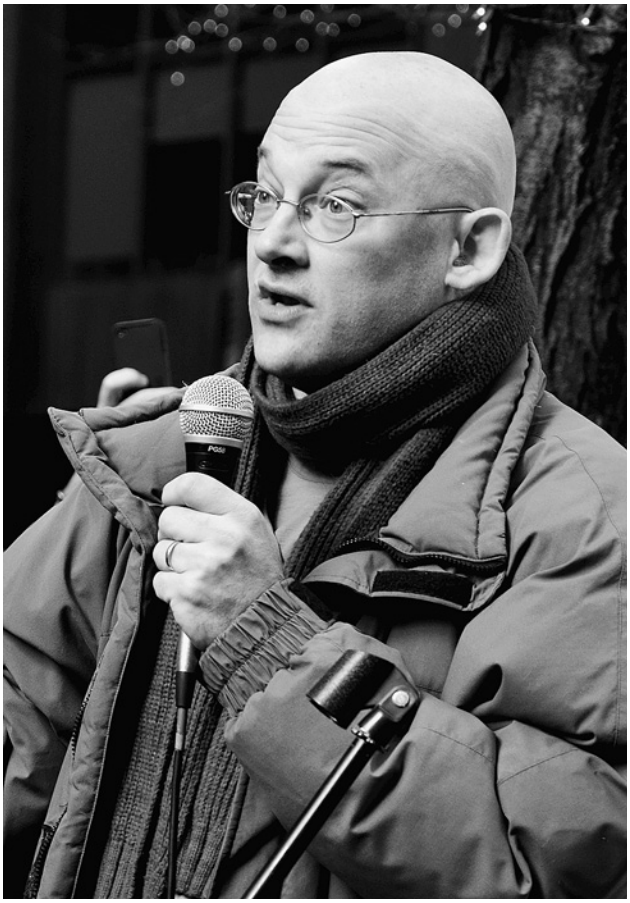
Clay Shirky graduated from Yale University in 1986, with a bachelor of fine arts. He then moved to New York City, and in the 1990s, he established Hard Place Theater. At that time, Shirky also served as vice president of the New York chapter of the Electronic Frontier Foundation; this organization provided legal assistance in the realm of consumer rights, free speech, innovation, and privacy.

Perhaps the best-known piece produced by Hard Place Theater was "Excerpts From the Attorney General's Report on Pornography," which used the 1986 Meese Commission Report authored by the U.S. Department of Justice. This six-actor show depicted the congressional hearing with its listing of bawdy, obscene pornography titles (more than 2,300 were documented in the actual commission) and testimony.

Presentation of the nonfiction text ranged from straightforward delivery to emotional, ironic, and humorous interpretive deliveries. Actors often spoke over each other, and the overall focus was on the questions raised in the report, more than any answers given. Testimony on rape, violence, pedophilia, and free speech mingled as the polar nature of American society was emphasized throughout.

The script (funded by the Justice Department, at least in its original form) interspersed testimony from rape victims and religious figures with titles of pornographic films. The frame-by-frame breakdown of *Deep Throat* from the report figured prominently in the stage production, and the show saw actors using dolls to reenact the breakdown.

Shirky went on to become the first professor of new media at Hunter College, a fellow at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society, an associate arts professor within the Interactive



Hard Place Theater's Clay Shirky at a rally for Internet freedom on January 18, 2012, in New York City. Shirky is now an influential scholar of issues related to social media and the Internet.

Telecommunications Program (ITP), and a distinguished writer in residence in New York University's Journalism Department. He also taught new media and public action as the Edward R. Murrow visiting lecturer at Harvard University in 2010.

A generally acknowledged authority on the effects of Internet and social media on society, Shirky is a devoted social media user and participant as well as a researcher. He published the book, *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*, in 2008. He pursues interactions between people and social media in his 2010 book, *Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age*.

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

See Also: Berkman Center; Cognitive Surplus; Electronic Frontier Foundation; Electronic Privacy Information Center; i-docs.org; Privacy.

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Hashtag

A hashtag is a symbol used to categorize, highlight, or tag topics and keywords contained in a single tweet on Twitter. A hashtag is signified by the use of the pound sign (#), called a hashtag on Twitter, followed by the word or words being tagged. For example, a tweet about President Barak Obama might contain the hashtag #Obama. Hashtags have become increasingly useful as a way to organize tweets about a specific topic, event, person, and so on. Event organizers, politicians, celebrities, and other Twitter users will select unique hashtags for their events or topics and encourage Twitter users to include the hashtags in their tweets (such as #GOP2012 for the 2012 Republican National Convention). The most popular hashtags, in terms of the number of uses, become trending topics.

Anyone can create a hashtag on Twitter. To create a hashtag, a person simply types # followed by a word or words (with no spaces

between words). Numerical characters are also allowed. Tweets can contain multiple hashtags, but they typically contain no more than three hashtags. For instance, a tweet about President Barack Obama's speech at the 2012 Democratic National Convention might use the hashtags #Obama and #DNC2012.

Event organizers who know the value of social media will often create a hashtag prior to an event and ask all participants to include the hashtag in their tweets. The more tweets using a hashtag, the more exposure for an event, person, or topic. Users can search for a specific hashtag and find all of the tweets that have included this tag. A person with interest in the Iowa caucuses could search for the hashtag #IACaucus and see all of the tweets using the hashtag.

Anyone can use any hashtag in a tweet, even a hashtag that is unrelated to the tweet. Hashtags are also not proprietary, meaning that anyone can use a hashtag for their event, even if it has been used previously or is currently being used in another context. For example, two organizations with the abbreviation ABC might both use the hashtag #ABC in their tweets. Twitter users searching for tweets about the American Broadcasting Company using #ABC might find unrelated tweets because others are using the hashtag for different purposes. For that reason, hashtag creators should search for unique hashtags to use. The more a hashtag is used, and the more specific its defining parameters, the less likely it will be used by others.

Although created for and primarily used within Twitter, hashtags are also not exclusive to Twitter. Other online outlets also use hashtags, including Instagram and Google+. With the use of services that automatically posts tweets to Facebook profiles, hashtags are also showing up on Facebook, one of the world's most popular social networking sites.

The use of hashtags has allowed politicians, political movement leaders, news outlets, and the general public to direct political dialogue toward topics of interest. Hashtags also highlight topics that many people are discussing. For example, the Twitter blog reported more than 4 million tweets using the hashtag #GOP2012 at the close of the 2012 Republican National Convention. This indicates at least 4 million unique tweets with the Grand Old Party (GOP) convention as a topic.

Event organizers can also use hashtags to interact with an audience during a live event. Television news personalities often ask users to tweet feedback and thoughts using a particular hashtag. Twitter users can easily move political dialogue toward various topics by using hashtags and encouraging others to use them. Politicians and political parties also use hashtags to advance a particular agenda and highlight a candidate or event. The success of the #GOP2012 hashtag is one example.

Hashtags are used to encourage a meetup, an online or offline gathering of people. The Occupy Wall Street movement is one example of using a hashtag, #OccupyWallstreet, to encourage offline gatherings. U.S. President Barack Obama has used Twitter hashtags to connect with the public in online gatherings, sometimes called a "tweet-up." In partnership with Twitter, the White House held the first Twitter @Townhall at the White House. Using the hashtag #AskObama, users submitted questions that were then answered by President Obama.

The general public, more specifically those who use Twitter, can voice their concerns and thoughts via tweets and classify them using hashtags. Policymakers and politicians who hope to gain a better understanding of the sentiments of the public can monitor the cumulative effect of those tweets by examining the hashtags.

Jenifer L. Lewis
Nazarbayev University

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Debate; Facebook; Going Viral; Trending Topic; Twitter.

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Hatch, Orrin

Orrin Grant Hatch is the senior senator from Utah, and in 2013, he became the longest-serving Republican in the current U.S. Senate. Although Hatch came to the Senate a quarter of a century before the founding of social media sites, the senator and his staff are among the most active users and advocates of new social media technologies in politics. Orrin Hatch was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1934. He attended public high school, lettering in basketball and boxing. He was the first in his family to attend college, graduating from Brigham Young University in 1959.

Hatch paid his way through law school, working as a janitor, lathe plasterer, and college residence hall monitor, receiving his degree from the University of Pittsburgh Law School in 1962. He was a dues-paying member of the Wood, Wire, and Metal Lathers Union. Senator Hatch is a Mormon. His ancestors were early converts to this faith. Hatch served as a Mormon missionary in the American midwest and has held a variety of positions in his church, including bishop. Hatch is the best-known Mormon public figure in America, after Mitt Romney. He and his wife, Elaine, have 6 children, 23 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren.

After running a successful private law practice in Pittsburgh, Hatch moved to Salt Lake City in 1969. His autobiography, *Square Peg: The Confessions of a Citizen-Senator,* recounts how he joined the Reagan revolution during the mid-1970s when evangelical Christians and Mormons began to flock to the Republican Party's pro-life agenda. Hatch was one of the first members in this movement to be elected to the Senate. A political novice and antiestablishment figure, Hatch defeated a three-term incumbent, Democrat Frank Moss, by a nine percent margin of victory in 1976. He has won re-election six times, with an average winning margin of 35 percent. In 2012, Hatch defeated the first serious challenger to his Senate seat, a Tea Party insurgent in the Utah Republican Senate primary, and returned to the Senate in 2013 to start his seventh and final (he says) term of office.

While in the Senate, Hatch was considered as a possible nominee to the Supreme Court during the Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush presidencies. He made a short-lived bid for the Republican presidential nomination in 2000. Hatch has served as the chair or the ranking minority member on the Senate Judiciary Committee, and is the ranking Republican member of the Senate Finance Committee, perhaps the most powerful committee in the Senate. He will serve as the chair of this committee, and will become the president pro tempore of the Senate if the Republicans win a majority of the Senate in the 2014 election. The president pro tempore is third in succession to the office of the president, after the vice president and the speaker of the House of Representatives, and presides over the Senate in the absence of the vice president.

Hatch has been a champion of conservative nominations to the federal judiciary during his membership on the Senate Judiciary Committee. As the longest-serving member of the committee, Hatch maneuvered the controversial Clarence Thomas confirmation to the Supreme Court. The senator voted to confirm, however, liberal nominees he believed to be worthy candidates, including Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer. He has participated in the confirmation of all the current justices of the Supreme Court. Hatch helped to form the Federalist Society, the nation's leading association of conservative lawyers. Hatch also serves on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Joint Committee on Taxation. He is a director of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. Harvard University's Center for Public Leadership and *U.S. News & World Reports* ranked Hatch as one of America's top leaders in 2009.

Legislation

Hatch's 36 years in the Senate have put him at the forefront of several important legislative

initiatives. He coauthored one of the first significant antiterrorism bills in reaction to the 1995 bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building. He won the extension of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act in 2008, a law criticized by the American Civil Liberties Union as a threat to civil liberties. He supported the Bush administration's Economic Stabilization Act and the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) acts of 2008, but says that he now regrets his vote for TARP. Hatch has proposed a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution 17 times. The amendment would cap federal spending as a percentage of the nation's gross domestic product and require a two-thirds vote in Congress to raise taxes, unless there is a formal declaration of war. Congress came within one vote of approving the amendment in 1997. Hatch opposed President Obama's health care proposal, the first senator to challenge the constitutionality of the individual health insurance mandate. He believes that it exceeds Congress' interstate commerce power. The Supreme Court agreed with Hatch in *National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius* (2012), although a majority of the court upheld the mandate under Congress' taxing powers.

The senator was a leading champion of the Medicare prescription drug benefit known as Medicare Part D, which was enacted in 2003. He helped win passage of the Ryan White Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) Care Act of 1990. He joined Democratic Senator Richard Durbin (IL) in an unsuccessful effort to pass the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act in 2001. The act would have established a process to give the children of undocumented immigrants access to American citizenship if they graduated from an American high school or served in the U.S. military. He was also instrumental in authoring the Violence Against Women Law, a bill designed to protect women and children against domestic assault, and the law establishing the America's Missing: Broadcasting Emergency Response (AMBER) alert system.

Hatch is a supporter of stem cell research, bills to strengthen state powers under the Tenth Amendment, and congressional statutes that seek to overturn Supreme Court decisions that Hatch fears infringe on the freedom of religion. He coauthored a bill limiting the regulation of dietary supplements with Democratic Senator Tom Harkin (Iowa) in 1994. Utah is the center of the dietary supplement industry in the United States. Hatch was also a long-term friend of liberal Democratic Senator Ted Kennedy (Massachusetts), partnering with Kennedy in passing the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), guaranteeing health coverage for low-income children in 1997.

OpenCongress.org, a nonpartisan Web site that tracks how often members of Congress vote with their party, ranked Hatch 26 among the 47 current Republican senators. He voted with his fellow Republicans 90 percent of the time in 2012. Hatch's life outside of the Senate is as interesting as his service within it. He is an accomplished piano, organ, and violin player. He is also a songwriter and recording artist of religious music, including a song celebrating Hanukkah. He appeared in a cameo role in the 2000 Oscar-winning film, *Traffic*.

Social Media Use

While 2004 is considered the Internet's breakout year in presidential elections, after Howard Dean's successful use of his Web site for online fundraising, the first overt political use of the Internet may be Usenet, the online network that began in 1979. By 1986, political groups began to intensively use e-mail and Internet bulletin boards. Both major parties and at least two of the minor party presidential candidates had campaign Web sites in the 1996 election. Most congressional candidates also had Web sites. However, these Web sites tended to be little more than digital brochures describing candidates' backgrounds and issue positions. Hatch was elected to the Senate before the rise of the Internet. He has become, however, one of the most fervent champions of these new technologies in today's Senate. His Web site (hatch.senate.gov) was one of the first established by a senator. During his 2000 run for the Republican nomination for president, Hatch highlighted his campaign's prowess in its use of the Internet during a primary debate. This was probably the first time that any presidential candidate has made the use of the Internet a campaign issue.

Hatch's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/OrrinHatch) became active in 2008, and has more

than 23,000 "likes." He was an early adopter of social networking sites, and he helped orchestrate the Republican gains in the Senate during the 2010 congressional campaign through traditional and social media techniques. Hatch's state and Senate offices are two of the most effective social media operations in Congress. The senator interviewed Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerman in an interactive discussion about the emergence and impact of social media on innovation and public policy in 2011. Hatch invited Zuckerman in Hatch's role as the chair of the Senate Republican High Tech Task Force, but also, journalists suggest, as a way to enlist young people's support during a tough 2012 re-election campaign. He has chaired this taskforce since 2009, and serves as the liaison between his party in the Senate and the technology industry.

Hatch's career in the Senate shows how new social media technologies have affected campaign politics. Reddit and Twitter "wars" broke out during his 2012 Utah Republican Senate primary campaign, and continued during the general election. Social media services such as Reddit are social networking sites that permit their members to sponsor forums on any topic. Supporters and opponents of Hatch flooded the sites with their accusations, complaints, and comments. The senator recognized early what others are now confirming. Adult users of social media tend to be more engaged in political activity than adult nonusers. A 2012 Pew Report on the Internet found that almost two-thirds of adult users reported that they used social networking to express their political views, promoted materials on social issues, or followed political candidates and public officials on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites. Google reports that more voters use their mobile devices for political news than they use traditional print media such as magazines and newspapers.

Social media and networking sites not only offer public officials easier access to the politically connected population, but can also serve to push voters to the ballot booth. Facebook messages moved more than a third of a million people to vote in the 2010 election, according to a study published in *Nature*. A nonpartisan social message urging people to vote and post that they had voted appeared on Facebook on Election Day. The message was more likely to result in higher voter turnout the closer the poster's relationship was to the viewer. It is not only elected officeholders and political candidates who seek to advance their agendas on social media sites. Hatch and Republican Senator Jerry Moran (Kansas) chastised Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner for using Facebook and Twitter to encourage members of the public to pressure their representatives in Congress to increase funding for the Security and Exchange Commission in 2012. The Treasury Department had placed several posts on Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Facebook, and the department's blog championing more funding for important government financial agencies.

Hatch's early adoption of Internet and social media technologies can be traced to Utah's role as one of the nation's most technologically advanced regions. The Salt Lake City area is called the Silicon Slopes in recognition of the more than 4,000 information technology firms, employing more than 66,000 people in the state. Animation film company Pixar, home video gaming pioneer Atari, Adobe Systems, Novel, WordPerfect, and Iomega were all founded in the state.

Conclusion

Senator Hatch's willingness to adopt these new technologies demonstrates how a long-serving senator appreciates the value of cutting-edge electoral and communication technologies. He uses social media to solicit donations, remind supporters of campaign events, and share and post videos portraying his positions. His staff uses Instagram and Flickr as digital scrapbooks to highlight events on the campaign trail and in the Senate. His office employs the biggest sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to canvass large numbers of constituents. Senator Hatch and his staff follow Twitter tweets and Facebook posts to gauge public response to campaign activities and legislative initiatives. Senator Hatch's reliance on social media and networking will increase as his constituents become more accustomed to using social media and networking to communicate their concerns and preferences and hold their elected officials accountable.

Timothy J. O'Neill
Southwestern University

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional 2010; Chaffetz, Jason; OpenCongress.org; Pew Internet and American Life Project.

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Hate Speech, Online and Social Media

Hate groups, defined as extremist organizations that espouse prejudice and separation based on race, religion, gender, or sexual identity, were early and enthusiastic adopters of the Internet as a tool of organizing and communication. White supremacist groups have used the Internet since 1985, when White Aryan Resistance leader Thomas Metzger founded an electronic bulletin board service that rallied against blacks and Jews. Since that time, organized extremist groups have primarily used the Internet for three main activities: to openly express their viewpoints without the opposition or consequences they would encounter elsewhere, raise money, and grow their organizations by recruiting new members. As with any affinity group, the Internet appeals to these groups because it allows members to connect across legal and geographic boundaries, finding common ground, regardless of where they live. For those engaged in activities that violate widely accepted social norms, the Internet and social media also provide privacy and anonymity. Popular culture, including both fiction and music, is also a key part of modern White Supremacy movement, and the Internet has helped create new avenues for sales and distribution of music espousing separatist and supremacist beliefs.

Despite this organizational activity, online hate speech is difficult to define because the concept encompasses a broad range of communication, much of which is not connected to any particular organization, and dissent and freedom of even unpopular expression are firmly entrenched in American law and culture. Hate speech is language that disparages or attacks a group of people based on a primary aspect of social identity such as race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Speech codes are controversial and hard to enforce, even in the private sector. Freedom of speech is enshrined in the Constitution and is central to national identity.

Political speech is the most highly protected category, even when that speech conflicts with other American values of tolerance and equality. In keeping with that principle, there can be no legal restriction on speech that is considered political in nature, and in the United States, the courts have tended to interpret "political" in broad terms. This sets the United States apart from countries in Europe, which have enacted restrictions on speech in reaction to concerns about the role of communication in the rise of fascism in the World War II era. In Germany and Austria, for example, denying the existence of the Holocaust is considered hate speech, is illegal, and is grounds for denial of an entry visa.

As a result of this tension between the desire to protect the rights of women and minorities and the desire to protect free speech, hate speech is largely defined by the different organizations that represent the types of people most often stigmatized by extremist groups. The most prominent groups involved in this type of advocacy include the Anti-Defamation League, with the mission to combat offenses against the Jewish people and monitor anti-Semitic speech; the Southern Poverty Law Center, which polices race-based speech and hate crimes; the National Organization for Women (NOW), which advances gender equality and monitors offenses against women; and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), which

A protester holds a rainbow-lettered sign meaning "end hate" in HTML at a November 2008 Dallas, Texas, protest against the passage of Proposition 8 banning same-sex marriage in California. Online hate groups are difficult to define and count, but a Southern Poverty Law Center report found a sharp increase in extremist antigovernment groups in the United States, from 149 in 2008 to 1,360 in 2012, or a change of 813 percent, corresponding to President Barack Obama's first term in office.

advocates on the behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Americans.

Responses and Remedies

The Internet presents new challenges and opportunities for responding to hate speech. With First Amendment protections and the borderless nature of the Internet, legal remedies against hate speech would be difficult to legislate and impossible to enforce. As a result, rather than seeking legal remedies to minimize hate speech online, groups like the ADL and NOW apply pressure to companies that host sites associated with hate groups or hate speech. Though not illegal, the types of speech that these organizations target may violate a company's individual terms of service agreements, the document outlining the rules of the road for a particular social network or community. On social sites like Twitter, Facebook, and media sites that host comments, users often agree to conform to certain rules when they join a community or register to post comments. These policies help to maintain a certain environment on the site that is a reflection of the company's brand, but sometimes conflicts with the idea of the Internet as a new public sphere. Public opinion surveys show that most Americans agree that the Constitution affords the Ku Klux Klan the right to assemble and speak. Even those who find their views repugnant may defend their right to express them in the town square. Online, however, the private companies that own and operate social networks require conformity to certain codes of conduct. These corporations impose standards that protect their image and reflect the expectations of the community.

Another remedy that some advocates have sought is to pressure advertisers to decline to place their marketing on pages that contain content they consider hate speech. Advocacy organizations have successfully applied pressure for companies to withdraw from shows that they believe include hate speech through campaigns like Stop Beck, aimed at Glenn Beck; and Stop Rush, aimed

at Rush Limbaugh. In 2013, Fox News executives admitted that the Stop Beck campaign had cost them significant amounts of advertising revenue and contributed to their decision to discontinue Beck's contract. In 2013, women's groups coordinated a campaign criticizing Facebook for hosting pages that promote sex trafficking and violence against women. When Facebook responded that the pages in question did not violate their terms of service, these women's groups placed more focus on appeals to advertisers.

Cyberhate in a Postracial Era

Hate groups have flourished online. By 2000, HateWatch had identified 400 Web sites linked to organizations they designated as hate groups, and leaders of organizations openly acknowledged the integral role that online community and communication play in their organizations. An analysis of messages posted on these sites characterized much of these communications as congenial. They focus on community building, pride, identity, and the prestige of their membership, rather than exclusively the core tenets of the organizations.

In addition to facilitating the distribution of hate speech cross-border organization among hate groups, the Internet also enables more effective measurement of these types of activities. Based on Web site traffic, researchers believe that the election of the United States's first black president helped to reenergize the backlash that had already been in progress for decades. Traffic to the white separatist site Stormfront.org, in particular, increased so dramatically following Obama's election that its servers crashed. A similar "Obama effect" occurred in 2012 after President Obama's re-election.

The topics and loci of American hate speech in the 21st century are illustrated in the Geography of Hate, a large-scale content-analysis project that maps the geographic origins and prevalence of hate speech on Twitter. Automatic coding identified tweets containing at least one hate word related to race, disability, or sexual orientation. Human coders then reviewed each of the resulting tweets to determine whether the tweet was negative.

Complicating matters, as one can see in the Geography of Hate research project and Stop Beck campaigns, distinctions between hate and other types of speech highly depend on the historical and social context. Ideas that are considered repugnant in 2013 may have been mainstream just a few decades ago, and much of the speech identified as hate speech by these groups reflects reactions to the social movements and change of the 1960s and 1970s. For example, the concept of homophobia is fairly modern. Although racial and religious defamation has attracted the most attention historically, in the 21st century, hate speech directed at sexual orientation and gender has generated a great deal of attention. This is also the source of some debate because these latter categories of identity do not enjoy the same legal protections as race and religion, public opinion on these issues is greatly in flux, and religious groups argue that expansion of antidiscrimination protections to sexual matters would violate their religious freedom.

Several scholars, including Jessie Daniels, have explored the idea that hate speech is not so isolated from mainstream discourse around race and gender. Consistent with feminist and anti-racist scholars like Jackson Katz, these writers find thematic continuities between what is defined as hate speech aimed at sexual, religious, and racial minorities and more mainstream conservative political discourse around race, gender, and sexual orientation.

In the United States, extreme and more mainstream political rhetoric on the right share the view that social movements like feminism, the civil rights, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual (LGBT) movements have expanded the rights of minorities by infringing upon those of the majority. Hate groups capture these rather widespread resentments and sense of grievance and situate them within rhetoric of zero-sum gain group competition, warfare, and violence. Though the speech is protected, these groups promote activities that fit the federal guidelines for hate crime. The Federal Bureau of Investigation uses Congress' definition of a hate crime as an offense involving group bias against a religion, gender, disability, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation.

The fluidity of the barriers between hate speech and other political discourse is also demonstrated in the activities of antigovernment groups, which aim their violence and activism at the perceived

excesses of the federal administration. While hate crimes have decreased or remained roughly stable, online discourse and other activity among groups that fit the broader definition of extremism related to government authority multiplied eight-fold from 2008 to 2012. These groups tend to believe that the federal government wants to curtail their rights. For them, President Obama serves as a primary manifestation of that.

Similarly, under Obama, hardcore groups now number 1,000, but extremist antigovernment groups have dramatically grown. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), "The number of Patriot groups, including armed militias, has grown 813 percent since of the Obama was elected—from 149 in 2008 to 1,360 in 2012." Even these statistics, however, are disputable because conservative groups take issue with SPLC's definitions and argue that they seek to marginalize or even criminalize organizations engaged in normal political debate about the proper size and role of government.

Carole V. Bell
Northeastern University

See Also: Civil Rights; Economic and Social Justice; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Gender; Human Rights; Immigration; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights; Online Smear Campaigns; Race/Ethnicity.

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HeadCount.org

HeadCount.org is a nonprofit, nonpartisan voter registration organization aimed at music lovers. The New York City–based group connects musicians with its purpose of encouraging those who are eligible to participate in the experience of American democracy, and its goal to add names on the rolls. HeadCount was founded in 2004 by Marc Brownstein, bass player for the band Disco Biscuits and Andy Bernstein, a journalist, music lover, and an author of the Phish guidebook, *The Pharmer's Almanac*. Along with a team of volunteers, the two located their work with this project at physical sites where they often crossed paths with unregistered voters: on parking lots, in vendor aisles, and at beverage tents. They similarly utilized virtual venues popular with that particular demographic via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social networking platforms. In cooperation with partner musicians, HeadCount members distributed information, held raffles for autographed memorabilia or VIP music experiences, and drew upon the identification audiences have with the people who play the music they love, all in service of greater voter participation.

This approach proved successful, and in the following years, HeadCount registered hundreds of thousands of live music fans across the country. While the organization began in the jam band scene, the scope of artists and acts among its 80-plus partner musicians ranges within a variety of tastes and tones, including Blues Traveler, Bonnie Raitt, The Decemberists, Greensky Bluegrass, Jay-Z, John Mayer, Maroon 5, My Morning Jacket, Neil Young, Pearl Jam, Phish, and Wilco. These collaborations foster existing relationships with fans, create new audiences for bands, and provide publicity for causes and artists alike. HeadCount also employs their partner artists' e-mail lists to distribute pertinent materials so that any given campaign can reach more than 1 million in-boxes.

A network of helpers is crucial to the success of HeadCount, with dozens of people volunteering as regional coordinators or team leaders and working in artists relations or new media. Many of these individuals engage in particular projects on the Web, and they remain connected, organized,

and energized with one another via social media. These are the channels through which the organization maintains awareness, energy, and the funding needed to flourish.

Many of the most successful HeadCount campaigns have been deployed via the Web and social media platforms, including one that occurred during the first full election cycle after the organization launched. On November 3, 2008, HeadCount hosted musicians such as Joss Stone, Phil Lesh, Robert Randolph, and Questlove for a Get Out the Vote Party at the Highline Ballroom. Webcast live nationwide via iClips, this was the first event of its kind to combine live audio and video streams to produce a national voter awareness and registration event, one with the potential to move thousands of people to the polls on the next day.

In 2012, HeadCount registered at least 103,340 voters at more than 1,170 events in more than 70 cities, marking its most successful year to date. One element of its national campaign around the November elections was the Clipboard Project, which took photographs of roughly 200 music and entertainment stars holding HeadCount's Register to Vote clipboard. These images were then tweeted, Facebooked, and linked to the official Web site to be pinned, Tumblr'ed, recommended on Google, StumbleUpon'ed, shared on Digg or Reddit, or otherwise circulated. 50 Cent, BB King, Cyndi Lauper, Edward Norton, John Legend, Ke$ha, Lewis Black, Marlon Wayans, Sarah Silverman, Stephen Colbert, Susan Sarandon, Tenacious D, and Warren Haynes represent a cross-section of the celebrities who participated in the project. Facebook posts from Dave Matthews and Linkin Park garnered more than 18,000 and 100,000 "likes," respectively.

HeadCount's Web site also hosts a current blog where volunteers, staffers, board members, and partner artists can post content to share with viewers far and wide, allowing information to quickly circulate on the virtual music scene. Between elections, it discusses current issues of interest to its members, such as food and farm policy, Gulf Coast recovery, human rights, and sustainability and climate change.

Bernstein and Brownstein still serve as HeadCount cochairs and as members of the board of directors, the latter of which boasts a roster that recalls an issue of *Rolling Stone* in its coverage of prominent musicians, industry leaders, and activists like Bob Weir of the Grateful Dead and Further, John McCrea of CAKE, Stefani Scamardo of Hard Head Management, and Peter Bahouth of the U.S. Climate Action Network. A list of festivals and promoters affiliated with HeadCount is equally diverse, and includes Austin City Limits, Bonnaroo, High Sierra Music Festivals, Horning's Hideout, Mountain Jam, Outside Lands, and PDX Pop Now!

Jennifer Jeanne Richardson
State UNY Potsdam

See Also: Get Out the Vote Drives; Nonprofit Organizations; Rock the Vote; Voter Apathy; Voter Turnout; Youth Engagement.

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Health Care

In 2010, President Obama signed into law the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, often referred to as ACA, which many believe is the most significant social policy enacted in decades. After an overview of the legislature and its historical and political significance, the entry explores the role social media played throughout the health care reform between 2007 and 2012.

Affordable Care Act

The overall goals of the health care reform are to expand health insurance coverage to millions of

uninsured Americans, to improve access to and quality of care, and to ultimately control rising health care costs. Some of the law's major provisions include the following:

- Requiring that most U.S. citizens and legal residents have health insurance by 2014, also known as the individual mandate.
- Creation of state-based exchanges through which individuals can purchase coverage, with subsidies available to lower-income individuals.
- A major expansion of the Medicaid program to cover all non-Medicare-eligible individuals with incomes up to 133 percent of federal poverty level (FPL).
- Requiring insurance plans to provide coverage, regardless of pre-existing conditions.
- Closing the Medicare prescription "donut hole."

ACA aims to provide health coverage to more than 30 million uninsured Americans beginning in January 2014. It is the biggest overhaul of the $2.8 trillion U.S. health care system since the initiation of Medicaid and Medicare in the 1960s. To say that it has been a challenging process to get the law passed and implemented is a gross understatement.

Health care reform became a point of contention in the 2007 Democratic primary election when the candidates presented different plans for achieving universal coverage. In November 2008, newly elected president Barack Obama started to push for a major overhaul of the health care industry, an effort that would lead to his signature legislature, the ACA. In 2009 there were many controversies and complications, and even though the president signed the ACA into law in March 2010, the tumultuous saga continued. Debates over the legality of ACA and the states' decisions to participate in the Medicaid expansion or opt out of this key component of the law, for instance, are some examples of the complications that confused the public during the implementation stage. Social media have provided a platform for public information and engagement throughout this process.

Social Media Events

From the early days of the law's inception, key turning events in health care reform have been shaped by social media events. The "death panel" controversy that significantly threatened the law, for instance, took momentum with a 316-word Facebook post by Sarah Palin, former governor of Alaska.

Betsy McCaughey, a former lieutenant governor of New York, first brought attention to this issue in mid-July 2009, claiming that the ACA would require Medicare patients to have counseling sessions that would tell them how to end their lives sooner. Though the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP, a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization for the elderly) as well as other sources debunked the claim, opponents of the law continued the discourse in their attacks of the ACA. However, the general public only started to take note of the controversy after Sarah Palin's August 7 Facebook post, in which the term *death panel* was first used. Her message that neither her parents nor her baby with Down syndrome should have to stand in front of a "death panel" where bureaucrats would get to decide whether they were worthy of health care certainly struck an emotional cord with the general public.

Though later voted on Truth-O-Meter (now PolitiFact.com) as the biggest political lie of the year, this controversy took hold: A Google search with the term generated 275 million results in November 2012; the top 50 newspapers across the nation published more than 700 articles on the claim in the five weeks after Palin's post. Brendan Nyhan reported a 2010 poll, which showed that after it spread, about 85 percent of Americans were familiar with the "death panel" charge, and about 30 percent of those who knew of the attack thought it was true. The section of the bill Palin was referring to, which would have paid physicians for providing voluntary end-of-life counseling to Medicare patients, was removed and not included in the final law.

The June 2012 Supreme Court ruling on the ACA, another monumental event in the health care reform saga, was connected to another social networking medium, Twitter. Shortly after the court's ruling that the law was constitutional, Twitter volume peaked at 13,000 tweets

per minute, which more than tripled from the record-breaking Twitter activity in March 2010 when the U.S. House passed the legislation. Both campaigns used the opportunity to engage supporters on Twitter during this key moment. Mitt Romney's tweet tied to the ruling—"If we want to get rid of Obamacare, we're going to have to replace @BarackObama"—was one of the biggest tweets of the day, which generated more than 4,000 retweets. These statistics would pale in comparison to the Twitter activity that the nation later saw on Election Day 2012, when more than 300,000 tweets were sent per minute at the height of the site's traffic. This is yet another poignant example of the ever-evolving role that social media play in shaping political events and redefining civic engagement.

Advocacy Organizations

Various constituency organizations saw the health care reform as an opportunity for advancing their agendas through policy advocacy, and social media provided a forum for such efforts.

On health care reform, women are both key targets for campaign messages and potential messengers. Momsrising is an online advocacy organization, which according to its Web site, "takes on the most critical issues facing women, mothers, and families, by mobilizing massive grassroots actions," using its interactive online forum. To defend and promote ACA, the Web site asked its millions of followers for personal stories about how the new law was helping their families. Dawn Josephson, a mother from Florida, shared her story about how, for the first time, her insurance did not exclude her son's pre-existing eye condition, referring to one of ACA's more popular clauses. The White House picked up Dawn's story, as did the major media outlets. She shared her story in person with President Obama, an event that received extensive media coverage via traditional outlets such as the *Washington Post* and CNN.

Proponents of social media's democratizing function laud its ability to empower and connect, giving an unprecedented advantage to historically disenfranchised groups. However, skeptics such as David Karpf caution that there is a difference between real civic engagement through social media and merely slacktivism and clicktivism. Malcolm Gladwell's commentary in *The New Yorker* was critical of social media doing little more than establishing weak ties, which may bring a million people to a Facebook page, but fail to mobilize 1,000 people to the streets and effect real change.

White House Social Media

President Obama has benefited from its engagement with the public via social media since his first election campaign and continued to use social media to communicate about his key policy endeavors, including health care reform. An analysis of social media platforms that Obama and Romney used in early June 2012 found that the Obama campaign posted nearly four times as much content as the Romney campaign, and was active on nearly twice as many platforms. The author of the study, the PEW Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ), pointed out that both candidates utilized social media outlets such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, not so much for the social function, also known as responding to voters or retweeting others, but mainly for direct digital messaging. The study concludes that, in 2012, voters were more actively involved in helping to shape campaign messages, whereas the traditional news media saw their authority lessen.

To promote ACA and to win re-election, the president's campaign used social media in several specific ways. First, the Obama re-election campaign Web site had visitors join 18 constituency groups, such as women and veterans, which allowed for direct messaging with targeted content to different constituencies. This targeted messaging strategy was not a feature in Romney's social media strategy. Second, the administration used social media messaging to debunk myths about ACA. The White House launched a Reality Check Web site to dispute popular criticisms of the new policies, such as tax dollars used to fund abortions. The well-designed site matches myths with facts, contains video testimony from patients and experts, and is media rich with features such as interactive maps. A few hours after the White House blasting the Web site packet to its hundreds of thousands of followers on Facebook and Twitter, users of the social news site Digg voted Reality Check to the site's homepage,

President Barack Obama at an "Open for Questions" online townhall event in March 2009. While the White House and the Obama administration have pioneered the use of social media such as YouTube and Web sites such as Reality Check to address major policy issues like health care reform, some critics suggest that the potential for truly interactive communication has not been fully realized.

indicating a tremendous success in reaching and mobilizing its base.

Open Government Initiative and Government 2.0

In 2009, and immediately after his inauguration, President Obama started an Open Government Initiative and subsequently released a memo to federal agencies with a call to engage in transparent, participatory, and collaborative governance. The memo specifically called for innovative tools and strategies to make government initiatives easily accessible for the public, to offer venues for citizens and government agencies, to become cocreators of ideas, and to facilitate public engagement. Social media outlets seemed to offer a solution because to achieve Government 2.0, Web 2.0 social technologies must be adopted. Government agencies and political figures started to embrace social media messaging. The White House, for instance, was among the first government agencies to use its YouTube channel for virtual townhall meetings.

Stuart Bretschneider and Ines Mergel saw this as a new wave of social networking technologies adopted by government and the public sector, and argued that when compared with the previous wave of e-government application, social media technologies offer one unique feature: They allow for real bidirectional exchanges, or real-time exchanges of content, while reaching more diverse and potentially more-engaged audiences. The feature of cocreation of content, Mergel argues, is "inherently collaborative and participatory and can help build online communities of interest around specific issues" and the abovementioned Momsrising.com case illustrates this function and the community-building potential well. In a 2010 analysis, Rebecca Lapaze focused on social media messaging by four federal agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security and the White House; the author cautions that simply adopting a social media strategy does not automatically guarantee true civic engagement and participation that embodies Web 2.0 principles. A key Web 2.0 principle,

according to Mergel, concerns the directionality of information sharing and the extent to which citizens are able to "reuse, reshare, and discuss the content" provided and authorized by the government.

An early poll by Nationaljournal.com in 2009 with new media experts from across the political spectrum reported that the administration's use of sites like WhiteHouse.gov warranted an average grade of C+. The main criticism was that the sites remained one-way forums with mostly top-down messaging, whereas the interactive features, such as the "Open for Questions" feature, were underutilized. In a 2009 memo, Peter Swire, former counsel to the Change.gov New Media Team, recognized the key limitations imposed within the federal government, which might explain the lower-than-expected performance of its Web 2.0 applications. The issues of scale were discussed, also known as engaging millions of motivated individuals using limited resources, and a complicated clearance process necessitated by the fact that a short Facebook post might be construed as official government policy.

Thomas Bryer offers an analysis of participatory venues, such as social media used in politics and governance, focusing on the alignment between government actions and citizen expectations. In this framework, the democratic equilibrium and the preferred position are the points where citizens have high access to participatory venues (mainly social media forums), and their expectations for civic engagement and government actions are well aligned. To achieve such a position, Web 2.0 principles such as directionality of information are essential for ensuring true transparency, participation, and collaboration. As can be seen throughout the health care reform saga, the role and potential of social media as forums of civic engagement and political discourse continues to be negotiated.

Min Liu
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Jina Yoo
University of Missouri St. Louis

See Also: AARP; Age; Change.gov; Clicktivism; Medicare; MomsRising.org; Palin Phenomenon; Social Security; Web 2.0.

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Homophily

Individuals are more likely to have a connection if they have common attributes. The homophily principle shows that relationships tend to be distributed according to the characteristics of the actors (whether persons, organizations, or other entities). People who share gender, ethnicity, language, class, values, or nationality tend to cluster in social networks. For instance, there is strong empirical evidence showing that girls tend to associate and become friends with other girls at primary school, whereas boys are more likely to be connected with other boys. This is one example of a homophile process.

Two different mechanisms seem to underlie homophile dynamics: selection and influence.

Social selection brings together individuals with common attributes. On the other hand, peer influence is the process by which the behavior of the individual is altered because of continuous interaction with significant others. Both processes, with different prominence, may be present in the same homophile dynamic. For instance, selection and influence contribute to the similarity of substance use patterns among friends. Following a social selection mechanism, adolescents who smoke tend to associate with more probability with smoking than nonsmoking friends. At the same time, social norms toward smoking in small friendship groups influence the behavior of individual members. Peer influence is an essential mechanism to initiate smoking behavior.

Homophily has also been documented in online social networks. One example is the network of consumption patterns of political books on Amazon. From 2004 onward, Valdis Krebs analyzed the "customers who bought this item also bought . . ." network for political books during American presidential elections. Results showed a dynamic of political polarization: Books with a Republican orientation were usually bought by the same customers, whereas Democratic literature was purchased by a different group of readers. Very few books played a "broker" role, acting as a bridge between Republican and Democrat arenas.

Facebook

Most evidence of homophily has focused on patterns of interaction on social networking Web sites. Facebook friends often conform to homophile clusters, where individuals share common characteristics. Students who share certain tastes in music and movies have a higher probability to establish a connection in Facebook, following a selection process. However, there is less evidence for peer influence processes in this case. Patterns of racial homophily were documented on Facebook friendship networks. However, co-residence and other forms of homophily below ethnic relationships seem to have a significant influence in the racial homophily effect. In fact, reciprocity and the tendency to be a friend of the friends of your friends (that is, transitivity) amplify the effects of racial homophily on Facebook networks.

Facebook users have an average of 120 friends. However, they actively communicate with only a small subset of the list of contacts, usually with strong relationships (confidents, friends, and family relations) to which they typically share several common characteristics. Family and close friends usually constitute the core of personal networks on Facebook. Users maintain passive communication patterns with a long list of contacts. Educational institutions and the workplace are two relevant areas to establish Facebook's contacts.

Other Social Media

Homophile dynamics are present both in the access of users to different social networking Web sites (SNWs), as well as in the distribution of personal contacts between online networking platforms. SNWs differ in the social and demographic profile of their members. For instance, in Spain, adolescents tend to use Tuenti, a Spain-based SNW, whereas adults are more represented in Facebook. Meanwhile, Twitter has predominantly young users, inbetween Tuenti and Facebook. In the same vein, SNWs have dissimilar penetration in different countries: Orkut is widely used in Brazil, Hi5 is extensive in Mexico, and QQ in China. Similarly, SNWs attract people with similar interests, as when they are looking for professional networking on LinkedIn or dating on Meetic. Therefore, there is a selection process based on age, language, nationality, and professional profile contributing to homophile networks on SNWs. So, when an individual accesses the pool of contacts of a SNW, he or she is not connecting to a representative sample of the population, but to a self-selected network of people sharing demographics as well as social, economic, and personal characteristics.

Individuals distribute personal contacts in different online networking platforms. Some users choose one platform as the main reference, whereas others combine several SNWs simultaneously. Some users are very active, while others are passive. Individuals may separate personal and professional contacts, or try to congregate relationships in the same social space. As a consequence, homophile dynamics are first affecting the access to a particular networking Web site; and second, contributing to the formation of friendship clusters among people who share similar characteristics. From this point of view, merging two SNWs is more than just summing up two

pools of contacts, insofar as it can alter the structure of online personal networks.

Homophile processes are observed even when SNWs were designed without taking into account the distribution of personal relationships in different social circles. Facebook tends to congregate people who may originally come from different social circles in face-to-face interaction. However, even in this context of open interaction, homophile processes seem to predominate. During the last decade, SNWs have gained relevance as a context for political involvement and debate. For instance, according to the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project, "39% of all American adults took part in some sort of political activity on a social networking site during the 2012 campaign." In this context, homophily on online networks may have important political consequences.

Homophile dynamics on online networks can contribute to political polarization. Studies of opinion formation processes have shown that greater interaction between like-minded individuals results in polarization. Similarly, the clusters of followers in Twitter are normally politically homogeneous, and as a consequence, users are unlikely to be exposed to cross-ideological content. Network dynamics seem to be relevant for political mobilization. A strongly connected voter network enables a politician to win an election, according to evidence from simulation studies. Also, political conversations with other members of the network predict political mobilization and community involvement. Within voluntary associations, homophily of political behavior is observed. The political orientations of individuals are reinforced through interaction with similar others, leading to behavioral involvement and political participation.

Isidro Maya-Jariego
Daniel Holgado Ramos
Universidad de Sevilla

See Also: Evolution of Social Media; Friend-to-Friend Strategies; Social Network Analysis; Social Networking Web Sites.

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Honeycomb Framework

The honeycomb framework is a visual structure composed of several blocks in interdependence proposed by Jan Kietzmann, Kristopher Hermkens, Ian McCarthy, and Bruno Silvestre to help scholars and professionals understand how social media can be used as part of a communication strategy. This model emphasizes the functionality of Web social media, and may serve to understand the better way to include these instruments in a communication strategy showing comprehension with the ways that Web users use social media in their lives. The honeycomb framework presented by these scholars is based on the ideas of several bloggers, namely Stewart Butterfield, Peter Morville, and Gene Smith, who developed and combined ideas discussed by Matt Webb.

In nature, honeycomb cells in beehives are an example of geometric efficiency because the shape of the cells allows two opposing honeycomb layers to nest into each other, with each facet of the closed ends being shared by opposing cells. Applying this metaphor to Web social media and considering seven main attributes, Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, and Silvestre have defined functional blocks in interdependence. These blocks are:

- *Identity*: Related to the information provided to identify users, and that reveals themselves or a constructed self. This self-disclosure may include data about sex, age, occupation, or preferences on a real or deceptive basis (to assure anonymity).

- *Conversations*: Concerning the channels used to promote dialogue between users, that is, with means that allow talking in real or deferred time.
- *Sharing*: Linked to the exchange, distribution, and reception of meaningful content by participants. Sharing may lead users to start conversations and establish relationships, depending on the functionality of the social media platform.
- *Presence*: Related to ways of knowing who is available in the social media platform.
- *Relationships*: Concerned with the information provided about the bonds that individuals form with each other (e.g., family and friends), through which they feel connected and exchange meaning.
- *Reputation*: Related to the appreciation and trust of users to the social standing of participants and content, usually expressed in opinions.
- *Groups*: Linked to the possibility that digital channels have to provide the creation of communities of users with common interests.

These functional building blocks are neither mutually exclusive nor present in all social media activity because they are constructs that show how different levels of social media functionality can be configured. The authors' proposition is motivated by the need to comprehend how citizens are consuming the Web and how its use is maturing, evolving, and changing through time thanks to the new communication landscape and broadening exposure to it.

Presently, a multiplicity of social media that differs in terms of scope and functionality may be found: Some are more massive, while others are more focused on a target, function, or purpose. This diversity may lead to reluctance or the inability to use social media in a strategic communication campaign and promote an effective engagement between the political actor and users (citizens or constituents). The honeycomb framework allows a systematic view of social media and illustrates the more suitable platforms according to the objectives of a communication campaign. It is a tool that serves several purposes; for example, it helps to define priorities, supports a modular approach to social media, and can serve as a looking glass, transforming how people see things and enabling new explorations.

The functionality of social media tools focuses on a combination of these blocks. For example, Facebook favors relationships, identity, and reputation, whereas channels of video sharing (like YouTube or Vimeo) promote sharing and group formation. Knowing the tools, their functionalities, reputations, and presence of the same users, organizations can define their communication strategies, which will depend on the market context.

Sónia Pedro Sebastião
Technical University of Lisbon

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Digital; Functionality; Social Networking Web Sites.

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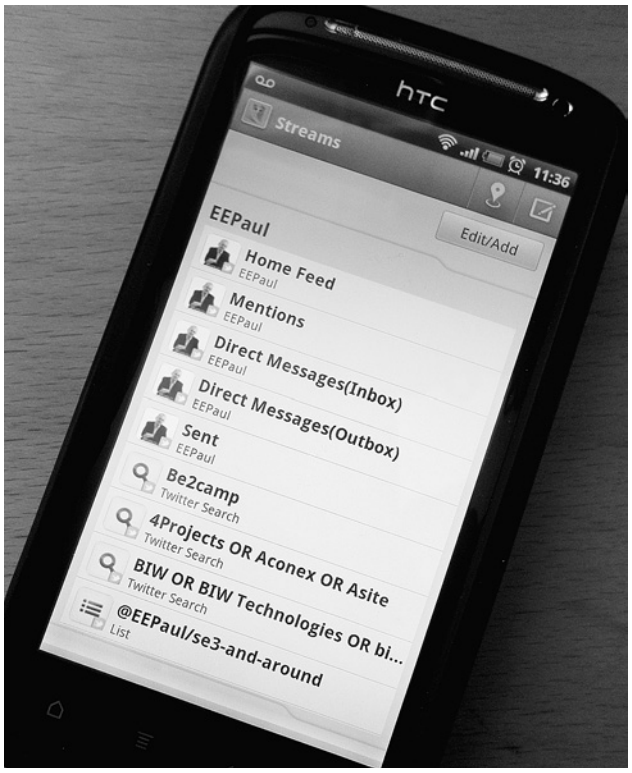
HootSuite.com

HootSuite.com is the most known social media management program. It is an application that can be used for synchronizing all desired social

profiles. It provides advantages both for time management and to become organized. For example, if an individual wants to share something on all of their profiles, one can choose all desired profiles and share them all synchronously by using HootSuite, rather than logging into these profiles one by one. Another feature of HootSuite is that it allows creating scheduled content. tweets and profile posts can be scheduled and published at the desired dates and times. It decreases the time spent in social platforms and provides an opportunity to increase time efficiency. HootSuite is a tool providing proper solutions for corporate companies that attach importance mainly to digital marketing. With its goal of "primarily gathering the streams in social networks," the target of HootSuite is defined as "dominating also the fields of customer services, CRM and publishing by taking the new functionalism to a step further."

HootSuite is an external application through which one can manage multiple social network accounts such as Google+, LinkedIn, Foursquare, Twitter, and WordPress. One must open a new account by registering. There are both free and paid versions. There are many limitations on free versions, but they provide good services for small companies and individual users. It allows only five different social media networks for free accounts, but allows unlimited social media network management for paid accounts. It supports many social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Foursquare, LinkedIn, Google+, Myspace, WordPress, Mixi, Tumblr, and YouTube. HootSuite may soon be a complete social center. Users will be able to share and display all content in social platforms such as Reddit, StumbleUpon, Scoop.it, CMP.LY, and Nexalogy through HootSuite. The total number of platforms supported by HootSuite is 35. Three new names, Evernote, Storify, and Zendesk, were added and supported by the Vancouver-centric HootSuite in August 2012.



A sample screen showing HootSuite's mobile app for Android phones in early 2012. HootSuite is one of the leading tools used to manage social media accounts, especially Twitter.

HootSuite, founded in 2008, bought its competitor Seesmic, which performed a similar function for platforms since 2007, in September 2012. HootSuite was chosen the best social media tool of the year of 2010 at the Mashable Awards, which is one of the most prestigious awards of social media.

Twitter and HootSuite Cooperation

This method was implemented to increase Twitter ad revenues and to reach those who attract interest with promotion codes. Twitter wants to put this method, which Google frequently uses with AdWords, into practice, and joined forces with HootSuite, which is one of the most popular third-party tools. HootSuite, in this case, provides the most appropriate solutions for corporate companies that mainly employ digital marketing. Twitter began to give $100 advertising coupons as gifts to convert these companies into advertisers after partnering with HootSuite. Twitter is the lead brand in social media. Their tools, used by companies monitoring consumer trends via social networks, have vital importance. The most used Twitter tool is HootSuite, with a usage rate of 29 percent, according to the research carried out by Pingdom. One of the most important features of HootSuite is its comprehensive social media measurement skills. Facebook and Twitter analysis and Google analytics are the most important

social media measurements offered by the HootSuite. In addition, this tool offers draft reports and allows one to choose the most appropriate report among more than 40 modules. HootSuite is a Web-based application addressing users who want to use Twitter for business purposes.

One does not need to install HootSuite application on each computer separately when more than one computer is used in Web-based Twitter applications. HootSuite has some extra features, such as "send later." User information can also be easily displayed by clicking on user names via the HootSuite application. This feature of HootSuite, which responds to the continuous updating demands of companies via Ping.fm, also applies to other social networks besides Twitter. The last advantage of HootSuite is that it uses a universal resource locator (URL) shortener. Users can use short URLs by means of Ow.ly or a third-party URL shortening service like Bit.ly.

Sule Yüksel Özmen
Karadeniz Technical University

See Also: Google+; Klout Score; Predictive Analytics; Social Media Optimization; Twitter; Web Metrics.

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HopeLab

HopeLab is a nonprofit organization founded by Pam Omidyar in 2001 to produce technology (e.g., games, applications, and social media) to improve physical and mental health. Although HopeLab is located within the medical and pediatric health arena, it also represents an entirely new approach to "social technology," a potent hybrid of social media and online gaming techniques that in 2013 was just beginning to pique the imagination of forward-thinking political strategists on the lookout for ways of making advocacy content even more ubiquitous in the everyday media mix. Sometimes called "gamification," HopeLab's innovative conceptual approach to information release and reconfiguring is, to some extent, mirrored in groundbreaking issues and advocacy sites like World Without Oil and Water.org, which are beginning to utilize similar techniques in the service of a social change agenda.

HopeLab created *Re-Mission*, a free online video game, to help young cancer patients kill video cancer cells and improve their health. HopeLab released *Re-Mission2* to provide more gaming options. HopeLab developed Zamzee, a portable tracker paired with a motivational, gaming, and tracking Web site to help youth become more physically active; activity earns users redeemable reward points. HopeLab's Resilience Initiative, scheduled for development in 2014, aims to use mobile applications and social media to boost humans' biological and psychological resilience. Studies have assessed the outcomes and impacts of HopeLab products. HopeLab is part of the philanthropic foundation the Omidyar Group, cofounded by Pam Omidyar and her husband Pierre Omidyar, who also founded eBay.

Pam Omidyar, born in 1967, earned a B.S. in biology from Tufts University in 1989, and attended the University of California, Santa Cruz, to study molecular genetics. In the late 1980s, Omidyar was a research assistant in an immunology lab who spent many hours viewing cancer cells under a microscope. Omidyar would unwind from her research by playing videogames with her husband Pierre, a software engineer who eventually founded eBay. The juxtaposition of these two activities gave Pam Omidyar the idea to develop a video game that would allow young cancer patients to kill cancer cells and ultimately improve their health. She founded HopeLab in 2001, where she developed *Re-Mission* in 2006.

Re-Mission has players drive a robot named Roxxi through simulated cancer patients' bodies

while killing cancer cells and battling treatment side effects. HopeLab sponsored an international study of *Re-Mission* that reported improved health outcomes for young cancer patients and was published by *Pediatrics* in 2008. *Re-Mission* encourages and motivates healthy behavior (e.g., taking antibiotics consistently) that in turn enhances the effectiveness of medical treatment.

The study focused on the role of both behavioral and psychological factors (e.g., acquiring medical knowledge and increased sense of control over cancer) in successful cancer treatment. This study is said to be the largest randomized, controlled study of a video game intervention. It tracked the cancer treatment of 375 teens and young adults at 34 medical centers in the United States, Canada, and Australia over three months. *Re-Mission* was made available online for free, and was reportedly downloaded over 100,000 times by fall 2007.

In April 2013, HopeLab released *Re-Mission2* as a collection of six games focused on different aspects of cancer treatment (e.g., Leukemia and Stem Cell Defender), with possible game levels varying from 11 to 25. Nerdook Productions, Tinime Games, Borne Games, and Novaleaf Game Studios developed these games. Game research and development was carried out with a group of 120 youths. The games are available for free online to clinics, hospitals, patients, their families, clinicians, and caregivers. This set of games incorporates data from research studies of *Re-Mission,* takes user data into account, and provides a variety of game-playing options. Like the original version of *Re-Mission*, the new game places players inside the simulated body of a cancer patient and has them apply real-life strategies and cancer treatments.

In 2010, HopeLab launched Zamzee, a pocket-sized activity meter that connects young users to a motivational game-based Web site. Zamzee was the subject of a study cosponsored by HopeLab and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the results of which were announced at the 2012 Obesity Society Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas. Again using a randomized, controlled study, HopeLab evaluated the effects of Zamzee across a diverse sample of 448 middle-school students coming from urban, suburban, and rural locations across the United States. Half of the study participants used the Zamzee activity meter without the Web site, and the other half used it with the Web site. The latter group reported a 59 percent increase in moderate to vigorous activity, saw reduced gains in bad cholesterol, and improved their blood sugar control. Users earn points for physical activity that they can redeem for rewards, including gift cards, charitable donations, and iPods. Zamzee is now marketed through a business that continues to work with HopeLab on the prosocial mission of the product.

HopeLab is currently planning a resilience initiative that will develop technology to bolster biological and psychological resilience to adversity using mobile technology and applications because of their pervasive presence in most people's lives. HopeLab has identified factors in human resilience through studying the scientific literature. Factors include a sense of healthy social connection, purpose in life, and control over one's destiny. HopeLab hopes to enhance each of these experiences in people's everyday lives with its technology, with a goal of having people live out their core values in everyday life.

Omidyar Group

HopeLab is part of the Omidyar Group, an extension of which is the Omidyar Network, where Pam Omidyar is a board member. She is also a board member of Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service (Tufts University), and is director of the Ulupono Initiative. For her philanthropic and health initiatives, Pam Omidyar was deemed one of "The Top Givers" by *Business Week* in 2003–08, "The 25 Best Givers" by *Barron's* in 2009–10, and "The World's 7 Most Powerful Philanthropists" by *Forbes* in 2011. In 2011, she was awarded the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy and an Honorary Doctor of Public Service (Tufts University). Omidyar resides in Hawai'i. HopeLab had released more than 200,000 copies of *Re-Mission* to over 80 countries by 2013, and has offices in Palo Alto and Redwood City, California.

Gordon Alley-Young
Kingsborough Community College

See Also: Health Care; Nonprofit Organizations; Social Media Political Gaming; Youth Engagement.

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Hoyer, Steny

Steny Hamilton Hoyer represents the Fifth Congressional District of Maryland in the U.S. House of Representatives. He has served in this office since 1981. Hoyer's district is located southeast of Washington, D.C., and includes mostly rural and suburban areas. A member of the Democratic Party, Hoyer was first elected in 1981. From 2003 to 2007 and again from 2011 through 2012, he served as House minority whip; from 2007 to 2011, he was the House majority leader. As of 2012, he was the second-highest-ranking member of the Democratic leadership of the House and had been since 2003.

Career

Steny Hoyer geared up for public office while serving as a staff member for U.S. Senator Daniel Brewster of Maryland from 1962 to 1966. During that time, he worked with fellow staffer Nancy Pelosi, who would later become speaker of the House, her position in 2012. In 1966, Hoyer won an office representing the 26th Senate District of Maryland in the state senate. Hoyer was then elected president of the State Senate of Maryland in 1975; this made him the youngest president in the history of the Maryland state senate.

In 1978, Hoyer made an unsuccessful bid for the nomination for lieutenant governor of Maryland. That year, he accepted an appointment to the Maryland Board of Higher Education; he held that post until 1981.

In 1981, the office of Gladys Spellman, congresswoman for Maryland's Fifth District, was declared vacant because of her ongoing illness. Hoyer won the primary election for this position by a small margin, and then went on to defeat his Republican opponent, Audrey Scott, although he was outfunded. This first election also won him the nickname "Boy Wonder." Since his second election in 1982, he has consistently been reelected to his position in the House, usually with a comfortable margin. Hoyer has served longer than any other southern Maryland House member.

Hoyer has a long history of service to the Democratic Party and the House of Representatives. He functioned as deputy majority whip in the House from 1987 to 1989. From 1989 to 1994, Hoyer served the Democratic Caucus as chair; this position is ranked fourth in the echelon of House of Representatives Democrats. Hoyer is also a member of the Democratic Steering Committee, and served as cochair in previous years. Between 1995 and 2000, Hoyer was the chief recruiter of candidates for Democrats in the House of Representatives.

Hoyer ran for minority whip in 2002, but Nancy Pelosi won that position. Next, Pelosi ran for minority leader after the midterm elections in 2002. At that point, Hoyer was elected as House majority whip, the second-highest-ranking Democratic position in the House. He served in that role from 2003 to 2007. Pelosi took on the role of speaker of the House in 2007, and Hoyer was elected to be House majority leader during the tenure of Democratic majority in the House from 2007 to 2011. He was the first Maryland representative in this position.

In 2010, the Democratic Party lost control of the House. Pelosi took the minority leader position, and Hoyer became minority whip once again. In 2012, he was still in that position.

Issues

In 2010, Hoyer took the position that middle-class tax cuts should only be temporary in that otherwise they would prove too costly. He identifies as pro-choice and, in 2003, he voted against the bill on partial birth abortion. Hoyer votes in favor of affirmative action and gay rights. He receives an "F" from the National Rifle Association based on his record of voting in favor of gun control.

The issue of immunity for telecommunications companies that engaged in warrantless wiretapping at the behest of George W. Bush after the 9/11 terrorist attacks has been a hot one for Hoyer. After being exposed in the press, the wiretapping program was sued by privacy rights advocacy group the Electronic Frontier Foundation. Nevertheless, Hoyer introduced a bill to extend wiretapping privileges and extend immunity for telecommunications companies that engaged in wiretapping, receiving criticism from many sides.

Hoyer was instrumental in the 1990 passage of the historic Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and later the 2008 ADA Amendments Act, which bolstered the existing law. He sponsored the Help America Vote Act of 2002, and in 2010, Hoyer played a role in ending the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

Hoyer is a major fund-raiser for Democratic officials and candidates. During the 2006 and 2008 elections, he donated in excess of $1 million to different Democratic candidates and to the party. This has been a source of controversy at times; in March 2007, the Center for Public Integrity reported that Hoyer raised the money he donated during the 2006 elections by "exploiting . . . a legal loophole." However, as various commentators, including the Federal Election Commission, pointed out, Hoyer's actions were legal, and his methods were transparent.

Social Media Use

Poleet reported in December 2012 that Hoyer had 25,000 followers and a Klout score of 82. OhMyGov reported in December 2012 that Hoyer had a Media Power Rank of 20th out of his 541 peers. It also showed that he had received more than 1,100 social media mentions in the past week, a typical result for him in 2012.

Although his social media presence is strong, in January 2011, Hoyer was the target of a social media attack in which his official Web site was linked to the wrong Twitter account. As a result, it appeared for a short time that he was tweeting comments including "Look how Republicans fell for this bi-partisan seating crap," and "This is what happens when political offices pay for high-priced, money-sucking 'social media' firms that have no clue what they are doing." The attack Twitter account was "@LeaderHoyer," reportedly an old account of Hoyer's, rather than a phony or hacked account. His actual account was "@WhipHoyer," and as of late 2012, that account remained active. It was speculated that, when Hoyer returned to the House minority whip position, he modified his Twitter account name to reflect the change. This left the older "@LeaderHoyer" account open, and this account was taken up by a different user in January 2011, days before the tweeting prank.

The prankster waited until the State of the Union address to tweet, and unfortunately, the congressman's Web site still had a link to the old account when it happened. Within hours of the tweets, the link was down. Hoyer does use his actual Twitter account liberally, and had more than 20,000 followers in 2012.

June 2012, Hoyer continued to build up his presence in the social media world as he joined Google+, Instagram, and Pinterest, in addition to his existing Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts. At the time he joined those three, he was reportedly the only member of the leadership of the House of Representatives who was on all of these networks.

Hoyer distinguished himself by joining Pinterest in because most male legislators, especially Democrats, have not begun to use Pinterest in any numbers, which reflect the site's popularity. Pinterest, which is traditionally heavily dominated by female users, is relatively new ground for lawmakers. Given the number of female voters in 2012, it was probably a strategic move for Hoyer to join. Hoyer had nine pin boards of images on Pinterest in 2012, ranging from Hoyer History, covering his years in office, to In Maryland's Fifth District, which Hoyer represents. Hoyer appears to be using Instagram in the style that is de rigueur for the site, sharing more casual behind-the-scenes photos, accompanied by background trivia.

In keeping with his voter rights positions, Hoyer created a video in October 2012, urging young people to register to vote and be heard in the November 2012 election. The video was part of an ongoing educational campaign from nonprofit OurTime.org, designed to maximize voter turnout in the face of recent voter identification laws. Hoyer stated in the video that he feels many of these laws were enacted specifically to discourage voter turnout from certain groups. He urged

young people to vote, saying that they had the "biggest stake" in the election. The video remains on Hoyer's YouTube channel and in other places on the Web. Hoyer's channel had more than 400 subscribers in 2012.

In July of 2012, Hoyer announced the third annual Member Online All-Star Competition for Democrats in the House. Similar to the Republican New Media Challenge, the three-week competition is a friendly challenge designed to encourage online interactions with constituents. The winner each year gains the most new Facebook "likes," Twitter followers, and YouTube subscribers during the three-week contest period. All House Democratic caucus members are automatically entered in the competition, and anyone except those in leadership positions can win.

Hoyer pointed out that, with more than 50 percent of American adults active on Facebook and more than 15 percent on Twitter, social media is crucial for lawmakers. Hoyer asked his constituents to follow him on his social media networks, if they did not already, and to share his profiles with their friends. He also announced a contest in which visitors to his Facebook site could enter their "high quality Maryland photos" for a chance to have theirs grace his page as the cover photo—making use of the format change to timeline to stay current with followers. Hoyer posted entries on his page and eventually chose a winner. In 2012, Hoyer's Facebook page had more than 6,000 "likes."

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

See Also: Facebook; Fund-Raising; Instagram; Pelosi, Nancy; Pinterest; Twitter.

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Huffington Post

The *Huffington Post* is a news Web site covering politics, business, entertainment, technology, style, media, and global news. It also has local versions in many major American cities, as well as international editions for Canada, France, and the United Kingdom, with Germany and Spain in development.

The site was founded in May 2005 by author, journalist, political analyst, and entrepreneur Arianna Huffington, former America Online (AOL) executive Kenneth Lerer, and Jonah Perretti, a graduate of the Media Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It was initially intended to be a liberal voice on the Web in specific opposition to Matt Drudge's *Drudge Report*, which is very conservative in nature.

The *Huffington Post* began its existence as a blog that aggregated content from other publishers across a wide variety of topics. It now employs a news staff to create original content in addition to featuring stories from external sources. It has several content-sharing partnerships that allow it to publish articles and posts from print and online

Arianna Huffington, cofounder of the Pulitzer Prize–winning Huffington Post*, at the 2010 Webby Awards in New York City. The* Huffington Post*, which makes use of more than 1,000 unpaid bloggers, sold to AOL for $315 million in February 2011.*

ventures such as TMZ.com, *People*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Variety*. In addition to its news staff, it also boasts more than 1,000 unpaid bloggers who contribute to the site.

One of its competitive advantages is that, in addition to its multitude of unpaid bloggers, it also lists a number of celebrities across a variety of industries as contributors. Posts from prominent figures from television, medicine, film, education, politics, sports, and other A-list bloggers ensure steady traffic to the site, which generates traffic to the advertisers that pay to be seen alongside them.

The site is the first commercially run digital media initiative to win a Pulitzer Prize, which was awarded in 2011 to military correspondent David Wood, whose series "Beyond the Battlefield" chronicled the lives of wounded warriors, veterans who returned from Afghanistan and Iraq with severe injuries. The Pulitzer Prize is considered to be journalism's highest award.

It has recently enjoyed the position of the top political Web site in the United States by eBizMBA-Rank, which compiles its rankings based on traffic data provided by Quantcast and Compete. Statistics from November 2013 indicated that it enjoyed more than 19 million page views a day and had more than 89 million unique visitors that month.

Like the majority of news sites, there is no fee for use. The business model relies on advertising for its revenue stream. The site is known for its innovative strategies at driving readership. Through careful analytics, the site is able to constantly monitor which stories on its sites are performing well, and which are not, and modify positioning and placement on the home page accordingly.

The site is also particularly savvy in its use of social media. It was one of the first sites that allowed users to "like" and follow not only specific reporters and contributors, but also larger topics so that stories about that subject or from that author would automatically be pushed into individuals' news feeds on their specified social media.

With the proliferation of blog sites like the *Huffington Post*, mainstream media is becoming more influenced by their content. Though traditional journalists still view sites like this with skepticism, the readership does not, and as a result, increasingly more mainstream publications use blog-heavy sites like the *Huffington Post* as source material for their work.

OffTheBus

OffTheBus is a spin-off of the *Huffington Post* with a unique twist. It allows citizen journalists to populate the site as watchdogs on candidates in the running for political office across the United States. Its title refers to the controversial novel *The Boys on the Bus* by Timothy Crouse, who posited that reporters who were assigned to cover political campaigns had difficulty remaining objective because of spending inordinate amounts of time so close to the candidates.

Merger With AOL

In February 2011, AOL, a global Web site company, announced its intention to purchase *Huffington Post* for $315 million. As a result of this

purchase, the Huffington Post Media Group was created. The media group is the umbrella organization for existing AOL properties such as Moviefone, *Black Voices,* MapQuest, and *PopEater*, in addition to the *Huffington Post*.

Arianna Huffington

Arianna Huffington is the cofounder, president, and editor-in-chief of the *Huffington Post*. Born in Greece, Huffington was educated in the UK and spent her young adulthood there, where she became an author for the first time with her book *The Female Woman,* which decried women's liberation. She has 11 books to her credit.

She came to the United States in the 1980s and became more prominent when her husband Michael unsuccessfully ran for the Senate in California in 1994. She developed a reputation as a conservative and partnered with former *Saturday Night Live* player and noted liberal Al Franken as a counterpart in "Strange Bedfellows" for Comedy Central's 1996 coverage of the U.S. presidential election.

She experienced further notoriety during the Clinton administration through her creation of Resignation.com, a Web site that focused on the call for the president to step down during Clinton's impeachment crisis. Over the years, her political leanings have shifted from conservative to more of a liberal perspective. She has dabbled in acting, appearing on a number of television programs, and even a few movies. She was named among the "Most Influential Women in the Media" by *Forbes* magazine in 2009.

John Dolan
Pennsylvania State University

See Also: Alpha Blogger; Blogs; Citizen Journalism; *Drudge Report*; Franken, Al; News Media.

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Human Rights

Human rights and politics have been inextricably intertwined throughout history, tracing back to the religious, philosophical, and historical origins of the modern concept of human rights. Human rights are both justifiable moral claims and contested political realities. Examples of modern social and political movements advocating human rights include abolitionist movements; women's suffrage; civil rights; antiwar movements; worker and labor rights; immigration rights; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights, and more. Many organizations and individuals have worked to create social change in the wake of repressive government rule or social, cultural, and political inequality.

The advancement of technology and the Internet have facilitated the dissemination of human rights activism globally. The advent of social media, or Web- and mobile-based applications that facilitate the exchange of information and interactive dialogue, have allowed for information to be published and accessed by anyone, and circulated to a broader audience. Examining the concept of human rights and its link to politics through historical movements and social networks provides a basis for the understanding of modern-day human rights movements and the implications of social media for human rights activism today, as well as the threats that social media can pose to the exercise of human rights.

Origins

Human rights are the rights one has by virtue of being a human being. Such rights are thought to be inalienable, unable to be taken or given away, and universal, equally claimed for all. Historical concepts linked to human rights, such as progressive punishment and justice, can be traced back to the Code of Hammurabi in ancient Babylon; Hindu and Buddhist essential freedoms and virtues; Confucianism's emphasis on education, self-actualization, and commitment to a social unit or community; and natural law extending beyond rights of citizenship and the individual's capacity to reason in ancient Greece and Rome.

Based on the views of Plato and Aristotle, Cicero advanced the idea of stoicism and reason possessed by all. Religion also played a large part in advancing ideas of moral equality for all human beings in the teachings of Christianity, solidarity and justice in Islam, and laws protecting rights and outlining duties in Judaism. Medieval Christian philosophers such as St. Thomas Aquinas promoted the idea of natural law as connected to the law of God, with reason bestowed to all human beings to allow individuals to act in accordance with universal values.

Philosophers and political theorists such as Hugo Grotius, John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau contributed to the idea that natural law can be conceptualized independently from God. Historical developments such as the Reformation and the English, French, and American revolutions contributed to the secularization of the universal ethics of rights. The Enlightenment ushered in a new discourse of rights relating to individual reason and freedom of choice, with the emerging nation–state to advance such ideals of human rights.

Human Rights and Politics

Human rights are exercised when their enjoyment is questioned, threatened, or denied. Human rights are linked to natural and legal rights, both nationally and internationally. Human rights seek to fuse moral vision and political practice by establishing limits and requirements of social and state action.

The Magna Carta of 1215 was the first instance in England of a group of subjects limiting the powers of a king by law. In 1648, the Peace of Westphalia established a new system of political order in Europe, emphasizing sovereignty of states and self-determination. The concept of a social contract by which individuals gained rights in society by subjecting oneself to civil governance emerged through the views of Thomas Hobbes in the 17th century, and was further expanded upon by John Locke in his belief that the purpose of law was to preserve freedoms and rights of individuals. Early political expressions of this concept of human rights can be found in the American Declaration of Independence, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and the English Bill of Rights. Emerging from the English, French, and American revolutions, these documents codified ideas of human rights in political discourse, tying the language of rights to political revolution and transition.

The establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross, as well as the adoption of the Geneva and Hague conventions, subsequently laid the foundations of international humanitarian law. After World War I, the League of Nations was established during negotiations over the Treaty of Versailles in order to promote collective security, peace, global welfare, and to settle disputes through diplomacy and negotiation. After World War II, the Allied powers agreed to replace the League of Nations with the United Nations (UN), providing a basis for the protection of human rights in the UN Charter.

Human rights were further codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, passed by the UN General Assembly in 1948, was the first international legal effort to limit the behavior of states through obligations and duties to their citizens, outlining basic rights to which all human beings are entitled. The social and political movements leading up to and following World War II laid the groundwork for modern human rights discourse and activism.

Historical Activism and Social Networks

Political movements are organized around a set of issues or shared concerns of a social group. Movements can be local, regional, national, or

global in scope. Some aim to influence government policy, while others have aimed to establish or broaden the rights of subordinate or subaltern groups. Some have represented class interests, while others have expressed national aspirations. Political movements can also involve struggles to decentralize or centralize state control.

Human rights campaigns have been launched throughout history in efforts to advance various social and political movements, including national liberation movements, the abolition of slavery through the Underground Railroad network, the civil rights movement, the women's suffrage movement, and LGBT rights movement, among many others. Activists formed political parties, community organizations, and social groups to advocate their causes through word of mouth, public speeches, protests, and printed materials. Efforts of movements advocating human rights resulted in various amendments to the U.S. Constitution, including the Thirteenth Amendment banning slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment on citizenship and civil rights, the Fifteenth Amendment guaranteeing African Americans the right to vote, and the Nineteenth Amendment granting women the right to vote.

During World War II, underground social networks and resistance groups such as the Polish Home Army, organized against the Nazi occupation. Organizations and networks in France provided intelligence to the Allies and helped escaping Allied servicemen. Many worked to hide families or provide temporary refuge from persecution. Similarly, local populations in Denmark organized to help people from Jewish communities escape to Sweden.

Mohandas Gandhi applied the practice of nonviolent civil disobedience to grassroots organizing of human rights movements. Gandhi protested racist policies in South Africa of British colonial powers against the Indian minority population, using economic boycotts to effect political change. Nelson Mandela later evolved as a leader in the fight against racism and apartheid in South Africa, becoming the first president of a democratic South Africa after he was imprisoned for 27 years for his advocacy efforts. Similarly, in the United States, the modern civil rights movement stemmed from the doctrine of separate but equal used to segregate blacks and whites. In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the doctrine unconstitutional with respect to separate educational facilities for black and white students in its landmark judgment for the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., became known as leaders of the civil rights movement in the United States through their protests, boycotts, and practice of civil disobedience. Sit-ins, marches, demonstrations, and boycotts continued throughout the United States, and were propelled by activists across the country advocating for equal rights.

Other movements that utilized human rights networks to advance their causes include the women's rights, LGBT rights, and immigrant rights movements. The women's rights movement grew out of advocacy for the right to vote, followed by the Equal Rights Amendment of 1923. The 1964 Civil Rights Act served as a vehicle for addressing gender inequality and the formation of the National Organization for Women (NOW). This grew into a global campaign for women's rights, including reproductive health. Similarly, LGBT groups have advocated for equal rights under the law. Campaigns for same-sex marriage, reports on human rights violations against LGBT communities, and advocacy efforts for basic rights to housing, contracts, employment, and child custody have become central to many LGBT activist groups. Social movements and networks have also helped push for immigrant rights, and have aided in promoting advocacy for documentation, employment, housing, health care, and legal services for immigrant populations.

Technology and the Internet

Many human rights organizations have begun to build a presence on the Internet to promote their activities and campaigns and to increase advocacy by mobilizing networks of local volunteers. Local chapters of international organizations use their Web sites to provide information and organize advocacy efforts. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty uses the radio and Internet to broadcast news to countries where free press is not endorsed by the government. Using social media tools such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook, within minutes of an event, anyone with access to the Internet can view messages and videos. Organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights

Watch have utilized these methods, in addition to their Web sites, to promote fact finding, impartial reporting of human rights abuses, and targeted advocacy efforts. Technology, such as camera phones and mobile Web browsing, in addition to social media platforms on the Internet, have made it easy to reach a large international audience in a matter of minutes to promote human rights activism and advocacy.

Promoting Human Rights Via Social Media

Social media can refer to a range of Internet-based applications that allow for the exchange of user-generated content through interactive participation by users. Types of social media can include collaborative projects, virtual worlds, blogs, content communities, and social networking. Wikipedia provides the most prevalent example of collaborative projects, or people working together to assemble content. Online collaboration projects can allow people to share documents, such as political strategies, through platforms such as Google Docs used in the Egyptian revolution in 2011. Blogs allow for the creation of online content on topic of the author's choice, enabling commenting by individuals. Video blogs, or "vlogs," allow for streaming video content to be accessed by the Internet community. This allows for an accessible alternative to mainstream media. Content community Web sites such as Flickr, YouTube, and Instagram allow for sharing of content such as photos and videos, which can be invaluable in exposing human rights abuses to the international community.

Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter enable users to share information by creating profile pages with virtual friends. Attracting only a fraction of the users on Facebook, Twitter is becoming an influential source of real-time news. Allowing members to post brief messages, or tweets, Twitter has created a mobile information network that allows communications to be posted and made available to the public instantaneously. Such social media sites provide free and widely accessible information across socioeconomic groups. Mobile phones with Internet, video, and photographic capabilities have also become crucial to the documentation of human rights abuses. Coupled with social media outlets, mobile phones can be used to record and disseminate information advocating a human rights initiative within minutes.

Social media is an important new tool for promoting social and political change. Social media allows eyewitness accounts to be made widely available and expands access to information. Reporting is no longer confined to traditional sources of journalism. Through social media, information has spread faster and farther, available now to local, regional, and global audiences. In the context of human rights movements, this element of spreading messages and bringing attention to a cause is crucial. Such attention to local activists also means that a human rights defender's disappearance is more likely to be noticed and reported. Furthermore, social media allows access to evidence of human rights abuses beyond the limitations of mainstream media sources and boundaries of nongovernmental organizations. The availability of mobile media, including camera phones, allows such information to be documented and disseminated almost instantaneously. Access to this type of information through social media also facilitates conversation and debate through which political opinions are formed.

Mobile communications have continued to be utilized to promote political activism and social protest throughout the world. Social media and networking sites played a major role in student human rights protests in Moldova in 2009 and in Iran the same year, following presidential elections. The term *Twitter Revolution* has been used to describe the protests in Moldova and Iran, as well as the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings in 2011.

The effect of protests and movements advocating for human rights fueled by social media have had a profound impact on the political sphere. Examples of recent efforts to galvanize the masses to political activism through social media include the Save Darfur campaign, WikiLeaks, the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, and "Kony 2012."

Save Darfur

The Save Darfur Coalition is a U.S.-based advocacy group that was organized in 2004 in response to the atrocities in the Darfur region of Sudan. The coalition is comprised of more than 180 organizations that have campaigned for a response to human rights violations that have occurred in the

Marchers filling the streets and impeding traffic during a street protest in Tehran, Iran, four days after the contested presidential election results of June 12, 2009. The protests, which continued into early 2010, became known as the Iranian Green Movement, which sought to improve human rights and encourage political change. Activists around the world marched in support of the Iranian protesters.

western region of Sudan. According to its Web site, Save Darfur inspires action, raises awareness, speaks the truth on behalf of the people of Darfur, and works with world leaders to demand an end to the genocide. By compelling everyday citizens to join the movement, the Save Darfur Coalition has worked to build a political movement, organizing more than 350 rallies in 41 countries. The coalition houses a network of more than 1 million online activists.

The Save Darfur movement has received criticism for presenting a one-sided picture of an ongoing civil war as a campaign of genocide by the Sudanese government-supported Janjaweed militia against defenseless civilians, without contextualizing the violence or presenting details on the complexity of the conflict and ongoing civil war. The movement has been accused of distorting the conflict by presenting a dichotomy between Arabs versus blacks, when the population in Darfur is predominantly African Muslim. The movement has also been criticized for the use of its funds and allocation of financial resources used for lobbying the U.S. government to intervene, rather than to help the people in Darfur, advocating for military aggression, rather than for a political settlement.

Additionally, the composition of the Save Darfur movement has been characterized as well-connected and well-funded U.S. foreign policy elite and celebrity supporters. Others have accused the movement of being a U.S. government-supported propaganda campaign to target the Sudanese government with anti-Arab prejudice. Save Darfur's advocacy efforts, while raising awareness through social media such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, have also caused problems in Darfur, with coalition members focused primarily on lobbying

as opposed to providing humanitarian aid, even after violence in the region declined.

WikiLeaks

WikiLeaks emerged in 2006 as a Web site publishing secret information, news leaks, and classified media from a database of more than 1.2 million documents from anonymous sources from within governments, corporations, and organizations. Among its notable developments, Wiki Leaks has published video footage of the Baghdad airstrike in 2007, in which Iraqi journalists were killed by an Apache helicopter ("Collateral Murder" video), the Afghan War Diary of documents not previously available to the public, the Iraq War Logs mapping deaths in insurgent attacks not previously reported or published, and secret files relating to prisoners in Guantanamo Bay. In 2010 and 2011, in collaboration with news media in the United States and Europe, WikiLeaks released large amounts of classified information allegedly leaked by a soldier in the U.S. Army, including military documents from Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as thousands of State Department cables. Detractors claim that WikiLeaks represents a serious threat to national security and both collective and individual privacy. WikiLeaks supporters maintain that, intended as a Web site to bring news and information to the public through original source material, the WikiLeaks model has posed a significant challenge to the privacy and confidentiality of government and corporate information.

Arab Spring

The Arab Spring is a wave of revolutionary demonstrations and protests in the Arab world that began in December 2010 due to mass dissatisfaction with corruption and oppression by governments. The first uprisings occurred in Tunisia in the town of Sidi Bou Zid in December 2010. Street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire in protest of harassment and humiliation by municipal officials, which resulted in massive protests and uprisings against state repression and corruption, and eventually, the ousting of President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali.

Videos of protests were uploaded to Facebook, one of the only video-sharing sites in Tunisia that was not censored. Because print and broadcast media were controlled within Tunisia, social media provided an outlet for citizen journalism to spread the word of the uprisings. Facebook groups were created to promote advocacy for social change, and Twitter users began to spread messages of solidarity with protesters. Youth movements in Egypt took notice of the events in Tunisia, and began calling people to attend rallies and protests in Tahrir Square in January 2011. This momentum resulted in 17 days of massive demonstrations that ultimately forced the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak on February 11, 2011.

Other countries that subsequently experienced political change and civil uprisings include Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Sudan, and others. In September 2012, social protests in the Palestinian Authority demanded and resulted in the resignation of Prime Minister Fayyad. Techniques of civil resistance have been implemented in these ongoing campaigns of demonstrations, protests, marches, and rallies by utilizing social media to organize and advocate for social change. Many uprisings have met violent resistance from progovernment forces and counterdemonstrators. Mainstream media such as Al Jazeera integrated traditional services of news coverage with social media to use citizen journalists on the ground to inform syndicated stories. This was important in spreading news of protests and uprisings in Tunisia regionally and globally.

Occupy Wall Street

In the United States, similar protest movements began in September 2011, in response to social and economic inequality, corruption, and the perceived influence of corporations on the government. The movement was called Occupy Wall Street, and began on September 17, 2011, in Zuccotti Park, located in New York City's Wall Street financial district. The slogan "We Are the 99 Percent" refers to the growing income inequality and wealth distribution between the wealthiest 1 percent and the rest of the population.

Protesters were forced to vacate Zuccotti Park on November 15, 2011, turning their focus to protesting at banks, corporations, and university campuses. Like the Arab Spring protests, Occupy Wall Street relied on social media and the Internet in order to spread its message and galvanize people to fight for their social and economic rights.

Kony 2012

Kony 2012 is a short Internet video released on March 5, 2012, that was created by the organization Invisible Children. The film was made in order to promote the organization's Stop Kony movement to raise awareness and advocacy to bring Ugandan war criminal and Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leader Joseph Kony to justice.

The organization has promoted its campaign through posters, T-shirts, buttons, stickers, and bracelets. Invisible Children has focused on obtaining support for its campaign from high-profile individuals and celebrities, including George Clooney, Angelina Jolie, Oprah Winfrey, Taylor Swift, Ryan Seacrest, Rihanna, Nicki Minaj, Kim Kardashian, Bill Gates, former President George W. Bush, Condoleezza Rice, and John Kerry, among others. By September 2012, the film had more than 92 million views on YouTube and 16 million views on Vimeo. On April 5, 2012, Invisible Children released a follow-up video titled *Kony 2012: Part II—Beyond Famous*.

The film has been criticized for its manipulation and oversimplification of facts regarding LRA violence for strategic purposes by its black-and-white portrayal of Kony. Critics refer to this type of activism as "slacktivism." Portraying Kony as a global celebrity embodying evil, as opposed to an actor in a complex regional conflict, has contributed to misinformation and a misleading impression regarding the location and activities of Kony's LRA forces. This becomes problematic not only in its impact on global activism, but also in its impact on regional and international politics because the video calls for military intervention.

Fact-Finding and Documentation

The collection, creation, and dissemination of documentation and reports of violence are central to human rights advocacy. Although this technique has been used for decades, the recent surge in communication technologies and social media has facilitated the dissemination of digital materials by advocacy groups. Electronic evidence can be created or stored digitally on computers, cell phones, and cameras, and may involve first-person recordings of events or testimony, news articles, videos, or forensic evidence. According to the Center for Research Libraries, this may include digital images, audio, or video; networked communications such as e-mail or text messages; information from Web pages, blogs, Twitter posts or other social media; text files, word processing documents, or spreadsheets; database records; records of transactions; court records and testimonies; and scanned images, digitized audio or video, and so on. Efforts by organizations such as WITNESS show ways in which human rights activists can use digital technology for evidence collection and crisis response, as well as human rights advocacy campaigns. HURIDOC's OpenEvsys project provides human rights organizations with software to document and manage data on human rights violations. Such efforts for documentation can contribute to creating historical records; pursuing accountability for human rights violations; advocating for transitional justice, such as truth commissions, prosecutions, reparations, and so on; and affecting policy change at local, national, and international levels.

Criticisms of Social Media

Skeptics have argued that true social change can only occur through meaningful, on-the-ground activism characterized by strong group identity and cohesion. Critics such as Malcolm Gladwell argue that social media promotes slacktivism, or feel-good measures in support of a cause with little to no practical effect, aside from personal satisfaction. Social media present a low-cost, minimal effort option that many have begun to substitute for substantive action. Such efforts include signing online petitions, joining Facebook groups, liking a cause on Facebook, posting or retweeting copied statuses or messages, sharing YouTube videos, or updating one's profile to reflect support of causes. Also known as clicktivism, the phenomenon of clicking a button to indicate support is argued to reduce social action to what is essentially no more than a list of names, as opposed to engaged activists. Gladwell argues that successful activism requires hierarchies and allocation of tasks with centralized leadership, and that social media makes it easier for activists to express their views, but harder for such expression to have any real impact.

Propaganda and Hate Speech

In addition to contributing to positive social change through human rights documentation and advocacy, social and traditional media can also be used to communicate inaccurate information,

leading to negative change. Media have been used to escalate violent conflict through hate speech, dating back to cases of Nazi propaganda campaigns through print and radio media.

In 1994, popular radio stations in Rwanda were used to broadcast messages inciting people to exterminate the Tutsi population. The most popular station, Radio Television des Milles Collines (RTLM), preached messages of Hutu supremacy to its listeners. Within minutes of the shooting down of Rwandan President Habyarimana's plane, RTLM accused Belgian peacekeeping troops in Rwanda of shooting down the plane, resulting in the brutal deaths of Belgian soldiers and the withdrawal of UN forces. RTLM then gave the signal to begin the massacre of Tutsis and moderate Hutus. In addition to its role in promoting activism and social change, social media were also used in the Arab Spring in 2011 to incite violence. The debate over media censorship to curb ethnic tensions and hate media has been ongoing in Bosnia as well. Organizations such as al-Qaeda also utilize social media and the Internet to spread their ideologies.

Censorship and Freedom of Expression

The role of social media sites in promoting human rights advocacy, as well as propaganda, has resulted in censorship by several governments. After the presidential election riots in 2009 in Iran, the government blocked many Web sites and increased surveillance of Internet users. Similar issues exist in China. Internet companies that operate in China are bound by the government's strict censorship policies. The organization Reporters Without Borders highlights that, according to its Press Freedom Index for 2011 and 2012, repressive media censorship and regulations are most prevalent in Eritrea, North Korea, and Turkmenistan, followed by Syria, Iran, and China.

The Internet has served as a key factor in promoting civic participation in political processes. The Egyptian revolution, beginning online through social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, faced government Internet blackouts aimed at silencing the masses of online activists. People used short messaging service (SMS) text messages through mobile phone networks and dial-up Internet connections to post updates to Twitter, which were then picked up by international media such as the *New York Times,* the *Guardian,* Al Jazeera, and CNN. Governments in Tunisia, Bahrain, Libya, Syria, and Yemen also began to shut down social media platforms that were used for mobilization for protests during the Arab Spring uprisings.

It is difficult, however, for states to shut down popular Web sites where most people engage in trivial activities unrelated to social activism. According to the cute cat theory of digital activism, shutting down popular social media sites can aggravate those who were previously apathetic, causing people to become politicized. Although social media facilitates interaction among users, content is mediated by private, intermediary companies. Content can therefore be censored both by local governments and social media companies.

Although one might be able to challenge state censorship in a court of law, there are few remedies if a private social media company chooses to take down someone's page. The concept of net neutrality suggests that the Internet should be free of censorship by governments or service providers. Such ideas harken back to the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to include the right to free speech, free association, and the right to privacy.

The Right to Privacy

The right to privacy has become a concern with respect to various social media sites. Such sites collect personal user information that can be utilized in personalized Internet searches. Facebook has been criticized for altering its interface and platform in ways that undermine user privacy. Although users can change their privacy settings, oftentimes they do not realize that such settings have been affected because of the new platform, and can consequently be sharing more information than intended. Such social media sites essentially constitute searchable databases of volunteered personal information. There is also the danger of access to such private information by governments or law enforcement agencies. In 2011, for example, the United States subpoenaed Twitter for information on users associated with WikiLeaks. This battle for the right to privacy is one indication of ways in which social media can infringe upon human rights while promoting advocacy for rights in other ways.

Conclusion

The relationship between human rights, politics, and social media has served as the nexus for analysis of many modern social movements. Dating back to philosophical and historical origins in religious and secular texts, human rights can be applied to both political realities on the ground and moral claims to such rights. Modern human rights movements have advocated for social change through technology and social media. These tools have made it easier for information to be spread worldwide at the click of a button, allowing for messages of advocacy to reach a wide audience with ease. It is important, however, to also acknowledge the potential for the spread of propaganda through such instruments. In addition to tracking and profiling dissidents, the Internet can be used to promote the views of those dissidents. Therefore, one must also take caution when promoting social media as an instrument of progressive political change. As easy as it is for positive messages to be circulated to a global audience, it is equally possible for false or negative campaigns to be spread through the Web.

The fact that most popular social media tools are run by large, for-profit corporations also presents a threat to freedom of speech and censorship based on the agendas of such companies and their relationships to potentially repressive government bodies. Social media today has created unprecedented access to information, voices, and connections globally, allowing for the dissemination of human rights and activism, which has shaped the future of modern human rights campaigning and advocacy throughout the world.

Carla De Ycaza
New York University

See Also: Africa, north; Africa, sub-Saharan; Activists and Activism, Digital; Actors and Social Media in Politics; Arab Spring; Civil Rights; Economic and Social Justice; Internet Gathering; Nongovernmental Organizations; Occupy Movement; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring.

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I

I Am Gonna Be Your Friend Campaign

"I Am Gonna Be Your Friend" is a line taken from the 1973 song "High Tide or Low Tide" by Bob Marley and the Wailers to name a Save the Children–affiliated campaign to fight starvation in east Africa. The campaign's name evokes the convention of friending people on social media. The campaign urges celebrities' social media followers (friends) to disseminate director Kevin McDonald's film about child starvation in east Africa set to Marley's song. Donations are then made directly to the campaign (www.imgonnabeyourfriend.org) and by purchasing the charity single version of "High Tide or Low Tide."

Kevin McDonald is a filmmaker and documentarian, best known for his Oscar-recognized documentary *One Day in September* (1999) and feature film *The Last King of Scotland* (2006). In 2011, while working on the documentary, *Marley* (2012), about reggae artist Bob Marley, McDonald uncovered the connection that Marley felt for Africa and African people. As a result, McDonald created a short video about the devastating drought and famine affecting east Africa set to Bob Marley's song "High Tide or Low Tide." The three-minute video focuses on children suffering from severe malnourishment and dehydration.

In 2011, the drought and famine were widely reported to be the worst to strike east Africa in decades. Reuters estimates the total number of people affected at 12 million in the Horn of Africa, which includes Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya. The problem was important enough for the United Nations Food Agency to call for high-level talks to tackle the crisis and discuss rebuilding agriculture in the area. In 2011, Save the Children projected that 1 million Somali children would die without aid.

McDonald's video ends with a black-and-white photograph of Marley, over which an appeal to help east Africa's children and a Web link for the I'm Gonna Be Your Friend campaign donation page are superimposed. The campaign is affiliated with the global charity Save the Children, which delivers food, water, and medicine to children in need. The campaign has celebrities use their social media networks (for example, Facebook or Twitter) to disseminate information about the campaign and urge their followers to purchase Marley's rereleased-for-charity single or to directly donate to the campaign through their donation page or that of Save the Children.

Celebrities, artists, athletes, entertainers, and singers used their social media networks to disseminate the video, news of the plight of east Africa, and fundraising appeals to their fans. Participating individuals included Eminem, Lady

Gaga, Jay Z, David Beckham, Bono, Beyoncé, Muhammad Ali, Jennifer Lopez, Elton John, Lewis Hamilton, Bruno Mars, Robert Plant, Kanye West, Madonna, Christiano Ronaldo, Justin Bieber, Brian May, and Sting. It is estimated that a total of 150 stars communicated the campaign to an estimated 700,000 million online followers. The campaign announced a goal of reaching a billion people globally with the message. Google featured the campaign and links to its video on its homepage on August 18, 2011. At the time, Save the Children applauded the move, noting that over a billion Google searches are made each day.

Several celebrities visited affected areas to draw attention to the campaign. Somali-born model, actress, and entrepreneur Iman visited Somalia's capital of Mogadishu in 2011 under the auspices of Save the Children, and she described the devastation and human suffering that she witnessed. In the same year, Somali-Canadian singer K'Naan, whose hit "Waving Flag" was the 2010 World Cup anthem, used his international celebrity to bring attention to the food crisis when he visited Somalia. Also, U.S. rapper, actor, and entrepreneur 50 Cent visited Doolow district in the Gedo region of Somalia in 2012, where he met with men, women, and children living in displaced persons' camps for civilian victims of civil strife. The experience led the artist to tweet that he wanted to feed a billion people in Africa five years from the time of his visit.

Rita Marley, the widow of Bob Marley, lent her name to the campaign on behalf of her husband, who died in 1981 from cancer. Bob Marley's daughter, fashion designer Cedella Marley, has also used her celebrity to promote her family's 1 Love Charity program that, in addition to the I Am Gonna Be Your Friend campaign, has included third-world water relief, and earthquake relief in Japan. As a result of the campaign, Bob Marley's Facebook following grew from 18 million to more than 30 million people.

Gordon Alley-Young
City University of New York

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Africa, sub-Saharan; Disaster Relief; Facebook; Musicians and Social Media in Politics.

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I Am Second Movement

The I Am Second online ministry movement was conceived from the Bible verse John 12:32: "Lift up Christ so that He might draw the people of His city to Jesus." Essentially Web-based, I Am Second aspires to provoke change by providing narratives about finding a sense of purpose in Jesus, putting the individual second. Norm Miller, chair of Dallas-based Interstate Batteries, believed that there was a need for an organization that would put these words into action. He took the idea to e3 Partners, an evangelical 501(c)(3) organization that he had partnered with in prior ministry endeavors. On December 2, 2008, they launched a billboard campaign in the Dallas area featuring the photo of an athlete, entertainer, leader, or "regular" person with the phrase "I Am Second" and the group's Web site on a stark, black background. The campaign now extends through print advertisements, television, films, events, speakers, and social networking sites, as well as small support group meetings.

E3 Partners manages Web content production and distribution. In 2009, the I Am Second Web site was selected as a finalist in the Activist and People's Choice categories of the South by Southwest Web Awards. The Web content centers on video testimonials from Seconds recounting their struggles, showing how these were overcome when the Second put him- or herself second to Jesus. Subjects range from death, divorce, and drug and alcohol abuse to satisfaction and finding

a purpose in life. The belief is that testimonies of those changed by God are strong arguments for faith. By December 2012, the 83 videos, which run from five to eight minutes, were plainly produced, featuring a person dressed in a black t-shirt, sitting in a white chair lit by an overhead fixture. One of the original and most famous testimonials is from former Korn band member Brian Welch, who relates how his crystal meth habit was overcome by establishing a relationship with Christ. In another, author Anne Rice (*The Vampire Chronicles*) describes herself as a "Christ-haunted atheist" whose early writings were reflections of her struggle with faith.

Other celebrity Seconds include American Idol Season 10 winner Scotty McCreery, who wore the black I Am Second wristband in his appearances; Olympian and cancer survivor Scott Hamilton; Bethany Hamilton, champion surfer; fashion blogger Lauren Scruggs, who nearly lost her life in 2011 when she walked into a spinning plane propeller; actor Steven Baldwin; former football coaches Tony Dungy and Joe Gibbs; National Football League quarterbacks Sam Bradford and Colt McCoy; and National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) champion Trevor Bayne. Its Web site describes the narratives as ones "that give hope to the lonely and the hurting, help from destructive lifestyles, and inspiration to the unfulfilled."

The Web site is not limited to Seconds video testimonials as it also offers a large number of resources to spread its ideas. Devoid of denominational influence, the resources offered may be used in church services, workplaces, or community groups. I Am Second provides extensive information, training, and free resources, as well as opportunities to engage in I Am Second lead labs. Based on a discuss-and-discover model, these lead labs offer leadership training that fuses scripture with individual commitment and discipleship. Participants experience developing discussion groups that are Bible-centered, yet individually focused. Leaders discover how to act as disciples, sharing with others what they've experienced and helping members toward individual commitments. These leaders return to their communities to create I Am Second support groups, which are unlike traditional Bible studies, by encouraging people to contribute through questions and scriptural discussion. I Am Second groups may be found in cities worldwide. In 2012, the Web site debuted the I Am Second church campaign kit, which includes a copy of the book *I Am Second*, the I Am Second conversation guide, and the I Am Second DVD-based study, film clips, sermons, and outreach tools.

The Web site has further expanded from its original video narrative content. It also provides the opportunity to chat, e-mail, or call a hotline 24/7. I Am Second expeditions promote missions around the world, and have recently put special emphasis on school and university groups. I Am Second is in more than 212 countries and boasts more than 7 million hits on its Web site. In October 2011, it launched a speaker's bureau that features personalities (people featured on the Web site), spokespeople (those involved with ministry philosophy, biblical issues, and outreach strategy), and ambassadors (speakers formally affiliated with I Am Second).

In January 2012, Thomas Nelson published *I Am Second: Real Stories. Changing Lives*, by Doug Bender and Dave Sterrett. The book contains extended testimony of 22 people, all featured on the Web site. I Am Second began a yearlong association with NASCAR with an outreach event in February 2012 at Daytona Beach, where it premiered a new I Am Second film featuring six NASCAR drivers. I Am Second may be found on Twitter and Facebook, and is mentioned at concerts and other events throughout the country.

Beth M. Waggenspack
Virginia Tech

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Virtual; Facebook; Nonprofit Organizations; Youth Engagement; YouTube.

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Identity Politics

In social life, one is held accountable for being, or assuming to be, a particular kind of person—of a particular race and ethnicity, sex, gender, ability, sexuality, religion, age, and nationality. Many use these categories to understand oneself and others (for example, if a person identifies as Mormon, others may have some ideas about the person's religious practices).

Identities can be avowed (self-claimed), or ascribed to a person by others; sometimes, one may not know the categories for which others may hold one accountable. Further, the identities that a person claims, or are assumed to be, can influence what the person can do, what the person can and should say, and how others may evaluate the person. In other words, identity is a social and cultural construction shaped by way of public policies that not only dictate what the experience of a particular kind of person is, but also restrict how this kind of person interacts with others.

For example, identities have influenced who people can love and marry (for example, relational and legal prohibitions against interracial, interreligious, and same-sex marriages), as well as if and where a person can work, eat, or attend school (for example, relegating women to the home or toward careers in nursing or teaching, rather than math or engineering). When these kinds of restrictions and evaluations happen, made possible by the existence and understanding of particular identities, this is called identity politics. Identity politics is the attempt to discern what it means to be a particular kind of person at a particular time and place. Identity politics is an investigation into the ways in which the categories—the identities—that people claim, or are assumed to be, influence what they are able to say and do, as well as how others might evaluate them. Most often, identity politics focuses on how some kinds of people in some contexts are treated in humane and privileged ways, whereas other kinds of people are silenced, disregarded, or abused in the same (or similar) context.

Searching for Equality

A person interested in identity politics may investigate obvious discussions of identities, such as when politicians try to court the vote of particular populations (for example, Hispanics), or when male legislators try to determine the reproductive rights of women. A person interested in identity politics may also investigate more everyday situations in which identities matter, such as when a disabled man, thought of as intellectually inept because he happens to be physically disabled, is talked to with a childlike voice or is addressed indirectly through other members of his party, or when a Muslim girl is not allowed to wear her religious garb (for example, a hijab) at school because such clothing may make other people uncomfortable. A person interested in identity politics may also investigate the sense of community that identities cultivate, especially the traditions, cultural practices, and ways of speaking that comprise a particular group, as well as the rules about who can (insiders) and who cannot (outsiders) say disparaging words. A person interested in identity politics may investigate the media representations of particular kinds of people, as well as who is, or is not, able to speak on behalf of these groups. For instance, does a person who is disabled (visually impaired) have any right to speak for or about someone who is also visually impaired, or differently disabled (hearing impaired)?

In many instances, identity politics indicate a quest for equality by offering strategies that particular kinds of people can use to work against cultural structures that do not recognize them. For example, when certain groups seek protections from discrimination in the workplace, this is often done with the hope that everyone will be

given a fair chance to succeed. Or, if a group wants to make government buildings or Web sites more accessible, this is done with the intent to increase the ability for everyone to equally participate in social life. Or, if a group wants to fight for the legal right to marry, this is a move toward legal fairness for them. However, in such instances, dominant groups may not perceive such issues as quests for equality, but instead as threats to social order.

For example, a woman wanting to join the military may want to be treated like the men, but men in the military may not only feel threatened by the woman's presence, but may also not allow her to participate in certain tasks (for example, flying aircraft or fighting on the front battle lines). Or, an able-bodied business owner may feel as though the need to make a building more accessible is unnecessary, and that structural changes will tax financial resources. Or, a religious organization may feel as though the legal recognition of same-sex marriages violates religious freedoms.

Some identity politics indicate a quest for superiority. For instance, with racial purification and racial cleansing, certain populations were assumed to be better (for example, the Aryan race). Thus, by eradicating the "inferior" populations, the (perceived) superiority of one group could be maintained. In the United States, the perceived superiority of races was also a significant rationale for the ban against interracial marriages because outlawing the legal ability for people of different races to marry protected the dominant, perceived-to-be purer race from genetic "contamination."

Social Media

The emergence and rampant use of social media also complicates identity politics. With social media, people can more easily and explicitly mark, manage, and manipulate their identities. However, they can become reluctant targets of tailored messages, and possibly even victims of identity theft or cyberbullying (that is, online harassment for identifying in a particular way). Social media can re-energize specific groups that, before these media, were weakening in power and social influence (for example, the Ku Klux Klan); social media can also strengthen groups that, before these media, were not known to exist, or did not have much social clout (for example, the Tea Party). Social media can allow certain groups to assemble quickly, efficiently, en masse, without the presence of media gatekeepers in order to change harmful beliefs and practices, and influence—and possibly even overthrow—problematic cultural authorities and political regimes. Social media now allow people to create and participate in niche virtual communities, thus allowing "underground" resistances and identities to come together, interact, and take action, without having to participate in public protests or rely on a physical meeting space.

However, in order for people to engage in these uses of social media, they must have access to and knowledge of how these media work. For instance, in order for a person to join a (underground) virtual community, the person must have access to and knowledge of a computer or a smartphone, the virtual location of the community, and the time to interact with community members. If a person wants to create cultural change, then the person must find ways, by way of social media, to employ change-related strategies with committed, like-minded others who may not reside in the same physical location. Or, if a person—maybe a politician—wants to appeal to a particular group, the politician should recognize that his or her message, among dense social media environments, may spread quickly, and possibly even erroneously, and that it may incite immediate action by active participants in these environments.

New areas of research have emerged within academic contexts, all tied to the study of particular identities. Scholars must continue to focus on the workings of identities in everyday discourse and to make attempts to understand—and possibly challenge—what it means to be particular kinds of people in particular places, at particular times, and by way of particular technologies. Situations in which people are singled out, not recognized, and told that they do not matter are encouraged to come together, in solidarity, as a member of a group.

Rafal Rybak
Tony E. Adams
Northeastern Illinois University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Civil Rights; Human Rights; Psychographics; Race/Ethnicity.

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Idlenomore.ca

Idle No More (INM) is a grassroots indigenous protest movement that originated in Canada and gained momentum primarily through digital and online activism. The movement, born in social media, helped to unite First Nations people and foster an awareness of the plight of indigenous peoples in North America. INM has also gained international prominence, with committed activists employing user-generated Web content as a tool to spread their movement's message. The vision of INM includes fostering sovereignty and nationhood for First Nations, pressuring industries and the government to protect the environment (for example, demanding sustainable development), and building allies to reframe the nation-to-nation relationship through the inclusion of grassroots perspectives.

The INM movement rapidly spread online and offline across Canada around October 2012. During that time, the country's federal government, led by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, introduced Bill C-45. Activists argued that the bill posed major threats to the environment. The introduction of Bill C-45 prompted four women in Saskatchewan, Canada—Jessica Gordon, Sylvia McAdam, Sheelah Mclean, and Nina Wilson—to organize an event, which they had scheduled for November 2012. They created a page on Facebook and called it Idle No More to help publicize this event. Supporters of the INM movement also employed Twitter to spread the word, using the campaign's hashtag #IdleNoMore, and tweeting comments and links to news items, blogs, photos, videos, and other relevant media. Not long afterward, the movement went viral, and similar meetings were organized in the region around Canada.

Idle No More supporters from the San Francisco Bay Area displaying a banner at the city's 43rd annual Pride Celebration and Parade on June 30, 2013. Idle No More's Facebook page, begun in late 2012, had 110,000 likes by 2013.

Among Bill C-45's provisions that most concerned First Nations communities were the Indian Act, the Navigation Protection Act, and the Environmental Assessment Act. INM argued that the Indian Act would allow for the easier privatization of designated reserve lands and treaty territory because it would change the way that First Nations communities approved the leasing and surrender of these areas. According to INM, previously, a majority of eligible voters were required to approve such leases and surrenders. However, C-45 allowed approval to occur after a meeting for such purpose was called, and irrespective of how

many people attended the meeting, the majority of attendees voted to approve the lease or surrender. On the other hand, through the Navigation Protection Act, companies that planned to build oil pipelines and power lines in Canada would only be required to prove that their projects were harmless to lakes and rivers if such waterways were on a "protected" list prepared by Canada's transportation minister. INM argued that because of amendments to this list, the number of protected lakes and rivers would drop by 99 percent, making most waterways vulnerable to environmental damage. In a similar vein, the Environmental Assessment Act reduced the number of projects that required environmental assessments.

2012 Protests

INM supporters vigorously used social media to mobilize and organize an offline and online National Day of Action, which they scheduled for December 10, 2012. Corresponding with this event, Theresa Spence, chief of the Attawapiskat First Nation, who would later become the face of the INM movement, declared a hunger strike on December 11, 2012. Spence intended to use her liquid-only fast to bring public awareness to concerns over Bill C-45 and the plight of the INM movement, and to increase support for the rights of First Nations peoples. Spence vowed not end her hunger strike until Prime Minister Harper would agree to speak with First Nations leaders to discuss Canada's treaty relationship. She called for a day of protest to occur on December 30, 2012.

Harper then agreed to meet with 20 chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), a group of leaders who represented the First Nations in Canada. The meeting took place on January 11, 2013, and on that day, INM organized a number of protests across major cities in Canada. The outcome of the meeting led Prime Minister Harper to vow a renewed focus on treaty relationships and claims. Although National Chief of the AFN Shawn Atleo declared the outcome of the meeting as an achievement, other First Nations leaders, such as Spence, held that the meeting fell short of what should have been accomplished. These differing stances illustrate the division among First Nations groups at the time, because some groups did not support the stances of INM. Spence ended her hunger strike on January 24, 2013—the day that chiefs of the AFN had scheduled to hold a major treaty meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia. This meeting culminated in a 13-point declaration spearheaded by Spence, which sought, among other things, to implement and follow through the commitments made by the Prime Minister Harper in the January 11 meeting.

INM provides an excellent case of how social media united an indigenous resistance movement. Mark Gollum, a senior writer with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, equated the movement to the Occupy Wall Street protests that occurred in the United States in 2011, having a campaign that was also largely diffused via social media. Gollum quoted Canada-based sociologist Jeffrey Denis, who described the INM movement as diffused with no organizing structure, much like the Occupy movement. Yet, the protest movements' tactics differ in a number of aspects. In particular, while Occupy groups chose to indefinitely occupy spaces, activists participating in the INM protests primarily used temporary, flashmob-type events. These included round dances, teach-ins, ceremonies, and prayers in shopping malls and city centers. Activists supporting INM also employed direct action tactics, such as the use of blockades to disrupt major rail lines and highways across Canada. Various First Nation peoples, including the founders of INM, have questioned these direct action tactics for their aggressiveness. However, proponents of these direction action tactics have argued that they are necessary as a means to resist the loss of native rights.

2013 Protests

INM has gained worldwide attention. Around the end of January 2013, INM called for a worldwide day of action, and mass mobilizations occurred in a number of cities in Canada, the United States, France, and the United Kingdom. Amnesty International and the United Nations have issued statements in support of INM. In 2013, the INM Facebook page showed close to 110,000 "likes," and an app called Makook, which tracks information on tweets, showed that close to 700,000 tweets had used the #IdleNoMore hashtag. While most of these tweets originated from North America, the app showed that some came from as far as Madagascar and Kazakhstan. Indigenous groups and other historically marginalized communities

continue to use social media as a resistance tool. INM is an exemplar of the power of social media in spurring on social change.

Francis Dalisay
University of Hawai'i at Manoa

See Also: Canada; Quebec, Canada, 2012 Student Protests; Race/Ethnicity; Social Issues Advocacy, Netroots Driven.

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I-Docs.org

i-Docs.org is a Web site and symposium dedicated to the production and study of interactive documentary. Though in development since the 1980s, interactive documentaries have recently gained attention for their abilities to harness digital technologies, address political issues, and engage audiences. Judith Aston and Sandra Gaudenzi founded the Web site, while Arnau Gifreu and Mandy Rose serve as contributing editors. All four are European scholar-practitioners with experience in creating interactive documentaries, either independently or within media organizations, and in studying them. The Web site receives support from the Digital Cultures Research Center, which is connected with the University of West England, and with the Pervasive Media Studio, both located in Bristol.

To encourage discussion of the emerging genre, the i-Docs.org Web site primarily consists of a blog. Posts fall under several categories, including activism, collaboration, locative, play, taxonomies, technologies, transmediality, and news. Written by site editors and guests, posts explore questions such as handling narrative order, using social media, using new creation tools, and engaging audiences. Other posts highlight the presence of interactive documentaries at film festivals, such as Sheffield Film Festival.

In addition to the posts, the news section covers conferences and research calls related to interactive documentary. The site also offers references to academic and other sources related to interactive documentaries, as well as a listing of currently available ones. Along with the main site, editors at i-Docs.org also maintain other social media presences, such as on microblogging site Twitter and photosharing site Flickr.

A key activity of the site's founders is to define, theorize, and explore the implications of the interactive documentary toward understanding applications, possibilities, and limitations. An interactive documentary refers to a documentary that incorporates multimedia tools such as short video, hyperlinked pages, clickable maps, and chat functions in its representations of reality. This grounding in reality is considered the foundation of the documentary form, distinguishing it from fiction. Digital technologies are used not only in creating interactive documentaries, but also in distributing them to audiences. Unlike cinematic or television documentaries, interactive ones unfold according to how the audiences direct them, such as through a mouse, keyboard, or even a microphone.

Interactive documentaries change how political messages reach audiences. Instead of just presenting these messages through voiceovers and interviews within a linear, time-based construction, interactive documentaries offer the opportunity to bring audiences into these messages and their creation, making them into interactors, collaborators, and even contributors. For example, in addition to watching, audiences might click on maps or objects, watch short videos, offer comments, or even upload content. The ranges of audience experiences expand with the number of options they can pursue, and overall meaning creation becomes more actively shared. At the same time, though, the interactive documentary maker

loses control over how audiences experience the text, and thus how audiences receive the political messages. Yet, political interactive documentaries about social issues regularly appear, such as *Here at Home: In Search of the Real Cost of Homeless*, *GDP*, and *Bear71* from the National Film Board of Canada. The British Broadcasting Corporation also has an interactive documentary division.

Some of i-Docs.org's posts specifically address interactive documentaries and political questions, such as through defining key issues, making interactive documentaries effective, and determining their impacts. They address not only technologies that become part of interactive documentary production, but they also address how people engage with them. For example, one post delves into the issues of collaborative production within the Global Lives project, wherein 10 filmmakers from around the world record their days. The editing and other project decisions get made as a group toward the goal of showing these global realities and hopefully enlightening audiences about differences. Another post examines the "docugame," wherein serious, reality-based subjects become reenvisioned as interactive games.

The Web site's founders also organized two conferences addressing interactive documentary in 2011 and 2012. The 2012 conference built on the 2011 conference in focusing on four key issues: user participation, space, activism, and open source technologies. Several presentations addressed the possibilities for interactive documentaries and political issues, analyzing titles such as *Journey to the End of Coal*, the *Endangered Languages Project*, and *The Great Primate Handshake*. These presentations addressed the reach and effectiveness of these campaigns. The site's founders anticipate convening another conference in the future.

Also available is a specially themed issue of the prestigious international journal *Studies in Documentary Film*. The winter 2012 edition of the journal offers a wealth of articles discussing practical applications of the i-Docs concept as well as presenting original academic research on this and related themes, which were explored at previous i-Docs symposia.

Heather McIntosh
Boston College

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Brave New Films; Documentaries, Social Media, and Social Change; Interactive Documentary.

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Immersive Journalism

Immersive journalism is a recently introduced alternative form of journalism that allows the production and consumption of news in a form in which people can gain first-person experiences of the events or a situation described in news stories. This is achieved by integrating virtual reality into journalistic stories and by employing various technological applications, such as gaming, 3-D audio and video, haptic technology, and digital avatars. It uses already existing virtual words, such as Second Life, to create a space in which news consumers can interact through simulated environments and activities. The simulation is achieved by using head-tracked or head-mounted display systems (HMDs), lightweight helmets that cover the eyes and track head movements in order to create a sensation of having a virtual body in a virtual location.

Immersive journalism does not aim solely to present the facts, but rather to create an opportunity to experience the facts. It is inspired by the immateriality of digital media, but also by a larger, ontological state of being that is luminal, emergent, and transcendent. Immersive journalism appears to its supporters as a profoundly different way to experience the news, and to understand it in a way that is otherwise impossible without really being there. This new form

of journalism poses a great challenge to the long-established mainstream and traditional journalistic practice by promising and envisaging complete user control over the experience of a news story.

The foundations of immersive journalism lie in the idea that the news experience of a person is enhanced by his or her virtual involvement (as a digital avatar) in a digitally recreated scenario representing the news story. This way, the person transcends his or her news experience as a reader/viewer/listener/user by his or her evolvement through 3D gaming (video gaming or online virtual worlds) and immersive technologies to a virtual witness/participant in the story, thus creating a sense of "being there" and of direct engagement in the news report. This way, news experiencing enables the participant to have a direct, unmediated, and first-person experience to the visuals, sounds, feelings, and emotions that accompany news reports and documentary films.

Immersive journalism belongs to the various approaches of interactive presentation of news in which the participant is entering the news scene either as himself or herself or as a subject in the narrative process of the reporting. He or she can enter the news story as himself or herself as a visitor, gaining first-hand access to a virtual version of the location where the story is occurring, or through the perspective of a character depicted in the news story.

Immersive journalism utilizes video and online gaming platforms as well as virtual environments to give a first-person dimension to news, documentary, and other nonfiction stories. Visual and audio primary source material from the physical world reinforce the concept that participants are experiencing a nonfiction story, with the video, sounds, or photographs acting on the narrative. For example, video that triggers at key points in the virtual landscape reminds a participant that the computer-generated environment is grounded in the physical world. Scripted events that create a first-person interaction with the reporting can also help create a feeling of being there. Also, participants can query or interact with the elements around them to learn more about the details or context of the news story.

The main difference between immersive journalism and news games is that the former involves an experience in which the user is participating, whereas the latter is about playing a game. News games follow gaming protocols in the sense that the player undertakes a task or pursues a goal and is constrained by rules, while the progress is measured by levels or points. On the contrary, a participant in immersive journalism is involved in an experience in which he or she is taking part and is affected by events, but may or may not have the possibility to change a situation following the news narrative.

Examples

The most notable and pioneering work on immersive journalism is undertaken by Nonny de la Peña, a U.S. journalist and producer and cofounder of Stroome.com (a collaborative video editing and sharing Web site) and senior research fellow in immersive journalism at the University of Southern California (USC) Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. De la Peña integrates the modern technology of virtual reality with journalistic stories in order to depict real-life events. Her goal is to go a step beyond the third-party experience of learning about an event and allow the public to actually step into the event and participate in it. With her work, she aims to reinstitute the audience's emotional involvement in current news events.

Some of the most notable immersive journalism projects include the following:

- The project Gone Gitmo is a virtual installation of Guantanamo Bay Prison in Second Life as a collaborative project between Nonny de la Peña and Peggy Weil.
- The project Hunger in L.A. developed by Nonny de la Peña focuses on calling attention to the growing issue of hunger in the United States by recreating an eyewitness account of a crisis on a food-bank line at the First Unitarian Church.
- Condition ONE is an immersive video player for the iPad, which allows users to simulate being in another environment, not quite virtual, but more a world that was captured using real video footage from a cameraman's first-person perspective (e.g., video footage depicting soldiers

in battle and the Occupy Movement protests).

Dimitra Dimitrakopoulou
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

See Also: Avatars; Documentaries, Social Media, and Social Change; Interactive Documentary; News Media; Second Life; Virtual Environment Technology, Immersive.

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Immigration

Social media have become important parts of grassroots activism across many issues, but have been especially transformative in the area of immigration reform, in part because of their exceptional popularity among immigrants. In 2006, when immigration reformers gathered for a mass demonstration, the message was transmitted largely by Spanish-language radio announcers. Seven years later, a similar demonstration was organized by Twitter, e-mail, and text message.

Hispanics are not only the fastest-growing group in the United States and the largest immigrant group, they are—thanks to the population growth that makes them younger on average—the group most likely to use social media. The Pew Research Center found that 72 percent of Hispanic Internet users are active on social media sites, while only 58 percent of all American internet users state the same. Similarly, Nielsen's 2012 Hispanic Market Imperative report found that Hispanic Americans outpace the American average in their engagement with smartphones, social networking, e-mail, text messaging, online video, and television.

While historically, immigrants have typically consumed media consumed in their home country or in their native language by fellow immigrants, the Internet has changed this and has encouraged immigrants to turn increasingly to the media of their host country in the form of social networks, Web sites, and online video. Further, while immigrants have typically primarily formed social ties with other immigrants until becoming well-established in their new home, in the 21st century we are finding immigrants becoming online contacts with native-born Americans very readily. Such online acquaintances help with language skills and cultural proficiency, as well as with political awareness and clout.

Hispanics were early adopters in using social media for political activism and vote drives. VotoLatino.com was founded in 2004 (in an attempt to defeat George W. Bush's re-election bid) by Maria Terese Kumar, who created the site on a laptop in a Starbucks coffee shop, with the goal of organizing voter registration efforts and encouraging communication among young Hispanic voters.

With the help of actress Rosario Dawson, Kumar sought out Hispanic Americans on Myspace, which at the time was the most prominent online social network. In the lead-up to the 2012 presidential election, social media played its largest role to date in registering Hispanic voters in support of incumbent Barack Obama. The large turnout rate of Hispanics, and the inability of the Republican Party to effectively outreach to Hispanic Americans, was widely cited as one of the critical factors not only in the 2012 results but is thought that it will influence presidential elections in the near future. While there are many reasons for Hispanics to be alienated by the Republican platform, immigration reform and the anti-immigrant stance of the Tea Party are certainly high on the list.

In 2009, Latins in Social Media (soon renamed LATISM.org) was founded to foster social media use, making cultural connections, and enhance political awareness in the Latin American community, including immigrants. The #LATISM hashtag is now viewed by more than 1 million people a week on Twitter.

The supporters of the Dream Act include a large number of young and tech-savvy immigrants and children of immigrants. A small group of undocumented students among them formed Dream activist.org, which originated as an online discussion forum for Dream Act supporters and young undocumented immigrants, and has become a deft public relations site for the act, highlighting individual stories. Journalist and undocumented Filipino immigrant Jose Antonio Vargas similarly founded Defineamerican.com to highlight the stories of immigrants and break down the stereotypes of the "illegal Mexican."

Organized Movements

In May 2013, a 48-hour virtual iMarch on Washington was held on Twitter in the name of immigration reform, resulting in thousands of tweets directed at numerous recipients, for a total of more than 500 million "landings." The name iMarch was both a play on Apple's branding (social media being as associated now with iPhones and other mobile devices as with computers) and an invitation to offer a personal testimonial in support of immigration reform. The event was part of a larger effort by Latino activists and allies on both sides of the aisle, not only to mobilize their supporters, but to rally the political leverage of undocumented immigrants. Support was tweeted by prominent political and celebrity allies, including President Obama; Cory Booker, New Jersey senator and former mayor of Newark; Arnold Schwarzenegger; and former president Bill Clinton.

The iMarch was organized by the Michael Bloomberg–founded Partnership for a New American Economy, a New York City–based immigration reform group. The iMarch provided a template for targeting members of Congress that the group continues to use. Social media was again used to organize an in-person demonstration later in 2013, when a nationwide immigration reform rally was held on October 5, 2013. Demonstrations were held in more than 100 cities, including a 5,000-person march across the Brooklyn Bridge.

The immigrant community and their allies have also used social media to spread key information and identify solutions to community problems. Undocumented immigrants use social media and text messaging to network with friends in order to stay apprised of police checkpoints, an increasing danger at a time when immigration-motivated checkpoints have been doubled in some parts of the country; the state of Arizona has even encouraged racial profiling in its attempt to weed out illegal immigrants.

Facebook and Twitter are instrumental in the drive to sign students up for the deferred action program for undocumented immigrants and those with expired visas, for instance, which results in a two-year reprieve from deportation. The use of GPS data of users on platforms like Facebook and Foursquare has also been used to provide evidence of residency and length thereof. Many activists cite the famous case of Walter Lara, who opened a Twitter account during his deportation proceedings in order to reach out to anyone who could help. His first tweet was "I am being deported," in 2009. A childhood friend started a Facebook page organizing help for Lara, who had been brought to the United States illegally from Argentina by his parents when he was 3, and was now 25. Overnight, there were 400 responses offering help and advice, and Lara soon obtained a year-long deportation deferment, which was renewed repeatedly. Lara was also able to find legal employment.

Political Use

Politicians also rely on social media to court immigrant voters. Because the bulk of immigrants living in the United States are Hispanic and the Republican Party has lost significant amounts of support in the Hispanic community, Democratic candidates have had greater success. Despite research by political scientist George Hawley that found that pro-immigration Republicans fare no better with Hispanic voters than other Republicans, Republicans who are part of the bipartisan push for liberalized immigration reform have nevertheless turned to Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and other means to network with immigrant groups and promote their alliance. Elsewhere, in districts with large immigrant populations, politicians often make a point

of noting on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media the celebrations and issues important to their immigrant constituents, such as celebrating Chinese New Year or observing the anniversary of India's independence. In this case, social media has extended the tradition of the "photo op," in which a politician takes a small amount of time out of their day in order to make an appearance connected to a group or issue.

Bill Kte'pi
Independent Scholar

See Also: Advocacy Groups; Arab Spring; Asia; Digital Citizen; Identity Politics; Diaspora/Migration; Economic and Social Justice; International Intervention; International Unrest and Revolution; Middle East; Race/Ethnicity.

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Independent Media Center

November 30, 1999, was one of the birthdays of social media and their political uses. Coinciding with protests against a meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle, media activists, community journalists, and alternative media practitioners came together to start the first Independent Media Center (IMC, often referred to as Indymedia), a collaborative media operation with the goal to represent demonstrators' perspectives and provide a different account of the protests. They created not only a daily newspaper, a radio broadcast, and video reports, but also a Web site that was open for anyone with Internet access to upload text, images, audio, and video. Through this open publishing system, not only the media activists at the center, but potentially all protesters and concerned citizens could post reports and commentary to a global audience. And that audience read, watched, and listened: the site registered over one million hits during the days of the protest.

The Indymedia concept rapidly spread around the globe. A total of 150 local IMCs had been created by 2004, a global network of citizen journalism. Some were national groups, others were city based; some were created by coalitions of existing alternative media groups, others by new media geeks; some were set up for reporting large protest events, others for regular local news coverage. Yet, all of the local Web sites included an open posting mechanism that allowed members of the public to publish their stories, and typically featured an open newswire on the right side of the page. The local groups were connected through a common set of principles on openness and nonprofit alternative journalism, the shared use of technical resources, and the collaborative ethos of the Free and Open Source Software (FLOSS) movement.

They benefitted from transnational technical support, contributed to the global Indymedia Web site that served as aggregator of local stories, and participated in discussions and decision-making structures via network-wide e-mail lists. Spanning across a variety of topics, from finance to gender, and involving hundreds of

There were 150 Independent Media Centers around the world by 2004. This banner hanging on a building in Amsterdam in the Netherlands featured an Indymedia Netherlands Web site address while expressing support for strikers in Oaxaca, Mexico, who suffered from a violent crackdown by police in summer 2006. The text translates as "Mexico murders/Oaxaca is everywhere."

IMC activists, these openly archived lists constituted a rich online public sphere and space for complex participatory and democratic decision making. IMCs also expanded to the offline world, for example, by building technical infrastructure for protest camps and creating public access points in the middle of demonstrations. Computers and other equipment were shipped to partner groups in the global south (e.g., in Latin America and Africa) in practical attempts to bridge digital divides.

As an early form, as well as one of the more politicized versions of civic journalism, the IMC network was confronted with many of the new challenges of this emerging field. Its open platform and politically motivated approach led to questions regarding its trustworthiness, and opened doors for rumors and false information, and the quality of articles widely varied. Several times, government agencies seized IMC servers, demonstrating both the threats and vulnerabilities of open online platforms. In response, IMCs experimented with different levels of moderation, and if necessary, censorship of their open posting newswires, leading to more regulated forms of openness. Yet, they continued to advocate two characteristics that became key components of the new citizen journalism sphere: a radical subjectivity that breaks with the attempts of objectivity and impartiality of traditional journalism, and is instead explicit about its vantage point; and a crowd-based journalism that seeks the truth through a multitude of voices, eyes, and comments, similar to the practices of open source software and Wikipedia.

In the mid-2000s, the steep rise of Indymedia was stopped and reversed. Its organizational model, based on online exchanges and volunteer labor, met increasing challenges; the wave of transnational protests that had carried the IMCs was in decline, and attacks from hostile governments added pressure. Perhaps most significantly, the rise of commercial social media platforms provided new opportunities for users to post their

stories and eclipsed Indymedia as the platform of protest and user-generated content. A new generation of activists now posts their videos to YouTube, stories are shared on Facebook, and pictures are posted on Flickr. Some local IMCs continue successfully, some are idle, and some have closed.

Despite its uncertain future, the IMC has been significant as a starting point for online citizen journalism, an early experiment of social media and a milestone toward Web 2.0—without the startup capital of the more recent social media enterprises, and organized in a decentralized, democratic way. It served as a key example for crowd-based peer production of content, and it has been one of the most prominent cases of Internet use by social and political activists. As a global hub of alternative media, it challenged established mainstream media at an unprecedented scale, and it built bridges between citizen-based old and new media practices, from community radio and video documentaries to online innovations.

The IMC's decline highlights the challenges to collectivist alternative media by new and more individualist forms of social media, but also the successful mainstreaming of the classic goal of alternative media—to turn the consumer into a producer. As concerns over online surveillance and the filtering practices of social media companies are increasing, the IMC serves as a reminder that nonprofit models of social networking based on anonymity and user privacy are possible.

Arne Hintz
Cardiff University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Content Communities; 18daysinegypt.com; Feb 17 voices; Seattle 1999 WTO Protests.

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Indexoncensorship.org

Indexoncensorship.org is a Web site for a publishing and campaigning nonprofit organization dedicated to promotion of freedom of expression around the world. Index on Censorship was founded in 1972 in London as a quarterly magazine with a circulation of 10,000 by poet and critic Stephen Spender. At its inception, the magazine provided space for dissident writers and thinkers from the other side of the Iron Curtain to publish their work and voice their opinions. Focused on the issue of global freedom of expression, the organization monitors and reports all forms of free speech violations around the world, including political, literary, religious, sexual, and ethnically motivated censorship and silencing. Among the original goals of the organization was to publish censored and "unpublishable" literature. At different points of time, the Index on Censorship published underground newsletters from Tehran in *Iranian Bulletins,* short stories by Russian writer and dissident Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, prose by Burmese political activist Aung San Suu Kyi, and commentary by controversial British Indian writer Salman Rushdie. The magazine also extensively covers instances of censorship in the cinema, visual arts, and music.

The magazine is published in three languages: English, Russian, and Arabic. Russian publication *Dosie na Cenzuru* was launched in 1997 with the financial support of Index on Censorship and the Glasnost Defense Foundation, a Moscow-based human rights nongovernmental organization. Initially, Index on Censorship provided some of the copy for the Russian edition, but the two publications now operate independently. Currently, an Arabic language edition of *Index on Censorship* is in the works.

The organizations' Web site was initially launched in 1997 as a blog, and relaunched in 2000 as a full-fledged online platform to support Index on Censorship's print publication and extend the organization's online presence. The Web site serves as a hub for all of organization's reporting and campaigning activities, and hosts all of Index on Censorship's writing, including some content from their quarterly magazine *Index on Censorship* published by Sage, such as originally commissioned articles, news reports, analyses, commentaries, and blogs on free

expression issues. The content is organized by geographic region, covering Africa, the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and north Africa and around free expression issues such as access to freedom of expression, authoritarian states that attack freedom of expression, freedom of expression in the digital world, challenges to freedom of expression in democratic societies, and challenges for free speech created by religious and cultural beliefs.

Index on Censorship also publishes *Index Index,* a country-by-country chronicle of free speech violations. Part of the publication from its inception, *Index Index* presents a summary of free speech–related news items from nearly 100 nations monitored by Index on Censorship. In addition, indexoncensorship.org has a searchable database of reports, commentaries, and analyses on issues of expression that goes back as far as 1997. For example, the Web site carries an extensive archive of coverage of protests and subsequent arrests of the controversial punk rock band Pussy Riot in Russia, attacks on freedom of expression in Iran, controversy surrounding the publication of a cartoon depicting Muhammad by Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten, and many landmark cases from around the world on Internet censorship.

Index on Censorship is not just a magazine and a Web site. Combining traditional journalism and campaigning practices, the organization uses its magazine *Index on Censorship* and online publication indexoncensorship.org to create a "noise of publicity" around issues that threaten freedom of expression and create censorship and oppression for journalists, writers, social media users, bloggers, artists, politicians, scientists, academics, activists, and citizens. This is done through extensive reporting, first-hand accounts, analyses, and commentary. In this way, *Index on Censorship* and indexoncensorship.org provide space for stories that do not receive adequate attention in the mainstream international media and a forum for creative thought and action in defense of free speech. For example, in the 1990s, *Index on Censorship* was among the first to report on fatal attacks against Russian journalists, which attracted the much-needed international attention and resources to combat the matter. As a result of its extraordinary efforts, in 2008, *Index on Censorship* magazine received an award from Amnesty International for coverage of media reform in Russia.

Closely associated with the charitable work of the Writers and Scholars Educational Trust, Index on Censorship is actively involved in campaigns and advocacy efforts in defense of free expression. Index hosts an annual Freedom of Expression Awards, organizes debates in universities, and implements training programs for media workers to teach monitoring, publishing, training, and advocacy in freedom of expression in Africa, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. For this reason, the organization's Web site dedicates a significant portion of its space to campaigning and advocating for different aspects of freedom of expression around the world.

An active member of the Global Network Initiative, Index on Censorship also champions Internet and social media freedom. Index on Censorship CEO Kirsty Hughes is known for harshly criticizing the UK's proposed regulations of news-related blogs on the Internet, arguing that it introduces a layer of undesirable political control on free expression in the digital world. Other current campaigns include the Libel Reform Campaign, advocating for free expression in Tunisia, Bahrain, Burma, and Azerbaijan, and campaigning against censorship in Europe's last dictatorship, Belarus.

Anna Klyueva
University of Oregon

See Also: Nongovernmental Organizations; Nonprofit Organizations; Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press; World Press Freedom Index.

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India

India is a culturally diverse country. Diversity of the people exists at many levels, including: geographical location, language and dialect, sociocultural patterns and practice, and socioeconomic and education status. India is the second-most populous country in the world, with a higher percentage of youngsters. Diversity makes Indian culture different from other cultures. Sometimes, this creates social imbalance and unrest, which not only affects the basic social order, but also overall growth. Social media are the popular media among youth. Like other countries, social media in India are gradually affecting sociopolitical selection and the political system. People belonging to the 15 to 35 age group take part in social media conversations and write what they think about issues. People's views reflect the social condition of the society. In the last two years, people have shared their anger and frustration in the form of debates, conversations, and messages on Web sites, converting into protests on roads against the political class and governing system.

India is a democratic country, and follows a political setup that allows the citizens of India to elect the government, a federal government. The central government has greater power in comparison to states. India has 35 states, including seven union territories. These states show much diversity in their sociopolitical, geographical, and cultural setup. They have different political agendas, which create differences between central government policies and state priorities. At present, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) is in power; this is the second term of the UPA. India is witnessing major changes and challenges in its political setup and system. Regional politics are more effective and altering national politics. This new trend has given birth to coalition politics in India. A coalition government has been in place in India since 1995, and has weakened the sociopolitical and governing system. It has created imbalances in power and has expanded differences between central and state governments. Corruption, poverty, high prices, and unemployment are the major problems that common people are facing while communal violence, terrorism, and casteism are some of the major issues affecting the integrity and security of India.

The legislature, executive, judiciary, and press are the four pillars of Indian democracy. Article 19 (A) of Indian Constitution provides freedom of expression to its citizens, with some restrictions. Both public and private media organizations in India play important roles in information dissemination. After economic liberation in 1990, the Indian market is open for foreign channels and private organizations. In recent years, the Indian media industry has shown progress, and analysts claim that it will grow quickly in the coming years.

Social Media

In India, social media have emerged as mediums of the masses in the last two to three years. They have played an important role in recent protests and have depicted social unrest. Social media were used in mobilizing people, mostly youth, in the anticorruption movement in 2011 and 2012. The anticorruption movement, mobilized by social media, was started in the wake of two major political scams: the Commonwealth Games in New Delhi, and the allocation of cell phone licenses. Around 12 million people registered their support for the cause. The movement was started under the leadership of Anna Hazare, a 72-year-old activist. Their demand was to bring the Jan lokpal bill (Citizens Ombudsman Bill) to remove corruption from Indian political and governing system. This was a revolutionary change in the history of protests in India, when thousands of people gathered to show their anger and frustration against political corruption and a faulty system.

India witnessed another public revolt mobilized by social media in December 2012. This protest was against gang rape in New Delhi. People demanded strong laws to punish the culprits and to give full protection to women by improving the system. People expressed their anger by writing on social media Web sites and blogs. Organizers of the protest used social media as tools to mobilize people and to garner their support.

India is a big market for Internet and mobile phone users. According to a report of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB), the number of social media users in urban India reached 62 million by December 2012, and it was estimated to reach 66 million by June 2013.

Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are commonly used social media network sites in India, apart from a large number of people who also write blogs. Generally, those in the 15-to-35-year-old age group use social media on a daily basis.

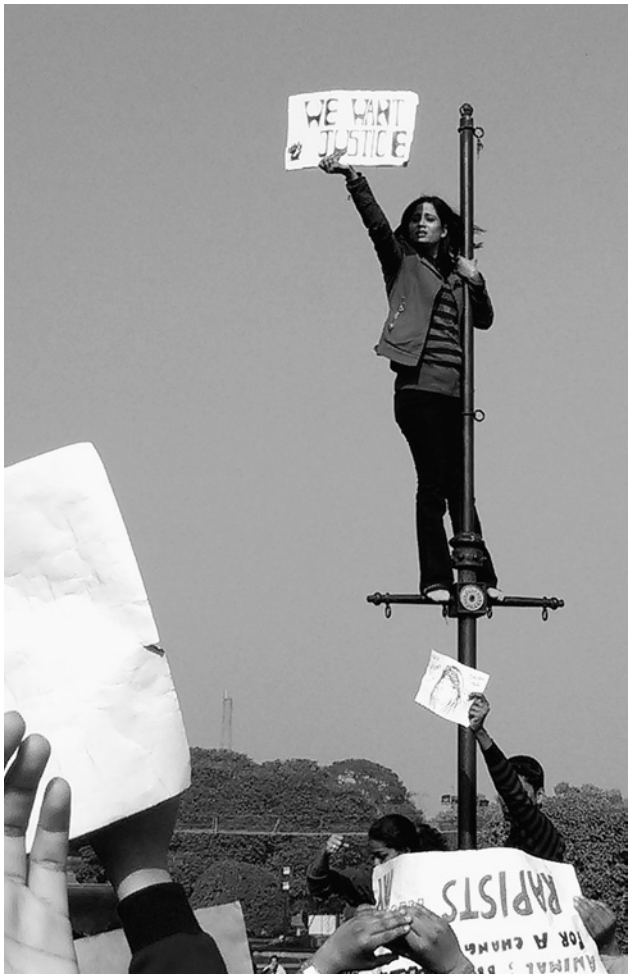
Unlike other countries, social media are not popular, and are not used very effectively by political parties for obtaining votes in elections or to keep people updated and informed about different government policies and programs. Few politicians and representatives of political parties are active on social media Web sites like Facebook and microblogging network Twitter. After recent agitations and protests mobilized by social media, the government has realized the potential of social media and planning to include them in their outreach activities and to use them to reach to the people. Certain political parties have social media cells, which they use to write against rival parties.

In 2012, there was an ethnic conflict in India's northeast state of Assam. The conflict erupted between two communities, the Bodo native tribe of Assam and Muslims. According to news sources, most of the Muslims living in Assam are migrants from neighboring Bangladesh. Communal violence erupted after the murder of three Bodos by Muslims. For retaliation, both the parties started killing people; and from fear, thousands of people left their villages and homes and took shelter in refugee camps.

The Muslim community living in other parts of the country opposed the killing of Muslims in Assam, and started protests in major cities of India. Some of the protests turned violent and killed civilians. Northeast people living in other parts of the country received threat messages through social media. Doctored messages and images were sent through social media to provoke people to take revenge against northeast people. In reaction, thousands of northeast people started going back to their home states. This mass exodus created panic, fear, and chaos. The government banned Facebook, YouTube, and other social media Web sites, and blamed Pakistan for uploading and sending doctored images and messages to provoke people and create communal tension. In this incident, social media was used to disturb the communal harmony, law and order, and sociopolitical system in India.

After this incident, the government is planning to make policies for social media. As a democratic country, regulation will be difficult. In India, public broadcasting services are run by the government and work as a mouthpiece of government, while it has been observed that private or mainstream media work mostly on selected agenda's and for monetary and business gains. Social media have given voice to the common people and are not biased. People feel empowered by expressing their views and opinions on social media.

To control cybercrime and cyberbullying, India passed the Information Technology (IT) Act in 2000. It was passed again by Lok Sabha (the parliamentary body) in 2008, after amendments were made to the original act. Some of the



A student protester climbs a lamppost during a protest against the 2012 gang rape case and violence against women on December 22, 2012, in New Delhi, India.

sections of the IT Act 2008 are implemented to control and filter out social media content. Section 69 of the IT Act empowers the central government/state government to intercept, monitor, or decrypt any information generated, transmitted, received, or stored in any computer resource if it is in the interest of the sovereignty or integrity of India, defense of India, security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, for preventing incitement to the commission of any cognizable offence, or for investigation of any offense.

In time, people in India will use technologically updated communication devices and advanced information-sharing networks and platforms. Different political sections are mapping existing possibilities of social media to reach urban youth and attain their votes in parliamentary elections in 2014. The ruling party and opposition in the center are also looking at different options for utilizing social media to make their presence on social media Web sites to counter political propaganda. Social media connect people and keep them updated; they start a thought process. Open dialogues motivate people to think differently—this initially creates a feeling of unrest and frustration, but brings major changes. In India, social media will help in bringing changes to the political and governing system.

Swati Bute
Amity University

See Also: Asia; Blogs; Economic and Social Justice; Education, Issues in; Political Parties; Poverty; Unemployment.

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Indonesia

The Republic of Indonesia is a diverse country located near the equator between the Indian and Pacific oceans in southeast Asia. Indonesia is an archipelago with over 17,000 islands, of which 5,000 to 6,000 are inhabited. There are 34 provinces. With around 240 million people, it is ranked the fourth most populated country in the world after China, India, and the United States. Indonesia also ranks as one of the largest democracies in the world.

Between 80 and 90 percent of the population self-identifies as Muslim, which makes Indonesia the largest Muslim-majority country in the world. It has almost 13 percent of the world's Muslims. Indonesia is within the top 20 of the world's economies for gross domestic product (purchasing power parity), but is still often called a developing country because of challenges related to poverty, unemployment, infrastructure, political and economic instability, corruption, public health, education, and the environment.

One particular area of rapid growth and development, however, is communication technology. Indonesia is currently experiencing a "digital jump," whereby the country's population is shifting from the building of traditional infrastructure, such as telephone landlines, to mobile devices. Close to 40 million Indonesians use a mainline telephone, while mobile phone penetration is close to 100 percent, and is expected to surpass that percentage within the next few years. Having a phone does not necessarily mean full access to the Internet, though. Statistics vary, but estimates are that from 45 to 50 million, or around 20 percent of Indonesians, are Internet users. These numbers are expected to surge as more mobile devices offer online access and companies provide more affordable communication options. This phenomenon has significant implications for social networking, business, and politics.

The Indonesian telecommunication industry is very competitive. The three major telecommunication companies in Indonesia are Telkom (semi-privatized, majority-state owned), Indosat (partially state owned, mostly foreign shares), and XL Axiata (privatized and foreign shareholdings included). There are also other smaller telecommunication competitors in the sector. Since

1999, deregulation and strong market rivalries have contributed to affordable mobile services and contracts for many Indonesians. Inexpensive phones or handsets, especially from China, facilitate mobile access. Personal computers are not as common as mobile devices. All of the telecommunication companies pay close attention to price points, network coverage, call quality, and speed to stay competitive and avoid losing their share of the market. Telkom currently holds between 50 and 60 percent of the market share, while Indosat and XL Axiata are more closely matched around 20 percent each, and retain the remaining market share.

Most mobile device and Internet users are young, under 40 years old. The overwhelming majority of mobile phone customers use prepaid or "pay-as-you-go" services, especially among the 15-to-20-year-old set. There is high preference for free to use services like chat applications and low-cost options like texting. This preference has led to the popularity of Research in Motion's Blackberry brand. While Blackberry use has significantly declined in other parts of the world, Indonesian customers continue to be loyal to the brand. The youth market is also quick to adopt or experiment with new services and applications. This openness has translated into high rates of social media usage. Analysts anticipate these rates to increase further as more Web-enabled phone plan options enter the market.

The most popular platforms for social media in Indonesia today are Facebook and Twitter. Indonesia consistently makes the top-five list for most Facebook users globally. At last count, over 47 million Indonesians were active Facebook users. Indonesia is also one of the top-five countries for Twitter, with around 29 million users. Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, recently ranked number one on a list of the top-20 cities in the world by number of posted tweets. Online media monitoring companies such as Brand24, Semiocast, Socialbakers, and Mediabistro have found that Twitter users in Jakarta posted more than two percent of the 10.6 billion public tweets posted worldwide. Bandung, another sizeable metropolitan area in Indonesia, ranked number six worldwide for posted tweets. The social media landscape in Indonesia can be divided into three main subject areas: social networking or communication and entertainment, business (e.g., brands), and politics (e.g., mobilization, critics, and education).

Social Networking

Indonesians use both Facebook and Twitter to connect with their family, friends, acquaintances, and coworkers. Both platforms provide users the ability to update one's community about a range of topics and personal interests. Examples include everyday behavior, special events, hobbies, travels, sports, celebrities, television shows or movies, music, religion, political preferences, current news, and questions or requests for assistance. Indonesians tend to use Facebook and Twitter to keep in touch, share memories, learn new things, promote oneself, maintain friendships, and have fun.

Facebook users can create profiles, upload photos, list contact details, send private or public messages, chat in real time, create or join groups, link to other Web sites, play games, and show support for others by clicking "like" on a post or page, signing a petition or some other action item, and sharing or forwarding material to others in their online networks. Twitter has less variety than Facebook regarding program functions; it primarily focuses on brief commentary and building a following, or subscribers, to a particular person's account. Twitter users can update their profiles with their mobile phones via text messaging or special applications on select smartphones.

Business

Indonesian entrepreneurs and businesses utilize social media to build and advertise their brands. Large businesses such as Yamaha Motor Indonesia, Surfer Girl, Blackberry Indonesia, Chocolatos, and Axe Indonesia each have between 1 and 3 million Facebook fans. These companies post information about their products, sponsor contests, experiment with applications, and encourage interaction with consumers by soliciting comments, photos, and videos. Occasionally, Facebook users will post a criticism or concern, which may or may not be addressed by the company. Depending on the company and type of campaign, there may be cross-postings or overlap between Facebook and Twitter. Businesses of all sizes adapt to their consumer base's demographic backgrounds. They emphasize

culturally and linguistically appropriate content. For instance, many brands make a point to observe religious holidays. They also self-censor their quotes and pictures to fall within expected norms or boundaries.

While brands are able to spread the word about their identities and products via social media, there are obstacles for converting such publicity into profits. Indonesia is still predominantly a cash-based economy. Limited credit card usage and online bank accounts make it hard for individuals and businesses to make financial transactions easily or regularly via mobile phones. Although e-commerce is still in its infancy in the country, there are firms interested in identifying growth opportunities. Test markets in other developing countries suggest that online retail and microtransaction markets could be possible and potentially lucrative in Indonesia.

Politics

Indonesians make use of social media for political purposes. Topics covered on Facebook and Twitter include public policy debates, social causes, campaigns, and elections at the local, provincial, and national levels. Political candidates and parties, nonprofit organizations, activist groups, and others are increasingly turning to social media to disseminate information, educate, critique, and mobilize Indonesian "netizens." Facebook and Twitter are often perceived as public platforms for free speech, deliberation, and possible activism. Underrepresented and marginalized groups such as women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual communities have used social media to combat prejudice and discrimination and generate solidarity. Social media has also been used to facilitate government accountability. In early 2012, for example, the Indonesian Students Association turned to Facebook and Twitter to report on the perceived financial waste of certain lawmakers who went shopping in Berlin. There was a public outcry about using government business as an excuse for a paid holiday vacation.

Politicians also make use of social media. Joko Widodo used Facebook heavily during the September 2012 gubernatorial elections in Jakarta. His strategy involved online posts and commentary, a music video, and organizing a flash mob. He continues to use Facebook after winning, along with YouTube to post videos of official meetings in an effort to demonstrate government transparency. While some analysts attribute Joko Widodo's success to a unique, tech-savvy media campaign, tracing a causal relationship between being a "fan" of political candidates or parties on Facebook or following them on Twitter and actually winning office is still relatively tenuous.

While there appear to be several benefits from social media in Indonesia, there may also be disadvantages. As with any new technology, much depends on who is using the medium and for what purpose. Scientists do not yet know the precise boundaries or limits of virtual movements. People do not necessarily have a clear picture of how to translate discussions via social media into real policies, reforms, or political participation, like voting and protests. Facebook and Twitter users may also be self-presenting in "biased" ways, which could obstruct change, progress, or democracy. Furthermore, quantitative and qualitative data are currently limited about issues such as illegal activities, culturally sensitive material, and possible or actual security breaches and threats. As businesses, governments, and researchers continue to explore and analyze the development and use of social media, it will become more evident how and to what extent mobile devices and the Internet are helping or hindering the nation's people and institutions. As more research think tanks and online or social media monitoring firms emerge and grow, social scientists will be in a better position to accurately and efficiently measure Indonesian public opinion, political behavior, economic matters, and cultural shifts in the future.

Jennifer Epley
Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi

See Also: Asia; Facebook; Mobile Connectivity, Trends in Politics and; Twitter.

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Inferring Sentiment

In 2006, Google developed quality scores to quantify the degree to which their search engine was meeting users' needs. This is believed to have been the first step toward the application of sentiment analysis to social media. Inferring sentiment is the systematic analysis of social media content, such as the text of blogs and forum posts, in order to discern the attitudes expressed in them. As a relatively new endeavor, methods for inferring sentiment from social media continue to evolve. In its simplest form, sentiment is inferred from the number of positive and negative expressions in selected online user-generated texts addressing specific matters of interest, such as the viability of a political idea or the likability of a political candidate. Positive and negative sentiments are determined using generic lists of positive and negative words or lists of words and phrases developed specifically for particular content areas. Other filtering mechanisms and machine learning processes are also employed to differentiate positive and negative sentiments from neutral and unrelated text and to discern sarcasm, casual language, and other language complexities that increase error. Typically, the goal of sentiment analysis is to gauge aggregate sentiment.

Inferring sentiment from social media content is becoming a highly valued and widely used resource. Businesses are prolific users of sentiment analysis, and intelligence agencies have used sentiment analysis to identify action plans of extremists and to help determine such things as regional sentiment toward the 2009 hotel bombings in Jakarta. In the political arena, sentiment analysis is on its way to becoming a routine and necessary feature of a variety of political endeavors. User-generated text in political and news blogs and posts to news forums and politically oriented Web sites provide a plethora of data sources for inferring sentiments about political positions, candidates, and policies. The use of social media analysis by President Obama's re-election campaign has been credited with providing him with a critical advantage over his opponents. Sentiment analysis then can be used to discern such things as what constituents desire, what legislation or social policies are likely to be supported by the general public, and public reaction to how policies are framed and how politicians present themselves.

A critical component of success for businesses these days is the utilization of sentiment analysis to monitor consumer preferences and product reviews offered online because of the potential impact that such independent evaluations of their products could have, given the unprecedented number of people from around the world who can readily access such reviews. As with consumer product reviews, social media allow for the possible inclusion of everyone's sentiments about political policies and candidates. The potential circulation of such sentiments to a wide audience, outside of the control of politicians and their carefully crafted messages, means that politicians might do well to follow the lead of businesses in assessing and monitoring such sentiments in order to keep abreast of how their constituents, opponents, and the general public are responding to dynamic political developments. The reverse is possible as well. Readily available political widgets track candidate sentiments on many topics, including controversial social issues, domestic and foreign affairs, and military involvement and budget allocations.

Benefits and Challenges

The benefits of inferring sentiment from Internet content in comparison to traditional opinion polling include its low cost, the availability of vast amounts of diverse Internet content to analyze, and the speed with which such analysis can be accomplished. Sentiment analysis can also capture

how aggregate sentiments evolve over time, and dramatic changes in sentiment because of unfolding events, with sentiment results generated as they happen.

Challenges with sentiment analysis are the subject of much current research. One problem with inferring sentiment from social media content is that people self-select themselves for participation by deciding to post their views online, and people with more extreme views are more likely to posts their thoughts. Moreover, people often vary their posts based on the audience of a particular venue and based on what others have already posted on that venue about the subject. The difficulty in sampling Internet content in a manner that effectively attends to representativeness is a weakness of sentiment analysis. Despite these challenges, inferring sentiment from social media content is likely to expand, and even more sophisticated questions about what people think and feel are likely to be addressed. The systematic mining of sentiment in social media has just begun.

Mel Moore
University of Northern Colorado

See Also: Data Mining; Internet Forums; Pioneers in Social Media and Politics; Polling; Proxy Measurements; Sentiment Analysis.

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Influence on Elections

In a democracy, elections are the moment in which citizens, through the vote, declare their consent to a candidate, political party, or even a whole political system. They can also declare opposition to those, for example, through abstention, or what political scholars call the "protest vote." For this reason, issues about the influence of social media on election turnout need to be discussed in the framework of media and social theories.

They assign to social media a specific importance for the democratic process, because they are mediated public spaces for the exchange of information, constitution of relationships, expression of thought and organization among citizens, and serve political or civic purposes. Therefore, asking questions about social media influence on elections also implies taking into account theories concerning the deeper process of building consent, which is specific to political and social studies.

The focus of those studies is on the construction of relations between political representatives and citizens, also in social media environments, in a context of ideological dealignment, permanent campaigns, and disintermediation processes. In addition to that, an account of the most recent electoral campaigns' practices through social media will be necessary. Since the earliest studies about social media's role in the electoral process (around the first half of 1990s), much attention has been paid to the efficacy of Internet-based electoral campaigns, especially on the possibilities of translating corporate marketing strategies into the political domain. This perspective helps to highlight the horizontal logic behind social media and the possibilities to mobilize users for political action, evaluate the performance of the campaign, and predict electoral turnout.

Political Activism

Despite what many have been claiming about the "Internet elections" or "social media elections" since 2000, data from advanced democracies' elections show an increasing, but still marginal diffusion of Internet and social media usage by citizens who are seeking information about the candidates or engaging in online discussions about politics and electoral campaigns. For

example, during the last U.S. presidential elections campaign, which saw the broadest digital activism ever seen, 39 percent of the American adult population used social media to conduct at least one political or civic activity. The problem is that those activities widely vary in their importance for the public debate and in levels of engagement needed, from clicktivism, which identifies the simple "like" or "follow" in social networking sites, to digital activism repertoire and more traditional ways of participating transposed online, such as signing petitions and active campaigning (encouraging people to vote and organizing groups and meetings).

International surveys highlight instead that social media and the Internet are only a part, even if increasingly consistent, of overall media consumption. Social media are not a world apart from real life: they are embedded in everyday life activities and other media, like television. Media scholars talk about the "mediascape" or "mediasphere" when referring to the complex interrelations among all media and between them and the overall culture—the shared collective values, practices, and images—of a nation (or even the world). For that reason, it would be very hard to isolate the power or the influence of social media on electoral behavior or on elections, as much as it would be for any other medium. The temptation to assign media a power of direct influence upon opinions and behaviors is old, but it has never been proven. On the contrary, media have a role in the day-by-day construction of opinions and consent, played in their interaction with the social, institutional, political, economic, and cultural context of each person. Thus, studying media and social media's influence on elections means taking into account all of the variables in play, in each country, at every moment.

At the same time, data from several studies point out that online political activism (however it is defined and articulated) does not necessarily overcome or replace offline activism, and it is still unclear whether or not the former can positively influence the latter. Scholars and media professionals are constantly trying to detect cases of online activism to vouch for social media's role in participation in democratic processes, not only during electoral campaigns. The north African and Middle East uprising in 2010 and 2011 known as Arab Spring is a perfect example of the need to cross the boundaries of disciplines to better understand the phenomenon of online activism and its relationship with offline activism. Media and political scholars are both facing the challenge of new trends in political participation and democratization.

One can use expressions such as "networked politics" or "digital democracy" to point out the possibilities of social media for democratic functioning, also concerning elections. The democratic value of social media is controversial, and it is a current convention to divide positions into cyberoptimistic and cyberpessimistic (or cyberskeptic) accounts. Cyberoptimists describe the Internet as having high democratic potential because it provides more access to information and a space to express opinions, which in a deliberative democracy perspective is believed to be positively linked

A man takes pictures with an iPhone while using an iPad to display a collection of photographs of the Mubarak regime's brutality during a January 29, 2011, march held in San Francisco, California, in solidarity with the Egyptian uprising.

to a healthy and active engagement in public issues. Cyberpessimists emphasize what they consider the dark side of the Internet, apparently neverending memory, winking to the Orwellian Big Brother when describing the surveillance society and the perils for privacy. It is now commonly accepted and confirmed by data that social media can reinforce involvement in political and civic affairs in subjects who are already involved in public life; however, social media is not the real engine for new involvement.

The interest in analyzing public engagement, and its role in democracy's health, has to be contextualized in a situation typical of most advanced democracies, in which political legitimacy is undermined and needs are continuously reaffirmed. Abstention is increasing, in parallel with a trend that assigns to oligarchies the role of managing political decisions. Voters are no longer tied to ideological belonging and party membership. Media have a specific role in influencing political communication practices through offering a mainstream popular culture imagination, specific in each country, but with some common elements, in a videocracy. Political scholars use the term *dealignment* to identify the process of disanchorage of voters from historical party belonging, which produces relatively new categories of floating subjects such as "the young," "the non-voters," and "the disappointed," who have to be persuaded to vote each time.

The media influence this process of dealignment, building new forms of relationships among politicians and the electorate, which appear more direct and disintermediated. Disintermediation is the answer to a political demand from citizens, who are asking to bypass the traditional intermediaries in public affairs, first of all political parties and unions. Social media seem to particularly fit in this model of relationship, and they contributed to build it: Through them, citizens can directly dialogue with politicians and other citizens easier than before. Media are also influencing the political context by setting up standards to evaluate political performance, and scholars have pointed out that those standards are closely related to those for choosing products to purchase. Some call "Americanization" the process of translating every aspects of life, including politics, in terms of consumption. That is why the perspective of political marketing helps to understand media's, and in this case social media's, role in the political process.

Influence on Electoral Campaigns

Social media's influence on elections can be read from the point of view of electoral campaign organizers. Social media are contributing to the design and creation of contemporary campaigning repertoire, as the proliferation of digital, new media, or social media divisions of electoral committees suggests (at least in the United States, the United Kingdom, and more recently in France). When facing social media environments, campaigners first tried to import expertise, methods, and techniques from public relations and corporate marketing. The result has been a combination of tools with a specific orientation to create relationships between candidate and citizens, involve them, and promote their action and mobilization through social networking practices.

It can be useful then to read the complexity of a campaign through the lens of political marketing. Political marketing has been defined as the use of marketing strategies, philosophies, and tools by political parties to raise interest and consent from voters. The four "Ps" of the corporate marketing mix can be applied to the political realm as follows: the product is the party, or the candidate, or even the policy that is to be sold; promotion and place concern all communicational and organizational aspects of a campaign; last, the price is the vote, which is given in exchange for the promises made by parties and leaders about what they are going to do when elected.

In this framework, social media may influence electoral campaigns by working on the first of the marketing mix, the product. In the construction of the message, social media and new media in general can be used as a symbol for an alternative style of communication, in opposition to traditional media outlets, and this opposition can in turn conceptually be linked to alternative political methods, far from the centers of power and institutional rigidity, closer to common people's real lives and spontaneity. This link lies on a sort of ideological position, claiming the Internet as providing a nonmediated space and resources for direct democracy, as in ancient Greece. However, despite the rhetorical use of social media

for electoral purposes, on many occasions, the Internet truly represented the only available platform to reach the audience and to try to influence the public debate. When traditional media are inaccessible because of power issues, or prohibitive because of high cost, insurgent subjects such as social movements, independent politicians, or new candidates have used digital media to compensate. In fact, social media can provide candidates a platform for fundraising, by collecting microdonations from supporters (which cannot replace corporate sponsor and party support, but can contribute to finance the campaign and raise the sense of belonging). Most of all, social media can help insurgent candidates who can try to exploit the viral potential of spreading pieces of information through social networking practices when traditional media pay them no or little attention.

Social media influence on elections can thus be studied as the influence of social media on the promotion and place elements of the marketing mix. Networking practices are the main element of this influence: Supporters can actively seek for more supporters among their friends and contacts in social networking sites, involving them in the campaign, inviting them to do the same, organizing meetings or joining already formed groups in the surroundings. This allows campaigners to reduce the budget for online promotion activities such as advertising, and this is also the reason for the increasing interest in promoting online engagement and activism.

Following the principle of viral marketing, once the network of affiliation is created, campaigners have to seed information, trying to reach the most influential subjects first (individuals who have the largest number of connections) in order to make information visible to the largest possible number of people. Disseminated supporters in almost every corner of the Web can also function as ears and eyes for campaigners, helping them to detect ongoing negative campaigning and providing an instant fact-checking service.

Electoral Data

Social media are mostly used in political campaigns as low-cost sources of information about voters in order to segment the electorate, position the candidate, identify the target of communication strategy, and reach potential voters through a mixture of traditional and unconventional techniques. Social media provide analysts and marketers with a huge amount of data, called "big data." When people sign into a social network site, they cede pieces of information about themselves: once ceded, those data about consumers' and voters' interests, tastes, and relations can be extracted and analyzed through software, helping marketers or political strategists to know the audience of consumers/voters and get in touch with them. In this perspective, social media are most of all powerful and cheap tools used to acquire data about citizens' contacts, habits, and preferences, and to sell them a product, the politician, by manufacturing the most effective message or by placing it in the right network. Some argue that Barack Obama's victory in the 2008 presidential elections was partly because of the great database built during Howard Dean's run in 2004: In this database, the names, addresses, and e-mail contacts of Democrat voters were contained, so it was easy for Obama's staff to reach and mobilize them.

Another way in which social media intervene in the design of an electoral campaign is in the attempt to measure consent prior to the elections, as in polls. Social media monitoring is the complex activity of listening to and analyzing social media data in order to capture the general trends of a brand's reputation and detect possible crisis. Like polls, the aim of those activities is to describe people's attitudes and perceptions with regard to the candidate, but unlike the first, social media monitoring is less expensive and time consuming, although it is not representative of the entire population (at least as long as a digital divide is in place). The focus on analyzing consent through social media has raised questions about how to measure it, probably along the lines of the need for calculating the return on the increasing economic investments in social media strategies.

To answer those questions, a quantitative approach has been developed, relying upon Web metrics such as Twitter "followers" and/or Facebook "likes" counts, but also sentiment trends detected in textual corpuses. The consent for the politician in social media is then planned, calculated, analyzed, and even predicted, as for every kind of brand, because parameters and metrics employed to evaluate the success of online

corporate marketing campaigns have also been adopted to evaluate the effectiveness of online political marketing campaigns.

Although most research shows no significant correlation between social media metrics and voter turnout, some scholars, journalists, and politicians still continue to superimpose the concepts of efficacy of online political marketing strategies and influence of social media on elections. Social media are used as alternative tools to traditional polls in order to observe and predict the consent for a candidate or a party. This (theoretical) link is not free of consequences: in particular, this vision of social media recalls deterministic information theories, according to which exposure to a message would have an effect on people's thoughts and behaviors. Social media do not have a natural and necessary power to influence voters' perceptions and behavior. Social networking practices can be planned and carried out following previous cases of successful campaigns, but it would be better not to evaluate this success only in terms of election turnout because there are many examples of perfect social media campaigns, where candidates eventually lost the elections.

Social media's influence on the "price," or the vote, is a difficult stance. It would be better to examine the role of the Internet as an infrastructure for data transmission. In democracies where voter registration is needed, such as in the United States, the Internet has been used to provide voters the possibility to register and find the nearest polls. The Internet represents a facility for citizens in terms of speed and immediacy, and it can hinder abstaining, which is one of the major problems in contemporary advanced democracies. Although it is not a specific function of social media, e-voting or electronic vote systems are already used in different countries, even if they are still experimental (e.g., in primaries or in administrative elections, not yet in political or general consultations).

Most scholars agree that candidates never won an election solely by designing the perfect online campaign or by crafting the perfect communication strategy. Electoral campaigns are as much field and territory operations as media events and social media presence: conventions, meetings, and groups, even organized through social media, are still important moments in electoral runs, in which people build their sense of belonging and networking is put into practice. The success of an electoral turnout cannot be ascribed only to communicative aspects, which are important, but are combined with other elements such as political context and culture, social and economic conditions, and the institutional framework.

Donatella Selva
Emiliana De Blasio
Luiss University of Rome

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, 2012; E-Democracy; Election Monitoring; Electronic Voting; Forecasting Elections; Voter Turnout.

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Infographic

Infographic, a contraction of information graphic, is a means of conveying complex, quantitative or categorical data in visual form. The terms *infographic* and *data visualization* are sometimes interchangeably used. As the use of statistical information has grown in the study of politics, so has the need to find methods by which that complex information can be easily and intelligibly

conveyed. Infographics provide the essential messages behind numerical patterns in manners that popular audiences can grasp without needing to understand the finer details of how that information was collected or analyzed. Because of the visual relationships they create among geographic, temporal, and other kids of data, infographics also allow more sophisticated analysts to observe patterns that they might otherwise miss. Finally, cognitive psychologists have demonstrated that visual representations of data aid comprehension and memory. Infographics thus provide different audiences with meaningful access to densely numerical or wordy information that they might otherwise incompletely interpret or recall.

Edward Tufte

Historians of data visualization identify ancient geographic and astronomical maps as among the first infographics. With their graphical representation of complex geographical information, maps perform data visualization's essential task by providing a selection of simplified essential details in information-rich, but intelligible visual forms. In *The Visual Display of Statistical Information,* statistician and political scientist Edward Tufte observes the ways that geographic mapmakers paved the way for others to later merge geography with other forms of data. The 19th century contains a number of important examples of the evolution of data visualization. Effectively conveying the futility of Napoleon's 1812 march on Russia, in 1869, Charles Minard displayed the number of surviving French soldiers as a steadily narrowing stream along their geographic path between the Polish–Russian border and Moscow. Similarly, Dr. John Snow's 1854 mapping of the number of cholera deaths in central London revealed the geographic centrality of a single public water pump that Snow was then able to identify as a likely source of the infection.

Tufte, who remains political science's most cited authority on the aesthetics of infographic design, argues for the principle of high "data–ink ratios," and increasing the amount of information available per inch of graphic. Good infographics should maximize the amount of information by removing unnecessary graph lines, labels, and distractions. Ideally, by using each recorded point to convey multiple measurements, Tufte argues that a well-designed chart can convey a quantity of information that would require substantially greater page space if expressed in the form of numerical tables. Tufte also argues that the benefits of well-displayed data can provide critical advantages in decision making; as an example of this, he describes how charts mapping temperature with O-ring failure might have prevented the 1986 space shuttle *Challenger* disaster. Tufte's intellectual forbears include William Playfair, the 18th- to 19th-century economist and inventor of the major graph forms (including the line graph, bar graph, and pie chart), and semiologist Jacques Bertin, who systematized a set of retinal variables (shape, orientation, size, color, value, texture, and position) that help convey specific kinds of information to audiences of visual data.

Web Infographics

While Tufte's insistence on visual economy remains one important reason for researchers to convey data in visual form, infographics have also become more prominent as the audience for scientific information has broadened. While traditional publications remain important, the Internet allows researchers ever greater ability to disseminate information through institutional Web sites, personal blogs, and multimedia Web features on journalistic Web sites. The information offered through these broadly accessible portals must be easy for a wide array of people to interpret, and infographics provide one easy and visually appealing way to achieve that goal. Cognitive psychologist Stephen Kosslyn has developed a series of eight psychological principles for the creation of effective graphics, which he argues encourage the quickest learning and easiest retention. Attention to these principles—relevance, appropriate knowledge, salience, discriminability, perceptual organization, compatibility, informative changes, and capacity limitations—allows infographic designers to effectively connect with their audiences and to promote comprehension and retention.

While some work on infographics describes best practices for visual communication, scholars have also expressed caution regarding the potential for data visualization to confuse—or even actively manipulate—audiences. Geographer Mark Monmonier has pointed out how the simplification of graphics allows for active advocacy and deception,

distorting rather than enhancing a balanced view of complex information. By disregarding logics of scale, poorly conceived infographics can convey messages at odds with the numbers they ostensibly represent: for example, an object that is doubled in length along a horizontal axis may be quadrupled in perceived volume, creating the visual impression of a much larger numerical difference than is truly the case.

Emily Shaw
Thomas College

See Also: Data Mining; Information Aggregation; Social Computing and Social Information Processing; Web Mapping and Online Politics.

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Information Abundance

The term *information abundance* refers to the idea of ever-increasing amounts of information on a wide variety of topics that becomes accessible to people via growing number of channels and from increasing number of sources. Technologically determined by its dependence on information storage capacities and communication channels' capabilities, as well as availability in terms of price and penetration, the phenomenon is of current interest in the age of the World Wide Web. While the gap between information supply and demand for it grows exponentially, accelerated significantly by the introduction of the Internet, audiences find themselves in a situation of cognitive challenge. The information-age consumer has to rely on technologies and collaboration in an attempt to sort through and make sense of immense amounts of information that is now at his or her fingertips.

Technology, which created the information abundance in the first place, becomes the necessary tool of functioning in an information-abundant world. Some argue that such dependence on technology in information seeking and processing limits users' cognitive development. A relatively easy and aided process, information seeking in a situation of abundance reinforces adherence to the principal of least effort in audiences. Having to deal with tremendous amounts of information may be changing the ways in which people process incoming messages and assess their credibility. Heuristic, as opposed to systematic, ways of sorting through vast amounts of data are making way into user's preferences, discouraging mental effort. The other side of the argument, however, supported by research and speculation alike, illustrates lack of evidence for such claims.

One of the arguments in relation to information abundance states that emerging new technologies, instead of enriching information markets and contributing to the pluralism of opinions, facilitate imbalance and serve as an engine for Western cultural and political domination in the world. Control over design and production of communication technologies, and ownership of databases, expertise, and experience (determined in large part by accessibility of education) provide more developed Western countries, as well as private companies based in those countries, with greater ability to make use of and benefit from information technologies. On the other hand, the phenomenon of information abundance arguably levels the field by providing cheaper, easier access to information, resulting in further education and expertise. The idea of information abundance is closely related to the phenomenon of information overload, researched mostly within the fields of psychology and organizational sociology. While testing the influence of plentiful and excessive information on human capability and decision making, researchers tend to agree that scarcity of time, not the excess of information, usually becomes the key impairing factor in decision making.

In the era of information abundance, the information supplier (media) loses control over the audience's agenda. Researchers suggest that the process of news editors essentially telling the audience what is important is being reversed with the help of new technologies (such as new search engines on the Internet). Instead of receiving and sorting through the information pushed on them by traditional media, the news consumer pulls (with the help of technology) the information that he or she needs from the vast supply. While generating fair amounts of controversy about possible adverse effects on society, development of communication technologies and resulting information abundance find appraisal in making citizen science and citizen journalism possible, giving voice to greater numbers of people, simplifying access to knowledge and education for the underprivileged. The notion of information abundance did not appear with the development of the Internet and emergence of social media. The latest advances in technology, however, provided an unprecedented acceleration in rates of accumulation and distribution of information. New groups gain access to information and produce unique messages that become available to the public. While ill-researched at the moment, the effects of information abundance are yet to demonstrate themselves fully.

Dzmitry Yuran
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

See Also: Cognitive Surplus; Framing Theory, Social Media and; Gate Keeping Theory and Social Media; Information Aggregation; Informationalized Nations Versus Industrialized Nations; Technological Determinism.

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Information Aggregation

The World Wide Web has changed dramatically in recent years, not just in sheer number of users, but, in particular, in the new forms of participation it offers. Web 2.0 technologies now make it potentially possible for every Internet user to have a voice and a worldwide audience—linking people from around the world in an unforeseen way—and have been hailed as a new paradigm in Internet communication.

The rise of social media sites, such as blogs, wikis, Digg, and Flickr, among others, underscores the transformation of the Web to a participatory medium in which users are collaboratively creating, evaluating, and distributing information. Social media sites share four characteristics: (1) Users create or contribute content in a variety of media types; (2) users annotate content with tags; (3) users evaluate content actively by voting or passively by using content; and (4) users create social networks by designating other users with similar interests as contacts or friends. This entry is to present the basic ideas of information aggregation.

Social media not only allow public relations practitioners to reach out to and engage their publics in conversation but also provide an avenue to strengthen media relations. More advanced users have a greater feeling that social media have been integrated widely into the industry than those who are using more common tools. Information aggregation is a formal framework in which are expressed means and tools for the alliance of information originating from different sources. It has been stated that a group of individuals who have to choose one of two alternatives by expressing their individual opinions, with the final verdict determined according to simple majority rule based on these opinions, would likely make the correct choice. Moreover, as J. Paroush states, this likelihood would tend to become a complete certainty if the number of members of this group tends to infinity, and this statement lays the foundations of the ideology of the democratic regime, providing the theoretical justification of democratic participation in public affairs and in social choice.

Condorcet Jury Theorem

The Condorcet jury theorem gives certain conditions under which majority rule is superior to dictatorship for a society composed of individuals with identical preferences, but diverse information. A precursor of the statistical fact known as the "law of large numbers" shows that the decisions made under majority rule are asymptotically perfect as the population of voters becomes large. A. McLennan believes it is generally the case that the probability of making the optimal choice converges to one, as the number of voters goes to infinity.

The formal framework is explicitly based on the idea that political institutions have a constructive role to play in order to allow for an efficient aggregation of all the socially useful information that is dispersed among individuals. T. Piketty believes that it states under which conditions majority-rule voting yields efficient information aggregation.

The Condorcet jury theorem provides a theoretical basis for democracy, describes K. K. Ladha, assuming that a population of size n has to choose between two possible policies $P = A$ or B, and that all agents have the same state-dependent utility function $U(P/s)$: If the state of the world s is equal to s_X, they all prefer policy X to policy Y, $U(A/s_X) > U(B/s_X)$, and conversely, if $s=s_Y$, $U(B/s_Y) > U(A/s_Y)$; further assume that all agents have the same initial prior beliefs about the state of the world $\mu_0(s_X) = \mu_0(s_Y) = 1/2$ and that they all receive a signal $\sigma = \sigma_X$ or σ_Y drawn from the same conditional distribution, such that Prob $(\sigma = \sigma_X/s = s_X)$ = Prob $(\sigma = \sigma_Y/s = s_Y) = p > 1/2$. Then, the Condorcet jury theorem simply states that if free elections are held, then the probability that the efficient policy (X in state s_X and Y in state s_Y) wins a majority of the vote tends to 1 as n goes to $+\infty$. In other words, majority-rule voting allows efficient information aggregation, and nobody would prefer to be a dictator. Piketty observes that this result is a trivial consequence of the law of large numbers, but it is powerful.

Role of Elections

Concerning political institutions, Piketty proposes that electoral systems need to be complemented by nonvoting institutions, and in particular by political parties, in order to achieve efficient information aggregation. A central role of elections is the aggregation of information dispersed within a population. T. Feddersen and W. Pesendorfer explain that elections have two distinct roles in society. First, they serve as a mechanism to decide policies when individuals disagree about appropriate action. Second, they aggregate information dispersed in the population.

Why are policies influenced by polls? One possibility is that polls aggregate information dispersed among affected constituents. Policymakers are often reluctant to say that this purpose guides policy at all. President Kennedy, for instance, famously kept his polling numbers locked away in a safe in his brother's house, rather than admit to using them. President Reagan, as stated by J. Green, was often viewed as making policy based mainly on his ideology, polled obsessively, taking polls "prior to his inauguration, while he was being inaugurated, and the day after he was inaugurated."

Jaime Raúl Seixas Fonseca
Technical University of Lisbon

See Also: Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Data Mining; Evolution of Social Media; Innovation and Technology; Media and Communications Policy; News Media; Polling.

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Informationalized Nations Versus Industrialized Nations

The progress of human civilization, as explained by A. Toffler, includes three periodical phenomena: agriculturalization, industrialization, and informationalization. Apart from a few tiny, agrarian tribal populations in the world, the agriculturalization era, which was mostly seen between 8000 B.C.E. and 1750 C.E., has been totally exhausted.

However, the industrialization process, which has revolutionized life in many parts of the world for the last three centuries, is still in effect due to the fact that, as the economic growth of many countries continues, some are at their early stages of industrialization, and they are in pursuit of industrialization like the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Japan. Informationalization has begun with the technologic and scientific revolution of the post–World War II era. This period is also known as the space age, information age, electronic era, or global village, thus indicating the shift from the industrialization process toward informationalization.

Informationalization is the new technological paradigm of the 21st century, to the point where Kerric Harvey argues that a nation's level of informationalization is now more economically, politically, and culturally significant than its relative degree of industrialization. Contrary to the material-based production of industrialization dating back to the 19th and 20th centuries, informationalization refers to the production of immaterial goods.

There has been recent development in information and communication technologies, such as computers, mobile devices, and the Internet, which can contribute to the rapid flow of money and information. These technological revolutions have eroded physical boundaries in politics, economics, and other aspects of world affairs. Therefore, there is a technological change from the conventional notion of industrialization to the involvement of information, knowledge, and communication in production and marketing industries.

In this respect, there are two aspects of the debate, respectively, as the cases altering the industrialization process and the cases challenging the industrialization process, which seem more salient while explaining the dilemma between the informationalized nations and industrialized nations.

Information-Based Cases Altering the Industrialization Process

In accordance with the Schumpeterian perspective emphasizing the importance of innovation, firms and states profit when they innovate. One can claim that using information technologies in industries is of utmost importance. For example, J. A. Cantwell argues that Asian countries, such as Japan and Korea, entered global competition later than the United States; however, they concentrated on innovation more than the United States.

Instrumentation, which is designed for scientific purposes, has a broad range of applications within industrial technologies. As suggested by N. Rosenberg, instrumentation and techniques have shifted from one scientific field to another. There have been interactions among different areas of science. The electron microscope (EM) and nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) can be given as examples for scientific instrumentation that have been transferred from one field to another. The EM was first designed to examine atomic structure, but it later became a useful instrument in medical research. In the same vein, NMR was first designed to measure the magnetic moments of atomic nuclei, but it was later used in analytical chemistry and biology.

The semiconductor industry is hardly unique in its experience of transferring research instrumentation, as opposed to transferring knowledge derived from research, from the university laboratory to the factory level. For example, ion implementation was first designed for high-energy particle physics by academic scientists, but it was later used as an alternative deposition technique in the semiconductor industry. In the same way, the scanning electron microscope has become an important measurement tool in the production of microelectronic elements because of its higher zoom capability, which cannot be obtained by optical microscopes.

Similarly, the invention of the laser resulted in a beginning of basic research in the fields of optics

for the purpose of using lasers in fiber optic transmission. The invention of the transistor in 1947 can be considered one of the most prominent milestones in microelectronics, thereby leading to the production of the first personal computer in the 1980s. Therefore, one can claim that science and information retain dynamic features, thus giving an impetus for transferring and diversifying industries.

There have been crucial changes for many other industrial products as well. For example, today's automobiles are manufactured with data information and communication units that can mediate their basic functions, including acceleration, breaking, and steering. In terms of industry on household appliances, a new washing machine has a microcomputer with controlling and information systems, instead of the mechanical ones of the 1980s and 1990s. Moreover, a primitive 1990s cell phone, which was capable of making only basic phone calls, later transformed into smartphones comprising navigation, wireless data communication (Edge, 3G, LTE, bluetooth and Wi-Fi), digital cameras, digital compasses, accelerometers, and light sensor units. With the inclusion of new features, smartphone usage has dramatically increased.

Along with advances in communication technologies, the information revolution boomed especially in late 1990s because of the rising number of personal computers and Internet usage. Increasing speed and mobility of wireless communication networks such as 3G, LTE, and Wi-Fi further accelerated the use of the Internet around the world. Therefore, the Internet has had the lion's share of marketing and purchasing in the world for the last two decades. Thus, advances in information technologies have led to the occurrence of a highly developed, informationalized society, and it has also contributed to the emergence of alternative marketing and purchasing industries.

Information-Based Cases Challenging the Industrialization Process

Informationalized nations have challenged industrialized nations over environmental issues. The dilemma between industrialization and the promotion of environmental protection in accordance with scientific information has hitherto become a matter of debate. Thus, the 1992 Earth Summit also drew attention to this issue and highlighted the link between environmental problems and economic development. There are two core arguments as to whether industrialization is positive for the environment or not.

Proponents of industrialization argue that economic growth and wealth contribute to fund environmental protection needs, to develop higher environmental standards, and to adapt environmental technology used for the protection and prevention of environmental problems. However, opponents of free trade have concerns about the preservation of nature due to the impact of industrialization policies. They argue that industrial activities will lead to increased pollution (as a result of overconsumption and transportation) and the extravagant use of resources. In addition to these concerns, countries' reluctance to sign environmental agreements because of their industrial policies will inevitably result in environmental problems.

The information-based conflicts around environmental issues take place in two specific areas, respectively, known as ozone layer depletion and climate change.

The Depletion of the Ozone Layer

The ozone layer plays a critical role in protecting human life on Earth by absorbing harmful ultraviolet radiation from the sun. In 1974, two American scientists suggested that the ozone layer was being depleted by anthropogenic chemicals, notably chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). In 1977, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) organized a conference attended mostly by scientists from 32 countries, and the output of the conference was a world plan of action aiming to coordinate future research on ozone layer depletion.

However, all these efforts did not create a significant result until a hole in the ozone layer was discovered above Antarctica in 1985. In 1988, scientists from around the world reached a consensus that CFCs and other synthetic chemicals were the primary cause for ozone layer depletion, and this fact was declared in the Ozone Trends Panel in 1988.

Meanwhile, in 1977, the United States, Canada, Norway, Sweden, and Finland (subsequently

known as the Toronto Group) pushed the UNEP for remedial action. Members of the European Community, which accounted for 45 percent of the world's CFC production, strongly resisted such an action. The Toronto Group proposed a complete ban of nonessential production and usage of CFCs, while the European Community advocated only limiting production. The UNEP's endeavors led to an international convention in Vienna in 1985.

Two years later, the resistance of the European Community and Japan was removed, and the Montreal Protocol was signed in September 1987, aiming to reduce CFC production by 50 percent of 1986 levels by 1999 and freeze halon production at 1986 levels by 1992. This was a success for the UNEP because the states had signed the protocol without any firm scientific evidence that proved the causality between ozone layer depletion and CFC production. Several months after the Montreal Protocol was signed, scientists proposed scientific evidence that linked CFC production and ozone layer depletion at the Ozone Trends Panel at the beginning of 1988.

Industrialized countries were responsible for almost 90 percent of CFC consumption, although they represented only 25 percent of the world's population. Therefore, it seems that the environmental regime on ozone layer depletion was successful. However, there are new problems that have occurred in the last two decades. Emerging global economic players like China, India, and Brazil consume ozone-depleting substances in refrigeration and air-conditioning systems that will increase with further industrialization. They may ask incentives from developed countries in order to develop substitutes to replace CFC and halon. Developed countries' resistance would jeopardize the future of the protocol.

Climate Change

Besides ozone layer depletion, the other striking environmental problem that the world faces is related to climate change. Climate change engrosses not only the scientific community, but also policymakers. In the international arena, there have been some initiatives to draw attention to this problem. Scientific conferences, panels, protocols, and global institutions all played roles in addressing the climate change phenomenon. Therefore, it can be claimed that implementing policies in accordance with the findings of the scientific community has become crucial.

For example, the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which reinforces the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, commits developed countries to reducing their collective emissions of six key greenhouse gases (GHSs) by at least 5 percent below 1990 levels from 2008 to 2012. Furthermore, the Climate Change Conference, which was held in Denmark, offers a framework for the alleviation of climate change beyond 2012. However, what is apparent is that the climate change is still on the agenda, and its main provisions wait to be collectively adopted.

Some countries are reluctant to agree with the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol because of the fact that it leads to the creation of ecotaxes that would provoke public hostility. On the other hand, provisions on reducing gas emissions would influence powerful energy producers and car manufacturers.

Moreover, enacting legislation on climate change can trigger energy lobbyists and split them in accordance to their industrial interests. According to J. Broder and J. Mouawad, producers of natural gas are battling with the oil companies. Electrical companies are fighting over the use of coal and emphasizing wind power or other renewable energy resources. Coal companies are combatting against natural gas firms.

Therefore, climate change is vitally important, and there is a need to take precautionary measures before it causes unsolvable problems. However, today's individual states are not willing to adopt and implement internationally acknowledged scientific provisions on climate change due to their own industrial interests.

Conclusion

One can argue that there has been a rapid flow of information, thus giving way to the development of new technologies and diversifying industries with information-based ones. However, information technologies do not always go well with industries. Nations adherent to the principles of scientific information can challenge nations making profits from conventional industries.

Informationalized nations defy industrialized nations through diverse industrial activities and

their scientific standpoints in dealing with environmental problems, which emerged as a result of industrial activities. Henceforth, informationalized nations will be on the agenda of the world politics for some time due to the fact that they will continue to shape industrial and environmental policies and challenge nations dependent on conventional industries.

Ahmet Kaya
Independent Scholar
Hakan Aydogan
Independent Scholar

See Also: *Al Gore's Penguin Army*; Developing Nations; Global Warming and Climate Change; International Examples of Political Parties and Social Media.

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Innocence of Muslims, The

The Innocence of Muslims is a trailer for a film, supposedly about the life of Muhammad, which appeared on YouTube in July 2012. It was posted by a man using the alias Sam Bacile, and turned out to have been produced by Nakoula Basseley Nakoula, an Egyptian Copt living in the United States. It came to prominence in September of that same year, after it was dubbed into Arabic and shared among anti-Muslim communities, eventually coming to the attention of Egyptian television station Al-Nas, where it was presented as a popular American film that denigrated the Prophet of Islam. The true notoriety associated with this short 14-minute clip occurred when protests against the film broke out on September 11, 2012. Aside from the associations of the date with the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, these protests were significant because they occurred in a variety of Arab Spring states, including Egypt, and were initially, erroneously, tied to the attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya.

The Innocence of Muslims and its producer are indicative of a couple of much wider social media trends. Many people claim that there has been a significant rise in Islamophobia since the 9/11 attacks, and that the Internet provides a means for people to vent hatred or prejudice against Muslims with relatively little fear of reprisal. Alternatively, the methods used to generate interest in the film and the likely motives behind its distribution could be seen as an example of online "trolls" at work.

Film Content

The claims of Islamophobia in regard to this film are based largely on its themes. In the space of only 14 minutes, the film makes a rather large number of points about the character and actions of Muhammad and their relationship to Islam as a whole, nearly all of which would be deeply offensive to the general public, and especially to Muslims. Muhammad as a man is depicted as a hybrid of domineering master and effeminate vacillator. As master, he marries various women, some of them forcefully, and is depicted forcing sex upon them and upon their slaves or women he has conquered in battle. There are also mentions of him marrying a child and approving of his troops sexually abusing children from conquered territories. As the indecisive, effeminate prophet, Muhammad's angelic visions are linked to placing his head between a woman's thighs.

He is shown being especially dependent upon the support of Kadijah and submissive to her. Another scene shows his men discussing him and asking whether he is gay. This is followed up by a further question of whether he is dominant or submissive in these acts, to which a resounding answer of "both" is given. Still other scenes show Muhammad interacting with non-Muslims. These involve him demanding conversion or payment of "extortion" money, which is a reference to the traditional tax on non-Muslim monotheists called the *jizya*. Refusal to obey leads to declarations of war, murdering men in front of their wives before mutilating their corpses, and admonitions to give up all their goods and flee.

Apart from these depictions of Muhammad, the short film also makes a host of claims about Islam. The opening of the clip involves the destruction of a Christian library or church by Muslim mobs while police stand by and watch. Then, Christians are shown discussing how they have been tortured and forced to confess to crimes against their people that they did not commit. At several points, it shows Muhammad or Muslim soldiers referring to the Koran and calling it perfect and gracious and holy, but always after making claims regarding the sexual liberties or killing that it allows. It is also depicted as having been written by someone else entirely, who states outright that it will be a mixture of Jewish scripture and the New Testament, but done in a way to look somehow new. The portrait painted of both Muhammad and Islam is meant to provoke a reaction because it touches upon things that are generally considered taboo in Islam, such as depicting an image of Muhammad, pedophilia, homosexuality, and questioning the origin and validity of the Koran.

The pattern of provocation is not only seen in the material in the clip, but also in the actors who ensured its distribution, including Florida pastor Terry Jones, who is famous for such things as wanting to host an International Burn the Koran Day. In the world of online social media, this practice is known as "trolling," and those who go about provoking reactions are called "trolls." These individuals promoted this YouTube clip from utter obscurity to center stage in an international protest movement. In the past, there were plenty of people with strong and even hateful views who would publish their beliefs. However, distribution required access to significant amounts of money or influence because publishing was expensive and often subject to state control.

Presently, though states often still attempt to regulate speech and media, they are generally rendered unable to comprehensively prohibit material because there are countless people committed to ensuring that they can slip information past firewalls and other technological barriers. Trolls are even harder to control because much of their work is simply done by sharing offensive links or statements in the comments section of articles or Web sites that are commonly accessed, and which often bear no relationship to the topic of their hatred. Once the material enters the mainstream, links are quickly replicated and shared, and it is nearly impossible to stop the spread of information.

Political Ramifications

The Innocence of Muslims is a case study of social threat posed by the potent combination of hate speech, easy access to distribution channels, the lack of context and accountability on upload sites, and the actions of provocateurs who seek to create social unrest or reactions. In this case, not only the film's maker and its promoters are responsible for stoking reactions, but also the inaccurate representation of the clip on Egyptian television as a proper film with some level of U.S. government approval or involvement. It has been argued that conflating protests expressing displeasure at

Protesters on September 20, 2012, in Sydney, Australia, display their anger about the controversial film The Innocence of Muslims. *The film trailer was supposedly about the Prophet Muhammad.*

the film with attacks by terror groups on the U.S. Consulate and CIA facility in Benghazi, Libya, made the film even more notorious. These attacks led to the first killing of a U.S. ambassador in decades, J. Christopher Stevens, ambassador to Libya, and three other embassy staff.

Further muddying the waters was the timing of the events in the last stages of the U.S. presidential election. In an effort to prohibit a rush to judgment and to encourage calm, President Obama's ambassador to the United Nations, Susan Rice, subsequently appeared on several political talk shows, and suggested that the attacks in Libya were spontaneous protests in response to the film. It soon came to light that this was not the case, and the Obama administration was accused, chiefly although not exclusively by its conservative opponents, of downplaying a terror attack for political reasons, a politically charged accusation. Given that these accusations reached their zenith in the contested period just prior to the 2012 presidential election, there has been some commentary regarding possible over-playing of the incident by conservatives for strategic purposes. There has been an ongoing series of hearings about the sequence of events in Benghazi, and much of the focus remains on the press releases and public statements regarding the supposed connection to *The Innocence of Muslims*.

The confluence of events that led to *The Innocence of Muslims* going from a nearly invisible YouTube clip to the spark of violent international protests and political scandal at the highest level of U.S. politics is unprecedented. To a certain degree, the volatility of social media because of its ability to quickly go viral and the ease with which information can be completely misrepresented is unsurprising.

The explosive nature of these events was further stoked by the way in which the clip played into stereotypes of Muslims as uncivilized, violent, and overly sexualized, while confirming the suspicions of some in the Middle East that the West is anti-Muslim and morally degenerate. The fallout from this incident is known to have included not just protests, but also deaths, and political ramifications for the U.S. government are yet to be determined. At the very least, the inability of governments to restrict potentially inflammatory material and the tension between free and responsible speech were brought into stark relief by this incident.

Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St. Andrews

See Also: Africa, north; Al Jazeera Effect; Arab Spring; Hate Speech, Online and Social Media; Islam and Social Media; Middle East.

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Innovation and Technology

The technology of social media depends on mechanisms that allow users to contribute content. In this way, as described by Tim O'Reilly, companies no longer offer products for consumers to buy, but platforms for users to exchange information. The incredible proliferation of social media technologies since 2000 is, in large part, from the shared set of resources that they can use to create their services. Many of the technologies behind social media were developed for other purposes, and almost all social media depend on infrastructures that they did not create (such as the World Wide Web and cell phone networks), so the innovation of social media companies is as much in how to harness the efforts of users for a social media platform as they are to develop new techniques for enabling public participation.

It could be argued that computer technology was social after the introduction of time-sharing computers in the 1960s. This method of sharing access to centralized mainframe computers meant that users were no longer in competition for scarce resources, and were encouraged to support each other by leaving files in common storage areas for other users, a practice that would be developed into e-mail. The development of the ARPANet encouraged users to share information between dispersed geographic locations, and researchers developed several conventions for group communication that are familiar today. Michael Hart, at the University of Illinois Material Research Lab, desiring to pay back the expensive computing resources he was given for free, decided to make the full text of the U.S. Declaration of Independence available to users of the network on July 4, 1971. This was the first e-text of a collection that would later become known as Project Gutenberg. ARPA leadership demanded that users of the network communicate electronically, leading to the development of protocols that allowed users to collaborate in groups.

USENET, or what was sometimes called the "poor person's ARPANet," was developed in 1979, based on a protocol for communication between Unix mainframes. USENET relied on periodic connections between mainframes, usually over telephone lines, to distribute messages. The first connections were to support computer users between Duke Medical School, Duke University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Because any user could create a group to foster a conversation between individuals with a mutual interest, USENET communities quickly grew. The network was helped by Bell Labs' sponsorship of a cross-country link in the early days of the network. Michael Hauben, an early USENET user and an eloquent spokesperson for its potential, coined the term "netizen" to refer to the new medium that was controlled by its audience.

Outside the United States, a French service known as Minitel brought many online services to the wider public, demonstrating how users would embrace this kind of service. First demonstrated in 1980 and available for users in 1983, Minitel was a small household terminal developed to replace the paper phone book, and promised to provide businesses with commercial listings. Soon, additional services were added: library catalogs, transportation schedules and ticketing, USENET information, e-mail, chat, and newspapers. One of the most used (and most infamous) services was Minitel Rose, an online sex chat that in peak periods of usage threatened to overwhelm the system.

In the United States, bulletin board systems (BBSs) allowed users to dial into a mainframe computer and share messages (and sometimes chat or explore virtual worlds) with other users. The first of these were available in the late 1970s, but one of the best known of these was the Well, created when Stewart Brand brought his Whole Earth Catalog online. This service was first profitable in 1987, and had a user base of 2,000. Other consumer dialup services were available at this time; Compuserv, which had begun in 1969

as a subsidiary of Golden United Life Insurance, was spun off as a separate service in 1975, and allowed users access to e-mail and other online services. Steve Case, who had been inspired by connecting to computer users all over the country, started a service in 1985 that would become America Online (AOL).

A mechanism to bring these different services together through one interface was developed by Tim Berners-Lee in the early 1990s. Berners-Lee developed the hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) so that applications like his WorldWideWeb could share pages that were formatted according to the hypertext markup language (HTML), which standardized the way that information was stored. Although the first Web browsers, software to access the World Wide Web, were available in 1992, search engines were not yet in use. Some users, in an effort to be helpful, created lists of interesting and useful Web sites that they discovered. These Web logs came to be known as blogs.

Using HTML, many different types of documents were easily made available, but the interactive capabilities of the Web (however rudimentary) allowed for input from users. In 1994, Ward Cunningham developed software to allow computer programmers to share their research using interactive Web pages as part of the Portland Pattern Repository. Based in part on hypertext applications that were readily available for single users, Cunningham's insight was to deploy a distributed hypertext that was available over the Web that users could quickly and easily edit. He made the software available on his personal Web site in 1995, calling it WikiWikiWeb, a conceptualization of Tim Berners-Lee's application WorldWideWeb, "wiki" being a Hawai'ian word for "fast." His software allowed his community to quickly collaborate.

The browser wars of the 1990s, where competing companies gave away browser software to access the Web and earned money by selling proprietary services, led to browsers with features that helped companies enrich their online presence. One of the protocols was known as real simple syndication (RSS). The idea behind RSS was that instead of expecting customers to visit a Web site—what was known as a "pull"—it would be better to "push" information out to those who might be interested. RSS allowed companies to push short notifications to potential customers who had subscribed to their RSS feeds. By subscribing, the notifications would show up in the user's Web browser when he or she started the application. This idea was borrowed by Facebook and other services that encourage users to sign back often to see updates from friends, colleagues, or companies that interested them.

Rise of Social Media

One of the first platforms to take advantage of the insight that users would donate their time and expertise to a project that would serve a social need was Wikipedia. Other encyclopedias had begun to appear online, but these were based on publishing enterprises and an expert-based mode of creating content. In January 2001, the organizers of a project to generate a free encyclopedia, Nupedia, went online with the intention of rapidly iterating the drafting, review, and publishing process. Although Nupedia had only created a dozen articles, in a few months, Wikipedia had over 8,000; after its first year of operation, there were more than 20,000. The first international Wikipedias appeared that same year, even though about 90 percent of the first Wikipedia articles were written in English.

The technical infrastructure for Wikipedia is remarkably simple to use. Based on Ward Cunningham's WikiWikiWeb concept, users can quickly begin editing the text of encyclopedia entries without knowing anything about Web programming or database management. Instead, users may edit pages with intuitive tags that the platform then converts into styles and links. In this way, the power and the flexibility of the World Wide Web ensure that a wide variety of users have access to the pages of the encyclopedia, while the WikiWikiWeb conventions allow users with varying degrees of computing expertise to participate in the creation of pages.

However, deciding to use this flexible, intuitive platform was not the main contribution of Wikipedia. Giving users the capability to create and edit pages does not in itself generate a usable resource. From the beginning, the encyclopedia announced clear guidelines for its users on what the expectations of the overall project were. For instance, the convention of the "neutral point of view" for articles was announced in the first year, requiring

that users do not present articles from a partisan position, but instead consider how different people will consider the topic. The international community involved in the project has taken this policy in interesting directions: for instance, the objectivity of the article on the launch of Sputnik in 1957 was questioned because it referred to the "Sputnik scare." Although this is a typical way of thinking of the aftermath of the launch, when Americans were concerned that they were falling behind in the quest for space, readers pointed out that this phrase only applied to people within the United States.

In 2003, when the encyclopedia contained more than 100,000 pages, the basic structure of the arbitration system was codified. A number of trusted users were given administrative privileges, allowing them to resolve conflicts regarding the encyclopedia, and a dispute policy was announced that explained what would happen when different users of the site disagreed about its contents. These developments helped develop the project because contributors made the editorial policies of the site transparent, but they had another important effect. By distributing the authority for maintaining the platform, much in the same way that AOL and other content providers had done in the previous generation of services, Wikipedia ensured that devoted users had a stake in the project. In this way, the most motivated and respected contributors to the encyclopedia were awarded for their contributions, giving them the sensation of pride that encouraged them to continue working on the project. Other awards and roles were developed that continued to respect the contributions of Wikipedia users.

China blocked Wikpedia in 2004 several times, and continued to block the site periodically in following years. In 2005, when there were more that 750,000 English pages alone, Wikipedia and other social media began to appear in the mainstream media. The article about John Seigenthaler, a journalist, was vandalized to accuse him of conspiracy in the Kennedy assassinations. The incorrect information was not detected for months. In addition to harnessing the creative power of their users, another way that social media technologies profit from their customers is by mobilizing information about them; as described by Tim O'Reilly, the key to a Web 2.0 company is to collect data on what users do, and then profit from it. The one company that has maximized the use of data generated by users is Google. Steven Levy has documented the rise of Google from its humble origins in a Stanford University dorm room to a multinational corporation, explaining along the way how Google has studied what its users do and has used that information to innovate new ways of helping them to do it better.

For instance, in order to improve search results, Google studied what users were looking for and identified which terms were likely to be searched together. The word *bio*, Levy points out, could mean "biography" or "biological." By studying which other words go along with the search, Google can understand the difference: When *Gandhi* is in the search box, the word must mean "biography"; but when *warfare* is in the search box, the word must mean "biological." Similarly, Google has used typing errors to help improve search results. By noticing what corrections users make in successive searches (e.g., looking first for *enterpenurial*, and then *entrepreneurial*), Google can help bypass user error and direct them to what they are looking for sooner.

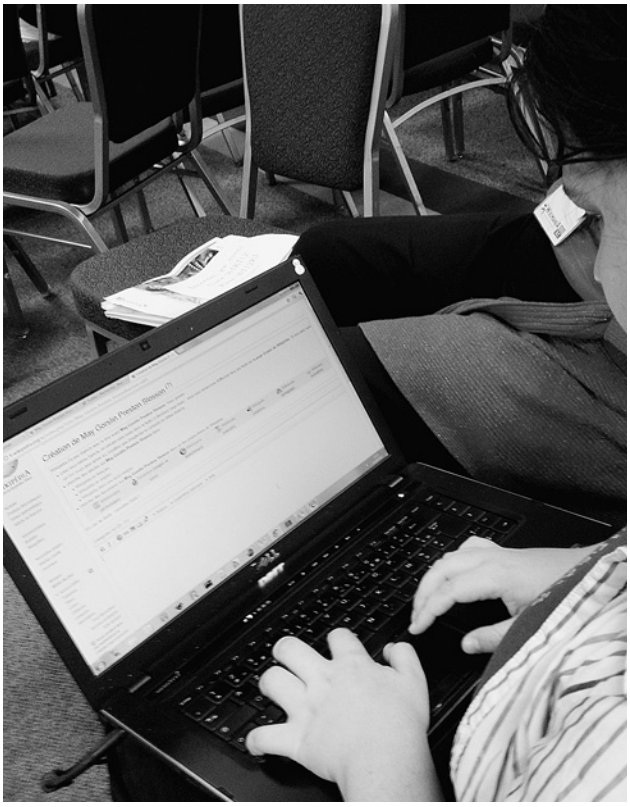
User information is also helpful in creating some of Google's key products, such as advertising. While other search engines had sold preferred placement in search results, Google decided early on that it wanted to provide a reliable service for its competitors. Instead, the company decided that it would sell advertising space based on what its customers were looking for and interested in. Google's AdWords service allows companies to bid on specific words, tying their advertisement to a selected number of times that a word appears in search results. This allowed smaller companies to gain access to Google's customers; in television advertising, in contrast, only the largest corporations have access to the most profitable consumers.

Criticisms of Social Media Technology

Social media have provided meaningful ways for users to collaborate, share, and access information in ways that go beyond the resources that any single company could have developed by paying employees. These services, however, are not without their critics. Privacy drives many of the concerns from users. Although Wikipedia

and other services can be credited for providing a usable mechanism for large numbers of people to donate their time, this means that many people are working without compensation. Trebor Scholz edited a volume titled *Digital Labor* about concerns over possible exploitation because users contribute their creative effort to social media, and companies use that content to turn a profit. These critics consider whether the contributions from netizens, who have made many billion dollar companies, are so different from *Harry Potter* or *Star Trek* fans, who add to the depth of media corporations' holdings.

Another issue is what has come to be known as content that is developed according to "geek priorities." Although social media have been used to develop what seem to be comprehensive resources for the study of culture, society, and even history, the development has been directed by the interests of users who tend to be white, male, in younger demographics, and American. As Roy Rosenzweig has pointed out, what is possible to find on Wikipedia is slanted. One critic pointed out that the article on Hurricane Francis is five times as long as the one on Chinese art. This is not to say that resources developed by traditional media are free from this kind of bias; some scholars have argued that encyclopedias and scholarly work in general are always conditioned by an unconscious pressure toward what the creators think is the most important. In order to address topics that have been underrepresented on Wikipedia, some groups have organized editing brigades, such as the March 2013 Feminists Engage Wikipedia.



A female editor working on Wikipedia content to address the site's gender imbalance at a WikiWomen's Edit-a-Thon held during the Wikimania 2012 gathering in Washington, D.C.

Given the way that international protest movements have relied on social media to organize themselves, social media has been criticized by human rights organizations because their policies, geared toward an American audience, do not consider their responsibilities toward people in other countries. For instance, Facebook's policy that individuals and not groups may create their pages—and the policy that users have only one account and use their legal names—is inhibiting to those who wish to use Facebook to organize. As documented in *Access Controlled*, for instance, YouTube's prohibition of violence in user contributions has led to documentary evidence about police brutality to be deleted by savvy regimes that seek to remain in power. It might be too much to ask organizations to respect the human rights of individuals when they make their policies, but it could also be said that companies that seek to profit from social media technology have a responsibility to those who use it in contexts outside of the United States.

Christopher Leslie
New York University

See Also: Digital Revolution; Web 2.0; Wikipedia Misuse; Wikis and Collaborative Project Web Sites; World Wide Web, History of the.

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Inouye, Dan

Daniel "Dan" Ken Inouye was, until December 2012, Hawai'i's senior U.S. senator. A lifelong member of the Democratic Party, his service as president pro tempore of the Senate made him the Asian American with the highest rank in the history of American politics in 2012, and third in line of succession to the presidency after the vice president. Until his death in December 2012, Inouye served the Committee on Appropriations of the U.S. Senate as chair.

Military Career and Education

Dan Inouye witnessed the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, where he was a medical volunteer. The U.S. Army ended the ban on Japanese American soldiers in 1943, prompting Inouye to postpone his educational plans and enrollment at the University of Hawai'i, where he was a premedical student, and enlist in the Army. He was a volunteer member of the Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team, a unit almost entirely comprised of Japanese Americans. In his first year of military service, Inouye attained the rank of sergeant and led his platoon. His regiment served abroad in Italy and France starting in 1944, and he was promoted to second lieutenant for his two-week stint in battle, attempting to relieve the surrounded Lost Battalion. He was shot in the chest during these weeks, but was saved by two silver dollars he had in his shirt pocket.

In April 1945, Inouye was seriously wounded in Italy as he led his platoon. Shot in the stomach, he proceeded to attack, and even refused treatment in favor of rallying his troops to destroy a second enemy gunning position. He personally advanced to within 10 yards of his next target, and as he had with the first, destroyed it using grenades and his machine gun. At that point, his right arm was severed at the elbow and left him next to his own primed grenade; he called back his own troops in case he lost control of his severed arm, removed the grenade from his right hand, and threw it at his target with his left hand. He managed one last burst of fire before he was wounded again, this time in the leg, collapsing from blood loss and shock. Inouye endured the amputation of the remainder of his right arm without proper anesthesia. In the hospital, Inouye met and became friends with Bob Dole, also a patient. The two maintained their friendship after that time.

Despite these trials, Inouye remained in the military until 1947, and left with the rank of captain. He was honorably discharged with the Bronze Star, two Purple Hearts, the Distinguished Service Cross, and 12 other citations. The Distinguished Service Cross was upgraded to the Medal of Honor in 2000 by President Clinton, alongside 19 other Nisei veterans; these men were initially believed to have been denied proper recognition based on their race.

In 2000, the emperor of Japan awarded the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun to Inouye for his career in public service. In 2006, the U.S. Navy Memorial bestowed the Naval Heritage Award on Inouye in recognition of his support of the U.S. Navy and his military service. In 2007, French President Nicolas Sarkozy inducted Inouye as a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor as a living veteran of World War II who had served on French soil. In 2011, in honor of his work on behalf of Japanese and American goodwill, Inouye received the highest Japanese honor available to a foreigner not a head of state: the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Paulownia Flowers. He was the seventh American to receive the honor, and the first Japanese American to do so.

Forced by his disability to change intended career—he had originally planned to be a surgeon—Inouye returned to the University of

Hawai'i using the GI Bill and studied political science. He graduated in 1950 with his bachelor of arts degree and went on to earn his juris doctorate from Washington, D.C.'s George Washington Law School in 1953.

Political Career

Senator Inouye first ran for office in 1954. That year, he was elected to join Hawai'i's Territorial House of Representatives and selected to be the Democratic majority leader. In 1958, he joined the Territorial Senate on the eve of statehood for Hawai'i. When Hawai'i was granted statehood in 1959, Inouye was elected to represent Hawai'i in the U.S. House of Representatives and served there until 1962; that year, he went to the Senate, and until his death in late 2012, he remained there, serving his ninth term in a row. Inouye was the first Japanese American elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

Inouye was the keynote speaker in Chicago at 1968's tumultuous Democratic National Convention. In the 1970s, Inouye was a member of the Watergate Committee, and this investigatory role was reprised many times in his political career. Inouye was the chair of the Select Committee on Intelligence from 1975 until 1979. In the 1980s, Inouye was the Senate Democratic Central America Study Group chair and the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America's senior counselor.

Inouye was perhaps most well known for his role as the Iran–Contra Committee chair. It was during the exchange with Lt. Colonel Oliver North that he referred to the Nuremberg trials with counsel for North taking great umbrage to the reference. His service during the Iran–Contra affair gave rise to his now-famous description of the "secret government";

> There exists a shadowy Government with its own Air Force, its own Navy, its own fundraising mechanism, and the ability to pursue its own ideas of the national interest, free from all checks and balances, and free from the law itself.

In 2009, Inouye replaced Robert Byrd as chair of the Appropriations Committee, where he remained until his death in December 2012. He also served on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee within the Senate until his death. At the time of his passing, Inouye was also the Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee's ranking Democrat, and he was on the Indian Affairs Committee. Inouye also served on the Rules Committee at the time of his death.

If Inouye had remained in office until June 29, 2014, he would have been the United States's longest-serving senator in history; instead, he was the second-longest after Robert Byrd. Inouye announced in 2012 that he intended to campaign for a 10th Senate term in 2016, a record number of terms; at that point, he would have been 92 years old. Senator Inouye entered the hospital on December 5, 2012, needing his oxygen intake monitored, and remained there until he died on December 17, 2012, of respiratory issues.

Social Media Use

Senator Inouye had a Starscore of 43,279 as of December 2012. He was number 53,171 on the Global Social Media Chart on December 13, 2012. Inouye's Media Power Rank was 51 of 541 on that same date. As of December 2012, he enjoyed almost 5,400 YouTube views, more than 5,500 Facebook fans, and more than 8,300 Twitter followers.

At least one opponent, Republican Cam Cavasso, saw Inouye's social media presence as a weak point for attack at election time. Cavasso's primary strategy in the 2010 election was to launch a social media–based campaign. Cavasso used Facebook, Flickr, Foursquare, and Twitter to attempt to reach younger and more technophilic votes. Ultimately, this proved unsuccessful as Inouye won with almost 75 percent of the vote.

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

See Also: Coburn, Tom; Cornyn, John; Ellison, Keith; Transparency.

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Instagram

Instagram is a popular social networking platform that allows users to share digital photographs. The service was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger in October 2010, and was sold to Facebook Inc. in April 2012. Political candidates and political organizations use the application to connect with various relevant audiences, perhaps the most important of which is voters. Instagram was founded in San Francisco, California, when Kevin Systrom began work on an application that aimed to combine the best characteristics of other popular social networking applications such as Mafia Wars and Foursquare. The original application was called Burbn, but the name was later changed to Instagram when Mike Krieger joined the project and the upstart began focusing exclusively on photo sharing. The name was designed to reference the idea that Instagram is a form of instant telegram service.

A collection of Instagram photos showing four different types of filters and varied borders. The Instagram site rapidly grew from 1 million users in December 2010 to 100 million by April 2012.

Instagram's mobile applications lets users upload and share photographs on the Instragram network and on other social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Flickr, and Foursquare. All photos uploaded to the Internet via Instagram are converted to a standardized square shape. Users are also given the option of applying a filter to the image that transforms the photograph's appearance. Many of the filters alter the lighting and tone of an image so that it looks dated. Available filters include Amaro, Mayfair, Rise, Hudson, Valencia, X-Pro II, Sierra, Willow, Lo-Fi, Earlybird, Sutro, Toaster, Brannan, Inkwell, Walden, Hefe, Nashville, 1977, and Kelvin. However, many users still choose to upload a photo in normal mode, without a filter. Users also have the option of adding a border to their photograph. In addition to posting their photographs, Instagram users can browse others' photographs, comment on them, and "like" them. Users can "follow" their friends and their favorite Instagram users. Images can be organized via hashtags so that content is more searchable. Photo maps

organize images according to the geographical location where they were taken. Competing platforms such as Hipstamatic, Camera+, and Tadaa, offer many of the same photo-sharing and photo-filtering features as Instagram, but are not as popular.

Instagram officially launched on October 6, 2010. By December of the same year, they had over 1 million registered users. By April 2012, the site boasted over 100 million users. Because Instagram has always been free to users, and because the company was initially reluctant to incorporate paid advertising into its site, Instagram's popularity did not translate into immediate financial success. However, the upstart's founders and financial supporters reaped financial rewards when Facebook Inc. bought Instagram for an estimated $1 billion in cash and stock in April 2012. When the deal was finalized in September 2012, the actual price tag was closer to $741 million. In December 2012, Instagram incurred the ire of many users because it amended its terms of service. Specifically, a new clause gave Instagram permission to use users' likeness, photos, and other information in Instagram's commercials and other promotional materials, without any compensation to the Instagram user. Other critics noted that the agreement expanded Instagram's ability to collect and share personal information about users with potential advertisers. Instagram has since backtracked on many of the proposed changes to the user agreement.

Political Use

Just like other social networking tools, Instagram has been put to use by political candidates and political organizations. In the 2012 U.S. presidential campaign, both major party candidates, Democrat Barack Obama and Republican Mitt Romney, operated Instagram accounts. In addition to images of candidates speaking at campaign rallies, meeting political supporters, and spending time with their families, these accounts often featured candidates in more candid, behind-the-scenes situations. Barack Obama's Instagram account also encouraged supporters to use the hashtag #Obama2012 to share their political images with the campaign. The praise that Instagram has received as a political communication tool has tended to focus on how it provides politicians with a concise, direct method of sharing their message and enhancing their image, and how it helps citizens feel personally connected to government and its leaders.

Elected officials have come to rely on Instagram for documenting their activities. For instance, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's office used Instagram to document Hurricane Sandy relief efforts. Former Newark Mayor Cory Booker used Instagram to share his experience when he volunteered to live on food stamps for a week. The Independent Voter Network, an organization dedicated to encouraging political discourse through new media, listed Representative Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), President Barack Obama, Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Representative Steny Hoyer (D-MD), and Representative John Boehner (R-OH) as the top five politicians on Instagram. Political news organizations such as CNN, as well as political think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation, also maintain Instagram accounts.

Instagram may be more useful for helping politicians and political organizations connect with citizens who already support them, than for converting people to new political positions. Users may only see the images from users (in this instance, politicians) who they have already agreed to follow. Therefore, Instagram may be more useful for reinforcing views about politics and politicians than changing those views. In addition to political actors' use of Instagram to influence audiences, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* has noted that many citizens used Instagram to document and share their Election Day experiences in 2012. The popular hashtag "#vote" aided in this process. Prevalent themes among Election Day images included pictures of citizens' "I Voted" stickers, pictures of voters' individual ballots, and pictures of the lines at polling places.

Mark Glantz
St. Norbert College

See Also: Candidate Image; Facebook; Flickr; Foursquare; Hashtag; Picasa; Twitter.

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Instant Messengers, IRC, and ICQ

Instant Messengers (IM), Internet Relay Chat (IRC), and ICQ are all protocols or software clients enabling online chat. As predecessors to social media platforms, these forms of Internet communication enable users to engage in real-time, text-based discussions. IRC is the Internet's first chat network, developed in 1988 in response to the popularity of online discussions on Bulletin Board Systems (BBSs) in the 1970s and 1980s. BBSs only allowed asynchronous communication.

Blossoming in the 1990s, the IRC network currently still operates from more than 2,000 servers worldwide, and the top 100 networks serve 500,000 people at any given time, according to Netsplit. IRC, accessible through clients or Internet browsers, enables real-time conversations. IRC is mostly collective, taking place in channels. Invisible to fellow users, one-to-one exchanges are also possible in private mode.

Political Role of IRC

Little attention is given to how IRC was used for political purposes among citizens, similar to contemporary social media applications. IRC is a historical predecessor of today's use of Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube for airing dissident voices (e.g., by Occupy or Arab Spring protesters). When Communist Party hard-liners sought to overthrow the Soviet government led by pro-reform president Mikhail Gorbachev during the Soviet coup d'état attempt (August 19 to 21, 1991), IRC played a key role in circulating information within the Soviet Union and beyond. A media blackout affected traditional media and communication networks, including newspapers, TV, radio, and telephone. However, RELCOM (one of the Soviet Union's first Internet service providers [ISPs]) was not censored, allowing alternative information to be circulated among the Soviet people and the outside world, which in turn assisted Gorbachev to regain authority. Similarly, IRC was used to circulate bottom-up citizen perspectives on events such as the 1992 U.S. presidential election, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, Gulf War events, and the 1994 earthquake in California, according to Ibiblio. Besides political and everyday use, IRC is known to be used for terrorist recruitment, criminal activities, and the dissemination of pirated and illicit sexual materials through private messages. By virtue of its decentralized workings, the intelligence community has difficulties in proactively monitoring all chat sessions. Furthermore, IRC chat is prone to hacker attacks, because exchanges are often collective and unencrypted, and activity typically spans long time periods.

ICQ

ICQ was the first IM client, launched in 1996 by the Israeli company Mirablis. IM is a social media technology that allows users to privately exchange written messages in real time. Users can add people to their personal lists of contacts. Besides one-on-one communication, one-to-many communication consists of the broadcasting of personalized screen names to the audience of fellow users added to the contact list. In 1998, ICQ was acquired by the America Online (AOL), and in April 2010, it was bought by the Moscow-based investment group Digital Sky Technologies (DST).

The client has fallen out of fashion among users in the United States, but its popularity continues across eastern Europe and Russia (with 50 million active users in 2010). The transfer of servers to Russia that resulted from the latest transaction is feared to hinder U.S. law enforcement monitoring and investigations of user activities. Furthermore, the Russian Federal Security Service has achieved a greater stronghold over ICQ activities because it has rightful access to user data in the event of suspected security threats. Unlike other IM clients, on ICQ, only a five-digit unified identification number is permanent; other details such as personal information, display name, and contact details can be altered without having to reregister. This feature allows users great influence over their

privacy; great anonymity simultaneously provides increased opportunity for malevolent use.

Other Instant Messengers

Other prominent IM clients are Windows Live Messenger (formerly Microsoft Messenger, or MSN) with an active user base of 330 million in 2009, Apple's iMessage with 140 million active users in 2012, AOL Instant Messenger (AOL) that dominated the U.S. market but diminished to 4 million active users in 2012, and the Chinese Tencent QQ with an estimated 440 million active users in 2011. Recent additions to IM are the inclusion of voice and video chat and casual games.

IM remains relatively understudied because data gathering within this private space is not straightforward; users control who they let into their networks, and exchanges are not stored in a publicly accessible environment online, but mostly on the computers of users. On the level of identity politics of everyday use, it should be noted that text-based digital interaction was initially celebrated by scholars for its theoretical potential for sustaining disembodied identity, including gender, race, and looks. Separated from the offline physical world, IRC, IM, and ICQ, by virtue of their disembodiment, would be equalizing, democratizing, and empowering. Recent scholarship has, however, proven that offline power relations also pervade online written interaction.

Koen Leurs
Utrecht University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Chat Rooms; Evolution of Social Media; Identity Politics; Platform; World Wide Web, History of the.

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Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication

The Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication (IPDGC) at George Washington University (GWU) examines public diplomacy on a global scale in the 21st century. IPDGC is a new vehicle for public diplomacy to connect with foreign publics. By combining the power of social media with leading U.S. and global political figures, the institute has established itself as a center to both inform and influence the global dialogue. As the institute's director Sean Aday notes, the lines between public diplomacy and diplomacy and that of the people and those in power are now blurred.

Established in 2001, the institute lies within the School of Media and Public Affairs of the Columbian College of Arts and Science, and the Elliot School of International Affairs, in collaboration with the University's Public Diplomacy Council. It is part of the university's global communication master's program and is led by Sean Aday. Aday joined the university's School of Media and Public Affairs in 2000, and focuses his work on the intersection of the press, politics, and public opinion.

The institute has five primary core focus areas: new media, security, and public diplomacy; the role of women and gender in security, communication, and diplomacy; 21st-century U.S. foreign policy priorities, such as China, Iran, and Africa; "whole of government," interagency challenges, particularly in the areas of public diplomacy and strategic communication; and global perspectives and approaches to public diplomacy.

It studies how fast information moves, how people connect with one another, and the impact of mass communications. Through conferences, panels, research talks, and workshops, the institute seeks to advance public diplomacy through scholarship, research, consultation, and professional services.

IPDGC has welcomed leading scholars, leaders, practitioners, and undersecretaries of state through its doors, and has offered training for nongovernmental organizations and embassies. Diplomatic officials from around the globe have

visited the institute to connect and discuss pressing and topical issues with students.

Dr. Abdul Hakim Asher is the director of the Government Media and Information Centre for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Dr. Asher visited George Washington University as a visiting scholar in 2012 through May 2013 to work on a book, participate in events at the School of Media and Public Affairs, and connect with scholars and students.

In November 2011, the institute welcomed two delegates from the People's Republic of China. The delegates, scholars from IPDGC, lawyers, and former and current government officials held discussions on the strengths and challenges of the American political structure, public affairs, and Internet policy.

Social Media Presence

The media play a critical role in public diplomacy in influencing opinion and thought. IPDGC leverages the power of the media through means such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook. In this manner, global conversations are driver by users, and feedback on the dialogue is instant.

IPDGC has a YouTube channel to share its lectures and conferences. In March 2012, the institute hosted a symposium, Hip Hop Diplomacy: Connecting Through Culture, to discuss cultural diplomacy in an intriguing and interesting manner. As Aday notes at the event, the Obama administration brought about a revolution in public diplomacy because it focuses just as much on the people as those in power. Mass communications play a large role in how the United States presents itself and how diverse audiences and stakeholders behave.

The IPDGC Twitter account, @IPDGC, presents itself as a hub for state affairs, new media, and important domestic and international news. The institute also features a blog, Take Five, which seeks to invigorate the public diplomacy discussion with contributions from a wide range of authors offering fresh ideas about the way that America conducts its diplomatic relations abroad and about the impact of current policies.

Many of IPDGC's events aim to analyze the role of social media in current affairs. In one event, which partnered with the U.S. Institute of Peace, a panel of journalists and political leaders discussed the role of new media, technology, and the Syrian crisis. Throughout the day, discussions were held on how user-generated images, videos, and stories stream in every day from the nation of Syria, documenting the country's instability. The group provided analysis and insight into the influence of new media in the crisis, specifically on three types of actors: activists on the ground, journalists and media-makers who are reporting on the crisis, and policymakers around the world.

On December 3, 2012, the institute hosted an event on the Role of Social Media in Ending Violence Against Women. The crux of the discussion, which included social media strategists and women advocates, was how social media offers unprecedented opportunities to raise awareness around violence against women and girls, to help users stay safe, and to inspire people to engage in social activism. Simultaneously, social media blur the lines between journalism and activism.

Marion Jean Herbert
Independent Scholar

See Also: Center for Innovative Media; International Examples of Political Parties and Social Media; International Social Media and Politics.

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Institution for Social and Policy Studies

The Institution for Social and Policy Studies (ISPS) was founded at Yale in 1968. Its aims are to foster

interdisciplinary social science research, and its outputs draw upon scholarship from several different faculties. The organization's tagline is: "Advancing Research, Shaping Policy, Developing Leaders." These functions are served through hosting academic conferences on a wide variety of social science topics, funding and publishing original research, hosting academics from the postgraduate to the professorial level engaged in interdisciplinary work, advocating specific policy positions that reflect its prodemocracy and pro-academic values, participating in public policy debates, and offering degree programs for undergraduate students.

Areas of Study

The ISPS has 25 recognized areas of study in its research and publication remit. Of these, at least four have direct relevance to social media and politics. These include: civil society and the state, governance and democratic process, political behavior, and science and technology.

The vast majority of its publications and research in these fields is in the form of academic journal articles, with a significant number of book chapters, and the occasional academic monograph. Many of these articles are published in the most prestigious journals, demonstrating not only the publishing success, but also the intellectual rigor and innovation involved in its work. In particular, the institution has a reputation for excellence in field experimentation, which is a method of research that involves the use of randomized variables introduced into personal or institutional political processes, which can then be studied for their effects. Studies of this type have assessed the role of constitutional education in generating support for civil rights and tax policy. Many eminent political thinkers and social activists have participated in the institution's events, including open information and technology advocate Lawrence Lessig.

The ISPS has three semi-autonomous study or research centers under its umbrella, in addition to its other projects. These are the Center for the Study of American Politics (CSAP), the Program in Agrarian Studies, and the Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics. The center is heavily engaged in the U.S. political science community, and frequently hosts conferences, seminars, roundtables, and visiting scholars on topics related to American politics. Its more unique offerings include short courses for faculty of other departments, which aim to give advanced specialist training and knowledge on particular special interests. The staff structure of ISPS reflects its interdisciplinary focus. Its current director, James Hacker, is a professor of political science. Other members of the leadership include professors from sociology, psychology, law, economics and management, and health policy and administration.

Advocacy

The ISPS could be characterized as generally progressive in its policy recommendations and advocacy activities. Much of this advocacy simply takes the form of convening experts in various fields to discuss political topics and making the proceedings available to the public through a variety of social media platforms. Examples of recent topics have included gun violence and gun control, the role of money and power in gaining a political voice, climate change and pressure on scientists to keep their findings quiet, and the idea that scholarship/scholars should take political positions and be politically engaged.

The political engagement of scholars can be problematic for an academic discipline such as political science, which purports at least a degree of objectivity by inclusion of the word *science*. There have been issues with government funding of political research, especially when that research is used to advocate positions that are not in agreement with the governing party or parties that appropriate the funds.

The ISPS was part of an effort to lobby the U.S. Congress to continue funding political science research through the National Science Foundation, but this effort failed, with politicians acknowledging that they objected to the type of research and its implications. The institution has been particularly forceful in advocating for open access to research and academic publications as part of its commitment to creating a better-informed voting public and citizenry.

This commitment is evidenced not only in its statements and research outputs, but also in the availability of its research database, which allows open access to view primary source

datasets, published papers, and journal articles, and even book chapters from its various scholars. Given that it has to negotiate numerous copyright obstacles in order to allow this level of access, this demonstrates a genuine commitment to the open access to information cause. Much of this information will remain practically inaccessible to the general public because of its academic language and specialization; however, the center also makes lectures and roundtable discussions from its functions available online for public viewing.

Social Media

In order to disseminate its work as widely as possible and to fulfill its role as an advocacy organization, the institution maintains a presence on several of the major social networking and media platforms. It has a Facebook page, and is especially active on Twitter. Its tweets link to articles and videos, and frequently refers to political hot topics using hashtags.

This allows its research to quickly enter the mainstream political discourse. It also has a YouTube channel with over 30,000 subscribers and a library of roughly 20 videos. The International Political Science Association lists its Web site as among the most important political science Web sites in the world. Through the medium of eBooks and hardcopy books, the institution also publishes a book series, showcasing the work of its scholars, often offering assessments of public policy and prescriptions for making it work better.

Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St. Andrews

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Virtual; Cause-Marketing Campaigns; Privacy.

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Institutional Cabling

As the Internet and other technological advances have become more reliable and common in schools, nonprofit organizations, hospitals, and other institutions, social media have become an area of interest, especially with regard to the extent that they allow the creation and exchange of user-created content. To permit such a change, however, institutions must have the infrastructure, such as cabling or wireless technologies, that permit the use of Web- or mobile-based technologies to foster such communication. Infrastructure improvement has been a keen concern of these leading institutions, although even wealthy organizations have sometimes found the cost of installing cabling or wireless access to be prohibitively expensive. This is perhaps related to a colloquial understanding of the term *institutional cabling*, in which those industry sectors perceived to have both the need for a new technology and the means to pay for it are likely to be at the top of the installation and diffusion list. A variety of public and government-sponsored initiatives, however, had greatly assisted with this endeavor.

Although discussions regarding social media commonly refer to the Internet, in reality, an extensive range of information services and resources are used to connect millions of private, public, commercial, institutional, and government networks. These information services and resources include the World Wide Web, which consists of a series of interlinked hypertext documents accessed by means of the Internet, as well as the infrastructure necessary to support this information transfer. Sometimes referred to as information infrastructure, it is comprised of facilities, people, processes, and technology that are used to create, use, transport, and store information. During the 1990s, information infrastructure first came to the public's attention as a result of a political initiative by Vice President Al Gore to assist nonprofit institutions, especially schools, to install the cabling necessary to connect to the Internet.

In 1991, then-Senator Al Gore introduced what became known as the High-Performance Computing Act (HPCA). Although the HPCA had a variety of goals, the creation of a National Information Infrastructure and the funding of the

National Research and Education Network had important ramifications for institutions seeking to create the high-speed computer networks necessary to efficiently access the Internet. This information superhighway would permit the development of digital communication systems that ultimately led to the creation and advancement of social media tools common today.

Building upon developments begun by the military during the 1960s, and refined for educational and commercial use with funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) during the 1980s, HPCA sought to bring the use of the Internet to the general public. To this end, HPCA helped to fund the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) at the University of Illinois at Champaign/Urbana. Work at NCSA led to the development of Mosaic in 1993, an early Web browser that helped to spur the Internet boom because of its use of a graphical user interface (GUI) and reliable and easily understood experience. While the HPCA provided funding for the cabling of schools, the attention this drew also led to state, local, and municipal governments funding this initiative, as well as volunteer initiatives designed to ensure that all students had access to the Internet.

In 1995, the chief science officer at Sun Microsystems, John Gage, established NetDay as a way for high-tech companies and organizations to assist clinics, libraries, and schools in connecting to the Internet. The first official NetDay, held on March 9, 1996, received a great deal of publicity because of the participation of President Bill Clinton and Vice President Gore, along with 20,000 other volunteers. Clinton and Gore spent NetDay 1996 at Ygnacio Valley High School in Concord, California, as part of an initiative to install cable in 20 percent of California schools so that they would be able to connect to the Internet. NetDay continued to be an annual event through 2004, with the program eventually merging into Project Tomorrow, another initiative that seeks to encourage and improve science and mathematics education.

Evolving technology has changed the materials used for institutional cabling. In the early 1990s, short coaxial cables were commonly used for implementing Ethernet networks, which is the standard for local area networks (LANs). As technology advanced, however, fiberoptic and twisted pair cables came to be favored for use in wiring institutions. As wireless local area networks have grown in popularity, many institutions have experimented with switching to a Wi-Fi system that allows electronic devices to exchange data using radio waves over a computer network. Wi-Fi can be used by many devices, including personal computers, tablets, smartphones, and digital audio players. The switch to Wi-Fi requires the installation of access points, sometimes called hotspots, every 65 feet within a structure. As the price of this technology declines, it seems likely to continue to replace traditional cabling in institutions.

Stephen T. Schroth
Knox College

See Also: *Al Gore's Penguin Army*; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Presidential (2000); Nonprofit Organizations; Schools4All; Social Media, Adoption of.

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Interactive Advertising Bureau

The Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB) is an organization founded in the United States in 1996, with the primary objective of encouraging investment in interactive advertising, and thus in digital media. This supranational organization has two main divisions in the United States and Europe that looks for specific purposes in their operation areas. The North American division of the IAB is composed of more than 500 telecommunication companies and media that account for 86 percent

of the country's interactive advertising investment. Its headquarters is located in New York City, and it has a public policy office in Washington, D.C. The power of this association lies in its members, including: general members, companies with turnover that is significantly based on the sale of interactive advertising inventory; associate members, companies that support the sale of interactive advertising inventory but are not qualified to be in the previous membership; and long tail members, composed of independent sites and corporations that act as publishers (selling indirectly, through a network, or directly) and have incomes above $1 million a year.

The current president and CEO of the American division of the IAB is Randall Rothenberg. He was elected president in 2007, and served as such until 2010, when he left the office to join Time Inc. as executive vice president and chief digital officer. Later in 2011, he was rehired by the IAB as president and CEO. Before working for the IAB, Rothenberg worked for 10 years as marketing and media columnist for *Advertising Age*. Then, he worked for six years for the *New York Times* as technology editor and politics editor of the Sunday magazine, daily advertising columnist, and media and marketing reporter. Prior to his IAB role, Mr. Rothenberg was the senior director of intellectual capital of Booz Allen Hamilton, the international strategy and technology consulting firm.

Members

IAB Europe represents more than 5,500 organizations from 27 countries across the continent. IAB Europe includes not only the mature markets of western Europe, but also countries such as Russia, Macedonia, Croatia, and Slovakia. Members fall into two main categories, corporate and national. The 54 corporate members include "a variety of European, Russian and American companies acting in Europe throughout different digital platforms, technologies and disciplines." Their role within the organization is supporting expertise and funding so that the association can achieve its objectives.

The association also brings together 27 national members that conduct regional studies about advertising investment in interactive media. They are responsible for developing ethical codes for the sector and to unify audience measurement systems in the network. Lack of standardization is the major barrier to advertisers. The 27 European countries that have headquarters of the IAB are: Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Slovakia, Slovenia, Finland, France, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, Serbia, Switzerland, Sweden, and the Ukraine.

Goals

The Internet is so far the only medium that combines three key channel capabilities in marketing: communication, transaction and distribution; and the vertical integration of marketing communications, including advertising, public relations, promotion, and direct marketing. In the early days of Internet advertising, editors of traditional mass media feared a loss of investment to online media. This did not happen, and the launch has been very slow, mainly because of the lack of standards for audience measurement, which is one of the reasons why the IAB was created. According to its statutes, the fundamental objective of the IAB is to promote interactive advertising, supporting its members to improve their position on the market.

The main goals of both divisions are: establish guidelines for audience measurement in digital media and promote standards to unify the market; share best practices that result in business growth; and generate research regarding this area, demonstrating the growth of the online industry. IAB Europe publishes the following reports: Adex Benchmark, the definitive guide to the European online ad market, covering 25 country clubs in 2012; Mediascope Europe, the industry standard, an average European consumption study; Regional Reports, including EEC, the Nordic countries, the Middle East, and the big seven markets in Europe; and Consumer Benefit Study, calculating the value of the free Internet, the economic value of the digital industry highlighting the digital creation of employment and trade for the regions, and protection against adverse legislation and regulation, which can influence the development of this market.

To achieve these goals, the IAB proposed establishing a system of councils and committees specialized thematically, and through its work, created added value to members. Committees are

advertising, platform-based groups open to all members of the IAB. Councils are based on job role or industry initiative, and are open only to members of the IAB General. Associate members may be invited to councils on a case-by-case basis. Both councils and committees are agenda-setting groups of senior executives. They spin off working groups made up of subject matter experts from member companies to focus on personal projects.

Natalia Abuín Vences
Raquel Vinader Segura
Complutense University of Madrid

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Campaigns, Virtual; Europe.

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Interactive Documentary

Interactive documentary is a term used to describe the new possibilities for both the construction and representation of reality brought about by the human–computer interface. For a documentary to be interactive in this context, a physical action needs to take place between the human and the computer. This physical action can include many different types of interactivity, such as mouse clicking through Web sites, tapping on multitouch tablet screens, activating censors in gallery installations, and using smartphones to call up locative media. As computers become ever more embedded into everyday life, the possibilities of interactive documentary continue to evolve, with the understanding of these possibilities. Interactive documentary has a strong link to the theme of politics and social media because it can help facilitate participation by breaking down boundaries between producers, audiences, and documentary subjects.

Early examples of interactive documentary presented multimedia recordings organized as a closed database of clips that the user could explore via a hyperlink interface. An example of this was *Moss Landing,* produced by the Apple Multimedia Lab in 1989, which used multiple cameras to record the life of the inhabitants of Moss Landing over the period of one day. This logic of hypertext documentary was subsequently applied to pioneering work produced by the Voyager Company, such as the Stravinsky's Rite of Spring CD-ROM and BBC Interactive Television, such as the Domesday Videodisc Project. These works tended to focus on the point-and-click style of navigation that was prevalent at the time, through which users could take multiple routes through an organized database of recordings.

By the mid-1990s, it had become evident that this approach to interactive documentary was failing to deliver an immersive experience for the user, and the suggestion was made that more subtle forms of interaction based on simulation and spatial metaphor held much greater promise for the future. The term *interactive documentary* fell largely dormant, and the focus shifted away from representation toward the development of networked computing. However, by 2005, high-speed broadband had enabled a new form of convergence, bringing together computing, television, and the telecommunications industry. This led to a renaissance of the term *interactive documentary* and a flurry of activity. While networked computing has been key to these developments, it is not the sole driver. Other factors, such as the development of more immersive interfaces and an increasing desire to combine documentary recordings with live performance, are also at play.

In 2011, i-Docs was convened as the world's first conference dedicated to interactive documentary. Taking an expansive view of interactive documentary, the conference incorporated possibilities afforded by a wide range of technologies, and placed debates around intent and purpose at the center of the discussions. A follow-up conference was convened in 2012, and the i-Docs.org

Web hub was set up for ongoing discussion and debate. Central to the endeavor was the idea to engage a community of practitioners and theorists in open-ended dialogue driven by a spirit of collaboration and exchange. Discussion around the politics of participation and associated ethical issues continues to be an important theme within this developing community. Interactive documentary making has subsequently become more recognized within the mainstream documentary circuit, as can be seen by its increased exposure at festivals and conferences around the world.

Current debates around interactive documentary are focused on different approaches to authorship within a fluid and interdisciplinary field of practice. The creators of these new forms may be professional storytellers communicating expert knowledge, artists communicating personal visions, or activists working to engage disenfranchised communities in an active process of making. By 2011, the current focus for interactive documentary making was in countries such as Canada and France, where there is a long-standing tradition of government subsidy for such endeavors. However, interactive documentaries are becoming ever more global in their reach. Projects such as 18 Days in Egypt have crowdsourced peoples' recordings of the events leading up to the 2011 uprising, and the database of documentary recordings from the Indian subcontinent found on the Pad.ma Web site has grown exponentially. *18 Days in Egypt,* in particular, is a good example of the multiple ways in which interactive documentary as a new media storytelling genre can—and often does—not just incorporate, but often capitalize on social media as a source of content nontraditional distribution strategies.

The interactive documentary holds the potential to facilitate political engagement by encouraging users to become participants in the active construction of a reality. This potential is playing out in a variety of contexts, from requiring participants to make active decisions through role-play and simulation, through increasing people's access to government information, to empowering people to create interactive documentaries in response to the world around them. Remix culture is also a key factor in the world of interactive documentary because recordings can be downloaded and repurposed to create new interpretations. In addition to this, the open source community is actively developing free software to facilitate access to interactive documentary making. This participatory promise must not be taken as a given. As interactive documentary making is becomes ever-more mainstream, viable business models are emerging. This brings well-rehearsed debates around access and ownership to the fore, placing the genre within a much broader continuum of practice.

Judith Aston
University of the West of England

See Also: Citizen Journalism; Crowdsourcing; Documentaries, Social Media, and Social Change; 18daysinegypt.com; i-Docs.org; Immersive Journalism; Open Source Politics; Remix, Political.

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International Examples of Political Parties and Social Media

Social media offer much to democracy and political engagement; therefore, much research has been devoted to examining how political parties and candidates use these platforms. Political parties are arguably the lifeblood of democracies. Traditionally, political parties form around a set

of ideological values and precepts. Recent trends have seen many parties shedding their ideological constraints to instead offer a manifesto of policies that appeal to a postideological electorate. These have been described as catch-all parties, designed to appeal to the largest number of voters possible. Within this postideological context, electioneering becomes more about positioning the party elite and leader as the best management team than selling a value-laden perspective of society. Political parties perform a number of functions within democracies. First, parties provide representation for individuals and groups. Second, they provide mechanisms for political socialization through meetings, social clubs, and societies and encourage participation by mobilizing their members. Third, they articulate the interests of those they represent and aggregate those interests to formulate policy. Fourth, they provide leadership to form governments or coalitions; power is dispersed among the elite and across the membership who elect the leader.

These demonstrators gathered outside BBC Television in London to protest the network's invitation to the leader of a neofascist party to a television interview. Opponents of the British National Party also attacked the party on its Facebook page.

The Potential of Social Media

Theoretically, the first three functions of political parties may be supported through the use of social media. The demand for responsive representation necessitates greater emphasis on communication. Mass media are increasingly unlikely to provide space for parties to inform citizens about their representative activities. Web sites have, for over a decade, been spaces for unmediated information from political parties; however, longitudinal studies by the U.S.-based Pew Research Center, the United Kingdom (UK) Hansard Society, and the French Mediapolis Project show that no more than 12 percent of people visit party Web sites. Weblogs, microblogs, the use of Twitter or Facebook as news feeds, or picture or video sharing platforms offer more engaging ways of reaching citizens. Furthermore, due to platform functionality permitting content sharing, social media use can extend the reach of the party beyond their immediate followers, via those followers to a broader online diaspora. Informing remains a core element of political parties' communication; however, the second and third functions may be best served using social media.

Social media facilitate the creation of communities that connect around shared interests. Political parties can use social media platforms to create spaces for members, activists, supporters, and those with a general interest in the policies or fortunes of the party to congregate virtually. The act of joining gives the party permission to contact individuals within that community, therefore enhancing the informational link.

However, and more importantly, parties are also able to mobilize their supporters to extend the reach of their messages, support their campaigns using e-petitions, for example, and engage in some form of offline activism. But, political party use of social media need not stop at building a community of members that will work for the party; the party can also work with members of the community. Social media can be used to solicit the views of community members, gaining data regarding policy priorities and cocreate policy. These activities evoke a somewhat optimistic view of how political parties may use social media.

Social Political Parties?

Political parties were initially slow to incorporate social media into their communication strategies. The U.S. campaigns of Jesse Ventura in 1998, the innovative use of Weblogs and Meetup.org by Howard Dean in 2003 and 2004, and Barack Obama's 2008 campaign showed the potential the Internet offered for building and mobilizing a grassroots movement. The use of the MyBO site to build a community, mobilize supporters online and offline, and, in a limited way cocreate policy priorities following his victory, led to his tactics being mirrored in elections across the world, from Portugal to Israel and the UK. However, take up of social media mostly just mirrored the look of the Obama campaign, rather than replicating the social strategy in its entirety.

Studies of elections in advanced democracies where a critical mass of citizens has access to the Internet show that the majority of parties create profiles on the most popular social media platforms in their respective countries. The global dominance of YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook has seen them equally dominate the sphere of political communication. YouTube plays the role of a personal television channel, allowing parties to place their videos online for continual viewing; this is particularly useful in nations where political advertising is not permitted by law. Twitter plays the role of a news feed, transmitting information, often including links to the party Web site or its YouTube channel. Facebook is largely used for a similar function. A Facebook feed is often linked to Twitter, but with scope for embedding pictures and videos. These social media platforms are often complemented by multimedia Web sites that offer news feeds allowing visitors to leave comments. These uses of social media all support the representative function of political parties by providing spaces where information can be delivered directly to interested supporters and the wider citizenry. The byproduct of this usage, even when it is not always the intention, is to facilitate a more interactive mode of political communication.

The use of Facebook in particular, by default, creates a community to whom the party can communicate, and that can communicate back to the party. The community is also able to communicate with one another, discussing any aspect of the party's communication or political program. However, parties remain absent from conversations that take place. Parties do not encourage discussion by asking questions or requesting content cocreation. They do not respond publicly to questions asked by community members (e.g., YouTube channels comments are disabled to prevent the party message from becoming distorted.

What appears within the political party profiles on social media platforms is a form of graffiti. Visitors place comments and slogans on the walls of social media profiles of the parties that require no response, and the graffiti writer does not return to check for responses. The majority of this graffiti is supportive. The Facebook profiles of parties during election campaigns in the UK, Poland, and France largely had favorable comments from supporters happy to publicly advertise their support. However, opponents also use these spaces to attack parties. The UK Labour Party launched a campaign called Change We See, asking supporters to upload pictures demonstrating what the Labour governments from 1997 to 2010 had achieved. One activist uploaded pictures depicting urban decay to subvert the campaign.

A blunter example saw Facebook users become fans of the British National Party, a right-wing neofascist organization, long enough to post comments such as "fascist scum." However, political parties universally encourage one form of interaction, activities that extend the reach of the party. Hence, social media is seen as a tool for political parties to promote themselves, using the free labor of supporters, as opposed to a space for communities to work with parties to develop policy.

Promotion is not the only use made of the Internet, and so, social media spaces that permit interaction but are not public need to be considered. The German Christian Democratic Union and Social Democratic Party created private spaces within StudiVZ, which could only be accessed by approved members. More common, however, is to have a social space within a party Intranet system. Here, debate can take place to determine policy, but this is open only to party members. Party strategists argue that if parties were to open up decision making, then it would undermine two key principles that underpin the principles on which parties operate. First, political parties should sell solutions, not simply

follow public opinion, retaining the role for values and utilitarianism. Second, parties with an internal democratic structure must involve members in policymaking, not the broader citizenry. Hence, the use of social media is limited; public communication is allowed, but interaction is designed to mobilize supporters into activism, not to contribute to policymaking. Political communication on social media largely adheres to the norms of persuasion.

The Challenge of Reach

The assumption was that social media provided the means to reach young people, those least likely to be interested in party politics, to engage with elections or vote. While young people are among those who follow parties on social media, according to surveys, the majority are 30 years old or older and have an existing high interest in politics. These data suggest that the only way for social media to fulfill the potential to gain support among new demographics relies on network effect, that online supporters of the political party share messages with their networks, facilitating messages to reach those who would perhaps never consider seeking political information online.

Social media usage, however, not only facilitates reaching new demographics, but also delivering information to individuals and groups who may extend the reach of a party by dint of their professions and interests. This group includes party activists, but more importantly, journalists, issue activists, and Webloggers. Party use of Twitter, for example, seems far more likely to be targeted at journalists. But, parties have the problem that they are unsure what voice to use on social media. Corporate brands can build a following using special offers. Individual politicians, presidential candidates, party leaders, or local representatives can present a more engaging experience for followers by using a mixture of political and personal insights. Local representatives can also address specific local issues that are of interest to their constituents. Political parties are unable to personalize their communication, have no products to entice supporters, and can offer little beyond a news feed.

Social media offer one further opportunity for political parties: the collection of data. A significant amount of data can be gleaned about party supporters from platforms like Facebook. Insights into their interests, the causes they support, their occupations, education levels, and other personal details can be learned and then used for targeting further communication. However, resources determine whether data mining can be effectively conducted.

Caution and Cost: Barriers to Usage

Two issues constrain political parties embracing social media, beyond those raised relating to wider issues of external and internal democracy. First are those relating to loss of control. Because of the practices of trolling, control over communication can be lost.

Criticism on social media is likely to be public and so becomes part of the overall online presence of the party. Furthermore, parties can be drawn into in-depth discussion about policy that they ordinarily avoid. Particularly in the context of elections, but also possibly when the opposition develops critiques of government policy, parties tend to eschew specifics in favor of broader political statements.

Second, there are practical reasons that social media are not used to their full potential by political parties: finances. To effectively manage a social media presence requires personnel to create content, answer questions, and moderate comments; resources are also required to effectively use data that can be gleaned from social media. Few parties outside of the United States have the resources for these demands; hence, social media tend to be used for promotional purposes only.

Darren G. Lilleker
Bournemouth University

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, 2012; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Networks, Political; Secondhand Political Engagement.

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International Intervention

Interventions are intentional actions taken by an actor from one state in the affairs of another. Historically, intervention has been viewed as state actions in the domestic affairs of other states. Today, augmented by social media, nonstate actors are also able to effect interventions across state borders. In countries where domestic political conflicts have potential international consequences, or where domestic factions are supported or opposed from the outside, various types of intervention can occur.

Electronic social media have provided new methods and channels for carrying out intervention. Social media are used to inject new information into political conflicts from outside a country's borders, and social networks can be deployed for political mobilization and opposition. Especially where political conflicts reach a crisis level, social media provide a critical instrument in foreign policy to influence the outcomes of domestic contests for political power.

Forms of Intervention

Intervention, as it applies to social media, can be viewed along a continuum of discrete actions of increasing escalation. In the social media context, interventions include official government-sponsored messaging, messaging by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) outside and inside the country, messaging by political factions or opposition groups in the country for internal and external consumption, and individuals—wherever they are located—participating in a political contest. The messaging can be strategic, in terms of communicating objectives, threats, and intentions or tactical in terms of organizing particular events or commenting upon developments in political crises.

Along this continuum, traditional diplomacy ranks at the base of the scale, where social media can best be used to communicate intentions from one government to another in a public setting. Social media have also played roles in revealing private, diplomatic communications that might benefit one faction or another. For example, the Tunisian uprisings beginning in December 2010 spawned a number of organizations, such as tunileaks.org and OpenTunisia.org, with their stated purpose to publicize diplomatic correspondence about the Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali regime, spreading their messages through social media networks.

Public diplomacy and advocacy follow traditional diplomacy in using social media to communicate intentions, demands, and support directly to affected groups, bypassing official governmental channels. Communicating intentions from one government directly to people in another country has the objective of countering, reinforcing, or contradicting messages by adversaries. Messages that condemn provocative or violent actions or expose human rights violations, for example, can be linked from press releases on official Web sites to social media services, and thus have a large, ready audience receiving such messages simultaneously.

During the Egyptian conflicts of January 2011, social media sites were extensively used to obtain real-time changes in support for the Mubarak regime in other countries. Likewise, running commentaries on official policy statements can be aggregated and used as an indicator of support or opposition. Knowing this fact, the security agencies in Egypt for a time injected individual messages of alleged support for Mubarak as a way of tempering opposition and perhaps to confound foreign social media analyses.

Novel ways to sustain intervention occurred during Iran's Green Revolution following presidential elections in 2009. Internal groups organized around the defeated political parties in ways that amplified their influence through social media, and they soon had support from Iranian diaspora groups and other sympathizers. The momentum and size of these groups grew and began to use social media effectively for both organization and tactical mobilization in the streets of Iran's major

cities. To sustain pressure on the Iranian government, U.S. authorities persuaded Twitter to defer maintenance on its site so that Iranians could continue to use the service. When the Iranian government began to block social media sites, individuals outside Iran provided methods for circumventing such censorship, and continued to monitor Iranian networks for signs of interference. While one of these circumvention tools was later proven ineffective, rapid, real-time actions from outside Iran were able to assist social networks inside the country actively and were able to get information in and out of the country, overcoming Iranian government interference. Thus, both governments and organized groups can monitor the activities of opposition groups during a political conflict and take measures to sustain and secure their activities or attempt to close them down.

Intervention can also extend to selective communications-related sanctions against one country by another or by a coalition of governments seeking to alter the dynamics of a political conflict. In the case of Syria, for example, in 2012, the United States and other sympathetic countries embargoed hardware and software that can block Web sites or enable surveillance of mobile texting and short messaging services (SMSs). At the same time, communications equipment, software, and training were made available to opposition groups by governments and private sources. This type of assistance has been used in social networks for warning the population in a given area of impending actions by the Syrian government and for better organizing groups inside Syria to report and document human rights abuses.

Intervention using social media also takes the form of covert actions and the use of proxy actors. Certain groups may not want to disclose the identity of their members for security reasons. Some groups and governments may desire to inject disinformation and rumor into a political conflict anonymously or in a false name. These uses of social media are only beginning to be understood because it is difficult to obtain systematic, reliable data about covert or clandestine media operations. Yet, when the stakes in a political crisis are high, and especially when such intervention promises to increase turmoil and disorder, incentives are strong to use social media to complicate the landscape or distract certain groups to their disadvantage. It is also very difficult to determine the source of such actions becasue social media services cannot always prevent pseudonymous identities or messages. Attribution becomes obscure: Groups may claim credit through social media for certain actions, without any independent means of verification.

When intervention reaches the point of military action, social media can be employed to aid certain operations. In the July 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah, incursions by Israeli forces or coordinated air strikes were preceded by SMSs and texting broadcast messages to thousands of Lebanese numbers. These broadcast text messages were effective in evacuating noncombatants from certain areas or compelling opposing forces to move, thereby disclosing their positions. Future conflicts

Local members of the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent unloading food with the help of city residents in the Al-Ghuta neighborhood of Homs, Syria, in February 2012.

can expect social media to play similar roles of warning and response. Opposing forces that want to restrict communications can also be expected to shut down or impede social media services of an adversary to gain operational advantage.

Norms of Intervention

International relations scholars generally agree that all forms of intervention have been increasing along the entire continuum in the past two decades and will likely continue. Yet, scholars disagree whether such evidence of intervention indicates an emerging norm in international behavior, and they disagree about the desirability of social media to play an increasingly significant role in international intervention. In normative terms, many forays in media freedom, the free flow of information, and similar concepts feed directly into arguments that promote human rights, democratic reform, and the development of healthy civil society. Yet, it remains to be demonstrated whether foreign intervention in a domestic political conflict can induce desired results or be controlled once ignited. Social media initially appear to be neutral or benign channels for distributing news, information, and for organizing political groups. Yet, its power for social mobilization appears strong. Once unleashed, these media may take on characteristics beyond the control of their initial source.

Even in a humanitarian response, social media may not always be used as intended by aid and relief agencies. Such observations should not be taken as arguments to curtail the value of social messaging in these situations. Yet, governments and nongovernmental organizations will need to understand that, when they intervene in a political conflict, their ability to control the outcomes of events may be more limited than desired. Conversely, the effects of social media in political conflicts show that information is power, and as such, political actors will seek to control and manipulate it for their ends whenever they are able.

Eric J. Novotny
American University

See Also: Arab Spring; Disaster Relief; Egypt; Iran; Libya; Public Diplomacy Institute; Spanish 15M Movement; Tunisia.

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International Online Communities

The Internet, by its boundary-crossing nature, has been able to support the development of a number of communities at an unprecedented international level. The definition of "community" is in itself a fluid concept, but for the purposes of this entry, it will involve an analysis of groups that come together online across a number of different

countries with a shared interest or aim. These communities can be facilitated through any form of online interaction, from video chat to bulletin boards, and can be open access or closed to a specific group. Furthermore, online communities can differ from real-world communities in that they can connect not only individuals, but also organizations working in relation to a common purpose or interest.

Research into real-world communities highlights the development and existence of norms of behavior, and while international online communities follow certain social structures, the use of technology has led to the development of new behavioral norms and methods of internal regulation. Whereas some communities, for example Virtual Sunderland in the United Kingdom, link to particular physical locations, a large number of online communities have developed at an international level.

Types

International online communities are difficult to categorize because of their differing origins, aims, and regulations. Some develop through a focus on entertainment and interactions relating to specific genres. Something Awful is a discussion-board Web site based upon the sharing of comedy-related content. Its pay-to-register forum has a large, international user base that has contributed to the development of a number of notable Internet memes. In a similar vein, IGN is an entertainment-focused community Web site that not only addresses video games, but also films and television programs. While most of the interaction focuses on entertainment, it also has active general discussion and community areas.

Certain international communities develop through an initial focus upon a particular interest or issue. Vault Network is a large, international community focused on roleplaying and massively multiplayer online role-playing games (MMORPGs). It includes a wiki and a very active forum, with a heavy emphasis on user-directed topic development. Buddy Pic has developed into an online community and had more than 74 million posts as of 2012; these often have a focus on rating users' photographs on the basis of their attractiveness. This is then underpinned by a number of forums, including general discussion topics. Gaia Online initially developed as an anime-focused community site, but has significantly grown to encompass social networking and forum-based interactions. It had more than 26 million registered users in 2012, and developed currency, GaiaCash, which can be gained as a reward for community participation. In a similar manner to Gai Online, 4Chan is a Web site that initially developed in order to discuss anime, but has grown into something much more all encompassing, and no issue is off limits. It has a focus on the posting of images and a policy of anonymous registration. Due to these policies and the grassroots development of community group standards, 4Chan users have created numerous Internet memes and are rumored to be at the center of high-profile instances of online activism and pranks.

The development of content is the key driver for the international online communities that have grown on a wiki basis. The first user-generated wiki site was WikiWikiWeb, which acts as an idea-sharing forum to bring people with shared interests together. Wikipedia is the largest wiki Web site, with approximately 365 million global users. It is a user-generated and edited online encyclopedia that supports a large, international community of contributors and interactions in order to achieve a consensus on the shared information. Its multilingual format supports the international nature of its community-building resources.

Certain online international communities encourage global interaction through immersion in virtual worlds. These allow users to interact with others through the online interaction of avatars. The international nature of these Web sites facilitate community development on a global scale, where users can find others with similar interests and share information using related chat, forums, and blogs. Second Life is an immersive online environment with more than 20 million registered users that allows those over the age of 16 to interact as avatars in a sophisticated virtual world.

International online communities can build up around the interactive features supporting commercial Web sites. EBay is a consumer-to-consumer Web site that allows users to list items for immediate or auction-based sale. Its attached community allows global users to use discussion boards and videos and to join groups. In a similar

manner, Amazon is a large e-commerce selling platform that includes community-building features, which allow registered users to rate and discuss products and to interact via its forums. The development of a virtual community attached to a commercial enterprise is a powerful way to expand online businesses. The community in which users can interact and support each other both attracts potential customers and aids the retention of existing ones.

Social Networking

Some of the largest international online communities have built up around social networking platforms. These will generally allow users a space upon which to post information and images; this is then complemented by chat facilities, games, and group spaces. Facebook is one of the largest social networking communities, and in 2012, its number of active users surpassed 1 billion. Another example of a social networking-based international community is Myspace, which developed with a focus on pop music and culture, but has recently seen a downturn in active unique users. Other similar platforms include Hi5, which has a large, international user base outside the United States; and LinkedIn, which seeks to create an international community of professional contacts.

International virtual communities have also been created in order to facilitate the sharing of research at a global level. The interaction provided through these communities allows for an unprecedented level of participation and collaboration across existing and new networks. The European Union's Lisbon Strategy includes a focus upon developing these online communities through initiatives such as GEANT and the e-Science Grids.

Catherine Easton
Lancaster University

See Also: Facebook; Internet Forums; Second Life; Social Media, Definition and Classes of.

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International Social Media and Politics

Social media began to emerge as a widespread tool for political change at the turn of the 21st century, alongside the development of the social Web. Globally, popular social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter have had a strong impact on the development of tactics for online organizing, while local platforms often play significant roles in the delivery of local political messages. Older social media, such as short message service (SMS) play significant roles in organizing, particularly in countries where mobile penetration is higher than Internet penetration.

Among the earliest examples of social media use to influence politics occurred in 2001 in the Philippines, where upon a congressional vote to set aside key evidence against President Joseph Estrada in his impeachment trial, thousands of Filipinos quickly organized in protest, in part by forwarding a text message with instructions on where to meet and what to wear. Their protest was effective in changing legislators' minds: The evidence was allowed, and Estrada was sentenced.

Similarly, after Spanish Prime Minister José Maria Aznar inaccurately blamed the March 11, 2004, Madrid train bombings on Basque separatists, demonstrations organized by text messaging led to Aznar losing the elections several days later.

Researcher Michael McFaul has suggested that Ukraine's 2004 Orange Revolution "may have been the first in history to be organized largely online." Activists coordinated protests using SMS, while Web site discussion boards for reporting election fraud were quickly developed and

disseminated. Additionally, the relative increase in Internet access—3.5 percent of Ukrainians had access in 2004, compared to 1.25 percent in 2001—allowed for newly developed independent and citizen media to reach a larger constituency.

Social Media and Political Movements

The launch of dedicated social media platforms such as Facebook (2004), YouTube (2005), and Twitter (2006) greatly improved the ability of politicians, activists, and other organizers to communicate to the masses. Whereas blogs and other Web sites enable individuals and organizations to broadcast information, these platforms enable one-to-one communication, and coupled with the proliferation of smartphones, allow anyone to quickly distribute text, images, and video.

While these tools have had significant impacts on the structure of both political campaigns and grassroots political organizing, they have been slow—or, in some cases, have yet—to eclipse older social media such as SMS in countries where Internet penetration remains low. For example, unrest triggered in January 2008 by Kenya's contested presidential elections quickly turned to violence because of the viral spread of SMS urging violent retribution against the Kikuyu ethnic group.

This prompted the development of a tool to track incidents of violence by a group of Kenyans located in the country and throughout the diaspora. Dubbed Ushahidi, the tool blends the use of Google maps with a tool for users, via mobile phone or Internet browser, to report incidents of violence and add photos, video, and text documentation. Ushahidi, later developed and made publicly available as a tracking tool for political and humanitarian purposes, helped draw attention to Kenya's political unrest and later restore order to the country.

Although it also relied heavily on the use of SMS for organizing, Burma's 2007 Saffron Revolution was among the first political movements to utilize Web-based social media tools. Using mobile phones, Burmese citizens took pictures and videos that they then uploaded from Internet cafes or sent across the border to Thailand to be uploaded. Although it is impossible to determine the intent of such widespread action, with Internet penetration in Burma well below 1 percent at the time, the effect was less of political change, and more toward ensuring that the world was watching. The government, nevertheless, responded by shutting down the country's Internet and mobile phone connections for nearly two weeks.

One year later what may be the first large-scale protest organized in part on Facebook occurred. In Al Mahalla al Kubra, Egypt, workers responding to low wages and rising food costs organized a general strike on April 6, 2008, just two days before municipal elections. Their strike was picked up and promoted on Facebook, blogs, SMS, and through word of mouth by activists. One Facebook group, dubbed the April 6 Youth Movement, attracted more than 64,000 members. As a result of the strike, several bloggers and online activists who participated in the calls to action were arrested. The 2008 movement is often cited as having contributed to the 2011 protests that ousted then-president Hosni Mubarak.

Facebook also featured prominently in what may have been the largest demonstration in Colombia's history. On February 4, 2008, more than a million Colombians—as well as smaller groups in dozens of major cities worldwide—took to the streets to demonstrate against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The call for demonstration originated with Oscar Morales, a young engineer who set up a Facebook group called One Million Voices Against the FARC in an effort to influence public sentiment during a period of hostage negotiations. Morales's Facebook efforts received considerable international attention, and may have influenced future use of the platform.

Twitter Revolutions

The use of Twitter in a political movement first came into play in April 2009 in Moldova, where more than 10,000 protesters were reported by the *New York Times* to have materialized, as Ellen Barry describes, from "seemingly out of nowhere." Utilizing Twitter's format of 140 characters or fewer, activists used the hashtag #pman (short for Piata Marii Adunari Nationale, or the name of Moldovan capital Chisinau's main square) to encourage citizens to join the protests and report on events, leading scholar Evgeny Morozov to dub the protests a *Twitter revolution,* the first documented use of the term.

Although the Moldovan uprising failed as a revolution, it succeeded in drawing attention to the use of social media as a protest tool. Moldova's Internet penetration—about 30 percent of the population in 2009—may have hindered Twitter's role in organizing, but given the global popularity of Twitter at the time, its use greatly contributed to global awareness of the Moldovan protests, partly because of the ability of activists to hijack existing conversation threads on Twitter in an effort to increase international attention.

A second uprising in 2009 cemented Twitter's utility as a tool for political movements when, following Iran's contested presidential election, protesters took to the streets to protest Ahmadinejad's win and used Twitter to ensure that the world was watching. At the time of the protests, many news sources—including the *New York Times* and *TIME Magazine*—immediately dubbed the uprising a "Twitter revolution"; however others, including Evgeny Morozov, were skeptical, questioning the number of Iranians actually using Twitter within the country. Whereas thousands of tweets utilizing the #iranelection hashtag were documented, it is not clear how many of those missives came from within the country; discerning location was made more difficult by the fact that many Twitter users changed the location field of their user profiles to Tehran as an act of solidarity, obscuring their true locations. The perceived importance of Twitter was increased by a request from the U.S. Department of State on June 12 to Twitter to delay a network upgrade in order to ensure that Iranian protesters using the site could access it during the day.

YouTube also played a prominent role in the 2009 Iranian uprising after the death of a passerby, Neda Agha-Soltan, was recorded and uploaded to the site, turning Agha-Soltan's death into "probably the most widely witnessed death in human history," according to Krista Mahr. Although in the aftermath, the utility of Twitter as an organizing tool of the 2009 Iranian protests remains hotly debated, Twitter's importance in garnering international attention for a political cause is not. However, while the Iranian government blocked access to Facebook amid the protests, presumably because they felt the platform presented a demonstrable threat to their stability; they did not block access to Twitter, which may have contributed to its heavy use.

Iranian authorities also demonstrated their ability to use social networks to identify, harass, and otherwise intimidate protesters, a harbinger of what would later occur in countries throughout the Middle East. While their tactics were reportedly rudimentary, relying on manually identifying faces in images and videos, their strategy nonetheless served to intimidate Iranian citizens.

In March 2010, Thailand's United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD), whose supporters are commonly known as Red Shirts, organized demonstrations to demand that the prime minister dissolve parliament and hold elections earlier than scheduled. After negotiations between the UDD and the government failed, the protests escalated into violence, with more than 80 civilian deaths and 6 police deaths in a period of two months.

Amid the protests, media researchers documented a significant rise in Facebook users: an increase of nearly 1 million between April and May 2010. At the same time, Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Suthep Thaugsuban reportedly ordered the blocking of television and community radio stations and Web sites that broadcast "subversive" stories. The blocking of news Web sites and blogs may have contributed to the rise in Facebook users: The platform may have served as a central location for information sharing at a time when popular sites were blocked. Twitter, which remained unblocked, also served to spread information, as well as serving as a guide for journalists to locate sources amid the demonstrators.

Thailand's Internet penetration in 2010 was roughly 22 percent, or 14 million users, roughly comparable to the number of users in Iran a year prior. At first glance, the two scenarios are quite similar: social media–fuelled protests lasting a period of several months, followed by an eventual crackdown by authorities. What distinguishes these two scenarios from one another is not related to technology; it is the political environments, the demands from protesters, and other cultural and sociopolitical barriers.

Analysis

In analyzing the role of social media in political movements, popular media has often focused on the use of social media among members internally, particularly for the purpose of organizing.

Meanwhile, scholars such as Zeynep Tufekci and Christopher Wilson have demonstrated that social media allow for information sharing that is beyond the control of governments, and can be crucial for individual decision making about participation. New network configurations enabled by social media often allow for previously disconnected publics to unite, thus enabling the rise of new political ideas and identities. In authoritarian countries, these connections are particularly important because they may be the only tolerated means by which individuals organize. Still others have looked to the role that social media play in information dissemination and in informing popular media.

Social Media and Politicians

While the use of social media by political opposition movements has been a popular topic in the media, mainstream and incumbent politicians have found effective uses for social media platforms, as have authoritarian dictators.

An early example of social media used in a political campaign comes from the United States, where in 2004, presidential hopeful Howard Dean was lauded for his campaign's use of the Internet, built with a dedicated director of Internet outreach. Just three years later, during France's 2007 election in which incumbent president Nicolas Sarkozy faced off against Ségolène Royal, a member of the French Socialist Party, social media once again became a point of discussion, as both campaigns developed innovative online tactics. Sarkozy's party, the Union pour un Mouvement Populaire, or Union for a Popular Movement (UMP), dedicated 1.5 million euros to its digital strategy, which included sending short messaging service (SMS) to party members in advance of Sarkozy's television appearances, keeping French video-sharing site DailyMotion updated with videos of the candidate, and purchasing sponsored links on other sites.

Royal's campaign, on the other hand, created and launched a Web site called Désirs d'avenir in February 2006, which served as a social network throughout her campaign and beyond. At the start of her campaign, Royal declared that 50 percent of its initiatives would take place online, establishing her as an innovator. All of the content on Désirs d'avenir was released under a creative commons license, which meant that it could all be freely shared, resulting in the creation of several similar Web sites, including Segosphere.net, a Web site for young supporters of Royal.

Although Royal lost in 2007, she continued to make use of social media, tweeting alongside activists during debates in the 2012 French elections during which her former romantic partner, François Hollande, was a candidate. Royal, however, also blamed Twitter as the reason for her loss in the 2012 French parliamentary election, demonstrating the influence of social media in French politics: Hollande's new girlfriend, Valerie Trierweiler, sent a tweet wishing good luck to Royal's rival, which Royal reportedly believes resulted in her loss.

In the 2009 Iranian presidential elections, all four approved candidates utilized social media. Opposition frontrunner Mir Hussein Mousavi's supporters conducted digital interviews, including with Mousavi backer and former Iranian president Mohamad Khatami. Interview questions were submitted through social media, including Twitter, Facebook, and Yahoo! Messenger. Another candidate, Mehdi Karroubi, also developed a social media strategy, perhaps influenced by his advisor, former president Mohammad Ali Abtahi, an active blogger. A third candidate, Mohsen Revai, used his Web site to list bloggers who were supportive of his candidacy.

The campaign of incumbent candidate Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, whose blog was launched in 2006, developed the most comprehensive online strategy, listing more than 100 bloggers supportive of his candidacy on a campaign Web site, creating blog badges for fans to place on their sites, and utilizing Twitter, Facebook, and other social media to send updates and links to videos about the president.

Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez has claimed that nearly 20 percent of the messages he receives on Twitter are hostile, reports the BBC News. The Latin American politician also claimed that in 2010, he hired a staff of 200 to help him deal with the influx of responses he received on social media sites.

Social media was also picked up by candidates in India's general election in 2009. Dr. Shashi Tharoor, the former undersecretary for Communications and Public Information to the United

Nations and the 2009 Congress Party candidate in the general election, utilized Twitter throughout his campaign, and just a few months after losing the elections, became the first Indian politician to reach 100,000 followers.

Other Indian politicians, such as Narendra Modi, chief minister of the state of Gujarat, have kept on top of social media developments, utilizing newer tools such as Google+. Modi, who was outspoken against his state congress's silencing of journalists who were critical on Twitter, became the first Indian politician to host a live chat using Google+'s Hangout feature in August 2012. On the day of the Hangout, the Twitter hashtag #ModiHangout became the top trending topic in India, while the hashtag #VoteOutModi, created by Modi's opponents, came in third on the list of trending topics that day, demonstrating the widespread use of social media by India's politically savvy.

In neighboring Pakistan, where Facebook and Twitter rank highest among social media platforms, social media became an integral part of politics in 2009, the year that both former president Pervez Musharraf and presidential hopeful Imran Khan created Facebook pages.

Although Internet penetration in Pakistan is fairly low—approximately 10 percent, or 17 million users—social media is central to the strategy of Imran Khan's political party, Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). In addition to Facebook, the PTI has used YouTube and Twitter to reach out to the public in advance of the 2013 Pakistani elections. Its various Twitter accounts, including @ImranKhanPTI, @ptiUK, @PTIOfficial, cumulatively have more than 500,000 followers, while videos on its official YouTube account have been viewed more than 5 million times. The party also has an account on Livestream, where it regularly streams live speeches and rallies.

Nepal is another south Asian country in which social media has become vital for politicians. In May 2011, using Facebook and other social networking sites, young Nepalese launched a campaign to pressure political parties to draw a new constitution for Nepal. By contrast, a December 2011 political incident to which the U.S. ambassador responded on Facebook prompted the leader of the Nepali Congress, Gagan Thapa, to proclaim that the ambassador was unnecessarily meddling with local affairs. In response, Thapa and the congress were criticized by young bloggers for not understanding how social media works.

Across sub-Saharan Africa, Internet penetration remains low, but social media is nonetheless a feature of politics in many countries. In Tanzania, traditional political campaigning involves handing out merchandise, but politicians—including the president, who tweets as @jmkikwete and parliamentarian Zitto Kabwe, who tweets as @zittokabwe—have recognized the importance of social media in reaching young constituents. Kabwe, notably, tweets mainly in English, but also maintains a blog in Swahili.

Amid the crisis following Côte d'Ivoire's 2010 elections, two politicians—Prime Minister Guillaume Soro and Minister of Youth Development Alain Lobognon tweeted using pseudonyms, both later creating accounts in their real names after

A Liberian user logs into Ushahidi, which was initially developed as a means of tracking incidents of violence during political unrest in Kenya. It has since been used worldwide during political events and natural disasters.

the elections were sorted. Both men, particularly Soro, are prolific on Twitter, interacting with citizens frequently.

In South Africa, which has the third-highest Internet penetration in sub-Saharan Africa (after Kenya and Nigeria), opposition parties and candidates have directly engaged with constituents on social media, signaling a shift in approach for the nation's politics. For example, the Democratic Alliance, a leading party in South Africa, has hosted Twitter town halls and discussions on local social networking site MXit.

In the Middle East, few major politicians have picked up social media, with notable exceptions. Jordan's Queen Rania and Queen Noor (the queen dowager) were both early adopters of Twitter, and Queen Rania's YouTube channel is popular throughout the region. Bahrain's government runs several official accounts (such as @moi_bahrain, representing the Ministry of Interior), but only its Foreign Minister Khalid Alkhalifa utilizes the site to converse with admirers and detractors alike.

Several prominent Lebanese politicians, including former Prime Minister Saad Hariri and Prime Minister Najib Mikati (@Najib_Mikati), utilize Twitter. While Lebanese politicians on Twitter generally interact with their own citizens, most are multilingual and tweet in Arabic, English, and sometimes French. In December 2012, a controversy erupted after Lebanese security agencies demanded the social media passwords and other data of Lebanese citizens for the purpose of investigating the October 2012 assassination of the head of the country's information services. Lebanon's Minister of Telecommunications Nicolas Sehnaoui took to Twitter to protest the request, using the hashtag #ProtectPrivacy, and encouraging citizens to tweet: "As a Lebanese Citizen I refuse to give up on my Internet Privacy."

More than a year after the uprising that ousted President Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's political parties have learned to adapt to the social media era. @IkhwanWeb, the Twitter account for the Muslim Brotherhood—the party of President Mohammed Morsy—tweets frequently, and has notably traded jabs with the Twitter account of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo. Social media also continues to be important for political movements, possibly helping to instigate protests against Morsy's presidential decree in November 2012.

One of the potential pitfalls of social media for politicians is the ability of content to immediately go viral, or spread quickly, offering no chance for backtracking. Just as the U.S. Embassy caught the Muslim Brotherhood in a lie on Twitter, Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves—disappointed by one of the *New York Times* journalist's columns—took to the social media platform to call out Paul Krugman for being "patronizing" in a piece he wrote about Estonia. Ilves vented his anger across several tweets containing profanities (which he censored with an asterisk) and American jargon.

Social Media and Diplomacy

Conceived by the U.S. Department of State, 21st-century statecraft is a concept that involves "complementing traditional foreign policy tools" with new, digital tools that "fully leverage the networks, technologies, and demographics of our interconnected world." In its efforts to promote 21st-century statecraft, the Obama administration has adopted social media, presumably encouraging other departments to follow; this has resulted in the use of Twitter and Facebook by embassies, consulates, and other officials.

The concept has been championed by some, such as former state official and current Google Ideas Director Jared Cohen and Google Chair Eric Schmidt, who have argued that governments that fail to engage online will be caught off guard by rebellious citizens "armed with virtually nothing but cell phones." Scholar Philip Seib has argued that the lagging response by the United States to the Arab Spring was a "failure to appreciate the importance of social media in modern politics," and that traditional diplomacy efforts were "left behind" in the midst of the uprisings.

Others, such as Evgeny Morozov, have criticized 21st-century statecraft, stating that the U.S. government is "showing too much admiration" for Facebook and Twitter, which he argues have "questionable ethics."

The Impact of Social Media on Politics

Given the rapidly changing nature of social media, it is difficult to assess the impact of social media on politics around the world. For the same reason, it is difficult to predict future implications of social media's impact on the international realm.

One important factor is the Internet penetration rate, or number of Internet users, in a given country. In France, where the use of social media in politics is widespread and arguably influential, Internet penetration exceeds 80 percent; in Lebanon, just over half of the population uses the Internet. In some countries, mobile penetration rates are a greater indicator of potential social media engagement. In India, for example, only 10 percent of citizens have access to the Internet, but 72 percent have access to mobile phones. In Libya, mobile penetration is more than 150 percent (meaning, generally, that some citizens have more than one mobile phone), but Internet penetration rests below 20 percent. Numerous factors unrelated to technology may affect its successful use for political means, including the form of government in a country and the politicization of a populace.

Jillian C. York
Independent Scholar

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Africa, north; Africa, sub-Saharan; Arab Spring; Asia; Bahrain; Egypt; Facebook; India; International Unrest and Revolution; Iran; Syria; Tunisia; Twitter; United States; Ushahidi; YouTube.

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International Unrest and Revolution

At age 11, Malala Yousufzai began writing, using a pseudonym, a blog for the BBC about living conditions under the Taliban in the Swat Valley of Pakistan where she lived. A great deal of what she wrote involved the difficulties of attaining an education, including the Taliban's destruction of 172 schools. In 2009, after the Taliban issued an edict that all girls in northwestern Pakistan be banned from school, Yousufzai began publicly speaking out through her blog and other media outlets about the need for girls to receive a quality education. Her father, an educator whose school refused to honor the edict, had raised her to stand

up for what she believed in. For her work, Pakistan bestowed upon her its highest civilian honor for bravery. However, the media attention also attracted Taliban militants, who shot Yousufzai in the head and neck on October 9, 2012, as she came home from school. The militants stopped the van that the 14 year old was riding in, and demanded that the children identify Yousufzai. When they did, she was shot, along with two other girls. As threats against her continued, she was airlifted to Britain to receive specialized care.

While Yousufzai has recovered and returned to school in Britain, her story illustrates the benefits and dangers of communication in a global media environment. Social networking/media, international cable channels, blogs, and mobile and citizen journalism have given increasingly more groups of people a chance to not only tell their stories, but also hear the stories of others. Many of those stories are coming from voices that did not have a platform from which to speak until the development of social media. Recent international protests have shown that social media can be a tool used by these dissident or minority groups to spark and sustain revolutions. The use of social media sites does not require a high level of computer proficiency or a large amount of expensive equipment. All that is really required is a smartphone that permits the user to place his or her posts across a range of interconnected social media platforms. In this way, anyone can become the voice of a revolution. However, it is overly simplistic to say that social media were the cause of or the sole reason for success of the international revolutions seen in the 2000s. There are many other factors that must come together to make a protest succeed.

In order for there to be a revolution, regardless of what communication tools are available to fuel it, there must be a group of people who share a common goal or passion. That passion must be so strong that it allows participants to overcome the fear of personal reprisals or harm. Whether these conversations occur in the salons of France or on a Facebook wall, revolution is born from discussions of shared concerns and desires. Communication and communication networks are vitally important for protest movements to not only grow, but also to gauge when the time is correct to ignite and spread. Therefore, controlling, or at least having significant access to communication channels has been seen as a crucial component in the creation and success of social or political activism throughout history, especially in modern times.

Communication Technologies

In looking at revolutions from a historical perspective, communication technologies have played a role as platforms for public speech. During the Reformation in Europe, the printing press allowed for a wider distribution of revolutionary thought, although it was limited by high illiteracy rates. Throughout the period leading up to the American Revolution, the postal system designed by Benjamin Franklin carried revolutionary materials to all the 13 colonies. The Vietnam War was brought into American living rooms via television, and the images shown decreased support for the war effort. Live images of the collapse of the Twin Towers in New York City on September 11 heightened the intensity of feelings about the responsible terrorists. However, technology is only one piece of each of these events, and it was not technology alone that caused them. Technology must be used appropriately by human agents in order to have an impact. Therefore, communication technology on its own is not enough to cause change, but it can help coordinate and organize it.

Social media allows protesters to organize their activities during all stages of activism. During this process, communities and collective identities are formed that provide strength and cohesion to people who have often started as marginalized groups. It does not matter if these activist groups have large amounts of resources because few resources are needed if the organization is occurring in cyberspace. Activists do not need to spend large amounts of money printing pamphlets or posters, nor do they need the resources necessary to own a mass media entity. Mass media allow for the broad dissemination of information about a cause, but social media allow for not just that, but also for the ability to recruit and organize new members, as well as to coordinate activities and craft new messages. In other words, social media create a space for two-way communication that is outside of government-controlled media channels.

Social media can also keep the issues that fuel the revolution in front of potential protesters and the world 24 hours a day, rather than on

an occasional news report. Keeping the issues in front of as large a group as possible increases the chance that more people will join or support the movement, and increases its opportunities for success. Unlike mass media, social media also allow for an instantaneous dialogue between activists and outsiders that works to increase the realism of events as they can be observed in real time, and without the perception of having been edited by an authoritative or corporate group. Finally, social media bring back some of the interpersonal dimension of face-to-face communication, which is why social media interactions can have stronger levels of influence over behavior. However, all computer-mediated communication has the potential for misinterpretation or the feeling of impersonality, so the impact in terms of influencing behavior can be tempered.

An additional advantage of social media for disseminating revolutionary discourse is the dissolution of space and time barriers. Communication through social media is both instantaneous and repeatable around the world. Broadcast signals or publication runs have significant limits in terms of reach to a potential audience. Theoretically, the Internet can reach anywhere, thus giving it the broadest possible influence. In reality, the reach is not so absolute or universal. While it can be one communication form, it cannot be the only one if the revolution is to succeed. The greatest hindrances for distributing information or organizing cyberactivism in social media are lack of open Internet access, access to equipment, and user knowledge.

Limits of Social Media

While social media allow for networking, there is concern that the ties built in social media are not strong enough to sustain cohesion throughout the often lengthy and dangerous process of social change. Once there is organization through social media, there has to be enough spirit to put the plans into action and take to the streets to call for political or social change. For example, in Egypt, the protests were supported by strikes of bus drivers, laborers, and even professionals such as doctors. In addition, protesters created a pamphlet, distributed online and in paper form in Arabic, which informed potential activists where and when to protest, escape routes, and how to dress. The Egyptian protesters were extremely organized and knew how to frame the protests and mobilize the necessary resources. In the recent international revolutions that were successful, the activists were well organized and the organization transcended just one group or form of communication. While there were leaders in the organization that allowed for clear channels of communication, the leadership was spread out among members of the organization, rather than concentrated in one person.

While organization is crucial, it is not the only factor necessary for successful cyberactivism. Protesters must also use social media to frame how the world is seeing the revolution. As with any media, the stories presented in social media are not always an objective reflection of reality.

The camera only has so much range in front of its lens, and the perspective of the camera operator will determine what parts of a scene the camera sees or that the edited story contains. The person who is controlling this framing, either the state or the protester, will control how events are perceived by the larger public. In traditional media, there is little chance for a group that is not in power to have access to the media. Social media, however, changes that power dynamic. Anyone with Internet access can capture an event in such a way that the story supports their point of view.

Framing is especially important because members of the protest group try to bring others into the growing revolution. In order to maintain consistency of messaging, organizers need to try to control slogans, speeches, and videos that present the ideas of the revolutionary group in a context that can be understand by people within the country, but also by individuals outside of the country. In Egypt, there was a concerted effort made by supporters of the revolution to convince Western media to describe the uprising as a revolution, rather than a riot. Such terminology framed what was occurring in Egypt as an organized movement to enact change, rather than as disorganized acts of vandalism and looting carried out by random individuals. Videos and comments can be easily and instantaneously shared with the world to show how a group is mobilized around a central cause, and they encourage others to support the movement.

Social movements require three key factors to succeed: organization, resource mobilization, and framing. Having just one or two of these three key factors is often not enough. Social media provides a platform where all three can be utilized to bring like-minded individuals together around a common narrative that can then be disseminated to large numbers of people. In addition, social media can provide crucial on-the-ground information, such as where and when protests or meetings will occur, or directing aid to protesters who are wounded or trapped. Mass social movements are not unique to the digital era, but computer-mediated communication technology assists in the development of such movements and the dissemination of the movement's ideology to a global audience. Nowhere is this better seen than in the many protest movements of the early 2000s.

Political Use of Social Media

The first political movement to successfully utilize social media occurred on January 17, 2001, in the Philippines. President Joseph Estrada was engaged in an impeachment trial for allegedly receiving bribes, and on January 17, the Philippines Congress voted to set aside key evidence in that trial. In just two hours, a large protest was organized at a crossroads in Manila through the forwarding of text messages. By the end of the week, over seven million text messages had resulted in a protest group of over 1 million people. The size and swiftness of the protest caused Congress to reverse its decision, and Estrada resigned on January 20. Similar use of text messaging resulted in the removal of Jose Maria Aznar as Spain's prime minister in 2004.

While the cases of Estrada and Aznar could be seen as the first instance of a political leader being ousted by social media, text messaging does not possess all of the characteristics associated with social media. Social media requires the creation of online communities where users can create and share content, as well as post personal messages. It was not until 2009 that social media was used as a true device for political revolution. Activists in Moldova, a former Soviet republic, used Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LiveJournal, an electronic diary service, to publicize the political unrest in the region that followed the disputed general elections. On April 6, 2009, protesters gathered in front of government offices in the capital, and the next day they were joined by opposition leaders.

In 24 hours, the size of the protest grew from 10,000 to 30,000 as a result of real-time dissemination of stories and pictures via social media. The official media of Moldova, however, did not carry any information about the protests. In spite of the international attention that was then focused on the protests, no political change occurred. However, the Moldova protests demonstrated that social media could be used as a source of political protest in the face of media censorship or government control of mainstream media.

This potential of social media was quickly tested in June 2009, in Iran. The unrest began, as it did in Moldova, after Iran's presidential election was called into question. Protests broke out June 13, 2009, when opposition leader Mir Hossein Moussavi asked for vote counting to stop because of violations. The government, however, declared incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad the winner. Seven days of increasing protests followed as Moussavi continued to call for a new round of voting. The protests were the largest seen in the country since the 1979 revolution. Images and accounts of the protest were spread around social media sites, but primarily through Twitter. Twitter brought the story to the Western media after journalists were removed from the country, but also allowed Iranian protesters to organize because their communication could occur outside of government detection. At this time, social media were so new that governments were not aware of all of the ways in which activists were able to use them for organization or framing purposes. The U.S. State Department, however, saw the importance of Twitter during this uprising, and asked Twitter to postpone an upgrade in order to allow protesters continued access to the site. Twitter delayed the upgrade, which is one of the reasons the Iranian uprising is often referred to as the "Twitter Revolution."

The protests in Iran continued and steadily grew. Then, on June 20, a young woman, Neda Agha-Soltan, was driving and got out of her car after becoming stuck in traffic. As she walked, she was shot and killed by an unknown sniper; protesters said she was killed by a member of the militia, and the killing was captured by a cell

phone. The video went viral, and Agha-Soltan became a martyr for the protest movement. In spite of Iran's strict media censorship, the video, also picked up by mainstream American media, became a symbol for antigovernment protests. The government also made claims that protesters actually shot Agha-Soltan, and then altered the video to make it appear that she was killed by a member of a government-sponsored group. It is unclear if protesters were using social media at this time to organize their protests, or to simply report what was happening within the country, which is perhaps why the 2009 protests did not lead to any political change within Iran. The protest movement, however, is still prevalent within the country.

Many experts point to the Iranian uprising as the foundation for what has come to be known as the Arab Spring, or the Facebook Revolutions. In December 2012, a young man in Tunisia, Mohammed Bouazizi, set himself on fire to protest the police's repeated fines that resulted from his not having a license to sell vegetables, his only source of income. The self-immolation, an act that would be seen again in the Egyptian uprisings, was captured on YouTube and other social media sites. Mass protests followed his funeral, and those images were shared via social media. Tunisia, as well as many of the other countries involved in the Arab Spring, have citizens who are well educated and focused on activism. In addition, Arab countries have a large pool of young adults who are technically savvy. In Arab countries, almost 70 percent of the population is under 30 years old, as compared to 50 percent in the rest of the world.

In spite of heavy social media censorship, over a third of Tunisia's population had a presence on social media. Tunisia's north African neighbor, Egypt, began to send text messages and posting videos to show their support for the Tunisian activists. Perhaps the government did not go far enough to block the Internet during the uprising because advocates were able to use private networks to continue to spread their messages, in spite of YouTube being blocked. As a result, the protesters were able to oust Tunisian President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali on January 14, 2011.

The success of the Tunisian Revolution, also referred to as the Jasmine Revolution (a moniker that was subsequently borrowed by the leaders of a similar uprising in China that enjoyed far less success), sparked similar uprisings in countries around the Middle East and Africa. Next to follow was Egypt, where Google marketing executive Wael Ghonim worked under a pseudonym to build an organized network of activities that were connected through computer-mediated communication. Ghonim's primary Facebook page was titled, "We are all Khaled Said," a reference to an Egyptian who was beaten to death by police. Photos of Khaled Said, taken in the morgue, worked to undermine the government's official explanation for how he had died. Social media allowed protesters to organize events in Tahrir Square, and they were aided by a military force that was unwilling to turn against the protesters. Government censorship of the Internet was unsuccessful because Egyptian protesters, and the world, had learned from Tunisian's revolutionaries how to work around such blockages. A total of 18 days of protest resulted in Prime Minister Hosni Mubarak's resignation on February 11, 2011.

The Arab Spring then spread to countries such as Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Libya as activists gained knowledge and enthusiasm from successes in neighboring countries. For example, in Libya, the civil war resulted in the end of Muammar Qaddafi's regime, but it took eight months, rather than weeks, to occur. Libya was a much more closed off and authoritarian regime than those seen in Tunisia or Egypt. The protesters in Libya were not as well prepared to use social media. That changed as the Libyan government increasingly lost control of its citizens. Social media also helped to keep the ongoing war in front of the world. Lebanon and Syria also experienced protests, but there has not yet been a resolution to the unrest.

Problems in Protest and Social Activism

What is learned in these instances is that access to social media is not always a guarantee of success. While social media provides a significant opportunity for individuals who normally have limited access to communication to assert resistance to political control, the end results are not always what was intended. In Egypt, women joined the revolution in the hopes of gaining more rights. However, they had to use social media to encourage other women to come out to protest,

something that women are not normally allowed to do. Female activists knew that if women were to see any gains from the revolution, they had to leave the safety of their homes and computers and take to the streets with the men. For these women in Egypt and Tunisia, however, the revolution has not brought them greater freedoms. In fact, many women's groups are still struggling to gain any of the advancements the revolution promised.

Lack of progress for women speaks to the lack of common goals for all members of a protest. Any division or sectarianism among the protesters significantly hampers the ability of the protests to grow and succeed in the long term. In Iran, the populace did not have a very strong history of activism, and there was general apathy among the citizens over both the election and the candidates. It was therefore difficult to tap into a common interest to unify the activists. Also, if the government is more totalitarian and militaristic, as in Iran and Syria, then there is a greater chance that the military and/or police will work to violently stop the revolution. This possibility was seen in Thailand's Red Shirt uprising in 2010, where social media were used to organize the protest, but the government swiftly moved in and killed dozens. The protest was not strong enough to keep activists together after the killings. However, the presence of cell phone cameras during these crackdowns makes it easier for protesters to record the government's action and share the videos with the world.

Finally, as the use of social media as a protest tool grows, governments become more technologically savvy and learn new ways to block access to social media sites or the Internet in general. There are downsides to blocking the Internet. Governments are beginning to experience that shutting down access to the Internet can actually work to fuel dissidents, as well as bring worldwide attention to the protests, rather than stop the activism. Perhaps more importantly, preventing access to the Internet can also harm a country's economy because the Internet is so essential for international business.

Russia

The dichotomy of social media as a revolutionary tool is seen in the protest movement in Russia. Russia is experiencing rapid growth in the use of social media and the Internet. Russians who are connected spend more time online than the citizens of any other country. Social media played a prominent role in the uprisings the country experienced beginning in December 2011. Even after the Cold War, Russians received their news from state-run media, but social media has leveled that playing field. After participating in elections that many felt were fraudulent, especially for Vladimir Putin's candidacy for prime minister, Russian protesters created videos to distribute on the Internet that criticized and satirized the government. Following the videos, social media were used by activists to organize the largest demonstrations in the country since 1991. On December 24, 2011, close to 100,000 protesters descended on Moscow.

Russian activists have access to Yandex, the Russian version of Google, where they not only shared information about the protests, but also organized pages to gather monetary contributions. The protests culminated prior to Putin's inauguration. On May 6, 2012, protesters organized a "March of Millions" event in Bolotnaya Square in Moscow. While the protesters were marching toward the square, they clashed with police, who responded violently. More than 250 people were arrested, including three leaders of the protest, and police put down smaller demonstrations throughout the city. In spite of the protests, Vladimir Putin was sworn in for a third term, and new laws were enacted in an attempt to stop opposition, including a penalty of $9,000 for unauthorized demonstrations.

In addition, the government tried to take control of Russian social media. In April 2013, Vkontakte, Russia's Facebook, had its offices searched and its ownership structure altered. Vkontakte's owner, Pavel Durov, refused to stop antigovernment protest pages. After being accused of involvement in a traffic incident, two other cofounders sold their shares in the company to a fund owned by a board member of a state-owned oil company. This gave the government de facto control over the site. In spite of the turmoil in Russian social media, it allowed for the protests to continue to disseminate their public history. One year after the protests, social media helped to organize and globally publicize the anniversary of the May 2012 clash.

Demonstrators confront riot police in Taksim Gezi Park in Istanbul, Turkey, on June 11, 2013. Protesters shared photos like this on social media and photo-sharing sites like Flickr and used Twitter extensively, often employing the hashtag #occupygezi. On a single afternoon, more than 2 million tweets were sent in Turkey, and even after midnight, over 3,000 appeared in only one minute.

Turkey and Jordan

Protests begun in June 2013 in Turkey and Jordan also serve as case studies to help clarify social media's potential for organizing and framing international revolutions. In Turkey, a protest that began June 1, 2013, was not started by social media, but used social media to report on what was occurring and to keep the protest atmosphere alive. The protests began over the government's plan to tear down trees in the main square of Istanbul in order to build a shopping mall, but it became much more than that very quickly. The protest brought to the surface concerns over the actions of Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who many protesters perceive as arrogant. Protesters used social media to repurpose a word, *capulcu*, which means "looter," which the government used in a derogatory manner to describe protesters in the early days of the uprising. Citizens in Turkey turned the word into a new verb, *capulling*, which they defined as "protesting."

Facebook users changed their status to "I'm capulling today." In addition, protesters used social media to share photos. As the uprising continued, both protesters and the government took to Twitter to try and frame how the outside world perceived what was occurring. In one afternoon, over two million tweets were sent in Turkey, and even after midnight, over 3,000 were published in one minute. At the same time, the Turkish newspaper *Sabah* did not feature a story regarding the demonstrations on its front page. Instead, the newspaper attempted to frame what was occurring in the country by reporting on stories of the president and prime minister receiving a gift of a horse or an award for a piece of antismoking legislation, respectively.

Similar discrepancies between traditional mass media and social media were also seen in the coverage of protests in Jordan during the same time period. In both countries, protesters were met with extreme violence. The protesters and government in Turkey and Jordan have posted accounts of what occurred in an effort to control global perception of the ongoing crises.

Conclusion

While social media is a tool for potential revolution and social activism, the presence of computer-mediated communication is by no means a guarantee of success. Even the founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, downplayed the role of or need for Facebook in the recent revolutions. It is very possible that all of the uprisings discussed would have occurred without the presence of social media, but social media enabled organization of the protest movements as well as discussion of the movements throughout the world. Yet, certain aspects of social media are fleeting and limiting. Tweets are not archived, and therefore must be retweeted to keep those messages alive. Social media tends to be utilized by young professionals who are well educated. That limits the narrative from spreading outside of large cities, which is why organizers need to think of alternative means of message distribution.

However, the potential for social media to be utilized as an organizing and framing tool for political activism is apparent. It is for this reason that the U.S. State Department is working to ensure global Internet freedom, where governments would be prevented from restricting citizen's access to outside Internet sites such as Google, YouTube, and newspapers. This approach does nothing to protect conversations between individuals, which is where much of the political organizing occurs. There has also not been enough time elapsed to see what the true impact of the revolutions will be in each of the countries. New governments are still being formed to fill the power vacuums that resulted from the revolutions. In some countries, including Egypt and Tunisia, there is already concern that the new governments will be no better than the old governments in terms of solving the problems that originally led to the uprisings. What remains to be seen is if the movements started by social media, through digital activism or cyberactivism, can lead to lasting change or serve as a blueprint for other types of protests.

Pamela C. O'Brien
Bowie State University

See Also: Arab Spring; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Egypt; Middle East; Monarchies, Social Media, and Politics.

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Internet Forums

An Internet forum provides a place for sharing information and discussion about certain topics. It lowers temporal, spatial, and cost barriers that exist in face-to-face meetings and consequently increases participation in forums. Examples of its earlier forms are bulletin board systems (BBSs), electronic mailing lists (listservs), community networks on Freenet, and newsgroups on Usenet, which enabled users to post messages on public message boards and exchange messages and e-mails with other users. Different from these services, which were forms of two-way communication but not very interactive, in the Web 2.0 era, Internet forums became more synchronous based on social

media such as Facebook and Twitter, and more mobile based on software such as bbPress.org and fluxbb.org. Recently, for the U.S. presidential election of 2012, the Obama camp launched mobile applications that promoted interaction with voters by providing information on campaigns and policies and receiving feedback and responses. Along with the increased usability and sociability of the technology, the importance of Internet forums is growing in a political context, which leads to the discussion the positive and negative sides of Internet forums. Social media are used as a venue for political discussion, and play a role in civil society.

Based on the technological affordance for social interaction, Internet forums facilitate many-to-many interactions and draw much more participants than offline forums. In Internet forums, people can revisit and respond to other citizens' opinions with fewer barriers of time and space and traverse diverse modes of communication such as reading news and joining discussions. Access to government information is also facilitated on the Internet. Moreover, people with poor political resources can express their voices on Internet forums. Sometimes, Internet forums develop into virtual communities by having shared interests and returning participants. However, despite these advantages, Internet forums are susceptible to several problems. Given that the systematic, individualized filtering of information is possible on the Internet, Internet forums can be echo chambers of like-minded people. Despite the technological feasibility of many-to-many communication, a small number of people actually garner attention in the fragmented online environment. In addition, discussions in Internet forums are likely to be far from rational critical discourse, as found by empirical studies. The negligible attention to Internet forums from policy decision makers is also one of the limitations.

Recently, social media have opened up another opportunity as people are becoming increasingly engaged in seeking information and discussing politics on social network sites. While earlier forms of Internet forums were geared to asynchronous, bulletin board–style postings, social media promote livelier discussions with larger numbers of participants and increased responsiveness to each other's opinions. People can also create groups in social network sites and share discussions on specific topics or with specific participants. Facebook groups and Twitaddons.com are examples. Although social media can exacerbate selective exposure to congenial ideas through receiving information that is highly personalized by one's like-minded friends, they can also provide a chance to be exposed to dissimilar opinions by facilitating contact with a population larger than a circle of one's acquaintances. Several studies have found that not only selective exposure to similar opinions, but also inadvertent encounters with conflicting opinions coexist in Internet forums.

In addition, political discussions shared in social network sites might not be deliberative, but the discussion can foster civic cultures more attentive to politics. Horizontal communication with fellow citizens and symbolic expressions such as parody and humor help people feel higher political efficacy and to be more engaged in politics. In addition, the viral capability of social media such as the retweet activity in Twitter allows discussions to extend outside the forum and generate social repercussions. Furthermore, the boundary of forums is not confined to written texts, but is broadened to audiovisual content, as observed in YouTube, where many people reply with self-produced video clips on certain political and social issues.

Conclusion

In the context of civil society, a frequently raised question about Internet forums is whether they constitute a public sphere where rational and deliberative discourse takes place, or simply a public space where anyone can express themselves. Some people reject this dichotomy, and suggest that Internet forums are a networked public sphere where social mediation takes place, diverse modes of communication exist, and lively discussions occur. Considering that online political discussions are found to increase political knowledge and participation, the importance of Internet forums should not be overlooked, despite their mixed possibilities as a public sphere. As social media permeates everyday life, Internet forums could serve a role as a barometer of public opinion.

Sujin Choi
University of Texas at Austin
Han Woo Park
Yeungnam University

See Also: Blogosphere; Digital Citizen; Social Networking Web Sites

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Internet Gathering

Online protests are virtual activities where the Internet is both the site of and the means for collective action. These activities range from online petitions, e-mail campaigns, virtual sit-ins, online meet-ups, and rallies to hacking, e-mail bombings, boycotts, and netstrikes (or denial-of-service [DoS] attacks). The creative use of computer and information technologies facilitates online protesters' ability to perform civil disobedience in cyberspace, and even disrupt the flow of information. Such virtual protest activities are increasingly popular, especially among younger populations more familiar with digital media. Also, while the Internet is increasingly the site of protests, such online gatherings do not necessarily have to relate to political or civic activism. Indeed, Jennifer Earl and Katrina Kimport, for instance, have studied the rise of so-called fan activisms, where protest tactics—including e-tactics, such as e-mail campaigns—are used to demand nonpolitical claims, such as entertainment-based and sports-related petitions.

Internet gatherings rely on the use of the Web as a direct expression of protest—not just as a means to call for and organize collective action. Thus, the Internet not only facilitates mobilization and participation in traditional forms of protests (e.g., street demonstrations), but it is also changing the way in which activists communicate, collaborate, and demonstrate. Online protests take advantage of the Internet's power to foster collaboration and participation beyond time and space constraints. Unlike offline mobilization, Internet gatherings are not limited by the spatiotemporal copresence of actors, which gives them a more transnational character and augments a protest movement's reach because strangers from around the globe can simultaneously participate in any virtual activity.

Along these lines, Christian Fuchs describes the Internet as more than a global computer network, seeing it as a social system that is brought alive by the human activities and social relationships that occur on the Web. In his view, online protests expand the scope of different movements around the world. Because of the Internet, net citizens attain voices in a community of hundreds of millions of people, and information and communication technologies enable individuals to gather

online, to challenge government policy and corporate businesses, and to promote social change. No longer working in isolation from each other, net citizens are brought together into a global community via the Internet.

Such community-building capabilities are important for the success of any mobilization because protest activity needs both strong and weak ties, or connections, that evoke a sense of belonging and the trust required to sustain mobilization. The architecture of the World Wide Web allows for a local conflict to trespass boundaries—even national ones—and be carried out globally by new forms of online communities. Via Internet communication, protesters share meanings, collective identities, and practices in a global, digital public sphere. Not surprisingly, then, Internet gatherings can unite geographically dispersed individuals with specific problems and travails into a densely connected community. Online protests take advantage of the fact that the Internet in particular, and spaces generated by information and communication technologies in general, can be the site of civil disobedience by attracting masses of people and mobilizing global public opinion.

Examples

Examples of these kinds of virtual protests abound, from the United Kingdom (UK)-based hacktivist group Electrohippies' action against the computer network servicing the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle, Washington, to the so called Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) strike in January 2012, in opposition to the law proposed in the U.S. Congress. The largest online protest to date, with more than 100,000 Web sites in the United States and abroad joining the strike by going dark and posting anti-SOPA messages on their home pages, the SOPA strike resulted in the controversial bill being shelved in Congress. Other examples include the 2007 nurse-in organized by the Mothers International Lactation Campaign against Facebook policies that censored breastfeeding photos for being deemed as obscene content, a 2003 virtual march on the U.S. Congress organized by the Web-based platform MoveOn.org that resulted in blocked telephone lines for hours, and massive online protests in opposition to the impeachment of former President of South Korea Roh Moo Hyon in 2004. Clearly, then, the Internet offers the means for massive online gatherings aimed at social change.

Besides disrupting online sites of real-world governments or businesses, online protests also are convened in virtual worlds. In 2007, Italian IBM workers organized a strike via the 3-D virtual world of Second Life. Roughly 2,000 people showed up for the online protest, and eventually the company responded to union demands. Other examples include the violent sit-ins and takeovers by aggravated users of online games, such as World of Warcraft and Ultima Online.

Impact

While increasingly popular, Internet-based demonstrations and e-tactics of collective actions have not replaced older, traditional forms of protesting. Some authors argue that, rather than a substitution, online protests complement offline actions. Oftentimes Internet gatherings incorporate parallel offline actions in order to reinforce and extend the impact of online protests. Likewise, scholars have found that the Internet not only has created online modes of existing offline protest actions, but it also has created a new repertoire of online actions.

Collective action also does not have to remain either online or offline. Rather, research indicates that the more individuals engage in offline activities, the more likely they are to also participate in online activities. Casting doubt on the assumption that online actions are somehow less valuable (e.g., the notion of slacktivism), studies increasingly are demonstrating that protest activities that begin online then move offline, with the potential for real-world impacts. In fact, some scholars argue that perhaps distinctions should no longer be made between offline and online actions because both are part of today's definition of activism. For example, scholars and media pundits alike point to the way the Internet, particularly social media, played critical roles in the Arab Spring and the Occupy Movement—both serving as examples of the way offline and online activism converged.

In addition to the online–offline comparison, online protests bring other potential pros and cons. On the one hand, Internet protesters can be

mobilized faster and in a territorially expanded space thanks to the Internet's global presence. Participation rates of online actions are often higher than those of comparable offline protests. In addition, online protests seem to offer a new way to engage segments of the population that traditionally have been disenfranchised from politics, such as young people or minorities. Empirical evidence from different countries supports the importance of online collective action to engage people in public affairs. This does not mean that the technology is a mobilizing force, but that users have found a way to use the Internet to express themselves and share information about their problems and concerns, thus helping mobilize users both online and offline.

Further, Internet gatherings allow individuals to join and leave causes and sites at will, avoiding formal involvement or commitment. While this might be empowering in terms of enabling civic or even political participation—such was the case during the elections in Iran—it also underscores the fact that Internet-based movements can be loose and less collective, and thus short-lived. Further, the anonymity that is usually present in online protests can translate into less collective trust than that of similar offline actions, also limiting a movement's sustainability. The lack of physical presence may also be a sign that individuals are joining online protests just to say they are part of a movement, instead of actually committing to being a part of the movement. The relative ease and lower costs and risks of online activism in comparison with offline activism often lead to the perception that online collective action does not generate the same levels of impact as offline activism. Online protesters have been criticized for being slacktivists or clicktivists, whose collective action is limited to clicking a link to support a cause. According to this argument, changing one's social media profile avatar to show support for a group or cause does little to nothing to provoke social change.

In addition, given that various social patterns—including social inequalities—are reflected to some extent on the Internet, the power of online protests and Web-based movements is mostly limited to those individuals with Internet access and know-how, potentially excluding the bulk of the world's population. Moreover, several studies have documented the way that nondemocratic regimes have successfully blocked online gatherings or have used the Internet itself to monitor and then track down and arrest online protesters in detriment to the promise of cyber-democracy and the expressive power of the Internet in countries like China, Iran, or Indonesia.

Ingrid Bachmann
Pontifical Catholic University of Chile
Summer Harlow
University of Texas at Austin

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Cloud Protesting; Hacktivism; Occupy Movement; Youth Engagement

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Internet Society, The

The Internet Society is an international, nonprofit organization founded in 1992 in Washington, D.C., with its main purpose to "promote the open development, evolution, and use of the Internet for the benefit of all people throughout the world." The Internet is considered an important platform for fostering and sharing knowledge and promoting an information society, thus the ultimate mission of the Internet Society is to favor its development. Especially during the last 20 years, developments in information technology have made the Internet one of the most important and most used "containers" of information and knowledge. The possibility of posting, sharing,

and seeking content online has turned the Internet into an extremely cheap and fast platform for the production, distribution, and consumption of knowledge. The Internet Society's main scope is thus to "provide assistance and support to groups and organizations involved in the use, operation, and evolution of the Internet," including provision of "forums in which technical and operational questions can be discussed and provide mechanisms through which interested parties can be informed and educated about the Internet, its function, use, operation, and the interests of its constituents."

Organization

The Internet Society is sustained by the Internet Architecture Board (IAB), which is a committee initially created by the U.S. Department of Defense in 1979 for supervising the technical and engineering development of the Internet, and later became an international, public entity. It is the institutional home for Internet standard operating processes, such as transmission control protocol/Internet protocol (TCP/IP), or Internet protocol. The nonprofit organization was founded by a group of Internet pioneers from the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), who needed an institutional framework for collecting funds to support their activities for the protocol development. Today, the Internet Society comprises a network of 65,000 individual members, over 90 chapters, and 145 organization members around the world, and has offices in Reston, Vancouver; and Genève, Switzerland.

Eight executive senior managers, five regional bureau directors representing each continent, and a board of trustees manage the Internet Society. The board of trustees is the actual governing body, and comprises people elected or appointed by chapters or regional bureau directors for a three-year mandate. The senior management and the board of trustees are supported by an advisory council, whose main task is to provide advice on different matters related to global Internet and users. Members of the advisory council include service and equipment suppliers, academics, researchers, representatives from public interest groups and international organizations, and governments. The Internet Society is primarily supported by individual member donations and member organizations' dues. Revenues are also obtained through direct sponsorships to the organization's different initiatives. Sources of support and funding are corporations, different regional, national, and international organizations, and Internet administrative infrastructures such as IAB, IETF, Internet Research Task Force (IRTF), Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA), and Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).

Activities

For the past 20 years, the priority policies of the Internet Society have been Internet access and development, digital content and innovation, human rights and rule of law, Internet governance and trust, and privacy and security. The Internet is considered the engine for cultural, social, and economic development, and the organization tries to promote its use and knowledge. The organization works with the IETF, IRTF, and the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) to stimulate research and assist the advancement of the TCP/IP protocol suite and the integration of new protocol suites, for example OSI, into the Internet architecture.

The activities of the Internet society can be grouped in three main areas: policy and standard advocacy, education, and development and recognition. Through its engagement in discussions on Internet policy, governance, development, and technology, the Internet Society tries to facilitate and support the development of standards, protocols, administration, and the technical infrastructure of the Internet. The organization is an advocate for Internet development and works with governments, national and international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to promote policies about the Internet that conform to its core values. It plays a key role in Internet governance discussions, including significant involvement in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and Internet Governance Forum (IGF).

The Internet Society promotes knowledge on technology, use, and application of the Internet, and supports online education and collaboration among organizations. In developing countries, training workshops on educational opportunities about the Internet are also provided. The Internet

Society offers community and ICT innovation grants to initiatives aiming at humanitarian, educational, and societal contexts of online connectivity; and individual fellowships to cover costs related to coursework, practical experiences, and mentorships of young professionals from around the world. The Internet Society offers three awards: the Jonathan B. Postel Service Award for an individual or organization who has made outstanding contributions to the data communications community, the Applied Networking Research Prize for applied networking research results, and the Itojun Service Award for individuals or groups who have made outstanding contributions to the IPv6 community.

One of the biggest challenges of the Internet Society is to overcome the digital divide problem, the inequality between groups of people around the world in terms of access to, use of, or knowledge of the Internet and other digital technologies. While the Internet is widely used and diffused in the northern part of the hemisphere and across rich regions, the southern hemisphere and poorer regions are lagging behind both in terms of availability of technological infrastructures that allow for the diffusion of the Internet and support for specific policies. Part of the digital divide problem is related to differences in Internet governance. The Internet Society is actively trying to foster the development and application of shared principles, procedures, and programs for the Internet across the world, which should help in removing some of the barriers for more equal use and diffusion of the Internet.

Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University

See Also: Association of Internet Researchers; Center for Internet Studies; Internet Forums; World Wide Web, History of the.

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Iran

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, social media are significant political tools. This was most apparent during the country's 2009 presidential election and its aftermath. Following a contentious outcome that returned far-right conservative Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to office for a second term, both the opposition Green Movement and millions of Iranians who contested Ahmadinejad's re-election, and the conservative government and other supporters of the official results used social media heavily. Whether to spread information, organize demonstrations, conduct surveillance, or sway public opinion, they were used in a variety of ways that drove political developments and contributed to shaping Iran's political landscape.

The intensive use of social media during the 2009 presidential election period stemmed from an already widespread base of Internet users in Iran, the anonymity that Twitter and blogs offered, and the well-established popularity of these interactive services. While this trend peaked with the elections, it had begun in Iran well before then and continues today.

Iran's information environment flourished under the presidency of Mohammad Khatami, who held office from 1997 to 2005. His government significantly relaxed censorship and allowed numerous reformist newspapers and journals to operate in relative freedom. The Internet also became an important means of communication. Several newspapers and journals developed online presences, and Persian language blogs proliferated. Some of these blogs were devoted to news and political discussions, whereas others provided outlets for individual viewpoints and experiences of thousands of Iranians. When Mahmoud Ahmadinejad first came to power in August 2005, he reversed Khatami's liberalization of most media. Under his leadership, the Iranian government took tight control of radio, television,

and print outlets, and made decisive steps to curb use of the Internet. In March 2009, Reporters Without Borders placed Iran among the world's 12 top countries known for effectively censoring news and information and systematically repressing Internet users.

The Green Movement

On June 12, 2009, Islamic Republic–controlled media announced a surprise landslide re-election victory for Ahmadinejad, only hours after the polls closed. Thousands of Iranians took to the streets to stage mass protests. The Green Movement was born directly from this opposition to Ahmadinejad's re-election. The two reformist presidential candidates, former Prime Minister Mir Hussein Mousavi and former Parliament Speaker Mehdi Karroubi, emerged as its leaders.

A woman dressed entirely in green joins in a protest against the Iranian election of 2009 and in solidarity with the Iranian people in Union Square, San Francisco, California, on June 18, 2009.

The Green Movement relied heavily on Twitter, Facebook, text messaging, and the thousands of blogs created by ordinary Iranians to quickly organize and coordinate opposition efforts and public demonstrations, as well as to disseminate doctrine and political manifestos. The relatively modest equipment needed to use social media helped enormously; Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and text messages could be accessed through portable, handheld devices. These social media tools played a pivotal role in the drive to circumvent government censorship and secure broad support from different, often conflicting strata within the Iranian populace.

Specifically, Twitter had scheduled maintenance that would render the service unavailable on June 16, 2009, between 9:15 and 10:45 A.M. in Tehran. Users created a viral campaign to pressure Twitter to reschedule the work. Using hashtags such as #NoMaintenance and #TwitterStayUp, the campaign called for Twitter to perform the maintenance at 4:00 A.M. Tehran time, instead, to allow the streams of correspondence between Iran-based Twitter users to continue uninterrupted. By 5:00 P.M. on June 15, 2009, Twitter announced that it would change its upgrade time. Six days after the presidential election, Facebook released a beta version of its entire site in Persian. YouTube helped by loosening its usual prohibitions against graphically violent videos. As a result, videos of the Iranian upheaval were extensively broadcast on YouTube, capturing the attention of its massive, international user base.

One example is the video associated with the death of Neda Agha-Soltan. On June 20, 2009, Neda was shot by a member of the Basij militia—a paramilitary volunteer militia that takes orders from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), a branch of Iran's military intended to protect the country's Islamic system. This happened during an antigovernment protest following the disputed presidential election, and Neda died on the street amid a crowd of demonstrators. Her death was captured as amateur video on mobile phones. These videos quickly spread across the world, eventually harnessing the attention of mainstream media and grabbing headlines on CNN and the *New York Times*. Soon, Neda Agha-Soltan became an icon of the Iranian

struggle against the government. In addition, the hashtag #Neda went viral on Twitter by the end of that day. When the regime prohibited her family from holding a public funeral, Karroubi used a Facebook post to call for public mourning of Neda Agha-Soltan's death.

The global nature of social media and the inability of observers to distinguish Iran-based users from users elsewhere also helped the Green Movement. With Twitter, for instance, in the days immediately following the election, appeals spread throughout the world: "Change your location on Twitter to Tehran, Iran." By multiplying the number of Twitter users who appeared to be in Iran, these appeals made it difficult for state operatives to identify and detain individuals tweeting against the establishment. The ability provided by social media to remain in touch with the Iranian diaspora and the rest of the world became especially important when the regime banned, and sometimes jailed, foreign journalists covering the election.

Response

Anticipating the role that effective communication and networking could play in organizing demonstrations, the government cut off mobile phone and text messaging services before the polls opened election morning, and service remained unavailable the day after the election. In the weeks and then months after the election, the Iranian information environment became progressively more repressive; for instance, the government drastically cut Internet traffic within Iran in the early postelection weeks. The Web site of a program produced by the IRGC for state television called *Gerdab*—originally aimed at exposing the "immorality" of bloggers—started posting photographs of Iranian protesters and requesting visitors to the site to identify them.

Also, the emergence of Neda Agha-Soltan's death video flew in the face of Iran's strong media censorship. It forced a move by the ruling government to exploit the same digital interfaces that were used against it. The government posted erroneous information about protest meeting times and locations on social networking sites, and unsuspecting citizens were met by baton-wielding militia forces. The regime started intentionally permitting Internet traffic to and from social networking sites so that it could use a practice called deep packet inspection to collect information about users and to monitor mobile phone communications.

These measures did not deter the supporters of the Green Movement. In June and July 2009, supporters in and outside Iran initiated multiple Internet-based campaigns to take down the Gerdab Web site. Leaders affiliated with the Green Movement engaged in social media publicly, maintaining personal blogs, despite intimidation and threats of physical violence. However, most Iranians in the opposition attempted to remain anonymous through the use of computer proxy servers or digital safe houses that could strip out identifying information and allow viewing of blocked Web sites.

Twitter was particularly important during this tumultuous period. In contrast to blogs and Facebook, use of Twitter was difficult to extinguish because the technology has several points of access and does not require individuals to have Internet access in order to post tweets. Cost also played an important role also; whereas handheld devices with Internet access could be expensive for many, basic mobile phones were inexpensive and a standard item for the urban Iranian population. People could use their phones to post tweets via text messages.

As members of the opposition looked for ways to evade government retribution, the regime expanded its efforts. The IRGC's Center for Investigating Organized Cyber Crimes took on a heightened role. Originally founded in 2007, partly to investigate and confront social and economic offenses on the Internet, the center became increasingly important over the course of 2009 as the regime combated the opposition's online activities. The government also extended these measures to Iranians living abroad in the form of threats and intimidating correspondence targeting emigrants against the regime.

By dominating traditional media and infiltrating the same social media that it had systematically repressed, the Iranian establishment under President Ahmadinejad succeeded in consolidating considerable power over the information environment in the nine months following the presidential election. The Green Movement, however, gradually lost momentum. Its broad, fractious

nature proved a liability, and its leaders came under increasing pressure from the regime. As this happened, Iranians in the opposition began to use social media for different purposes. Twitter and Facebook no longer served solely to unify and coordinate. Instead, Iranians began to increasingly use these tools to express dissatisfaction with both the Green Movement and the international leadership for their perceived failure to meaningfully change the fate of the Iranian people. They also continued to communicate a multipronged message regarding the authoritarian nature of the Iranian regime and the importance of reform, and to show that the movement was still alive despite the lack of overt protests. One year after the election, Mousavi's Web site Kalemeh.com, though it operated outside Iran, remained a key channel of communication for the opposition leader.

Demonstrations in 2011 and 2012

The revolutionary wave of demonstrations and protests in the Arab world that began on December 18, 2010, eventually leading authoritarian rulers to be forced out of power by the people in several countries in the Middle East, influenced a series of demonstrations across Iran from 2011 to 2012. These began on February 14, 2011, and in essence followed the 2009 and 2010 Iranian election protests. In the days leading up to the protests, Internet access to specific sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, along with e-mail access, was blocked throughout Iran. The sites were replaced with a message reading, "According to computer crime regulations, access to this Web site is denied." A number of Iranian bloggers feared that this outage was a precursor to the implementation of the halal (permissable according to Islamic law) Internet.

Halal Internet

The fifth Iranian five-year plan, beginning in 2010, called for the creation of the halal Internet, an internal network that would contain only religiously acceptable material and promote Islamic values. It is feared that the Iranian government would use this to slowly throttle access to all outside sites, making them unusably slow and forcing users to settle for the national network. For instance, consequent to the incendiary anti-Islamic *The Innocence of Muslims* video uploaded on YouTube in July 2012, Iran cut off access to Google, but was forced to restore access to Gmail after public outcry.

Since 2009, the Iranian establishment has taken several measures to control the information environment in Iran. How successful a halal Internet and these measures would be remains to be seen. Fortunately, creative strategies and social media have allowed Iranians to find novel ways around restrictions and make their voices heard.

Soumia Bardhan
St. Cloud State University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Bahrain; Egypt; International Unrest and Revolution; Libya; Middle East; Russia; Syria; Tunisia; United States.

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Islam, Nation of

In the United States, religious organizations have benefitted from the growth of new technologies since the 1990s, and have embraced these forms of communication to reinforce their religious message and various theologies. In the first decade of the 21st century, Muslims in America accounted for the majority of producers and consumers of "virtual Islam." Therefore, English is an important language for the spread of a contemporary vernacular Islam via YouTube and other forms of social media. Although organizations such as the Council of American Islamic Relations (CAIR) and others play an important role in the projection of the faith

in the United States, older Muslim formations in the country have also played important historical roles in regard to social media. Of particular interest is the growing attraction of Muslim identity within several subgroups of the African American population. The Nation of Islam's utilization of media in various forms, from newspaper to contemporary social media, is the product of unique set of societal forces that impact African Americans to include cultural politics, social media, and emerging Muslim trends in social media.

The cultural politics of the 1960s included opposition to the Vietnam War, the Black Power movement, the Black Arts movement, and the United States' most vocal critic, Malcolm X. Two figures who would impact the national popular culture and consciousness were Muhammad Ali and Amiri Baraka, both Muslim converts influenced by the teachings of Malcolm X. However, the medium that would introduce them to a wider audience, especially Ali, was the Muslim newspaper *Muhammad Speaks*. With the emergence of its first issue of *Muhammad Speaks*, the Nation of Islam established itself as an alternative voice to mainstream civil rights news of the African American community. Its first issue came out in October 1961, and its circulation rapidly grew in response to discontent within the African American community. Developed by Malcolm X to be the Nation of Islam's official news organ, it communicated the ideology and concepts of its brand of Islam as articulated by its leader Elijah Muhammad, and grew into a circulation of 900,000 per week.

Founded as a religious and social movement, the Nation of Islam (NOI) was an offshoot of the Moorish Science Temple of America in the 1930s, and both organizations drew deeply upon principles developed by Marcus Garvey and the Pan African Garvey movement. Primary among these ideas were that African Americans must psychologically and physically defend themselves against white supremacy by developing and maintaining communities and worship deities in their image. *Muhammad Speaks* grew even quicker when one of Malcolm X's pupil's and NOI convert heavyweight champion Cassius Clay changed his name to Muhammad Ali, and was featured prominently on the cover of its paper. Following the assassination of Malcolm X and Elijah Muhammad's death in the 1970s, *Muhammad Speaks* was no longer in circulation. However, in the late 1970s, Louis Farrakhan reestablished the newspaper as the *Final Call*.

Social Media

The *Final Call* online Web site was developed in 1995 by black Muslim college students to promote the Million Man March. Since 1995, it has promoted subsequent marches, and now operates as an arm of its newspaper and promotes itself as an alternative to mainstream media for black consumers in the Americas, the Caribbean, Africa, and Europe. Since 1995, *Final Call* online has expanded into news coverage in several areas, ranging from entertainment, athletics, business, health, and international affairs. *Final Call* kept up with developments in social media and joined Facebook in 2009, followed by Twitter and Google+, and extensively utilizes YouTube. *Final Call* online revealed that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security distributed intelligence information on the organization as part of domestic operations, concerned with the Nation of Islam's leadership succession. A lawsuit filed by the Electronic Frontier Foundation and American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) uncovered the operation, and federal officials with the Homeland Security agency's Department of Intelligence and Analysis on October 12, 2007, admitted that they had the organization under observation.

However, the Nation of Islam expanded its use of social media to project its message via a #Ask Farrakhan social media Q&A at a September 26, 2012, town hall meeting at its headquarters. Farrakhan fielded questions from around the world via Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and e-mail to address various issues of concern or interest. Additionally, the Nation of Islam has conducted classes on the advantages and disadvantages of social media and networks at events like its annual Saviors Day convention. For example, Muslims are admonished not to stop being or acting like proper Muslims simply because they are engaged with social media technology. Yet, members are also encouraged to embrace and leverage the power of social media and networking to conduct business, branding opportunities, and promote their art and other creative forms. Finally, the importance of social media to members of the Nation of Islam was evident when a conflict arose over the drop

in Twitter followers for their leader Louis Farrakhan, and a minor investigation was conducted to examine or explain the sudden loss in followers. However, during the advent of social media in the United States and globally, other Muslim groups have emerged to compete with the Nation of Islam to project the faith and politics of Islam, both domestically and abroad.

For example, the Muslim American Public Affairs Council (MAPAC) is a Muslim political advocacy group headquartered in Raleigh, North Carolina. The mission of MAPAC is in the area of political affairs; it collaborates with other media to promote a Muslim viewpoint. Moreover, it is involved with political and public policy to influence the local or national political process in order to defend the rights of Muslims. This behavior is in contrast to the Nation of Islam, which will primarily defend the rights of Muslims and African Americans. However, this also represents the diversity of viewpoints within the Muslim community. Yet, this perspective is often obfuscated by claims of other media that tend to singularly focus on the tensions between the Nation of Islam and select members of the American media or Jewish civic community. Nowhere does this tension emerge more than in the area of international or foreign affairs.

International Issues

The impact of the role of social media influencing the Arab uprisings in 2011 is still in dispute. While mainstream media encourages a broad understanding of a grassroots social media narrative, the Nation of Islam, among others, promotes and downplays the role of social media, and focuses on the realpolitik of the Middle East and Africa and the role that Western governments have played to destabilize the region. Evidence suggests that there was massive involvement from the average Muslim citizen utilizing social media in relation to the protests, and it also demonstrated how the Nation of Islam, through its social media, remains heavily engaged in foreign policy developments.

Reynaldo Anderson
Latisha Smith
Harris-Stowe State University

See Also: Arab Spring; Civil Rights; Islam and Social Media; Nation of Islam Movement.

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Islam and Social Media

Islam is the fastest-growing religion in the world. It is especially popular among young people who are connected to social media platforms. Digital platforms have markedly impacted the social life of Muslims, including their religious practices, religiosity, preaching, issuing *fatwas* (religious decrees), and building virtual communities in the Muslim majority countries or in diasporas. Just as other regions, the Muslim majority countries have recently witnessed a rapid diffusion and adoption of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. In the Arab world, Facebook is the leading social networking Web site, with 45,194,452 users. Twitter follows with 2,099,706 users. The Arab region is second to the United States when it comes to the number of YouTube daily views. With 90 million video views per day, Saudi Arabia has the world's highest number of YouTube views per Internet user. The popularity of social media platforms in the Arab world has led some scholars to expect that its impact on religious life is likely to rise. The common argument is that social media have the potential to change people's religiosity and practices of piety. The impact of social media on religious behaviors of individuals and communities in environments characterized by conservatism and traditionalism, it is argued, will be even more profound than in environments characterized by liberalism and openness.

As for the followers of other book-based religions in the Abrahamic tradition, communicating and winning the hearts and minds of believers and non-believers through *dawa* (proselytism)

is a central commitment for many Muslims and Islamic preachers and leaders. Social media have become an invaluable means to pursue the path of dawa and the dissemination of the Koran. Only very few voices condemn the use of the new digital media as incompatible with Islamic practices. For instance, Abdul Aziz Al Shaikh, Grand Mufti in Saudi Arabia, advances a critical stance toward social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter because, as he says, they disseminate lies and may destroy established relationships and Muslim families in the offline real world. In a similar line, religious authorities in some Islamic countries issued fatwas against the use of social media like Twitter, arguing for its incompatibility with Sharia (Islamic law) because of trading accusations and promoting lies. While some Islamic religious leaders advise their followers not to use social media platforms, the overwhelming majority of scholars and preachers capitalize on the effectiveness and efficiency of social media in engaging with the community of believers and enhancing their fidelity and loyalty.

In the first generation of the Internet, there were some traditional Web sites like Online Islam that acted as "one-stop shopping" for religious information and comprehensive services to the Islamic community, the *ummah*. These digital platforms led to the emergence of what some call "Facebook fatwas," or "F-fatwas." They introduced a new paradigm to the practice of religious instructions in the way they were formulated, issued, disseminated, received, and acted upon. The mushrooming of digital platforms during the second era of the Internet, Web 2.0, led to a process of undermining the monopolistic nature of religious orthodoxies. For many, social media have become the ideal platform, the new mosque or madrasa for the dissemination of the Islamic belief. F-fatwas spark commentary and feedback among many sectors of Muslim societies, including religious authorities, Islamist intellectuals, young urban or secularized Muslims, and ordinary believers.

Proselytization

One type of Islamic use of social media platforms is proselytization, which is widely popular among Islamic preachers. Some estimates put the number of Twitter followers for some Islamic scholars at 600,000. Famous preachers like Tareq Al Suwaidan and Amr Khaled even reach 1 million when it comes to Facebook fans and "likes." Ironically, some star religious scholars have social media accounts, even if they died decades ago, yet their religious and intellectual followers have aspired to reach new generations of digital natives and followers by creating Facebook pages, Twitter streams, and YouTube channels. Social media are an increasingly important source of religious information for many people in the Muslim world. As a result, a new media culture is emerging that is having a significant impact on global Muslim consciousness.

The use of social media is not limited to religious leaders, but is also used by normal Muslims who started tweeting Koranic verses and *ahadith*, or "prophetic sayings." The dissemination of religious content regularly reaches its peak during Ramadan, when the degree of religiosity increases. The Ramadan Aperture, when Muslims are internally and externally motivated to receive and process religious content in form of tweets, is a new phenomenon that changes the way the Islamic faith is promoted among believers and nonbelievers. The very nature of a tweet, with its 140 characters, designed especially for ease of use and memorability, is a perfect tool for memorizing the Koran and the Prophet's sayings. Tweeting Koranic verses and sayings from the Prophet have become a part of Ramadan religious rituals and habits. On the occasion of *Haj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca, pilgrims tweet feeds, offering a sense of virtual spirituality to their families like a vignette for the sacredness and presence of the holy place. Other pilgrims upload photos and clips from sacred places to share the rituals and spiritual experience. These practices contribute to the enhancement of co-religiousness and co-piety of the Islamic ummah (community).

Social media have become integrated in the habit of not only spreading the word of Allah, but also safeguarding Islam against critics from the outside. For example, Muslims created Facebook pages to defend the prophet Muhammad from attacks. The Web site "Social Media and Islam," for example, is a page that "promotes the message of Islam on social media." Social media also created an Islamic popular diplomacy.

Yemeni women undergoing computer training at a women's center in the city of Taiz, Yemen, in 2002. In 2013, there were more than 45 million Facebook users and 2 million Twitter users in the Arab world, and the region was second only to the United States in daily YouTube views. Saudi Arabia had the highest number of YouTube views per Internet user in the world, at 90 million views a day.

This involves the global mobilization of believers through virtual platforms in case of individual or group attacks on the Prophet or the Koran. Prominent examples are the plan of a U.S. pastor to burn copies of the Koran in 2010, and the dissemination of the anti-Islam video clip *Innocence of Muslims*. These incidents have triggered a global mobilization of Muslim protests by means of social media platforms. Countries such as Pakistan, Jordan, and Egypt asked YouTube to delete the film from its platform.

Some conservative leaders called for the creation and launch of *halal* (permissible according to Islamic law) social media platforms. As a response to these calls, a number of digital initiatives and projects were carried out. Islam-centered alternatives to Facebook, such as Muslimsocial .com, Muxlim.com, and SalamWorld started to appear; yet, their adoption rate is still very low. The recent SalamWorld has sought endorsements from Saudi and *salafi* scholars (puritans). This social networking Web site filters what it views as harmful content, like pornography, terrorist activity, or human rights violations. Its mission is the respect of the values of Islam.

Social media have opened up the opportunity, especially for young Muslims, to engage with their faith and communicate to co-believers in a manner that their parents could never have imagined. Where once the ummah was a spiritual notion, with Muslim communities separated by language and geography, social media have broken down barriers and enabled young Muslims to connect, irrespective of where they are. It allows them to discuss what it means to be Muslim in the 21st century, especially for those

living in the Western Hemisphere. Teenagers and young adults of second- and third-generation Muslims living in western Europe and North America have become engaged in digital discussions and debates concerning religious issues and identities.

For some hyperdigital activists, social media provide the means for reuniting the ummah in a form of e-ummah. Digital social platforms, they hope, can contribute to the creation of virtual communities that may pave the way for eventual physical communities, and thus support the global cohesion of believers by weaving links between community members of the different countries worldwide. In some urban centers in North America and Western Europe, Islamic social media Web sites have contributed to the spread of Islamic icons, indexes, and symbols among members of the Muslim diaspora. Recent research has shown that young Muslims in Western societies are more receptive to religious beliefs and values. One indication of their religiosity is that they are likely to attend mosques more frequently. In the Islamic communities in the northern hemisphere, proselytizing efforts have been exceptionally successful. In Europe and the United States, non-Muslims accept invitations to convert to Islam. The personal videos of converters are broadcast on YouTube and discussed in virtual chat rooms. Young Muslims have uploaded a great number of videos that discuss issues related to the creation of the universe. For instance, there are about 70,000 YouTube videos on the "Scientific Miracles of Quran," an indication of their special popularity.

Like mysticism, Sufism is a way of inner and mystical practices of Islam. The ritual-mystical practice is based on a master–disciple relationship. Adherents of Sufism are traditionally not interested in technology because spirituality is about silence and stillness, whereas digital social networking platforms are agile and restless. However, in recent times, even Sufi movements have made use of social media to practice their spiritual purification in the virtual world. It is remarkable that the applications of social media have led to an extension of Sufi spiritual sphere of influence and followers. The challenge for these Sufi groups is to adequately address the need for a direct and physical relationship with the spiritual master, or *sheikh*, which is still a key moment to the Sufi experience.

Terrorism

In addition to the Sufi and other soft versions of Islam, there are also violent manifestations of Islam found in the blogosphere, enacted as Al Qaeda, Hamas, and Hizballah. The emergence of e-jihad in forms of digital activism, hacking activities, and cyberattacks has turned the blogosphere as a realm of civic use of social media into "Blogistan," where aggressiveness and violence are prominent. The strongest manifestations of the use of social media for political or even militant Islamic movements are the recent Arab revolutions. The Arab Spring brought Islamist movements and political parties to power in many Islamic countries. Because they were denied access to the public sphere, they turned to digital platforms as an efficient tool for creating and distributing political messages, and for mobilizing followers and supporters for demonstrations. For instance, during the mobilization of protests in the Egyptian streets, social media–savvy activists used Facebook to schedule the protests, Twitter to coordinate, and YouTube to tell the world.

The recent return and rise of Islam is spectacular. It has been argued that the synergy of small media and social media have helped Islam to gain or regain a place in the contemporary complex social life. The continuous digitization of Islam and the Islamization of the digital world represents both a blessing and challenge to the religion of Islam in the 21st century, where closed systems are resisting the openness of instantly constant transparency and WikiLeaks effects. For centuries, interpretations of the Koran were kept a reserved domain for a tiny minority of *ulama,* or "scholars of religion." Social networking Web sites, microblogging platforms, and mobile social apps have become profane avenues for disseminating sacred interpretations. Religious authorities on digital platforms are in the process of being undermined. The blossoming of digital fatwas is an indication of the splintering of orthodoxies and the emergence of heresies. The traditional concept of religious authority has come under attack, and has been shaken in many forms. Consequently, religious authority

has become a contested domain, rather than an accepted reality, for the uneducated masses.

Mohammed Ibahrine
American University of Sharjah

See Also: Africa, north; Arab Spring; Asia; Cyber-Jihad; Indonesia; *Innocence of Muslims, The*; Islam, Nation of; Israeli–Palestinian Conflict; Middle East; Nation of Islam Movement; Terrorism.

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Israeli–Palestinian Conflict

Advocacy of causes related to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict on the Web were already highly used before the rise of social media. Grassroots Web campaigns related to the conflict reached their peak during the first half of the 2000s, from the outbreak of the Second Intifada until the Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005. As with political campaigns elsewhere on the Web during that time, most campaigns related to the conflict were led by international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and aimed at resonating in mainstream international and local media, a high rank in search engine results and a dense network of hyperlinked Web sites.

While the turn to social media as platforms for online advocacy related to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict has engaged larger publics and individual users, governments and officials from both sides of the conflict have developed a top-down approach to social media in order to shape international public opinion, control coverage of mainstream media, and directly target their adversaries. At times of escalated conflict and violence, social media have been gradually implemented as a strategic tool for advancing informational war. With the rise of social media, Web campaigns related to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict have been decentralized and adapted to the unique characteristics of each platform. The long dispute over the recognition of Palestine as a state and of Israel's unofficial borders has also migrated to social media platforms, where users from both sides of the conflict complained that platforms misrepresent their country.

Social Media on the Battle Field

Between 2006 and 2013, the Palestinian–Israeli conflict was marked by four periods of escalated conflict and military operations: the Hezbollah–Israeli war in the summer of 2006 (also dubbed the Second Lebanon War); Israel's military operation in Gaza in January 2009 (also dubbed Operation Cast Lead, or the War on Gaza), Israel's attack of the Turkish flotilla Mavi Marmara in May 2010, and the conflict between Israel and Hamas in November 2012 (also dubbed Operation Pillar of Defense). During these years and around these events, Israel, Hezbollah, and Hamas have significantly increased and elaborated their use of social media as a strategic warfare tool.

In 2006, Hezbollah used the advantage of real-time Internet press and social media as a tactical tool to bypass mainstream media coverage and to decrease Israeli public morale, whereas Israel was still relying on traditional informational tools such as targeting Lebanese combatants and civilians with push text messages and airborne leaflets. For example, on July 14, 2006, Hezbollah attacked the Israeli naval ship *Hanit* near the coast of Beirut, killing four Israeli marine soldiers. Within hours of the attack, Hezbollah posted footage of the missiles hitting the ship on YouTube. The footage had already circulated widely in social and mainstream media before Israel officially confirmed the event. It is also reported that Hezbollah monitored social media to determine the precise location of the rocket attacks on northern Israel.

Media Strategy

To learn the lessons from the war with Hezbollah, Israel established the National Information

Directorate to control and unify Israeli propaganda and public relations across different media outlets. By December 2008, Israel's launch of Operation Cast Lead in Gaza was accompanied by a massive and concerted informational campaign that combined traditional media, new media, and diplomacy. Israel gained full control on information coming out from the Gaza Strip by enforcing a media blackout that banned foreign journalists from entering Gaza. At the same time, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Spokeperson's Unit launched a YouTube channel, which given the media blackout, was the only source that journalists and mainstream media could report on. The IDF YouTube channel was viewed by millions, either on social media platforms or through mainstream media.

The Israeli Consulate in New York also held a press briefing on Twitter, but journalists ridiculed the statements, made in an abbreviated form to match Twitter's 140-character limit, as a gimmick. On the civic front, the Israeli foreign ministry recruited immigrants to blog in favor of Israel in its native language. The Intidisciplinary Center in Hertzlia recruited students to spread positive messages justifying Israel's military operation in social networking platforms and to post comments in Israel's favor on influential blogs. Hamas posted footage on PalTube.com, a video-sharing platform affiliated with the organization. Despite the media and electricity blackout, citizens from Gaza managed to send tweets, videos, and images with mobile phones. Gradually, information started to leak from Gaza. Palestinian journalists based in Gaza gave interviews by phone and Skype to international mainstream media outlets, and used social media such as blogs and Flickr accounts to report on the unfolding events. Outside Gaza, thousands of supporters of Palestinians used the Qassam Count bot, a social media utility that automatically updated their status to report the real-time events on the ground.

Mainstream media reporting had to accustom itself to the media blackout and incorporate social media as a primary source for covering the war. This included footage from the IDF channel, live video feeds streamed from Gaza news agencies, and Google maps to display the places of Israel's airstrikes and infantry incursion in Gaza, or the Israeli cities hit by Hamas rockets. Mainstream media also made use of a collection of tapes released online by Al Jazeera under a Creative Commons license. Al Jazeera also implemented the crisis mapping code released by the nonprofit company Ushahidi, which displayed user reports made through a Web site or mobile phones.

In June 2010, Israel's media strategy was further implemented in the events that unfolded after the IDF's raid on a flotilla of six ships carrying activists and humanitarian assistance to Gaza. On May 31, 2010, Israeli naval commando soldiers boarded the six ships in international waters of the Mediterranean, but faced resistance from the activists on board the MV *Mavi Marmara*. A violent struggle unfolded, leaving nine activists dead and 10 soldiers wounded. The IDF detained the passengers and confiscated all cameras and footage obtained from the activists on board. As with the media blackout during Operation Cast Lead, the IDF posted a video on its official YouTube channel, claimed to be taken by the soldiers on board, to serve as evidence that the soldiers were forced to shoot in self-defense because the activists were armed and prepared for battle.

Critics of Israel claimed that the low-resolution videos might have been manipulated; yet, with all other media confiscated, Israel did not allow for other evidence to counter their claim. As with the media blackout in Gaza, over time, the photos and footage taken by activists appeared on various social media outlets, countered the Israeli narrative, and ignited heated debates from both sides of the conflict.

By November 2012, social media had been fully integrated by Israel and its opponents, to the extent that operation Pillar of Defense has been launched in Gaza, together with the IDF spokesperson's declaration of war on Hamas on Twitter. On November 8, 2012, the IDF Spokesperson Unit tweeted: "We recommend that no Hamas operatives, whether low level or senior leaders, show their faces above ground in the days ahead." In response, the Al Aqsa Brigade posted a countertweet, directly addressing the IDF spokesperson's Twitter account: "@idfspokesperson Our blessed hands will reach your leaders and soldiers wherever they are (You Opened Hell Gates on Yourselves)." In

2012, Twitter had become a platform for official real-time reporting of each side's successes and adversaries' failures, while attempting to actively engage followers by asking them to retweet if they found their claims to be right.

Grassroots Campaigns

Even before Palestinian and Israeli officials turned to social media as tools for informational warfare, social media were already widely used by grassroots organizations and individuals to advocate Palestinian and Israeli causes related to the conflict. Before the rise of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, the blogosphere was the main platform for online grassroots advocacy. Most Palestinian and Israeli blogs are written in English in order to appeal to international publics. Alternative media outlets such as Electronic Intifada or Social Israel TV have gained popularity as authoritative sources that challenge mainstream media reporting of the conflict. Social media have also been used to mobilize dissident activities within Israeli and Palestinian societies. The Boycott, Divestments and Sanctions movement, for example, has gained popularity worldwide and has created a dense network of activists that use social media to mobilize support of Palestinian rights and criticize the West Bank administration's efforts to receive recognition of the Palestinian state around the 1967 borders.

Israeli activists have used social media to organize demonstrations against the Israeli occupation. In Gaza, the Gaza Youth Breaks Out is an example of a social movement that started as a Facebook group critical of both Israel and Hamas. Dissident voices have not always been welcomed by social media platforms, which at times have suspended their accounts. Facebook, for example, removed a page that called for a third intifada against Israel. Before it was removed, the group attracted over 300,000 fans and mobilized a march of Palestinians from Syria to cross the border with Israel in May 2011. Pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli activists have also edited and re-edited Wikipedia entries related to the conflict. In most cases, such as with the entry "Gaza Flotilla Raid," Wikipedia adds a notice at the beginning of the article claiming that the entry might be subject to dispute or impartiality.

Recognition of Statehood and Representation of Borders

In 2010, the West Bank administration launched a diplomatic campaign in preparation for a bid for United Nations (UN) recognition of the Palestinian state around the 1967 borders. Many governments expressed their support of the West Bank government, declaring their recognition of the Palestinian state. In dismissing this diplomatic move, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister commented that the recognition of Palestine by foreign countries is similar to clicking "like" on Facebook. Palestinian Prime Minister Fayyad, in return, commented that Palestinians are seeking more than a "Facebook state." While other platforms used various naming conventions, such as separate entries for West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian Territory or Occupied Palestinian Territory, Facebook was the first social media platform to add Palestine to its country list. Facebook's recognition of Palestine as a country was an outcome of fierce user activity organized around groups that petitioned for adding or removing Palestine from the platform's country list. Upon user requests, Palestine was first added to Facebook's country list, then delisted, and eventually relisted. In 2008, Israeli settlers also protested against Facebook for identifying their addresses as living in Palestine. Facebook eventually allowed settlers living in three large settlements to choose either Israel or Palestine as their home country.

Social media platforms that display geographic information such as Google Maps and Flickr were also sites of continuous dispute around the placement or nonplacement of the Palestinian Territories, and around misrepresentations of Israel's borders. In 2008, Google Maps displayed the Palestinian Territories as a grey area that did not contain any geocoded data. Although it is unclear whether Google changed its policy based on user protests, by January 2009, the missing data appeared, and most international media sources relied on mash-ups building on top of Google Maps to report the Israeli military's operation in Gaza, and Hamas' rocket fire into southern Israeli cities. As with Facebook, complaints were also made by Israelis that the localization service of Google AdWords did not show Israeli ads in areas outside the Green Line boundary, such as the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem, and the Jewish

Settlements in the West Bank. In November 2012, the UN granted recognition of Palestine as a nonmember state. Following the UN recognition, on May 1, 2013, Google officially changed its naming convention from "Palestinian Territories" to "Palestine" across all of its platforms.

Anat Ben-David
University of Amsterdam

See Also: Conflict Resolution, Social Media and; Cyber-Jihad; Middle East; Third Palestinian Intifada; Web Mapping and Online Politics.

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Issa, Darrell

Darrel Issa serves as a congressman in the U.S. House of Representatives from the 49th District (formerly the 48th District) in California (R). He is currently the chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. To his supporters, Issa is a dedicated watchdog, seeking the truth on topics from Operation Fast and Furious to the attack on the U.S. Consulate in Libya. To his critics, Issa is a partisan zealot desperately seeking to embarrass and undermine President Barack Obama's administration.

Darrell Issa was born in 1953 in Cleveland, Ohio. After graduating from high school, Issa enlisted in the U.S. Army. While in the U.S. Army, he received a business degree from Sienna Heights University. By the time he left the army in 1980, Issa became a captain in the army. Issa left the army in 1980, and entered the private sector. He became a millionaire by the 1990s because of the success of his company, Directed Technologies, which sold antitheft auto devices. In 1998, Issa unsuccessfully ran for a seat in the U.S. Senate from California. However, two years later, he was elected to a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives from the 49th District. Issa easily won reelection in 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2012. He usually received more than 60 percent of the vote in his re-election bids.

In the House of Representatives, Issa was a staunch economic and social conservative. On the issue of abortion, the National Right to Life Committee gave Issa a 100 percent rating. On economic issues, he tended to vote for tax cuts and spending cuts, and against government spending programs. Issa voted against the TARP bailout in 2008, President Obama's stimulus plan in 2009, and the Affordable Care Act in 2010. Issa was such a strong supporter of business that he received a 100 percent rating from the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM). On environmental issues, Issa proclaims himself a strong supporter of alternative energies. However, critics noted that Issa voted against President Obama's cap and trade bill in 2009.

Darrell Issa entered the public spotlight in 2010 when Republicans gained control of the House of Representatives. Issa, who was a member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, became its chair. As chairman, Issa began aggressively investigating the Obama administration. The most famous example was Issa's investigation into Operation Fast and Furious, a federal government sting operation that put guns into the hands of Mexican drug dealers and led to the murder of a border patrol agent. Issa demanded answers and documentation from President Obama's Justice Department, even subpoenaing Attorney General Eric Holder to testify before his committee. To Issa's defenders, he was merely trying to determine the truth about a disastrous operation that was possibly covered up by the Obama administration. To Issa's critics, he was a partisan Republican, using his committee's powers to embarrass and undermine President Obama.

Issa also investigated President Obama's handling of the attack on the U.S. consulate in Libya on September 11, 2012. Issa aroused controversy

when his committee released documents pertaining to the attack. Senate Democrats condemned the release, claiming that vital national security information was leaked by publicizing the documents. On the other hand, Issa's defenders insisted that Issa was merely trying to determine the facts of the matter, and that no vital national security documents were leaked from the document release.

Issa has had a combative relationship with the press. For example, Issa challenged a *New York Times* profile that claimed that he had enriched himself while serving in Congress. He responded that the article contained many factual inaccuracies. Contrary to the *New York Times* profile, Issa contended that he actually lost money on investments while in Congress. Issa is a controversial political figure who frequently uses the media to get his message out to the public. He ofetn appears as a guest on the Sunday news shows to discuss his investigations into Fast and Furious, the IRS, and Benghazi. In addition, Issa regularly uses social media, such as Twitter, to communicate with his constituents. As long as Republicans control the House of Representatives, Issa will continue to play a significant role, to the delight of his supporters and the chagrin of his critics.

Jason Roberts
Quincy College

See Also: Online Smear Campaigns; Political Information Opportunity Structures; Political Parties.

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James K. Batten Award

Named after a prominent newspaper executive, the James K. Batten Award began as a recognition of excellence in civic journalism in 1995. After eight years, the award was transformed into a prize celebrating innovations in journalism, becoming known as the Knight Batten Awards.

Sponsored by the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, the James K. Batten Award worked to acknowledge the efforts of those print or electronic journalists whose work encouraged individuals' participation in and contributions to the life of their communities. The Knight Batten Awards, which focused on new media and interactive and participatory journalism, helped to acknowledge the growing power of social media in political and other matters affecting communities. After 2011, the Knight Batten Awards, which had been sponsored by the Knight Foundation, were ended.

James K. Batten

James K. Batten, born in 1936, served as chairman of the board of directors and chief executive officer (CEO) of Knight-Ridder Inc., a media conglomerate that included daily and weekly newspapers, television stations, and other companies that focused on the electronic transfer of news and data. Upon graduation from Davidson College, Batten began working for a Knight-Ridder newspaper, the *Charlotte Observer*, in 1957, and moved to Knight-Ridder's Washington, D.C., bureau eight years later, where he became known for covering the civil rights movement. After later serving as the city editor of the *Detroit Free Press*, Batten moved into management at Knight-Ridder's corporate offices, becoming company president in 1982, and chairman of the board in 1989.

In 1995, Batten died at the age of 59 of a malignant brain tumor. In his honor, the James K. Batten Award for Excellence in Civic Journalism was created and first awarded in 1995. The first award was given posthumously to Batten in honor of his lifelong commitment to making journalism a building block to invigorating citizenship while adhering to a mission of accurately reporting difficult and discomforting facts.

Batten's work to ensure that journalists were connected with the communities that they served culminated in the creation of what has become known as civic journalism. This term is taken from a speech Batten gave to students at the University of California, Riverside, about the need for journalists to adhere to an ethos that emphasizes connections with those they serve. Before his death, Batten assisted the Pew Charitable Trusts in establishing the Pew Center for Civic Journalism. Batten used his extensive connections with

news organizations around the globe to assist in the formation of the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, and upon his death, the Pew Charitable Trusts established the James K. Batten Award for Excellence in Civic Journalism with annual prizes totalling $25,000. In addition to the awards ceremony, a symposium occurred, where issues facing those interested in civic journalism could be addressed.

The James K. Batten Awards for Civic Journalism were given between 1995 and 2002. The location of each year's awards ceremony and the accompanying symposium moved annually, and took place at locations such as the University of Minnesota, Boston University, Kent State University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Topics covered by the symposia included new media, new journalism, race and civic journalism, and the legacy of journalism.

Beginning in 2003, the awards became the Batten Awards for Innovations in Journalism, later called the Knight Batten Awards. Although funding for the Knight Batten Awards ended following the announcement of the 2011 winners, the new format of the recognition process greatly expanded perceptions of how social media contributed to and could become journalism. The broader focus of the awards helped to improve perceptions of new media in the eyes of the public.

Knight Batten Awards

The Knight Batten Awards sought out new advances in interactive or participatory journalism, which included social media in ways that the James K. Batten Awards had not. This change was intentional, because the Knight Batten Awards were intended to increase attention on approaches that spurred wider audience engagement, encouraged innovative forms of information sharing, and nurtured nontraditional dealings between different groups that had a positive impact on communities. The Knight Batten Awards were administered by the J-Lab, a research center of the School of Communications at American University in Washington, D.C.

Over the eight years the Knight Batten Awards were given, they helped to foster deeper dialogue between news providers and the audiences that they served. The new prizes also helped to change the definition of what constituted the news, and helped to create new ways by which useful information was disseminated, distributed, and delivered. To that end, the Knight Batten Awards were highly successful.

Following a process similar to the previous honors, the Knight Batten Awards combined recognition of digital engagement that grappled with public issues with a series of symposia intended to focus attention upon emerging media and forms of communication. As they broadened conceptions of what constitutes the news, the Knight Batten Awards encouraged a variety of new forms of creative thinking. These forms of out-of-the-box approaches to the news included creative use of mobile devices such as cell phones or global positioning system (GPS) tools, data-mining schemes, innovative initiatives encouraging citizen-led media, news games, networked journalism projects that combined "old" and "new" media, online applications, and social networking approaches to gathering or disseminating information.

Symposia that followed the awards explored how news gathering connects with and fosters connections between communities, how new media such as blogs have affected both local and national political races, digital delivery systems and how they will evolve, and how new institutions such as the "newseum" are changing how society thinks about both news and community.

Stephen T. Schroth
Nathaniel T. Rosenberg
Knox College

See Also: Blogs; Campaigns, Grassroots; Global Center for Journalism and Democracy; MIT Center for Civic Media; News Media; Pew Internet and American Life Project.

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John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award

Each year, the National Press Club (NPC) gives the John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award. The award honors at least one U.S. journalist and at least one international journalist who "embody the struggle to advance press freedom and open government." Recipients have included print journalists, broadcast journalists, and bloggers.

The Award

The John Aubuchon Press Award was established in memory of John R. Aubuchon, the 95th president of the NPC, who died in 2003 at the age of 57. Prior to heading the NPC, Aubuchon had a career in broadcast journalism that spanned more than three decades, and included stints at UPI, CNN, and Maryland Public Television. During his career, Aubuchon was a staunch advocate of press freedom.

The National Press Club, which sponsors the award, is located in Washington, D.C., and serves as a social and professional organization for journalists. It has more than 3,500 members, and hosts approximately 2,000 events each year.

Typically, the Aubuchon award committee recognizes an individual or individuals who typify a broader class of journalists who are suffering from government prosecution or enduring other hardships. In addition, many of the awardees have reported from war zones, and some have suffered physical injuries or have died while covering these conflicts.

Award Recipients

In 2007, the domestic award was given to Pete Weitzel, a former editor of the *Miami Herald*, for his work as a press freedom advocate. Weitzel worked with several nonprofits, including the Florida First Amendment Foundation, the National Freedom of Information Coalition, and the Coalition of Journalists for Open Government. Also honored that year was Anna Politkovskaya, a Russian journalist who was assassinated in 2006. The NPC honored her posthumously with the international Aubuchon Award, citing her critical coverage of Russian military operations during the war in Chechnya.

The 2008 award for a domestic journalist went to *USA Today* reporter Toni Locy, for her coverage of the 2001 anthrax attacks. In 2008, Locy was held in contempt by a federal judge and fined after she refused to reveal the sources for her story.

The 2008 international winner was Chinese journalist Qi Chonghuai; he was recognized for his coverage of Communist Party corruption in Shandong Province. In 2008, the Chinese government charged him with "extortion and blackmail," and sentenced him to four years in prison.

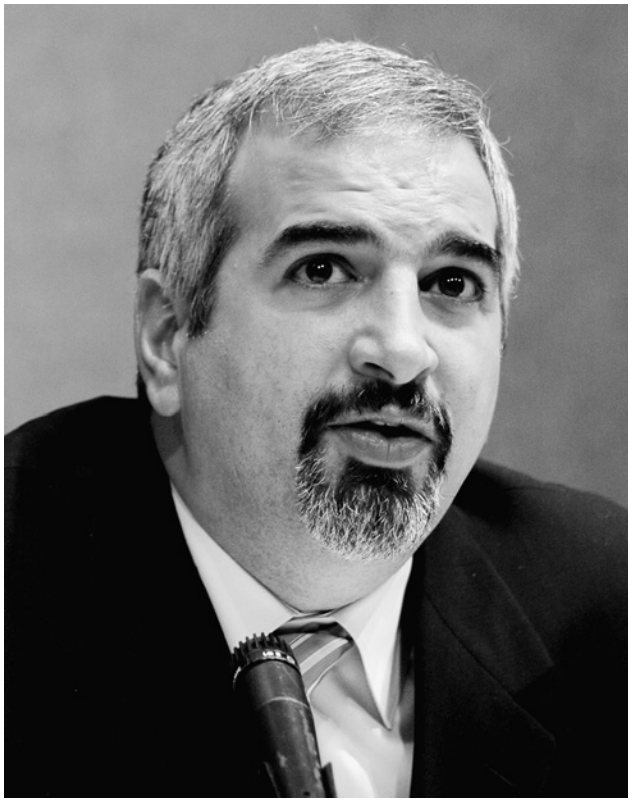
In 2009, the domestic winner of the award was David Rohde, a journalist for the *New York Times*. Rohde, who had previously received a Pulitzer Prize for his coverage of the war in Bosnia, was honored for his reporting on the war in Afghanistan. While in Afghanistan, he was kidnapped by the Taliban and held in Pakistan for seven months before escaping.

Also in 2009, the NPC honored Sri Lankan journalist Lasantha Wickrematunge posthumously. He was the founder and editor of the *Sunday Leader*, a paper that was highly critical of government corruption. Wickrematunge, who had previously survived an assassination attempt, was shot and killed in January 2009. Before his death, Wickrematunge had written an editorial about his fear of government plots against him; it was published posthumously.

In 2010, Charles N. Davis, a former journalist and associate professor at the Missouri School of Journalism, received the domestic award. From 2005 to 2010, David ran the National Freedom of Information Coalition, an organization devoted to promoting open government.

That same year, the NPC chose imprisoned Iranian blogger and human rights activist Kouhyar Goudarzi as the recipient of the international award. In December 2009, the Iranian government arrested him for the third time, and subjected him to harsh interrogations. In the press release announcing the award, the NPC called attention to the fact that in the aftermath of the disputed 2009 election in Iran, the country held more journalists in prison than any other nation.

In 2011, Lara Logan, the chief foreign affairs correspondent for CBS News and a contributor to *60 Minutes,* received the domestic award. Logan was honored for her reporting on the protests during the 2011 uprising in Egypt. While in



Anthony Shadid at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on March 1, 2007. Shadid won two Pulitzer Prizes and was posthumously awarded the John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award after his death in Syria on February 16, 2012.

Egypt, Logan was sexually assaulted by a mob in Cairo, and spoke publicly about her experience.

Also honored in 2011 was Al Jazeera's Dorothy Parvez. The NPC recognized her for her coverage of the Arab Spring protests; while reporting in Syria, she was detained by the Syrian Government for 19 days, and shared a jail with many political prisoners.

In 2012, James Risen, a reporter for the *New York Times*, won the domestic award. The NPC honored him for his coverage of national security affairs, including his reporting on domestic wiretapping by the Bush administration, as well as his stories about U.S. sabotage operations against Iran. For the 2012 international award, the NPC honored three journalists who died while covering the civil war in Syria. The honorees were Anthony Shadid of the *New York Times*, Marie Colvin of the *Sunday Times of London*, and freelance photojournalist Remi Ochlik.

In 2013, the NPC did not award the domestic prize to an individual; for the first time, it gave the award to a general category of people, namely "The Whistleblower." Specifically, the NPC sought to honor those who have served as anonymous sources for journalists; as the NPC press release noted, "without sources, reporters can't do their jobs and our democracy can't properly function."

That year, the international award went to Zeynep Kuray, a Turkish journalist who spent almost 18 months in prison after writing stories critical of the Turkish government. In the press release announcing the award, the NPC noted that Turkey had now become the country with the most journalists in prison, surpassing both Iran and China.

Kelly McHugh
Florida Southern College

See Also: Committee to Protect Journalists; Freedom of the Press and National Security; National Press Club; News Media; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security.

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Judaism and Social Media

Social media have been embraced by most Judaic organizations because they have been heralded as key mechanisms by which Judaism will be passed on to the next generation. These technological advances in communication and their popularity, especially among youth, offer relief to those who worry about the dwindling number of Judaic devotees with each new generation.

The tremendous power of social media's various formats and forums are being harnessed to bring Judaism to any who desire it. One no longer needs to find a Jewish neighborhood or attend religious services to learn about Judaism or to commune with Jews. Judaic charitable and social groups were the first and are the most prolific users of social media in the Jewish community. They led the way in assimilating the latest communication forms into their campaigns for new members and donors. Now, many rabbis post their sermons on their temples' Web sites, and some rabbis use Twitter to send a daily message from the Torah to their Twitter followers, or to direct attention to relevant events happening locally, in Israel, or elsewhere in the world.

Participation

Social media also allow for dynamic and two-way conversations in real time that can involve a wide variety of participants from virtually any locale. This is a substantial and pervasive alternative to the usual top-down communication of Judaic principles and practices. Many Judaic forums and bloggers have large followings with religious discussions of all kinds among participants who sometimes vary widely in their degree of devotion to Judaism and a Jewish identity. Participants may also have great differences in terms of age, socioeconomic status, and geographical location. Moreover, a vast array of Judaic discussions can be found every day and at all times of the day online.

Although most welcome social media as a crucial mechanism for enhancing contemporary Judaic participation, a few concerns persist. Some worry that the focus on popularity in social media with continual counts of "likes" and "hits" has and will create Jewish "personalities," and these personalities may focus on self-promotion and their personal popularity, to the exclusion or detriment of effective Judaic messages and representations. Indeed, extensive self-focus is problematic because it contradicts the more introspective and community-centered approach reflective of Judaic principles. In addition, such personalities may offer or encourage especially provocative and radical positions on Judaic issues in order to enhance their popularity. In turn, by definition because of their popularity, more people are exposed to their messages than the messages of others, who may offer more representative and thoughtful presentations of Judaism. This, though, is true of any subject matter available through social media. Just as the proliferation of Judaic-focused social media makes accessing Judaism easier than it has ever been before, social media are also likely to include inaccurate, superficial, and trivializing representations of Judaism.

Judaism is so prevalent in social media that it is represented in all social media genres, and includes active daily participation by thousands of people, including well-known and relatively unknown rabbis, life-long orthodox Jews, reformed Jews, non-Jews, teenagers, and people considering conversion to Judaism.

Upon posting their sermons to their local temple Web sites, well-known rabbis often receive responses to their sermons from people around the world. Their messages are available to people well beyond local attendees, and those who have been a part of a local temple can continue to connect with that group on social media, no matter how far away or how many times they may move. Anyone can experience an active and vital Jewish community, even if one does not live in a Jewish neighborhood because there are thousands of large and thriving Jewish communities that can be found and exist exclusively online.

Forms

One of the most popular and active Jewish blogs is Jewlicious. As quickly as Jewish bloggers make posts on this site, dynamic conversations about those posts ensue and often include a wide variety of participants. In fact, the founder of this blog, David Abitbol, resides in Jerusalem, while his colleagues who blog on Jewlicious.com are scattered about in Canada, Los Angeles, and New York.

Although Facebook is not yet 10 years old, nearly 1,600 Jewish and Israeli Facebook groups and fan pages exist. One fairly representative example of these groups on Facebook is IMPACT, an organization in Baltimore that creates and reports volunteer and leadership opportunities for the local Jewish community and those interested in Jewish communities in and around Baltimore. On its Facebook page, a message board is available for people seeking contact with Jews in Baltimore. People may be seeking assistance with

such things as finding a roommate, employment, or housing. The page also includes current Judaic-related events around Baltimore, and discussion boards on topics that sometimes lead to significant opportunities for participants with respect to education, business, and socializing.

Even Twitter, which allows only 140 characters per message, offers opportunities to advance Judaism in meaningful ways. For example, Rabbi Moshe Goldberger answers questions about the Torah and includes links to Judaic-related news stories from around the world in daily tweets from @GemsofTorah. Others tweet links to sermons of popular rabbis or embed links to Judaic-related videos.

Influencers

The Judaic presence on social media is so large and well developed that national Judaic organizations offer annual conferences centered exclusively on the use of social media, and some organizations celebrate individuals who have excelled in their Judaic presence on or contributions to social media.

In 2012, the National Jewish Outreach Program announced its inaugural recipients of the Jewish Treats: Top Ten Jewish Influencer Awards. Top on this list was Rabbi Yonah Bookstein, the executive director of an organization in Los Angeles designed for young Jews to become spiritually connected to something larger than themselves. He is also a popular blogger for Jewlicious and the *Huffington Post*.

The second person on this top 10 list was Lisa Colton, who founded Darim Online, a nonprofit devoted to helping Jewish organizations and leaders maximize their use of social media to achieve their goals. Goals typically include such things as community building, education, and fundraising.

Others on the list tweeted insights about happenings in the larger Jewish community, and one was a recent recipient of the New York Jewish Week list of "36 Under 36." Another created the popular Web site "Jew in the City," designed to create a positive view of orthodox Jews.

There are even rankings of the most influential Jewish organizations on Twitter in the United States. The Holocaust Memorial Museum (@HolocaustMuseum) in Washington, D.C., ranked first and the Israeli Consulate in New York City ranked second on the list. Their Twitter account (@IsraelinNewYork) is a live feed of the everyday activities at the consulate in New York. Twitter followers can ask questions and make comments about activity there in real time, with dialogues about consulate activity occurring at the same time that the activity is happening. This is a new dynamic as Twitter followers of this group have the opportunity to contribute to and participate in the work of the consulate. This is citizen participation in government well beyond what people could have imagined just a few decades ago.

Conclusion

Because social media is already a part of the lives of so many young people, creating a substantial Judaic presence on social media has been viewed as essential and has been successful in increasing membership and participation in Judaic religious, educational, and social organizations. In addition, social media has been a tool for enhancing relationships between Judaic groups and fostering a vibrant Jewish community because of the large number and availability of such communities online. It has also changed the nature of Judaic education and participation for many who are now able to engage in a two-way, active debate and discussion about Judaism, an incredibly powerful, dynamic change that is thought to be especially attractive to youth. Social media has been a uniting, educational, and social facilitation force with respect to advancing the principles of and participation in Judaism.

Mel Moore
University of Northern Colorado

See Also: Catholic Church and Social Media; Islam and Social Media; Israeli–Palestinian Conflict; Middle East; Race/Ethnicity; Youth Engagement.

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K

Keystroke Logging

The keyboard, which is an important input device for computers, smartphones, and tablets, is also of high importance in terms of privacy. This is because identity thieves, cybercriminals, hackers, or others can monitor confidential writings, e-mails, chat conversations, and other forms of communication as users strike the keys of the keyboard. In 2008, 76 percent of identity thefts were performed by keystroke logging. Keystroke logging involves the secret monitoring of the activities of a keyboard as its keys are struck, regardless of whether it is a hardware keyboard connected to a laptop or desktop computer, or a virtual keyboard that is part of the software of smartphones and tablets.

Keystroke Logger Software

Keystroke logger software are programs that run in the background and secretly record all the text written by the users of a computer or mobile device. The recorded data can be accessed locally or remotely according to the keystroke logger software type. In general, there are two kinds of keystroke logger software.

The first kind of keystroke logger software is installed into a computer that is physically accessed. After installation, keystroke logging can be activated and deactivated by a local user by pressing a secret key combination on the keyboard. The user who is administering keystroke logging on the computer can reach the secret and encrypted data file holding keystroke logs and view what the other users of the computer typed.

For mobile devices, software is first installed into a device accessed physically. After it is locally activated, it starts logging keystrokes, and sends the logs to the person administering the keystroke logging process, either by e-mail or file transfer protocol (FTP). Later, the keystroke logging process can be activated or deactivated by remotely accessing the device using the remote control panel of the software.

The second kind of keystroke logger software is downloaded over the Internet without a user's knowledge when they open an e-mail attachment or click a link on a Web site. It runs in the background and collects the user's private information and correspondence as they are typing on the keyboard. Later, it periodically sends the recorded keystroke history data to the identity thieves by e-mail or FTP.

The presence of any form of keystroke logger software usually cannot be detected, and remains invisible to users unless found by antivirus software.

Keystroke Logger Hardware

A keystroke logger, as a hardware device, is commonly attached to one of the USB or PS/2 (for

older computers) ports of a computer. It is the size of an ordinary USB flash memory device and resembles a keyboard cable or a keyboard cable connector between the keyboard and computer. When a user of the computer to which a keystroke logger device is attached starts to write something, the device secretly saves the key strikes of the keyboard to a text file on its internal memory, which is not accessible from the target computer. Later, the saved data on its memory can be reached by physically removing the keystroke logger device from the target computer and installing it onto another computer. Special software is then used to access the keystroke logger's internal memory.

Keystroke logger devices cannot be detected by antivirus software because they are physically out of the computer system, and therefore, they are inaccessible to the computer's operating system. Because keyboard cable connectors are generally located to the back of computers, keystroke logger devices attached between the computer and the keyboard may not be seen at first glance by a user. However, it is possible to detect these devices by means of a physical inspection.

Keystroke loggers are an important tool of cybercriminals, hackers, or identity thieves, but in some cases, a parent who wants to track a child's activities, for example, may also use this kind of software or hardware device. In order to be protected from keystroke logging, computer users should use antivirus software and firewall preventive strategies and frequently check whether these are up to date. Second, they should think twice before opening e-mails from unknown or untrustworthy senders, or clicking unknown links. Finally, they should check whether there is an extra device attached between their computer and their keyboard connector.

Hakan Aydogan
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Carnivore; Deep Packet Inspection; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Echelon; FinFisher; Firewalling.

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Klout Score

A Klout score is a single number that represents an aggregation of multiple pieces of data used to measure a social media user's influence across his or her preferred social networks. Klout, the company that creates Klout scores, analyzes data from Twitter, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Foursquare, YouTube, Instagram, Tumblr, Blogger, WordPress, Last.fm, and Flickr, and uses the data to craft an individualized, numerical score for each user of their service. In creating Klout scores, Klout measures the amount of personal contacts in a network and the regularity of content creation, and analyzes the interaction that content receives from other users. Klout provides a score range from one to 100, with 100 representing the highest amount of possible influence.

Klout assesses a variety of variables in crafting its algorithm, but does not publicly share its exact process of arriving at the Klout score. Responding to the question of how scores are derived, Klout says that it sees influence as the ability to drive people to action, thus making replies and retweets the most important factors in high Klout scores. Historically, Klout scores have been represented using three pillars, which Klout has referenced as true reach, amplification, and network impact.

True reach references the number of people the social media user influences. Klout filters out spam and false placeholder accounts to focus on the people who are acting on the shared content.

When users post messages and people tend to respond to the information, users tend to have higher scores. Amplification is how much a social media user influences other users. When a message is posted this category, the analysis looks at how many people respond to it or further spread it. If people act upon users' content, they often have a higher amplification score. Network impact references the influence of the people in the users' true reach, or how often top influencers share and respond to content created by a user. The more highly influential members that share a user's content, the higher the corresponding network impact score.

Methodology Changes

Since Klout launched in September 2009, the company has had many objections raised toward the methodology of crafting Klout scores. Specifically, critics like Alyson Shontell, who writes for Businesinsider.com, have pointed out that Klout scores are not representative of the influence that a person really possesses. Shontell highlighted that Barack Obama, president of the United States, had a lower influence score than a number of bloggers. In August 2012, Klout changed how it accumulates the data, and now President Obama commands a 99 Klout score. Klout has switched from originally assessing 100 variables to now looking at more than 400 criteria in evaluating the assigned score. Overall, Klout currently assesses more than 12 billion data points per day across the seven social networks to apply score ratings to all social media users. More than 100 million users had Klout scores as of 2012.

Klout's remaking of the Klout score formula removed the longstanding breakdown of true reach, amplification, and network impact, and created the concept of Your Moments. The Your Moments feature within Klout allows specific engaging social media activities to be highlighted. Your Moments allows users to view their own and other users' social media impact and interactions. Klout also introduced a direct list of Your Influencers. Your Influencers looks at social media users who are leading conversations in areas where the Klout user specifically interacts. Finally, Klout introduced the concept of Your Influential Topics to provide concise understanding of main areas of conversation. Your Influential Topics are represented by keywords around which the Klout user's main social media interactions revolve. The cumulative focus on Your Moments, Your Influencers, and Your Influential Topics is meant as a tool to increase participation in Klout, understand how users can better utilize social media, and provide ways for users to increase their Klout scores.

Commercial Applications

Klout scores and associated Klout influencers have become tools for businesses and companies to seek out Klout users to whom they wish to provide incentives, or Klout perks. Klout perks involve opportunities for Klout users with specific Klout scores to have access to certain experiences and products and to receive discounts from businesses. Leveraging Klout scores for business purposes is increasingly on the rise. The automotive company Audi invited top design, technology, and luxury influencers to test drive the new Audi A8 at exclusive Klout-directed events, with some Klout perk members receiving all-expense-paid weekend trips with the car. Similarly, Universal Pictures invited top Klout entertainment influencers to screen the movie *Adjustment Bureau* before it was released in theaters. Hewlett Packard offered Klout top film influencers HP laptops preloaded with the top films from the Cinequest film festival.

As Klout scores become more widely accepted and utilized by an increasing range of companies such as hotels, call centers, and department stores, the importance of this numerical representation is bolstered.

Many companies and customer service organizations are integrating Klout scores in their service protocols to determine how specific and detailed their approaches to serving the individual customer should be. Klout scores are already thought to possibly create shorter call wait times to speak with customer service, nicer hotel rooms, and better deals on clothing, all of which center around companies wanting to provide powerful Klout score holders, who are thought to have a more powerful digital presence, a positive experience. The integration of Klout scores with social media services and aggregators such as HootSuite and TweetDeck, which are used by nearly all 100 of the top Fortune 500 companies, have made

the experience of utilizing the scores much more prominent and easy to conduct on a large scale. Also, as Facebook and Twitter are increasingly used to sign on or into other digital services, the ability to track and have access to a digital user's complete social media profile, and in turn, his or her Klout score, is easier to manage.

Jason Schmitt
Green Mountain College

See Also: Data Mining; Information Aggregation; Social Media Career Wreckers.

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L

Latin America

Citizenship participation in Latin America through social media is the result of a long and continuous process of social alienation of communication technologies. This has marked struggles for the region's democracy because of a lack of visible channels of a proper system and sometimes because of the monopoly of the analog and digital media mainstream. The dominance of the private sector and the integration of audiovisual media controlled by the major transnational telecommunications operators map a media scheme that is not favorable to the interests of the population and to open channels for a public and representative dialogue.

Though in the past decade, the change in the regional political map has brought about the development of public media and access to certain rights for citizens, the common pattern is the lack of a democratic public sphere and a sufficiently solid institutional system, eventually weakening the continuous efforts of some states to develop and intensify cultural democracy. This is to a large extent the result of the sociopolitical structure of corporatism and underdevelopment that have dragged down the national history of most Latin American countries. In this regard, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) pluralism and democracy indicators confirm important democratic deficits in most of these countries, considering that a media system is defined by a low level of newspaper circulation and a high dependency on the television system. A continuous private and oligarchic implementation of journalistic information remains, and the government makes use of public media, while press reporters experience a limited development of professional autonomy. It is within this framework that social media reach their projection and importance as alternative informative media or channels.

Manuel Castells dates the centrality of these emergent political communications, typical of the new society network, in 1994, from the Zapatista Army of National Liberation's (EZLN's) Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico, to represent a double split, both symbolic and media-related; however, two events coincided. On the one hand, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into force, an antagonist critique to the economic and trade integration model; on the other hand, the reality of the indigenous population was made visible to the Mexican media space, the former historically excluded from the cathodic mirror, despite the revolutionary imaginary that inspired the Constitution of the United Mexican States in the early 1900s. In addition, the war in Chiapas was not actually an Internet war.

The era of social networks and political battles in cyberspace took place in the region from that date, as the EZLN later organized the First Intercontinental Encounter for Humanity Against Neoliberalism (1996). It set up for the first time in the public agenda of global movements in the region the role of social media and resistance levels against capitalistic globalization. From Seattle until today, the Zapatista effect projects with the mobilization of Mexican youth's Yo Soy 132. They engage in new practices and ways of political citizen articulation against authoritarian regimes form a new perspective of the McBride spirit and the cultural rights of the Latin American cultural citizenship, matching the configuration and nature of the new ecosystem of dispersed information and knowledge networks devised from the south and from the bottom.

From 1994 until today, the new social media not only have strengthened community integration schemes and mobilization in the subcontinent, they have also widened the forms and extent of citizenship participation within the population. These interactive networks have contributed to radically transform methods of sociability, and have also gradually deepened the institutional basis of the centralizing and hierarchical mediation model of social representation of companies, such as Televisa (Mexico) and Globo (Brazil), archetypical models of the hierarchical system of control of images and public speeches in the region.

Political Ramifications of Social Media

As a result, from the memory of practices and experiences of cultural subversion and resistance, social movements and progressive political forces in countries such as Mexico, Chile, and Colombia have experienced new social mediation processes led by new generations of digital citizens willing to alienate social networks and challenge the hegemonic place of traditional information media. As such, the motivation of productive know-how for the use and alienation of new technologies has encouraged in the past years new transformation processes of the public sphere that permeate and question the agenda setting of mainstream media. For example, civil organizations Brasil Menor and Brasil Vivo link their emancipating willingness to movements such as Los Indignados in Spain, stating how Occupy Rio or Occupy São Paulo involve the process of accelerated modernization that Brazil is going through with the Internet and social networks. On the other hand, initiatives such as the REDISTIC network and the MISTICA project, as well as the Communication and Citizenship Forum, have highlighted the emergence of new processes for access and participation with new technologies from a peripheral and alternative approach, aimed at building both a community and citizenship.

Thus, the broad experience accumulated in the region from the 1960s in terms of participative communication and local development drive the processes of empowerment in the digital culture of social media, whether by means of telecenters or battles for the land of indigenous movements. Technological innovations and the resourceful Internet as a system of communication for social change constitute a constant factor throughout the subcontinent today, as several reports compiled by the Latin American Information Agency have proven. In its study "Theory and Practice of Research and Intervention in Social Communities and Organizations," Eduardo Vizer documents the proliferation of numerous processes of creativity and political struggle in cyberspace in the past decade. Likewise, the project The Internet, Digital Culture and Hegemonic Culture of the Gino Germani Institute at the University of Buenos Aires illustrates how the Internet is today's main venue for struggle for political actors in the region, proving significant transformations in the strategies, political intervention, and construction of new subjectivities to generate collective identities in the digital era.

Despite this, however, Latin American countries live immersed in the analog era, with audiovisual media communicative structures highly concentrated and still determinant, which in practice can be interpreted as an economy of cultural industries totally dependent on consumerism and the conditions defined by the international division of cultural labor. Few comparative studies regarding the information structure in countries of the subcontinent show the persistence of an oligopolic, restrictive, and unbalanced structure of communication, with little or null margin for political, ideological, and cultural plurality. This explains to some extent the destabilizing consequences of regulation processes in the region,

from a media coup d'etat (Venezuela, Grupo Cisneros), to the pressure and campaign of discredit (Argentina, Grupo Clarín), to the judicial process and black propaganda against the presidency of the government (Ecuador, El Universo). The latter illustrates the regulation process that has taken over two and a half years, confronting the lobby of the private journal industry that dominates the national market.

The social communication bill, for the first time in the history of Ecuador, puts forward a democratic model for equal distribution of frequencies (33 percent for public media, 33 percent for the private sector, and 34 percent for the third sector and community media). It has been subject to criticism from private operators, whose biased claims state that the proposal is a raid against freedom of expression, with various arguments that range from considering community media as progovernmental, to identifying the regulating state media council as an a priori censorship court. They also defend the private rights of the concessionary companies that will have to renounce a portion of their assets to fulfill the new structure of distribution in radio frequencies. The bill, one of the most advanced of its type, along with the Argentinean regulation, will rebalance the voices and actors that access the public space, reinforcing the production of local content (40 percent of the production must be national, and 10 percent independent) and suppressing private monopolies common in some parts of the country. Because of the paradoxical situation of mediation within the sector, the initiative has even become the axis of the struggle for law and hegemony during past legislature, in an environment full of national political confrontation.

Traditional journalism is at a crossroads in most Latin American countries. The fact that progressive governments took office in certain countries in the region in the early years of the 21st century steps out of the box in terms of configuring the relation of forces. In this process, private communication media, already distant from the mere role of a controller of democratic institutions, strongly embraced their political performance, using highly propagandistic and corporativist speeches, and were eager to take the political word from various national governments. Thus, according to Orlando,

> . . . mediatic communication has become a really political battlefield where different actors fight for the construction of hegemonic directions over the model of the state and democracy. Actually, in recent years and in different countries, the open disputes between media companies and national governments have become one of the most important issues of political conflict within the context of reformed states.

The paradox of this situation, therefore, apart from reediting what has been experienced with the McBride report in most of the Latin American countries, is that above all, the processes of democratization remain focused on journal content. This ignores the cyberculture sphere of autonomy and citizen empowerment processes on the network, while the colonization of virtual space, the cloud, by Google, Apple, Microsoft, and the nearly absolute control of the telecommunications networks by quasimonopolistic companies takes place, as occurs in Mexico with Carlos Slim.

Meanwhile, the network requires both a protagonist role in electoral processes, as in the last presidential campaign in Mexico, or in the projection of revolutionary figures such as Hugo Chavez or Rafael Correa. The example of global projection of the Chilean students' movement in media and platforms such as @Movilized2011 show the practices and importance attributed to new political actors in the region. An example in this regard is the process experienced by the indigenous movement.

Cultural Diversity

Latin American culture is made up of a symbiosis and diverse colonization processes, migrations, and mestizo races that determine a conflictive, but liberatory political framework of cultural diversity in media. In communication intervention practices, the wealth and contributions, both material and symbolic, of this common history nourish different cultures and identities. These are also original because they open the door to communication channels with other civilizations, and are potentially autonomous in their capability of projecting new content and codes of representation, and of politicizing access to the world of minorities, such as indigenous peoples. The original syncretism

that has imprinted the local histories of the subcontinent and that is the result of diverse mobilities and long historic changes thus evidences an insufficiently explored potential in the public policy agenda. This includes understanding the confluence and crossroads of pre-Columbian and migrant cultures, the production of multiple mediations and creative hybridizations in the rise of a possibly different modernity that is sensitive to this rich diversity, even more important in the era of proliferating crowds that continue to emerge with the use of digital networks.

The difference would constitute a social capital of indispensable reference in the creation of a constitutional power and the possibilities of regional development when articulating new ways of change and organization of the symbolic capital in cyberspace. Hence, in the era of creative economy, the value of diversity has been built on condition of an expansion and contemporary economic development, on the foundation to generate immaterial and intangible values for the sustainability of native cultural economies and ecosystems. Despite progress on the regulation of the informative system and the right of access of indigenous minorities, the political and regional public agenda marginalizes the role of a public stakeholder of the native peoples when discussing modernization processes in the Internet galaxy. In some cases, this situation, as in Colombia, Chile, or Mexico, is unsustainable, but new spaces and changing times have been envisioned

Indigenous children from Isla del Sol in Lake Titicaca in Bolivia in 2005. Indigenous people have the potential to affect the ways in which Latin American cultures use social media. The average consumption of social networks in Latin America, at 7.5 hours a month, is already higher than that of North America (with nearly six hours per month), and the European Union (at seven hours per month).

in the past two decades, which continue inspiring the need to rethink contemporary ways of political communication.

From Chiapas to Temuco, from the Pampas to the Amazon, from the Intercontinental Encounter Against Neoliberalism to the Second Continental Summit of Indigenous Communication of Oaxaca in Abya Yala (2013), the indigenous peoples' movement of struggle has gained strength and articulating power in its fight for the land and culture. The example of the Mapuche people in Chile is illustrative in this process of cultural challenge and resistance that today contributes to legal recognition in the informative system in most of the Latin American countries of social media managed by citizen organizations. Because of its historic weight and importance in the public function of regional communication, these communitarian channels constitute a relevant political stakeholder in the new landscape of transformation of the political and communication system in Latin America. It links audiences with the public sector, fueling the innovation and development cycle, and giving support to supranational projects, as is the case of Telesur.

This virtuous circle begins to be projected in policies such as the Culture Spots Program in Brazil that opens new logics of empowerment and citizen participation on a local basis. One of the advantages of Latin American countries in their alienation of information and communication technology is the population pyramid. The average consumption of social networks in the region surpasses that of Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and North America. Therefore, while in Latin America average consumption is 7.5 hours a month, in North America it is nearly 6 hours, and 7 hours in the European Union. In the era of TV screens, Latin American youngsters, as shown by studies on migration, develop creative ways to alienate digital culture. In spite of the persistence of important generational gaps that affect schools, governmental institutions, and/or family life, phenomena such as the Yo Soy 132 movement or the March of the Penguins (Chile) lead to the emergence of new modes of consumption and representation that should be considered in the analysis and understanding of the political transformations that countries such as Mexico and Chile experience.

Envisioning a new framework of displacement and discursive and representational transitions assumes the emergence of a new political culture that evidences the process of constitution of a new subjectivity, of a new citizenship open to dialogue and debate, to the collective discussion and decision with more capabilities of autonomy and empowerment. New generations, and in part women and minority groups, tend to develop new ways of articulation and public projection as stakeholders in Latin America. Therefore, the digital revolution aims at a new logic of interaction that correspondingly demands new policies in everyday life. School and family are important, and there are still unsolved problems usually ignored by experts when talking about the socialization of new technologies and their social appropriation. These include the inexistence of public policies adapted to emergent ways of organization to then continue to new ways of representation and assemblage of domestic culture, and other circuits of social representation and production, despite the propaganda of projects such as the Digital Agenda (Chile), Edusat (Mexico), or Online Government (Colombia).

Moreover, the Association for the Progress of Communication has supported projects such as COMUNICA to implement social networks seen as citizen convergence platforms with a view to influence public policies in countries like Ecuador, Peru, or Uruguay. In order to do so, the demand of new politics in communication stresses the need of new governance in terms of the Internet in the region. Since democratic progress in the digital culture is facing the private boundaries, blockades, and alienation of a cultural policy limited by the transnational interest to manage intellectual property rights.

Conclusion

If the problem of communication and culture is fighting for the code, the alienation of the immaterial for the common cultural heritage that is also subject to intense exchange, the recognition of self-examination and of the diverse forms of self-production (the *favelas*, the informal tertiary sector, of the freedom to circulate online, claimed by new political actors in the region), it may guarantee a public sphere that recognizes the productive dimensions of citizens and collective interests

in front of the traditional model of accumulation and alienation of cultural assets. Beyond the state and the market, not questioning the patent system and intellectual property rights is detrimental to the possibility of a social contract necessary to exercise cultural rights in the region. Most Latin American countries have not devised political alternatives in their strategies of positioning; instead, they have fulfilled the demands of the WTO and Anglo-American standards of trade exploitation in the digital network sector, even though they are against their interests.

Francisco Sierra Caballero
Tommaso Gravante
University of Seville

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Digital Revolution; Polarization, Political; Political Economy.

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Legacy Media/ Old Media

Edmund Burke, an 18th-century British parliamentarian, is cited as the first to acknowledge the power of the press when he deemed the news media a "fourth estate," with stature equivalent in the social order to the "three estates of the realm": clergy, nobility, and common people.

In the United States, the founding fathers believed that the power of the press was so essential a guarantee in fostering a democratic society and helping citizens to curtail abuses from the powerful that they added the right to a free and open press in the Bill of Rights in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution in 1791. Thomas Jefferson said,

> Our first object should therefore be, to leave open to him all the avenues of truth. The most effectual hitherto found, is freedom of the press. It is therefore, the first shut up by those who fear the investigation of their actions.

Today, the media are considered informally as a fourth branch of society with the president, Congress, and courts, whose history has been intertwined with politics since the founding of the United States. In the 19th century, pamphlets and newspapers were often raw, partisan political tools supported by the wealthy, literate elite who took out subscriptions and made donations to support like-minded publishers. Historians cite Thomas Jefferson's successful presidential run in 1800 as the first modern political campaign. He personally underwrote several newspapers during his race against John Adams. The news reports were as rough and tumble as any modern campaign, with issues of race, religion, and sexual indiscretion, along with political issues of the day.

The 19th-century inventions of the high-speed press, typewriter, linotype, photography, photoengraving, and telegraph helped improve the presentation and delivery of newspapers and propelled them into a modern mass medium. An outgrowth of this innovation was the penny press, cheap newspapers, filled with populist, sensational fare that drew a large working-class audience. Advances in printing presses and improvements in photoengraving and photography allowed newspapers to easily incorporate visuals, which also helped spur the evolution of the advertising industry and the craft of photojournalism. The invention of the telegraph led to a cooperative of newspapers to share reporting resources and the development of the Associated Press.

Rise of Mass Media

Legacy, or old media, are defined as newspapers, radio, television, magazines, and books. Some would also include movie and music studios, as well as the advertising industry. The daily newspaper began to face competition when radio became popular in the 1920s, and television in the 1950s. The spread of radio coincided with the political fortunes of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the 1930s, who used it as his bully pulpit to rally a nation battered by the Great Depression. The four-term president used the new technology to conduct nearly 1,000 fireside chats. Roosevelt's relationship with the press was so close that, even though many news editors were aware of his physical limitations and health problems, they never reported on his infirmities.

By the 1950s, television was becoming the most popular medium for news and information. This led to increased competition for the advertising business. Because newspaper publishing and distribution were expensive, and paid subscriptions did little to cover the costs of publishing, not only were newspapers competing against television for audience, but they were also competing for advertising when some advertisers realized that television was more effective in delivering their messages. At the same time, television became the primary medium for political ads. By 1960, nearly 90 percent of U.S. households had televisions, which allowed then presidential candidate John F. Kennedy to use television to politically devastating effect against his rival Richard Nixon in a series of widely watched, televised debates. Kennedy was also helped by a multimillion-dollar advertising campaign that tailored his ads for a television audience.

The rise in television presaged the newspaper circulation declines in the 1970s, while changes in monopoly law led to a greater concentration of ownership in both print and broadcast media outlets. In 1972, the laissez-faire relationship between presidents and the press came to a dramatic end when the *Washington Post* covered a break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate Hotel, which led to the resignation of President Richard Nixon.

New Media

By the late 1980s, all media began undergoing changes as a result of the rise of the Internet. Some newspapers began to experiment with innovative interactive communications technology, such as videotext and the use of modems to transmit information. The rise of America Online (AOL) in 1989 heralded the influence of the Internet and the pressures that would disrupt traditional media. As one of the first Internet service providers (ISP), AOL grew from 200,000 to 6 million subscribers from 1992 to 1996. At its height, the service had 30 million subscribers. In 2000, it acquired old-media titan Time Warner in a disastrous merger that precipitated the decline of the fourth estate.

Amid this climate, the traditional role of the journalist became marginalized by the proliferation of "pseudo-journalism," according to John S. Carroll, a former editor of the *Los Angeles Time*s. Carroll called the spread of faux journalism a troubling development because people who resembled journalists were manipulating, rather than informing the audience. Politicians have taken advantage of this new era to bypass what former President George W. Bush once called "the filter." In addition, financial and other pressures at some news organizations resulted in ethical and professional lapses—plagiarism and falsehoods in reporting—that heaped scorn on the profession, sapping its credibility and creating a more cynical readership.

Subsequently, people have become more skeptical about what is reported in the news. In fact, the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press said that only about one-third of people say they believe what is reported by the 14 largest news organizations. The perception does not bode well for traditional media as more people are willing to go elsewhere for news deemed more reliable, even it means that they must create it themselves through blogs and social media.

Blogging, first introduced in the late 1990s, was a tool for personal journaling. Now, the availability of easy-to-use blogging software has meant that bloggers are covering their communities and fact-checking professional journalists.

The Internet began to play a bigger role in political campaigns. For example, Democratic Senator Diane Feinstein of California was credited with launching the first campaign Web site in 1994. John McCain was among the first to use the Internet to raise money in online donations. By

the 21st century, technology has made publishers of anyone with a computer. By 2002, more voters turned to the Internet to find political information. In 2004, social networking sites began launching, and political campaigns began to recognize the growing clout of bloggers. For the first time, many were issued credentials to cover the Democratic and Republican conventions.

The 2004 presidential bid of former Vermont Governor Howard Dean set the stage for the strategies adopted by Senator Barack Obama in his presidential run in 2008. Dean encouraged bloggers to generate voter interest, as well as to recruit and to motivate volunteers. Despite a lack of sufficient funding, Dean's strategy of Internet-based fundraising and grassroots organizing revolutionized the political campaign.

By 2008, the number of people getting their news and information from social media more than doubled, according to a Pew study. More politicians began incorporating the use of social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube channels, and blogs to connect with their constituents and to challenge opponents. Financial pressures began to weaken not just print news organizations, but also the broadcast-centered model of political communication. Following Dean's example, Barack Obama, a former community organizer, bypassed traditional press to develop a database with millions of names, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers of people who could instantaneously be reached and engaged. At the time, Obama had nearly 2.4 million supporters on Facebook. His rival, Senator John McCain, had 620,000. On Twitter, Obama had about 112,000 followers to McCain's 4,600. On YouTube, there were more than 18 million channel views for Obama, compared to 2 million channel views for McCain, according Pew. In 2012, Obama's database and a strong get-out-the-vote campaign led many in the press to underestimate the strength of his support against Republican challenger Mitt Romney.

However, some scholars say the retreat of legacy media has had a detrimental impact on the democratic process. In the recent past, newspapers would reprint the entire text of important political speeches. Today, the *New York Times* is one of the last newspapers to do so. Declining news coverage has resulted in 25 states having no full-time reporter who covers Capitol Hill. Despite the perceived decline of legacy media, a 2011 University of South Carolina Annenberg/*Los Angeles Times* poll on politics and the press found that most voters still turn to traditional sources—television news and newspapers—for information. Also, traditional media remains more trusted than blogs, late-night comedy shows, and social media networks.

Ingrid Sturgis
Howard University

See Also: Blogosphere; Blogs; Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Presidential 2008; Campaigns, 2012; Citizen Journalism; News Media; Social Media Optimization.

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Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights

Social media can best be defined as forms of electronic communication such as social networking and microblogging Web sites that are used to create online communities that share information, videos, and personal messages, and have become increasingly influential for a worldwide audience.

Some of the most influential and best utilized include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Myspace, Skype, LinkedIn, and Tumblr. More than 50 percent of people learn about breaking news via social media versus traditional news venues. This growing forum for information, play, and political advocacy yields a powerful source of influence, with significant relevance to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) issues.

LGBT rights are a source of controversy among those who are personally included within this group, are supportive of LGBT people, or are against anything beyond traditional gender roles and sexual orientation. Social media allows anyone to support or denounce anything, simply by posting, reposting, or commenting using venues like Facebook. This is the primary news source for many about issues related to federal, state, local, international, religious, psychological, medical, spiritual, and natural disaster news and resulting policies of social acceptance or rejection.

Facebook now counts over 800 million active users (11.5 percent of the global population). It tracked 71.7 million U.S. Election Day–related comments in 2012. Facebook has a safety page, which went purple on Safety Day, October 12, 2012, when millions wore purple to speak out against bullying in support of LGBT youth. This Facebook initiative is "liked" by 907,273 members. On June 3, 2012, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) presented Facebook with a Special Recognition Award related to bullying prevention and LGBT inclusiveness. Twitter, an online social networking and microblogging site, allows individuals to send messages to followers in 140-character tweets. Twitter supports self-expression and does not censor its members. This means that the variety of LGBT feeds (accounts) and tweets (messages) can range from the most supportive to the polar opposite about any issue, each side potentially misinforming or enlightening followers. Twitter is often the first social media source to broadcast immediate news, such as the U.S. Supreme Court's decision, on December 5, 2012, to rule on two gay marriage cases.

College students brought together by the Soulforce Foundation protest the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy by holding a sit-in outside of the U.S. Armed Forces recruiting office in Times Square in New York City, September 2006.

Lightening-swift Twitter communication spreads across the Twitterverse.

LGBT youth, vulnerable to social and family pressures, can become overwhelmed, resulting in self-harm, attempted suicide, or death. A Social Outlet provides LGBT youth with connections to virtually every social media type, offering validation and linkages between isolated and at-risk young people who feel no reason to live, giving assurance of their value and supportive social resources. An increasing number of organizations are using social relationships on Facebook to involve increasing numbers of members who support social issues to engage others to fundraise and vote.

Global Voices provides a forum for international bloggers and includes an English-language resource regarding gay rights. Postings promote awareness of LGBT issues across the globe. Amicus, Latin for "friend," assists organizations in expanding its member base using the Amicus link to have supporters invite friends to learn about and act on behalf of causes. Friends and family are more likely to respond to personal, versus random e-mailings or advertisements. Various LGBT organizations, including the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), have used Amicus with great success. The Bilerico Project is the Internet's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and gender queer blog site, with a host of carefully selected bloggers who are leaders and experts providing unique perspectives, news, and/or personal commentaries.

Social Media Evolution and LGBT Rights

Delia Lloyd highlighted important social changes regarding relationship status on Facebook, already creative beyond the scope of traditional U.S. census categories, with the inclusion of "In a Relationship" and "It's Complicated." "In a Civil Union" and "In a Domestic Partnership" were added in 2012. Such changes allow couples, in particular homosexual unions, to be represented with specificity in ways not previously available on this or any other social forum, as far-reaching geographically and by membership scope. These Facebook postings allow friends to identify LGBT connections with relevant news about legal challenges and limited rights reserved for heterosexual married couples via postings or other news sources. While this Facebook status change pleases members, it also added political weight to important issues in a changing political and social realm. LGBT consulting organizations involved in these changes included: HRC; the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network; and the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. Facebook's participation in the expansion of one's ability to define relationship status was on the side of expanding gay rights.

Christina Sirabella notes the impact of increased issue exposure via social media. The more a social issue is discussed, the more awareness individuals have regarding relevance within an evolving society. Such opportunities provide individuals with private and unique forums through which they can explore different opinions. Social media provide mechanisms for the support and effectiveness of LGBT organizations, including HRC, the NOH8 Campaign, and the Trevor Project. Sirabella provides examples from YouTube that allow individuals to be themselves, at whatever stage in their self-identity/disclosure process, including supportive forums for allies to share messages on the It Gets Better Project. Facebook and Emoji have created icons for same-sex couples.

Federal law provides 1,138 rights and protections based on marital status. These rights are not available to couples in same-sex marriages. The HRC is using social media to make this information known. Some key rights denied married same-sex spouses include Social Security recognition, family eligibility survivor benefits, inheritance taxes, as well as taxes on employer-provided health benefits. The idea behind these campaigns is to eliminate the perpetuation of different classes of social rights, which is contradictory to the U.S. Constitution and human rights according to the United Nations' bylaws.

Social Media Advocacy

Social media has provided an almost instantaneous venue for any type of social movement and message. Consider the Chick-fil-A backlash when the company president offered his support of families as those defined by the Bible. Offended customers and observers took to Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube to encourage social awareness, pressure for change, and a boycott of the fast food chain. North Carolina endured a media blitz before,

during, and following the May 2012 passage of Amendment One (a gay marriage ban). All Out is an international LGBT rights movement that utilizes many social media tools. This group, led by brave individuals risking their lives in different countries, has mobilized many through social media to create social awareness to protect LGBT communities from government-sanctioned violence, and even death. Since establishing itself one and a half years ago, All Out has organized efforts in 50 countries. Friendfactor.org is an organization for family and friends of gay individuals who can provide support in a method similar to the "like" function of Facebook. Friendfactor.org is considered a contributor to the success of legalizing gay marriage in New York State. Anyone can start a page, gay or straight, to engage friends to support issues important to them. If someone receives a personal request, Friendfactor offers an easy mechanism to provide the state legislator's contact information, as well as a recommended script regarding the specific issue.

Opponents of LGBT Rights

While social media has been used to advance the rights of the LGBT community, many opponents similarly advance their agendas. Westboro Baptist Church (WBC), via its Web site and Twitter, promotes its anti-gay agenda. Among other protest issues, WBC has demonstrated at the funerals of gays, churches that perform same sex marriages, and many other LGBT events. Dave Agema, Michigan's Republican National committeeman, posted a copy of an online article on his Facebook page: "Everyone Should Know These Statistics on Homosexuals." A strong social media showing by Michigan Republicans condemned the outdated 1970s statistics that suggested that gays and lesbians are dangerous. Republicans throughout the state, while reiterating their support of traditional marriage, found that the article promoted hate and discrimination, which was not a party value. Agema was encouraged to resign, while others in his party worked to distance themselves from him and his positions.

France legalized gay marriage on April 23, 2013; the move, while celebrated by many also met with homophobic backlash. By that evening, Twitter was used to protest with hashtags #MortAuxGay ("death to gays") and #ilfauttuerleshomosexuels ("we must kill all gays"), following months of conservative opposition. Printemps Français (French Spring) has a Facebook group supporting anti-gay marriage demonstrations. Blogs, news sources, and other social media provide updates about Printemps Français, which is also linked with fascist and other splinter groups.

On May 17, 2013, thousands of anti-gay activists in Georgia attacked peaceful participants of an International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia. The disruption was led by clerics, and 30 people were injured. As a result, an anti-gay game went viral on Facebook. The goal of *Call of Taburetka* is to maneuver a priest to wield a stool against LGBT activists, as happened on that day. As of May 29, 2013, the game received 26 Facebook "likes" and many critical comments.

Social Change

California's 2008 Proposition 8, anti-gay marriage amendment, would have been minimally known beyond state borders, absent the social media frenzy that brought much attention. It was supported by a state vote, amending California's Constitution by defining marriage as only between a man and a woman. The amendment was in response to the California Supreme Court's early ruling that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry. During this window of on-again/off-again permissions, some same-sex couples married, and these marriages were left standing, even after the passage of Proposition 8. The power of this representative case, in one of the most progressive U.S. states, led to the 2010 U.S. District Court's ruling to overturn Proposition 8 based on the lack of due process and equal protection under the U.S. Constitution.

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals supported this decision upon appeal; the case is now up for consideration by the U.S. Supreme Court. If the U.S. Supreme Court takes on the case, it will face the scrutiny of public opinion and awareness of the changing climate in a more accepting society that elected President Barack Obama for a second term, whose platform included support of gay marriage. Social media outlets will provide much food for thought to the higher Court and others regarding the balance between interpretation of the U.S. Constitution and the values of a living and breathing society that voted to permit

gay marriage in three additional states during this same election cycle.

All Out campaigns included mobilizing 20,000 in several hours in Sofia, Bulgaria, in 2012, to counter a church-sanctioned call to stone gay pride parade celebrants. In Uganda, 500,000 online signatures contributed to enormous global pressure to stall a national bill to "Kill the Gays." A rampant online campaign to gather 250,000 signatures stopped a "gay gag rule" in St. Petersberg. The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the governing body of international soccer, opened an investigation into the Nigerian Football Federation's commitment to kick out any suspected lesbians from the national team. All Out exceeded its 40,000 online petition signature goal by nearly 10,000. In Iraq, All Out collaborated with the Iraqi Refugee Assistance Program via online petition and fundraising efforts to smuggle to safety young gay women and "emo" men who were experiencing brutality, and often death.

Social media addresses political issues affecting people; it helps instantly identify the will of the masses through online petitions, fundraising, mass demonstrations, and protests, determining who will get the lion's share regarding rights or benefits, and who will live or die. LGBT lives have been saved in Iraq, and celebrants have been saved in Bulgaria from church-condoned stoning at a parade. Legislation is monitored by an increasingly informed and demanding public regarding LGBT civil rights as social rights. Those who feel abandoned or isolated, like LGBT youth, can reach out to someone like themselves, or an ally who can offer a supportive hand, via a social media site. These are some reasons why social media and their effects on the politics of LGBTs are so vital.

Kim Lorber
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Adele Weiner
Metropolitan College of New York

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Economic and Social Justice; Hate Speech, Online and Social Media; Human Rights; Identity Politics.

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Liberation Technology

Lying at the intersection of social science, computer science, and engineering, the Program on Liberation Technology at Stanford University examines how information and communication technologies (ICTs)—including mobile phones, text messaging or short message service (SMS), the Internet, blogging, global positioning systems (GPSs), and other forms of digital technology—are used to promote freedom and democracy, defend human rights, improve governance, foster development, and pursue a variety of other social goods. The program is hosted by the Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law at the Freeman Spogli Institute, in collaboration with the Program on Global Justice, the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (d.school), Stanford Institute for Innovation in Developing Economies (SEED), and individuals from a variety of schools and academic departments at Stanford.

The Program on Liberation Technology at Stanford University is motivated by the explosive growth in ICT usage to nurture grassroots activism, fight corruption, deter electoral fraud, expose government wrongdoing, empower the poor, protect the environment, educate consumers, and improve public health, among others. The program examines the technical, legal, political, and social obstacles to the wider and more effective use of liberation technologies, and how these obstacles can be overcome. It also tries to evaluate (through experimental and other empirical

methods) which technologies and applications are having the greatest success, how those successes can be replicated, and how less-successful technologies and applications can be improved to deliver real economic, social, and political benefit.

There are two key dimensions to the program: creating a nurturing space for projects with a practical relevance, and creating a space for scholarship and learning. Faculty, staff, and students lead the research projects. Currently, the program is initiating in-house research on using basic mobile phones to monitor governments and combat corruption and an incubation space for technology-based activist projects from around the globe. A d.school course on Designing Liberation Technologies has led to the development of Stanford student-initiated projects, where students work closely with Kenyan nongovernmental organizations to design mobile phone applications for real-life issues such as finding clean water, safety, and health education. Partner organizations have adopted the projects, with some receiving seed money from collaborating Stanford schools and departments.

As a learning space, the program runs research seminars where leading scholars and practitioners of liberation technologies report on what they are learning and doing. These seminars result in reports, working papers, and academic publications that inform the program's community of affiliated scholars about the latest developments in the field. The program also hosts postdoctoral fellows, who enrich the program's research and design activities with their cutting-edge work. Each year, the program brings one fellow with a specialization in law or social science, and another specialized in computer science or some other area of engineering. The program supports undergraduate research and conferences, student-initiated courses, and small-scale student conferences exploring the use and development of liberation technology.

Joshua Cohen
Yosem Companys
Larry Diamond
Jeremy Weinstein
Terry Winograd
Stanford University

See Also: Berkman Center; Center for Civic Media; Center for Innovative Media; MIT Media Lab.

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Libya

The history of Libya parallels that of other previously colonized nations. The country now suffers from economic, class, gender, religious, and ethnic inequalities. Libya gained independence from Italy in 1951, becoming the United Kingdom of Libya, a constitutional and hereditary monarchy. After the discovery of oil reserves and growing income from petroleum sales, Libya became a wealthy nation. However, discontent arose with the concentration of the country's wealth and power in the hands of a few.

In September 1969, a group of military officers led by Muammar Qadhafi launched the Libyan Revolution and deposed King Idris. The constitution was abolished and policies were outlined in the Green Book, a proposal of Qadhafi to improve and develop the country. Keeping Libya debt free, the government increased per-capita income and improved the ranking of the country in the

Human Development Index for Africa. However, beginning in the 1970s, most oil profits were spent on arms and supporting terrorist groups. Without any democratic elections, in 1977, Libya became the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, and Qadhafi gained unlimited power. In 1986, there was a failed assassination attempt against Qadhafi, and shortly thereafter, Libya was sanctioned by the United Nations (UN).

The "Permanent Revolution" of Qadhafi has been characterized by its brutality and extravagance. The dictator prohibited private ownership and retail trade, banned the press, controlled the military, implemented Sharia (Islamic) law, and pursued dissidents. Libya's decades of international isolation left the country without political alliances or national organizations of any kind. Libyan society had been fractured, and was divided along kinship and regional lines. In his later years, Qadhafi changed from an anti-Western terrorist dictator to a something of a Western ally in the global war against terrorism and fundamentalist Islamism.

The Arab Spring

At the beginning of 2011, revolutions in several Arab countries were highlighted in the worldwide media. Social media played an important role in these political changes. The Arab Spring, as it became known, reached Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Syria, Libya, Jordan, Morocco, Algeria, Yemen, Oman, and Djibouti. Social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr were key to this revolution. These platforms were the epicenter of Arab regional social media innovation and helped build new communities. The terms *Twitter revolution* and *Facebook revolution* appeared in many newspaper headlines. However, demographic issues as well as social and political patterns among countries were diverse.

Comparisons of substantially different economies and cultures became habitual, although this led to fallacies. Activists used technology to share ideas and disseminate their messages. Nevertheless, the main issue is that these uses resonated in different ways in local contexts and in the global sphere. Therefore, were social media facilitators of the revolution? There is no consensus. Yet, it became clear that political developments in the Arab world demonstrated that youth were using the Internet as a political platform and as a tool to mobilize people for change.

The use of platforms such as Facebook and Twitter highlighted the shift from social tools to political tools, not only in the Arab world, but also in the larger Arab diaspora. Through social media, diasporas have been instrumental to change. However, broadcast media have not been redundant in the revolutionary processes. The roles of the Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya television networks were also significant.

Because the Libyan regime was based in a society fractured into clan and regional networks, armed rebels ignited the protests first within the eastern provinces. The first manifestations in Libya began on February 15, 2011, and in the following days, more than a dozen protesters were killed in confrontations with pro-Qadhafi tribes and secret police. Protests of government intransigence and brutal repression of demonstrators grew into a revolt that rapidly spread through the eastern part of the country, which had traditionally been opposed to Qadhafi.

In April 2011, the *New York Times* reported that two sons of Qadhafi had attempted to articulate a transition to a constitutional democracy that would include their father stepping down. The transition was to have been conducted by one of Qadhafi's sons, Saif al-Islam Qadhafi. The rebels, however, rejected the proposal. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) took command of military operations in Libya. The decision was unanimously made by member states of the organization after several days of tough negotiations on NATO's role and its ability to perform air strikes on ground targets.

Even with a defeat of pro-Qadhafi forces declared, and complete occupation of the territories, Saif al-Islam Qadhafi remained in hiding in the south of the country until his capture in November 2011. In addition, members of the former government escaped to Niger despite encountering violence when they were detected by troops from that country.

Role of Social Media

Although digital migration is still in its early years in Libya, the use of social media for external dissemination of protests revealed the tribal and regional cleavages in the country. In Libya,

Families belonging to the Libyan diaspora in Dublin, Ireland, protesting against the regime of Muammar Qadhafi on March 19, 2011. During the Libyan uprising, the diaspora became a source of information about what was happening inside the country for international audiences. Libyan youth in the diaspora also helped popularize the movement's now iconic Twitter hashtag of #feb17.

the Internet penetration rate was quite low: Only 5.4 percent of the population had access in June 2010; and in March 2011, only 1.1 percent had created accounts on Facebook. These numbers demonstrate that it is not possible to argue that social media was the main driver behind the uprising in Libya. From an internal perspective, the numbers demystify the idea of the Facebook or Twitter revolution.

Numerous Facebook pages and hundreds of thousands of tweets supported the protest. Moreover, mobile devices were used for both messaging and conveying information. On February 18, the regime disabled the Internet, hoping to smother the protests. Nevertheless, they increased, culminating in bloody clashes between rebels and those loyal to Qadhafi. As social media facilitated free expression, Qadhafi's regime replied with brutal repression and arrests. Word spread through independent social media in the diaspora, resulting in an increase in citizen engagement. Social media became watchdogs of the official Libyan press and disseminated information to the Western world. Several Twitter campaigns were directed to public figures and against political actors in Libya. The Libyan government tried to respond, and became particularly active on Twitter. Saif al-Islam also tried to use social media to spread his message to the international community and express his determination to govern Libya and move the country toward democracy.

As the revolution had several social and political actors, it became clear that many had appropriated social media as methods of propaganda. The "YouTube war" exposed the uses of social media platforms for the purposes of political dissident and activist organizations. There were

many questions about the content published, and confirmation of information was increasingly difficult, with armed rebels on the ground hindering the work of media professionals. The propaganda war became evident in video content, fake pages created on Facebook, and false information disseminated on Twitter. The different streams in social media provoked many questions about what was actually happening in the country.

Journalists and bloggers faced serious repercussions for expressing independent opinions and publishing information. Several social media campaigns demanded rights for Internet users, journalists, citizen journalists, and bloggers. The Qadhafi regime severely repressed digital dissidents. The imprisonments were emblematic of control of digital space. Hence, the Libyan diaspora became an important source of information about what was happening inside the country for international audiences. In fact, the Libyan youth movement in the diaspora directly reported on Twitter and Facebook, and tagged their messages with the hashtag #feb17.

As Tripoli collapsed into a civil war, social media were used to empower the revolution as well as to place the messages into a transnational sphere. On Twitter, users from around the world began tagging tweets with #feb17 in an international demonstration of solidarity for the prodemocracy protests. Media professionals directly dialogued with users through these streams and relied on the techniques of semantic classification to remain at the forefront of publishing content and attracting audiences.

The new tools implemented different (simple and simultaneously complex) social objects that promoted new practices: to subscribe, like, retweet, Digg, or share. This means that users' online behavior could be studied as activities. Therefore, social practices could be identified as leading to social action and interaction. The role of hashtags in the Libyan revolution were relevant because they promoted adherence to social and political movements, ensured information streams, indexed messages to contents, and disseminated information by communication channels that promote collective action through social interactions.

The NATO intervention in Libya was also an issue that has been much discussed in social networks, and led the rebels to impose severe punishments on critics. What seemed like a revolution for democracy began to raise questions in social networks and in the Libyan youth movement in the diaspora.

Conclusion

After five months of being blocked, by August 2011, the Internet was again available to the Libyan public. The capture of Qadhafi and his death at the hands of the rebels seemed to put an end to civil war in October 2011. Although Libya is currently undergoing political reconstruction, widespread corruption and scarcity of basic goods still occur. The main issue is state formation, not just democratization. The 6.4 million people in Libya are still living in fear of another war, and are still divided along provincial lines.

Social media is still used to expose what is happening in the country. As media professionals have begun to redirect attention to Syria, social platforms have become one of the only media to disseminate information on the real situation in Libya. Some youth from the diaspora have returned, and are playing an important role in confronting the disillusionment that followed the fall of Tripoli to the rebels.

The opposition members who took power after Qadhafi understood the role of social media. Attempts to limit Internet access were frustrated because users could get to Twitter via SMS and virtual private networks and proxy servers that allow secure remote access to external networks. Limiting communications with the outside world not only failed, but also highlighted the need for additional change.

Social media continued to play an important role at this stage. After the elections in July 2012, the new leaders of the country had difficulty imposing their authority over the rebel brigades who fought the Qadhafi regime in 2011. Some militias believed that their legitimacy was greater than that of elected officials. The population responded by organizing demonstrations, and managed to oust Islamist groups. Amnesty International reported that although most human rights violations had been committed by the forces of the deposed regime, supporters of the new regime had also been involved in torture and murder.

Facebook pages and Twitter continue to have a significant impact on the disclosure of information from the country, often surpassing media professionals and television networks. However, bloggers and citizen journalists continue to be harassed, and Internet access is still controlled by the authorities and militias, according to both Reporters Without Borders and Amnesty International.

The critical mass of Twitter, mostly Western, considers this kind of pressure on citizens unacceptable, and also condemned the way in which Qadhafi was executed. The trial of the son of the dictator and imprisonments and repression of digital dissidents are now the most discussed topics in social media concerned with the situation in Libya. The hashtag #feb17 continues to be used to index content on the Libyan revolution and its aftermath.

The use of social media cannot be interpreted as a direct cause of changes in Libya. Cyberspace was the link between different networks and established new public spheres for debate. Digital media has individualized, localized, and structured a collective consciousness. Within this emerging news ecosystem, political uses of social media were also exposed. Social media do not generate revolutions, but may facilitate them and aid political actors in transforming their public image. Nevertheless, social media can change the nature of news, just as Arab satellite channels helped to broadcast the revolution.

Inês Amaral
University of Minho

See Also: Africa, North; Al Jazeera Effect; Arab Spring; Facebook; Feb 17 Voices; International Unrest and Revolution; Syria; Tunisia; Twitter; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring; YouTube War, The.

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Lieberman, Joe

Joseph Isadore "Joe" Lieberman is a former four-term U.S. Senator from Connecticut, nationally well known for his roles in the 2000 and 2008 presidential campaigns. Lieberman, who spent most of his political career as a Democrat, earned the party's vice presidential nomination in 2000, becoming the first Jewish candidate on one of the major party's presidential tickets. A leader who often reached across the political aisle to find common ground, Lieberman became an independent in 2006, and further broke away from his party during the 2008 presidential campaign to become a chief surrogate for Republican candidate John McCain. Lieberman is also known for his sometimes controversial legislative agenda that included issues such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights, homeland security, and cybersecurity.

Born in Stamford, Connecticut, on February 24, 1942, Lieberman is twice married with three children, one stepchild, and 12 grandchildren. Lieberman married his first wife, Betty Haas, when he was a student at Yale Law School in 1965. After divorcing in 1981, Lieberman met his second wife, Hadassah Freilich Tucker, the child of Holocaust survivors who fled to the United States. Still married to Hadassah, the two describe themselves as "observant" Jews. Lieberman's faith brought him attention throughout his career, but especially when he was selected as Al Gore's running mate in the 2000 presidential election. Speculation over whether Lieberman's faith would pose a problem for the Gore campaign died down after the election, when Gore and Lieberman lost the electoral college, but received over half a million more votes than their Republican opponents George W. Bush and Dick Cheney.

Career

Before becoming the Democratic Party's vice presidential candidate, Lieberman served for 10 years in the Connecticut Senate, six years as the Connecticut attorney general, and 14 years in the U.S. Senate. Although he served those years in the Senate as a Democrat, Lieberman often could have been described as a political maverick at that point in his tenure. Lieberman often sided with mainstream Democrats, agreeing with their

Former Senator Joe Lieberman in conversation with General David H. Petraeus at the International Security Assistance Force Headquarters in Afghanistan. Senator Lieberman was taking part in a congressional delegation tour in November 2010, and was accompanied by several other senators, including John McCain, for whom he campaigned during the presidential election of 2008.

positions on issues like abortion, gun control, and the environment. Lieberman was a strong proponent of environmental legislation, helping negotiate the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, voting to ban drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, and authoring bills to combat climate change. However, Lieberman often sided with Republicans on foreign policy, and also angered many in his party by being the first prominent Democrat to publicly reprimand President Bill Clinton during the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

Lieberman's run for vice president coincided with his campaign for re-election to the Senate. Although Gore and Lieberman ultimately lost the presidential contest, Lieberman easily maintained his seat in the Senate, winning 64 percent of the vote over his Republican opponent. As a Senator, Lieberman soon became chair of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and was a leader in efforts to create the Department of Homeland Security. Lieberman supported the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and became a target of criticism from the left for his continued support of both military operations. In an interview with FOX News anchor Chris Wallace, Lieberman would later admit that he identified as a Democrat on the majority of domestic issues, but largely sided with Republicans on foreign policy.

Lieberman's support for the Iraq War, along with his other conservative positions on a variety of issues, did him no favors when he sought the Democratic nomination as a candidate in the 2004 presidential election. Lieberman's former running mate Al Gore snubbed Lieberman with his endorsement of Howard Dean in December 2003. Lieberman withdrew from the race on

February 3, 2004, after failing to win a single primary or caucus. Ultimately, Lieberman found himself on the losing end behind six other candidates, including Reverend Al Sharpton, retired General Wesley Clark, Ohio Representative Dennis Kucinich, former Vermont Governor Howard Dean, North Carolina Senator John Edwards, and the eventual nominee Massachusetts Senator John Kerry.

As fewer and fewer prominent Democrats supported the Iraq War, Lieberman again found himself out of favor with many in his party as he campaigned for re-election to the Senate in the 2006 Democratic primary. While Lieberman received the support of some Democrats in his primary battle, he went on to lose the party's nomination to antiwar candidate Ned Lamont. After losing the primary, Lieberman ran as an independent candidate on the newly formed Connecticut for Lieberman Party's ticket. Running against Lamont and Republican Alan Schlesinger, Lieberman became a divisive figure to his Democratic colleagues in the Senate. Most, including notable names like Democratic Minority Leader Harry Reid and New York Senator Hillary Clinton, expressed their support for Lamont; only five Democratic senators endorsed Lieberman. Meanwhile, Republicans largely expressed their support for Lieberman over their candidate. Lieberman racked up notable endorsements from Republicans like former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and Maine Senator Susan Collins. Lieberman eventually won the race and returned to the Senate to caucus with the Democrats, giving the party a 51–49 seat majority.

Citizens for McCain

Although he continued to caucus with the Democrats, Lieberman endorsed Republican Arizona Senator John McCain for president on December 17, 2007, when the Democratic field of candidates still included eventual nominee Barack Obama, as well as Hillary Clinton, John Edwards, Dennis Kucinich, Delaware Senator Joe Biden, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, former Alaska Senator Mike Gravel, and fellow Connecticut Senator Chris Dodd. Citing his support for McCain's foreign policy positions, Lieberman became one of the candidate's most visible supporters on the campaign trail. In June 2008, Lieberman launched Citizens for McCain in an effort to attract moderates and disaffected Democrats to the candidate's side. The effort primarily targeted former Clinton supporters who may have been reluctant to support Obama. In September 2008, Lieberman assumed a key speaking role at the Republican National Convention, where he argued that McCain's experience (and Obama's lack thereof) made the Republican ticket better qualified to serve the nation.

Lieberman's close relationship with McCain kept the media speculating over possible cabinet appointments for the Connecticut senator in a McCain White House. Many believed that McCain wanted to select Lieberman as his vice presidential running mate, but others thought that selection would anger the more conservative wings of the Republican base. When McCain announced Alaska Governor Sarah Palin as his choice for vice presidential nominee, the media began to speculate more about Lieberman serving in other positions, like secretary of state.

Instead of assuming a high-level cabinet position, Lieberman saw McCain lose the election in a landslide defeat, and then faced an angry Democratic Senate majority that threatened to take away his chair on the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Although Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell approached Lieberman about caucusing with the Republicans, Lieberman decided to stay with the Senate Democrats after Obama convinced Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid to let Lieberman keep his chair. Lieberman was instead stripped of his membership for the Environmental and Public Works Committee as punishment for supporting McCain during the election.

Health Care

Since the 2008 campaign, Lieberman has continued to be an independent voice in the Senate. During debates on health care legislation, Lieberman came out against any plan that included a public option, and threatened to join Republicans in a filibuster if any such plan should come to the floor. Lieberman opposed plans including government-run insurance programs because of the burden he claimed it would put on taxpayers and the national debt.

Lieberman was one of the most vocal critics of the public option, and helped force Democrats into pulling the feature from their legislation. With that disagreement out of the way, in December 2009, Lieberman sided with the Democrats and was one of 60 senators who voted for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, commonly known as Obamacare.

LGBT Rights

Lieberman regained some favor with Democrats as an out-front spokesperson for the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Lieberman had supported the initial passage of the policy prohibiting gay, lesbian, and bisexual troops from openly serving in the military; however, he believed the policy was outdated and discriminatory by 2010, and pledged to work toward its repeal.

Along with Susan Collins, Lieberman introduced a bill repealing the policy, which passed the House of Representatives in a vote of 250–175, and the Senate in a vote of 65–31. Before the Senate vote, Lieberman gave the final argument for the legislation's passage, while his friend and colleague John McCain argued against repeal. President Obama signed the bill into law on December 22, 2010.

National Security

While Lieberman opposed McCain and many conservatives on the issue of gays openly serving in the military, he remained hawkish on other issues of national security. In January 2012, Lieberman cosponsored the Enemy Expatriation Act with Senator Scott Brown and Representatives Charlie Dent and Jason Altmire. This controversial bill was designed to allow the federal government to strip U.S. citizens of their citizenship if they participated in certain terrorist activities.

Internet Freedom and Cybersecurity

In recent years, Lieberman has taken on the controversial issues of Internet freedom and cybersecurity. In 2008, Lieberman's Senate Committee, viewing the Internet as a potential vehicle for terrorist threats, issued a report titled "Violent Islamist Extremism, the Internet, and the Homegrown Terrorist Threat." Lieberman also called on YouTube to take down hundreds of videos produced by Islamic terrorist supporters. Lieberman was criticized on freedom-of-speech grounds, but remained persistent with his call for censorship, and in June 2010, he introduced the Protecting Cyberspace as a National Asset Act of 2010, a bill he coauthored with Susan Collins and Democrat Thomas Carper of Delaware. Lieberman claimed that the bill would give the president authority to respond to cyberterrorist attacks on government infrastructure. Vocal opponents labeled the legislation the "Kill Switch Bill" and alleged that it would give the president unprecedented authority to take over or shut down the Internet.

Lieberman also came under fire for actions related to WikiLeaks, an organization that publishes secret and classified information from anonymous sources. Lieberman directed his staff to make inquiries into Internet companies like Amazon.com, which provided service to the controversial WikiLeaks. With Senators John Ensign and Scott Brown, Lieberman then introduced legislation to amend the Espionage Act in order to affect WikiLeaks and similar Internet sources that leaked classified information. Again, Lieberman's call for censorship drew criticism from those insisting that such legislation hinders the free speech rights of both new and traditional media sources.

Cybersecurity legislation has continually proved controversial, and has failed to receive the 60 votes needed for the Senate to take up the issue. In December 2012, Lieberman lamented that "cybersecurity is a goner and I'm really disappointed about it." Lieberman continues to believe that the nation is unprepared for a cyberterrorist attack that he claims could be more devastating than the 9/11 terrorist attacks. While Lieberman campaigned against Internet security threats, he also recognized the communicative advantages provided by social media, and maintained an active presence on sites including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Lieberman often posted pictures and videos, as well as links to articles about himself and the issues he championed.

Retirement

In January 2011, Lieberman announced that he would retire from the Senate at the expiration of his fourth term. With credible opponents on both sides of the aisle, like Republican Linda McMahon and his eventual successor Democrat

Chris Murphy, some pundits questioned whether Lieberman had a realistic pathway to re-election if he had chosen to run again. Lieberman discounted such criticism, and served the remainder of his term relatively quietly. Lieberman refrained from endorsing a candidate in the 2012 presidential contest, and presented himself as a voice of reason on the "fiscal cliff," encouraging compromise between Democrats and Republicans on the issues of taxes and the national debt. Lieberman also spent his final days in the Senate, campaigning for an end to the filibuster, a tool he had both utilized and criticized in the past.

Since retiring, Lieberman has somewhat withdrawn from public view, not updating his Facebook or Twitter accounts since December 2012. However, he remains a steadfast advocate for many positions, and recently joined the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank aiming to build consensus around various foreign policy issues. Lieberman may be remembered negatively by some as a controversial figure, and by others positively as the rare independent in Washington, unafraid to compromise across party lines. As the first Jew on a major presidential ticket and a central surrogate and supporter of John McCain's 2008 White House bid, Lieberman has also secured himself a place in national political memory.

Jefferson Walker
Jason Edward Black
University of Alabama

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential 2000; Campaigns, Presidential 2008; Cyber-Jihad; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights; WikiLeaks.

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LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a publicly held social-networking Internet company tailored toward professionals across all industries. Founders Reid Hoffman, Allen Blue, Konstantin Guericke, Eric Ly, and Jean-Luc Vaillant established LinkedIn in December 2002, and launched the site on May 5, 2003. The CEO of LinkedIn is Jeff Weiner. Headquarters are located in Mountain View, California, with offices throughout the United States, including Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Omaha, and San Francisco, and 20 international offices spanning the globe. In 2010, LinkedIn opened a European headquarters in Dublin, Ireland.

Hoffman argues that many people are not equipped with the skills to effectively remain mobile so that they can grow professionally, and he believes that it is LinkedIn's job to assist professionals in making connections. The intention of LinkedIn, according to Hoffman, is to assist members to create, manage, and share their professional identities online while strengthening their professional connections through social networking.

LinkedIn has a diversified business model. Revenue is generated from hiring, marketing, advertising products, and premium subscriptions. The company receives most of its revenue, about 42 percent, from LinkedInJobs, which generates more than $102 million a year. LinkedIn Corporate Solutions are tools that aid businesses in locating qualified candidates for positions, whereas LinkedInJobs allows businesses to advertise open positions on the site. Premium subscriptions only account for 25 percent of annual revenue for the company.

The remaining annual revenue, approximately $79 million, is generated from advertising. LinkedIn Ads is a self-service option that allows advertisers to build and target their advertisements to LinkedIn members. LinkedIn offers additional services for businesses through LinkedIn Ads for Enterprise, which handles large-scale marketing and advertising accounts. LinkedIn's business model has it collecting money directly from individuals and businesses. The company has its feet firmly planted in the service industry and the technology field. LinkedIn has more than 2,860 employees globally.

Much has changed since the day LinkedIn was started in Hoffman's living room in 2002; namely, growth. By the end of the first month, LinkedIn had 4,500 members; in June 2013, there were more than 225 million members globally, with more than 60 percent living outside the United States. The top five countries with the most LinkedIn small business membership accounts include the United States, the United Kingdom, India, the Netherlands, and Canada. LinkedIn is available in 19 languages. LinkedIn reports that the rate of membership growth is estimated at two members per second. The fastest-growing membership group is college students and recent college graduates. LinkedIn is considered the world's largest business social networking site. Members range from college students to top business executives. Executives from every Fortune 500 company have a LinkedIn account, making this network as deep as it is broad.

Site Features

To assist professionals to effectively create, build, and maintain business networks, LinkedIn uses a registered membership model, where every user must create an account and register with LinkedIn. Accounts exist on a continuum, ranging from free to premium. Users create their accounts by adding professional histories and information, including résumés. It is against LinkedIn policies to create a solely personal profile page; that is, all individual pages must be career-life focused. Professional networks are built by adding connections with fellow LinkedIn users. Accounts can be personalized as users post photos and showcase their work and community service activities.

Networks are established by inviting people into one's network. Connections can be first degree, where the person has a direct professional association with the person, such as being current or past colleagues at a company. A second-degree connection is a relationship by means of a mutual association, such as a former colleague of a current coworker. Connecting via a second-degree connection is called a third-degree connection. Third-degree connections can be beneficial in helping to establish a connection with someone to whom you may wish to be introduced. In addition to individual membership accounts, LinkedIn offers groups for special interests. There are well over 1.2 million LinkedIn Groups, with the largest category being professional and career issues. Academic and corporate alumni groups account for more than 120,000 of the LinkedIn Groups. The openness of groups can vary from private to open to all Internet users.

LinkedIn offered some new features in 2011, many intended for companies or enterprises. Companies can create free banner advertisements linking back to content. Companies benefit from this added tool because it allows them to bridge LinkedIn with other social media. LinkedIn supports video content on pages, allowing companies to add videos about products or services. Recommendations are all offered by LinkedIn, where recommendations are shown based on connections in a network. Much like Facebook, LinkedIn has a "follow us" button that can be added to a Web site, blog, or other social media platform. By means of HTML code, LinkedIn can connect a company's Web site with its LinkedIn page; visitors to a company's Web site can click a "recommend" button that connects to the company's LinkedIn page. LinkedIn, similar to Facebook, has a "share" button.

LinkedIn is a social networking site that focuses on the business side of effectively building professional connections. The goal of LinkedIn is to aid individuals, companies, and groups in accessing shared knowledge and insights and locating advantageous business opportunities.

Diane M. Monahan
Saint Leo University

See Also: Facebook; Foursquare; Google+; International Online Communities; Social Networking Web Sites; Unemployment.

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Lobbyists

By definition, lobbyists can be described as a group of persons engaged in conducting activities aimed at influencing public officials and the activities of governmental agencies. The term is widened with the inclusion of anyone who tries to impact governmental activities, including the legislative process. In this context, one can argue that lobbyists target to impact policymaking, decision-making, or decision-taking processes of states and organizations other than states. Therefore, lobbyists are perceived as the person who can impact the cited processes that are concerned with their purposes and interests.

Lobbies are becoming increasingly significant in the 21st century. There are a number of factors that have contributed to the rise of lobbies. They may include the media, advances in new technologies, globalization, democratization, human rights, and the rule of law. In this sense, cited factors have facilitated collective action, mass participation, involvement of third parties, mobilizing resources or structures, and increasing political opportunities, which contribute to political change and strategic outcomes.

Civil Society and Lobbyism

The concept of civil society has existed for centuries. Its meaning has varied across time, place, theoretical perspective, and political persuasion. The term *civil* signifies a measure of good faith and respect for law. As an ancient term, *societas civilis* refers to the rule of law and active participation of citizens in public life. Liberal theorists explain civil society as groups of citizens who emerge and associate spontaneously and freely. As an outcome of liberal assumptions, relations among private individuals, groups, and societies that can produce important consequences for the course of events have also supplemented international relations among governments. In broadly accepted terminology, the concept of civil society can be defined as "an intermediate sphere of voluntary association and activity standing between the individual and the state."

The number of civil society organizations (CSOs) has grown exponentially, and they have expanded their scope, from aiming at specific targets like slavery or prisoners of conscience, to fundamental matters of global governance. Such an increase suggests that lobbyists will play a crucial role in the political arena, where the modern state system faces severe challenges.

There are several factors playing a role in encouraging the growth of lobbyists since the 1970s: the result of globalization and the emergence of interdependency issues around the globe, United Nations (UN) sponsored global conferences, advances in communication and information technologies, the end of the Cold War, and the spread of democracy. Pluralist thought also argues that openness of the political system leads to the creation of an environment for other stakeholders. For example, there are a number of actors other than governments and citizens such as social networks, advocacy groups, and lobbyists, who have shared interests and seek to influence policymaking processes within governmental agencies.

Lobbyists have transcended national and regional borders with the processes of globalization, and have become a part of the global system. Today's lobbyists cannot only be considered as a simple social polity crossing national borders, but also as important social actors within structural forms ranging from organized nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) for public benefit and associations for member benefits, to faith-based organizations, Internet-based pressure groups, and antiwar or antiglobalization protestors. Social associations, NGOs, citizen movements, student bodies, environmental groups, feminist networks, human rights advocacy chains, epistemic communities, and so forth, are principal members of global civil society that can act and perform lobby activities around the world. To give an example, Greenpeace, Doctors Without Borders, Initiatives of Change, and International Campaign to Ban Landmines are considered well-known lobbyists.

Originally, lobbying activities were targeting legislative and decision-making processes within states. As time passed, lobbying has included

intergovernmental phenomena such as lobbying legislative processes in the European Union and the UN. Thus, lobbyists have played a crucial role in all forms of agenda setting, including at the national and supranational level. Therefore, one can claim that the context of lobbying activities has shifted into a global sphere with the involvement of social media, as compared to the old sense of lobbyism used to refer to national drives and conventional tactics.

To make an overall definition, lobbyists can be viewed as the field of action and thought occupied by individual and collective citizen initiatives, of a voluntary nonprofit character, both within and among states. However, the term *lobbyists* has undergone dramatic transformations. The old sense of the word encompassed the wining-and-dining era when lobbyists were financing cocktail parties and social activities and benefiting from organizing pressure on elected or governmental officials over specific social, economic, and political issues. In contrast, lobbying in the contemporary era requires new strategies, information-based initiatives, and social media coverage, thereby changing the conventional definition of lobbyists. Additionally, the emergence of diverse social media tools has profoundly accelerated the rise of lobbyists.

One question behind these definitions is how a lobbyist can accomplish desired ends. Utilities or services designed for realizing the purposes and interests of lobbyists are primarily concentrating on information and persuasion. Information and persuasion can be considered valuable assets that a lobbyist can benefit from while influencing decision-making or policymaking processes. Therefore, with the help of these tactics and strategies, lobbyists can generate a power that can ensure the achievement of individual purposes and interests regarding the decision-making and decision-taking processes. Lobbyists, therefore, can be acknowledged as key actors in the democratic system; they perform a vital function in raising awareness about important issues.

Transnational Lobbying Activities

As one of the policy responses to contemporary globalization, transformism sees lobbyists as a source of fundamental social change. Thus, the lobbyists of worldwide peasant activists, indigenous people, women, and working classes have all sought social changes as a result of their transformist views. In this sense, lobbyism can be defined as a sustained campaign of claim making, using repeated performances that advertise claims based on organizations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that can sustain these activities.

Scholar Mary Kaldor classifies activities of lobbyists as "old" and "new." Old lobby activities tend to be labor movements, national movements, self-determination movements, or anticolonial movements. Contemporary lobby activities, however, retain global features such as international human rights activists, global environmental groups, or groups defending women's rights. Flows of information have facilitated the emergence of transnational advocacy networks and transnational lobby activities. As communication technologies have become decentralized, cheaper, and more accessible, the ability of states to control communications has diminished.

The boom in information and communication technologies has formed the infrastructure of globalization in finance, capital mobility and export-oriented business activity, transnational communication, migration, and travel, as well as civil society interactions. There has been an unprecedented compression of time and space, as individuals, groups, and governments increasingly integrate political, economic, and social processes across national boundaries. Transnational movements of lobbyists, moreover, have displaced domestic contention; they will deactivate the boundaries between states and activate new boundaries that can lead to the formation of lobbyists.

Social Media Coverage

Lobby activities within states and regions have reached a broader sphere of influence. The description of certain lobbies as "transnational" has been increasingly common. The primary goal of these lobbies is to create, strengthen, implement, and monitor international norms. States or political systems violating these rights have been countered by lobbyists in the international arena. Such lobbyists have been so powerful that they have generated significant changes in political systems. The "color revolutions" of former Soviet republics in eastern Europe and Central Asia,

which took place in past decades, are the most significant indicators of the power of global civil society and transnational lobby activities.

In this era, social and political problems in a certain society do not stay within the borders of that individual state, but can attract global awareness through transnational networks of lobbyists. For example, the Danish cartoon crisis in 2005 represents the impact of lobbyists on the behavior of political actors. Several strategies and tactics, including media coverage, transnational visits and trips of interfaith communities to the other countries, peaceful demonstrations, and boycotts led to both the Danish prime minister and editor-in-chief of the newspaper that published the cartoons expressing their regrets about offending Muslims.

Consequently, the examples of color revolutions and the case of the Danish cartoon crisis demonstrate that social and political problems are no longer national or regional. There is a noticeably rapid flow of information among the members of global civil society and lobbyists. Thanks to the rapid flow of information, lobbyists are now able to simultaneously react. By the increase of nationally defined close-minded interests, they have contributed to the creation of long-term social ties. Building connections and improving joint solutions, activists have been exposed to a diverse coalition of viewpoints and concerns, thereby contributing to the engendering of mutual understanding and trust as a basis for future cooperation. For instance, a group of 1,500 citizen organizations from 89 different countries have called on governments to adopt a suspension on any new issues that expand the scope and power of the World Trade Organization, in the so-called Battle in Seattle.

Social media coverage now plays a crucial role in the activities of lobbyists. There has been a dramatic increase in the amount of social media tools, digital media technologies, and social platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, and blogs, which are strategically employed by lobbyists in order to affect policymaking mechanisms. This does not mean that conventional strategies and tactics have been eroded and social media tools are the only means that lobbyists would resort to. However, diverse social media tools have contributed to the enrichment of lobbying activities, thereby ensuring new strategies and tactics for lobbyists.

Conclusion

The impact of lobbyists and civil society in this century has been more salient than before. The globalization process, advances in new technologies, the development of international values and norms, as well as calls for human rights are the paramount factors that promote lobbying activities and initiatives of global civil society, which in turn lead to the creation of political changes and strategic outcomes.

One of the challenges of the globalization process for the future is considered to be the legitimacy of the system. The participation of civil society in world politics and providing NGOs and lobbyists access to global governance activities will contribute to overcome the challenges that global governance has been facing. Additionally, a larger and higher quality of lobbyists' involvement in worldwide issues could significantly improve public education, public debate, public accountability, and public participation in the issues of international affairs. It is apparent from the developments over the past few decades that the rising importance of lobbyists continues not only within states, but also at the international level.

However, lobbying activities have shifted over the course of the time. Initially, they were concerned with policy- and decision-making processes within states. Now, they have begun to impact policymaking processes of intergovernmental organizations, such as the European Union and the UN. Furthermore, in the old sense of the word, lobbyists used to host cocktail parties and finance social activities in order to gain influence. By contrast, the approach that lobbyists implement today is more related to employing social media tools, thus aiming to influence decision-making mechanisms both in states and at the international level.

Irrespective of shifting strategies over time, the main goal of lobbyists, which has not changed, continues to be influencing government activities through information and persuasion. The emergence of a global civil society and lobbyists has been crucial now that technological and political changes have produced notable impacts around

the world. Furthermore, these changes will continue as globalization proceeds and social media tools further spread. Therefore, the importance of global civil society and lobbyists will also likely increase in the future.

Ahmet Kaya
Independent Scholar

See Also: Activists and Activism; Campaigns, Grassroots; Nongovernmental Organizations; Special Interest Campaigns.

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London School of Economics Public Policy Group

The London School of Economics Public Policy Group (LSEPPG) is a university think tank that supplies consultation and recommendations for a variety of clients in the public sphere and private sector. The group conducts empirical research in the social sciences, provides detailed analysis of policymaking, and serves as an interface between academia, the private, public, and "third" sector. It operates four blogs on politics, policy, and the social sciences. In its role as a university think tank, the LSEPPG conducts pure and applied research and offers policy intervention and consultation to a diverse group of governmental entities, international organizations, and major corporations active in the fields of public sector innovation and productivity, citizen redress, policy evaluation, public engagement, building and audit, and e-government, survey and focus group research, public opinion, and the design of election systems.

The group is housed at the LSE Department of Government, where it is one of the research units in the department. The group was honored with an award by the United Kingdom's (UK's) *Times Higher Education* for best knowledge exchange initiative in higher education during 2011. The LSEPPG is ranked among the world's most influential think tanks. The group was jointly named the world's fourth-best university think tank in a

global survey. The PPG podcasts its public events and makes them available on its blogs. Some of the group's conference topics engage online media and present it in the context of policy issues, such as whether social security should be moved online. The PPG uses Twitter hashtags to promote its events held at LSE, and encourages participants to tweet using the hashtags while at event proceedings and conferences.

Blogs

The group's dynamic string of academic blogs has found new ways of stimulating interest in the social sciences and politics in the UK and beyond. The four blogs that the PPG runs are British Politics and Policy (BPP) at LSE, European Politics and Policy (EUROPP), LSE Review of Books, and The Impact of the Social Sciences. All four blogs bring together expertise from academics, policymakers, and analysts in order to promote social science debate, expressed through the writing and editing of research scholars at LSE. Social media that the LSEPPG incorporates on its academic blogs include Twitter, Facebook, RSS Feeds, and Pinterest. The blogs employ Google Analytics that track the number of unique visitors and are licensed under Creative Commons. They feature links to related LSE Podcasts of PPG events.

The BPP at LSE is the top-ranked university blog in the UK, according to *Times Higher Education*, and is the second most read economics blog there. The aims of BBP at LSE are to increase public understanding of the social sciences in the context of UK government, facilitate the sharing and exchange of knowledge between experts within and outside universities, and open up academic research to increase its impact. BPP draws primarily on the community and researchers at LSE, but the blog welcomes contributors from UK and overseas universities and other research organizations. It encourages submission of material that focuses on substantive insights or research as it pertains to any aspect of British politics and policy.

The primary goal of EUROPP is to maximize public understanding of social science in the contexts of European governance and policymaking, both at the level of the European Union, the countries across Europe, and within its neighborhood. The blog focuses on multidisciplinary themes reaching from topics in European governance, economics, and politics to cultural and social issues, both at the EU and nation-state levels. It posts two articles each day of the week, a Brussels blog roundup, and weekly academic book reviews. A primary and strategic function of EUROPP within PPG as an entity is to commence a knowledge exchange. The blog aims to convey insights from academia to policymakers and citizens. Another of its goals is to bring to academic and wider attention the research and evidence generated by nongovernmental organization, pressure groups, and a wider range of organizations researching on European politics and policy themes. EUROPP encourages the submission of material that can improve the evidence base for public debate on any aspect of European politics and policy.

The Impact of Social Sciences blog, run by the LSEPPG, is part of a larger research initiative, the Impact of Social Sciences research project. A joint project between LSE, Imperial College London, and the University of Leeds, the Impact of Social Sciences research initiative aims to investigate the impact of academic work in the social sciences on government and policymaking, business, and civil society. Another aim of the project is to demonstrate how academic research in the social sciences achieves public policy impacts, contributes to economic prosperity, and informs public understanding of policy issues and economic and social change. The project has made publications available to download on its blog. The blog functions as the main site for disseminating the research findings from any of the partners working on the project, as well as its publications, such as handbooks. It is updated daily with news articles and comment pieces on impact in the UK and abroad.

The LSE Impact blog has its own twitter handle, and its Tweets are also embedded in its blog page. Impact of Social Science and the LSEPPG-produced guides are available as downloadable and printable computer files and focus on social media topics such as how to use Twitter in university research, teaching, and impact activities. The Twitter guide was designed for use by academics and researchers, authored by LSE faculty, and made available in the public domain with Creative Commons licensing. The PPG and Impact also published a handbook that instructed academics

on how to set up a single or multiauthor blog. LSE's Impact blog curates a public list on Twitter of social science tweeters.

On the LSE Review of Books blog, additional social media embraced includes Soundcloud and Storify, and each blog post features a link to a reviewed book's page on Amazon's UK Web site, including to its Kindle edition. It won the European Podcast award, finishing first for 2012 UK Academic Podcast, and fifth in the UK Non-Profit category that year. The LSE Review of Books has a Twitter handle, and its tweets are embedded in the blog page. The blog's posts are Google+ sharable. The review has a Facebook page that is available to "like" on the blog's main page. Selections of book reviewers' tweets are shared on the blog.

Dustin Bradley Garlitz
Earl Conteh-Morgan
University of South Florida

See Also: Europe; International Examples of Political Parties and Social Media; International Social Media and Politics.

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Long-Tail Nano-Targeting

First used by Jeff Koster to describe targeting strategies used during Democratic Senator Al Franken's campaign for Minnesota senator in 2008, long-tail nano-targeting is a type of online political marketing that targets persuasive messages to the most responsive niche of voters. It is part of a procession of techniques adapted from the commercial marketing industry that have contributed in the last 40 years to the marketization of political and advocacy campaigning. Utilizing knowledge of audience attributes and characteristics such as race, religion, income, voting history, credit card purchases, lifestyles, spending habits, group memberships, ethnicity, class, and cultural groups, the concept of long-tail nano-targeting, like most targeting, rests upon the idea that audiences can be separated into small online niches of voters, and that messages can be tailored to those voters' particular interests. These voting blocs are targeted online and in a much more finely tuned manner than with traditional targeting or micro-targeting (both of which include other media such as radio, television, mail, and door-to-door canvassing).

There are various forms of targeting as it relates to political and advocacy campaigning: micro-targeting, hyper-targeting, and nano-targeting. In long-tail nano-targeting, "long-tail" refers to the way that niche marketing strategies are formulated on the Internet. In marketing, it enables retailers to inexpensively locate and market specialized or obscure products to individuals, regardless of geographical locale, who have an interest in purchasing those products. Correspondingly, the concept of nano-targeting has emerged from a long procession of marketing techniques that have been applied to voter targeting in political and advocacy campaigning.

Voter targeting spans back to the 1970s and 1980s during the campaigns of Presidents Carter and Reagan. Utilizing consumer databases to generate suitable mailing lists, campaign operatives sent tailored appeals to narrow, tightly selected members of the electorate on a wide-scale basis. The availability of more comprehensive and accurate voter databases has been key to the success of voter targeting in general. In the United States, both Republican and Democratic parties have amassed databases with information on practically every voter in the country. These databases integrate information culled from various public and private sources (e.g., telephone numbers, age, marital status, voting history, race, religious denomination, income, and other demographic information culled from survey data, direct marketing companies, credit reporting agencies,

group membership rosters, consumer databases, and social media sites) to create a highly detailed picture of each voter.

These databases, along with the development of sophisticated technological tools and processes and widespread public accommodation of Web technologies, transformed the simple voter targeting of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s into the 21st century. Republican Mitt Romney's use of micro- and nano-targeting not only helped him prevail in his 2002 bid for Massachusetts governor, but also set the stage for adaptation of these techniques in major political campaigns like George W. Bush's 2004 re-election campaign, where the first extensive use of micro-targeting as a voter identification tool occurred.

Long-tail nano-targeting is not unique to any particular political party, organization, or group.

A Barack Obama supporter reading the program at a campaign fundraising event specifically for potential lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender donors in New York City in June 2011.

It has been extensively used by both Democratic and Republican candidates and a host of advocacy groups. However, the campaign of Barack Obama set the standard for the use of long-tail nano-targeting in a political campaign. During the course of his 2008 and 2012 campaigns, Obama's team collected millions of pieces of data that it fed into Democratic voter databases. This information, culled from disparate sources, but especially from online activities, concerned voter preferences about location and online activities. Later, using data mining, an applied statistical technique that is used to extract meaningful intelligence or knowledge from the patterns that emerge within a database, voter information was sorted, analyzed, processed, and subjected to predictive analytic techniques. A voter model or profile was then created for the purposes of categorizing voters, based upon particular attributes and interests. In this way, specific messages could be targeted to small groups of voters with the reasonable certainty that the message would be relevant to that group of voters. Because it is Web-based, long-tail nano-targeting allows for ever-smaller groups of voters to be segmented, based upon their prior online actions (down to the individual level).

Summarily, the core idea of long-tail nano-targeting is that the nature of the Internet allows individuals to be transient, never residing in one place for very long. Long-tail nano-targeting enables political campaigns and advocacy groups to place persuasive and tightly targeted messages (to the most responsive individuals) everywhere that the specified individual travels on the Internet. Highly relevant messages tailored to the voters' whims, preferences, and indulgences, are placed on Web sites that they visit, which when clicked on, direct those voters to the relevant portion of a candidate or organization's Web site.

As with any tool, long-tail nano-targeting can also be used as a tool of marginalization, discrimination, or privacy invasion. There are serious privacy and surveillance issues that have arisen. The purchases one makes, the Web sites on which one comments, and the videos one watches all can be, unbeknownst to the voter, harvested, analyzed, and sold to anyone with enough money. The personal information of millions of individuals is compiled, analyzed, and disseminated, often

without their knowledge or consent. Voters are compiled into clusters or segments based upon sometimes dubious or incorrect data in order to paint a picture of what is believed to be their preferences. There is no need for direct contact with the voter.

Critics of the excessive use of nano-targeting in political campaigns have argued that, by its very nature, the process is exclusionary and contributes to not only unjustifiable segmentation and polarization of the electorate, but also self-segmentation. In such an environment, voters have every incentive to only seek content that is congruent with their political preferences. In this way, the opportunity for voters to encounter and engage issues that are unplanned and unanticipated—which is central to the notion of healthy democratic engagement (especially regarding points of view that voters find incongruent with their own)—is greatly diminished. Excessive application of technologies like long-tail nano-targeting may limit voters' exposure to the randomness that builds understanding and empathy for different worldviews. The result may be that voters may become more entrenched than ever in their positioning and loyalty to particular policies, ideologies, candidates, and worldviews.

D. Elisabeth Glassco
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Data Mining; Franken, Al; Predictive Analytics; VoteBuilder.com; VoterVault.com.

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Luddite

A Luddite was a member of one of several groups of 19th-century English craftspeople known for sabotaging industrial machinery that threatened their jobs. Although not themselves technophobic, the term *Luddite* has since been appropriated as a pejorative to dismiss the objections of someone who does not like, has difficulty using, or is otherwise hostile toward technology or its proponents. It can also refer to skeptics or cynics of new technology generally, an increasingly sympathetic position amid rapid development of technologies like the Internet, genetic engineering, mobile phones, and surveillance cameras. Most of these contemporary actors practice nonviolent, theoretical forms of resistance rooted in objections to narratives that link technological innovation to notions of "progress."

History

By the time the Luddites cohered in 1811, the English Industrial Revolution was well underway. In the preceding decades, the government had reoriented its laws and economic priorities in support of for-profit enterprise, regardless of the toll on individual workers. Technological unemployment and the replacement of artisans with unskilled labor became increasingly common occurrences. After the Combination Act banned trade unions in 1799, employees were left with little recourse.

In the burgeoning textiles industry, machine breaking emerged as a strategy to substitute for collective bargaining, somewhat successfully and simultaneously causing losses of capital for employers and ensuring their own necessity. Though scattered, the Luddites held a unified identity by writing letters to their employers and signing the name Ned Ludd, a folkloric figure who was said to have broken his father's knitting machine in a fit of rebellious rage.

Noting the movement's frequency and spread, and the public sympathy it enjoyed, the pro-industry English government quickly passed a law in 1812 making machine breaking a capital offense, leading to a series of trials and hangings in the years that followed. Although the Luddites did not halt the implementation of labor-saving machinery, they did delay its introduction in certain areas, and although their motivations were entirely practical, their actions demanded consideration of the negative aspects of technological adoption.

Neo-Luddites

Luddites of the 21st century, sometimes called neo-Luddites, hold concerns that span industrialization, computerization, automation, cloning, privacy, deskilling, environmental impact, separation from nature, artificial intelligence, loss of humanity, loss of community, loss of individualization, and effects of new technologies generally. Sabotage remains a viable strategy for some activist groups like the Earth Liberation Front, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, and Earth First!, but the destructive acts have been given new labels like ecoterrorism or monkey wrenching.

Contemporary Luddites are defined less by breaking machines than by some form of opposition to "technological progress" as linear, inevitable, objective, desirable, or otherwise independent of the society from which it emerges. For them, every technological object has its own scrutable, ideological imprint and prescriptions for its use, which result from being created by people with particular values in a particular cultural context.

Few have ever self-identified as Luddites or neo-Luddites. After the machine breakers were banished, hanged, or otherwise deterred by the harsh new laws, their true motivations were swallowed up and obscured by the grand mythology of the Industrial Revolution. To be a Luddite was to be stubbornly old fashioned or to fight a hopeless battle against powerful forces of change. In economics, the Luddite fallacy attributes to them the argument that technological advancement does not adequately make up for the jobs it eliminates. In politics, pundits have accused Green Party members of being Luddites for their objections to technology that might pose threats to the environment, animal rights, or human rights. An article in a 2000 issue of the *National Review* even wielded the term to attack Al Gore when he challenged drug companies' pricing policies. The former vice president's position had little to do with technology, but the article was able to capitalize on the connotations of Luddism by pointing to the effects that price regulation could have on biotechnology companies.

The relationships between jobs, economics, and technology remain complicated and controversial, but the immediately practical raison d'être of 19th-century workers has been displaced by two opposing senses of the name. Luddism serves simultaneously as a rhetorical device to call a particular position "anti-progress," and an ideological orientation that challenges the very association between quality of life and technological complexity. Authors like Nicholas Carr and Sherry Turkle, for example, attract controversy and derogatory accusations of Luddism when they criticize the extent to which people use services like Google and Facebook. That neither advocates destroying or even abstaining from using computers illustrates the way deceptively moderate calls for caution or temperance somehow appear radical within the binary context of being for or against "progress."

Ryan McGrady
Jeremy Packer
North Carolina State University

See Also: Military-Industrial Complex; Snowball Effect; Social Media, Adoption of; Technological Determinism; Ubicomp.

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Mamfakinch

Mamfakinch (Moroccan Citizen Journalism Collective), or "we won't give up" in Arabic, is an award-winning Moroccan citizen media organization started in 2011 as part of the youth-led February 20th movement's efforts to reform the Makzhen ruling class under King Mohammed VI's leadership. Mamfakinch provides alternative information largely unavailable in the Moroccan press to give voice to underreported issues. Whether its efforts are having any impact has not been causally linked (nor necessarily empirically researched). Nevertheless, owed to its presumed influence, in 2012, the Moroccan state allegedly infected its computer systems with spyware. According to its Facebook page, Mamfakinch is the "Moroccan Leading Citizen Media Portal." As a citizen media organization, it operates out of a social movement, rather than a journalism paradigm. Like civic journalists, its members pursue an advocacy agenda. They do not pursue a gatekeeper role guided by norms of professionalism, at least as measured by the goal of achieving objective news coverage. Instead, they aim to cover and advocate on behalf of issues that are underreported or not reported at all.

Unlike professional journalists, its staff is not professionally trained. Like other citizen or community media organizations, they construct their identity as insiders or outsiders to their advantage, arguing that they are better suited to the goals of advocacy because in the spirit of the Arab Spring, they are a part of the people. They therefore do not consider Mamfakinch a newspaper, at least not in a manner akin to what Moroccan journalism has come to symbolically represent, "a forum for oversight and distortion of key issues." Therefore, they attempt to reform the established professional media from the outside. Its members, or those formerly known as the Moroccan audience, do so as a mobilized audience. They have moved beyond the active media paradigm to now participate directly in producing media. They do so not simply by responding to journalism (e.g., by writing letters to editors), but by producing user-generated youth media.

As a social movement operating in an age of mediated politics, they report not out of an interest in the practice of journalism, but on behalf of their cause. As part of the February 20th youth-led movement, and like similar social movements operating across north Africa, the Middle East, and Gulf during the Arab Spring, they began using media to protest. In their case, February 20th leaders led protests against the Makhzen state governing authorities and elites under King Mohammed VI's leadership, mainly in pursuit of reform. Mamfakinch members regard journalism, or information more broadly, as a necessary

means to achieving such ends. Therefore, and specifically to foster democracy, freedom, and human rights, they advocate on behalf of the human right to information, rather than endorsing a specific political platform. By contrast, the right to information is not clearly enshrined in Moroccan law.

Democratization

By arguing on behalf of the right to information, Mamfakinch situates itself in relation to corollary data asserting that democracy and freedom of expression cannot exist without one another. However, Morocco is not a democracy, but an anocracy (a middling autocratic-democratic system). As part of larger reform and liberalization efforts, King Mohammed VI embarked on a process of transforming the kingdom's subjects into citizens, democratizing from above. Citizen media, on the other hand, seek to democratize from below. Unlike civic media professionals, community-based citizen organizations like Mamfakinch do not seek to provide the public with the tools necessary to become "good citizens," according to a state's predefined notion of citizenship. Rather, they seek to define citizenship on their terms and use their participation in media (and their products) to engage with and reshape the state, including by establishing and routinizing democracy.

Through the processes of such engagement, Mamfakinch in turn is trying to create not just a self-empowered citizenry, but an actual citizenry. To create this citizenry, along with systemic change, Mamfakinch provides the public with information otherwise unavailable. It does so by forging alliances with civic journalists, and specifically with members of the independent or alternative press (e.g., *Lakome* and *TelQuel*), which also provides information not otherwise available in Morocco (whether through its largely party-affiliated media system, or government-controlled sources).

In the beginning, Mamfakinch staff, comprised of volunteers who refer to themselves as activists and bloggers, began signing articles with the byline "Mamfakinch" or "Arab Spring." Presumably, they did so to prevent the Makhzen from infiltrating the organization, to maintain staff personal security, and to continue expressing their voices, in spite of statewide censorship, and self-censorship in response to presumed government arrest, monetary fines and/or other adverse reactions to critical coverage. Since then, some authors, like cofounder Hisham Almiraat, have begun personally signing their bylines.

In terms of channeling, Mamfakinch's presence includes two Web sites, two Facebook pages, a blog site, a YouTube channel, a "Mamcast" podcast, a Twitter account, a Tumblr account, an RSS feed, and an e-mail listserv. Its main Web portal emphasizes news and commentary that is self-produced or culled from the Moroccan independent media and other independent or citizen media sources. The Web site blends Arabic with French, per the normative bilingual form Darija (Moroccan colloquial) Arabic assumes, in this case, by alternating between Arabic and French articles, rather than translating the two. In addition, it includes a streamlined English section. Its other Web site, called "Mamfakinch 24/24" No Concessions, emphasizes information about Mamfakinch, the February 20th movement, and links to its more overtly activist side, including its "Open Makhzen" Facebook initiative. The latter was created in conjunction with a protest that Mamfakinch organized to help combat rampant state corruption.

Mamfakinch supports domestic causes like reform, anticorruption, transparency, democratization, and the rights of women and the Amazigh (otherwise pejoratively known as Berbers), and international causes like Palestinian statehood. Its reporting and advocacy orientation concerning these and other domestic issues are underscored by a theme that, despite changes made by the state since the Arab Spring, these are in fact only cosmetic, making Morocco appear more progressive than it is in reality. At the same time, however, its reform agenda and critique of the state operate largely without crossing Morocco's "red lines." They do not transmit (or at least write) information critical of the king, to the point of suggesting that he should be overthrown (instead focusing on his need to reform his governing apparatus), or Islam. While they include articles referencing Morocco and Saharawi competing claims over Western Sahara, these tend to respond to an officially driven agenda, are limited in their framing of relevant actors and viewpoints and stop short of practicing peace journalism to advocate compromise on this intractable conflict.

Impact?

Whether Mamfakinch has had any impact with respect to (1) empowering and transforming its members into citizens through the process of learning to create and manage its volunteer organization, (2) (re-)setting mainstream media agendas and frames to open new spaces for public discourse, (3) influencing Moroccan elite and popular opinions, and (4) impacting policy processes to bring about systemic change, is unclear. Mamfakinch received the 2012 joint Google and Global Voices Breaking Borders Award. However, whether winning that award or achieving other ends has empowered its volunteers, and as part of that, what their chosen organizational structure has come to assume, has not been studied to make any empirical statements to any ends. Moreover, while members of the independent press follow them on Twitter, to what extent such uses, or Mamfakinch's overall practices have influenced discourse and in turn change, is neither clear. As Mamfakinch has noted, despite the cosmetic constitutional revision, real change in Morocco following the Arab Spring has not yet been achieved.

As is the case with any media source, especially those that have received critical acclaim, fear of Mamfakinch's impact, rather than its real impact, has created concern. Likewise, its exposure demonstrates that supposed technologies of freedom, in this case new digital networking tools, can be used by those seeking to further social justice just as easily as they can by those seeking to repress freedom of expression. To that end, hackers attacked Mamfakinch's computers on July 13, 2012.

According to its staff and as confirmed by the San Francisco–based Electronic Frontier Foundation, the organization received a message, which when opened, loaded eavesdropping spyware onto its computers. According to research conducted by Marquis-Boire at the University of Toronto's Citizen Lab, the downloaded remote control systems' Trojan malware was manufactured by the Italian-based Hacking Team. Hacking Team reports that they supply their malware to government law enforcement and intelligence agencies to investigate crime. However, as in other cases reported by political activists (whether or not these activists were arguably defined as legitimate criminals or terror operatives), commercial-grade tracking and monitoring malware have nevertheless been used by governments to investigate political activity. Meanwhile, in this case, Marquis-Boire tracked the originating source of Hacking Team's malware to the Moroccan capital of Rabat.

Thus, given that Hacking Team only sells to governments, and that the Moroccan state critiques and harasses citizen activists and journalists, according to many scholars and activists, it is likely that the government made use of this software not to safeguard national security, but rather to hamper individual liberties. Namely, it hampered Mamfakinch's members' right to freely report about and attempt to reform the existing anocratic system. Such allegations in turn are a concern to those invested in social media practice and the potential impact that such practices might have on reforming and redefining future state-based citizenship rights globally.

Yael Warshel
University of California, Los Angeles

See Also: Arab Spring; Citizen Journalism; Middle East; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security; Youth Engagement.

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Mashable

Mashable is an online news portal for digital developments and social media. It was founded in 2005 by Pete Cashmore as a blog when he was only 19 years old. The Web site attracted 20 million unique visitors per year as of November 2012. The main headquarters for the company is located in New York City, and an additional office is located in San Francisco. Mashable estimates that over 60 articles are tweeted per minute, and the writers cover such topics as social media advances and trends and how-to articles focused on various topics.

Designers also make sense of data through image-heavy infographics. The Web site showcases new tech and review gadgets, apps, and software. In addition, Mashable publishes business news from large tech companies to start-ups, as well as lifestyle and entertainment stories related to social media and technology. It is a multimedia mix of news with videos, blogs, news stories, and infographics. A new feature, Mashable Follow, is the site's content feed that lets users pick topics. In addition, Mashable Follow enables users to discover and follow their favorite topics, share stories with ease, follow social media friends and others who share their interests, customize their news feeds, and earn badges. These badges range from the "double rainbow," which focuses on connecting with two networks to "laughing baby," which highlights that a user follows five topics. Additional badges include hamster dance, early adopter, grade school, honey badger, I like turtles, I'ma let you finish, LOL cat, sad Keanu, and sneezing panda.

The Mashable Web site features the following links: top stories, trending topics, people, jobs, and events. In addition to the aforementioned links, Mashable categorizes news stories into the following types: social media, tech, business, lifestyle, watercooler, entertainment, U.S. and world, and videos. The following companies are global syndication partners: ABC News, CNN, Metro, and Yahoo!. Mashable is focused on maintaining a specific voice on the Web with their social media users. Through Cashmore's vision, Mashable maintains a limited scope to perpetuate creativity. Cashmore is focused on the quality of social media content, instead of merely the quantity.

In late 2012, Mashable announced a redesign of its Web site. This redesign incorporated cutting-edge technology and innovative technological designs to make the Web site more appealing in the social media atmosphere. A predictive engine called Mashable Velocity identifies content that is projected to go viral. To appeal to those who may use a variety of platforms (including cell phones, tablets, and computers), Mashable utilizes an adaptive and responsive design.

In 2012, Mashable played a sizable part in the U.S. presidential election, publishing political articles and videos on a daily basis. During the 2012 presidential campaign season, Mashable created a report titled "Politics Transformed: The High Tech Battle for Your Vote." This report compiled information resulting from 13 different articles (resulting in 20,000 words) focused on politics from a digital point of view. Two of the articles in this series were titled "How Close Are We to Internet Voting," and "How Social Media Can Safeguard Your Vote." During this campaign season, Mashable proved its importance in digital campaign marketing, voter turnout efforts, and the importance of mobile devices in political campaigns. Through this campaign report Web site, users can read each article and send a tweet about it, "like" the article on Facebook, recommend the article on Google+, or share the article on LinkedIn.

In addition to political campaigns in the United States, Mashable also covers political campaigns around the world. Mashable also published the 13 virtual articles in its political report in an eBook of the same name. Users who purchase this eBook automatically gain access to four exclusive interviews. These interviews range from Adam Sharp (Twitter's senior manager of government, news, and social innovation) to Dana Chisnell (ballot design and usability expert).

Each year, Mashable, the 92nd Street Y, the United Nations (UN) Foundation, Ericsson, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the UN Development Programme host a Social Good Summit. Through this three-day event, more than 300 attendees from various countries participate in dialogues focused on problem solving through social media and mobile technologies. This conference approaches social media and social good from a broader context: mobile technologies, spirituality, women and economic empowerment, citizen journalism, global health, and kindness. The event enables attendees and nonattendees to take part in the action by creating a Mashable Meetup called "Take Action." Speakers for the event range from Kathy Calvin (ceo of the UN Foundation) and Helen Clark (administrator of the UN Development Programme) to Larry Irving (cofounder of the Mobile Alliance for Global Good) to Todd Park (chief technology officer of the United States).

Jennifer Edwards
Yvonne Mulhern
Credence Baker
Sarah Maben
Tarleton State University

See Also: Digerati; Earned Media; HootSuite.com; *Huffington Post*; News Media; Social Good Summit; *Social Media Week*.

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McCarthy, Kevin

Kevin McCarthy is a Republican and the majority whip in the U.S. House of Representatives. He has represented the 22nd District of California, but now represents the 23rd District. Kevin Owen McCarthy was born in Bakersfield, California, on January 26, 1965, the fourth generation of his family to be born in Kern County. When McCarthy was 19, he opened a deli called Kevin O's in order to achieve his goal of attending California State University in Bakersfield, from which he earned a B.S. in marketing in 1989. In 1994, he earned an M.B.A. degree. While in college, McCarthy became the chairman of the California Young Republicans. He was later chosen chairman of the National Young Republicans organization (1999–2001). After completing his advanced degree, McCarthy ran several small businesses. McCarthy still makes his home in Bakersfield, the ninth-largest city in California. In 1992 McCarthy married Judy Wages, and they have two children. He identifies himself as a Baptist and is of Irish ancestry.

Political Career

Beginning in the late 1980s McCarthy served as the district director for U.S. Congressman Bill Thompson. He remained in the post until 2002, when he was elected to the California State Assembly to represent the 32nd Assembly District. In 2002, Arnold Schwarzenegger also won the election for governor following the recall election that forced Governor Gray Davis from office. McCarthy served on the transition team, and later worked closely with Schwarzenegger. One project was to redraw all electoral districts so that neither Democrats nor Republicans had a political margin greater than 7 percent among registered voters.

McCarthy served only two terms, or a total of four years, in the California Assembly. When Bill Thompson announced his retirement in 2006, after 28 years in the House representing California's 22nd District, it was just four days before the candidacy filing deadline. This gave possible opponents very little time to organize and launch a campaign. Thompson endorsed Kevin McCarthy for the seat he was vacating in Congress after McCarthy announced that he was entering the race. McCarthy easily defeated the opposition in the Republican primary, and then faced Sharon Beery, the Democrat Party nominee.

Beery was a newcomer to an election. She had been a Kucinich for President organizer in the central coastal region of California. She had been an educator, teaching for 22 years, and also a businesswoman. She won the endorsement of the California State Democratic Party, the California Democratic Council, and the personal endorsement of State Senator Dean Flores. She also gained the endorsement of ImpeachPAC, a federal PAC that funded candidates for Congress who would seek the impeachment of President George W. Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, and others. Beery advocated bringing American troops home from Iraq immediately. She wanted to institute universal health care for all Americans and to stop the endless testing in the No Child Left Behind law. To promote her issues, she used a Web site that explained her positions on the issues in several languages. Her campaign also used Twitter, Facebook, Linkedin, and e-mails.

McCarthy won with 70.7 percent of the vote to Sharon Beery's 29.3 percent. The victory was impressive because the election of 2006 was very favorable to Democrats. In the election of 2008 that swept Barack Obama into the White House, McCarthy had no opposition. In the 2010 election, he received 98.8 percent of the vote, with the remainder going to a write-in candidate.

Majority Whip and "WhipCast"

In 2011, McCarthy was chosen the majority whip by his Republican colleagues. The whip is a party official who is responsible for ensuring that the party rank and file will vote as the party leadership

wishes. The term comes from fox hunting, in which the individual who whips the dogs back into the pack to keep them in the hunt is known as a "whipper in." The whip will get to know the members of the party, offering inducements and threatening punishments to ensure particular votes. The most important role is to see that members are in attendance on important votes.

In 2012, the official majority whip Web site began advertising a new social media app called WhipCast. It connects members of Congress, staff, and the public with new information and real-time updates on current affairs in Congress. The WhipCast mobile app is available for Blackberry, iPhone and Droid phones. The majority whip Web site also features a "newsroom," blog, and WhipCast connections.

2012 Election

The election of 2012 presented new and serious challenges for McCarthy because it was the first election in which California used its new Top Two Candidates Open Primary Act. The law forces all candidates to run in one blanket primary. The two top vote-getters then run in the general election in November. The law was the result of a California proposition. The claim of the supporters was that it would produce a more centrist result, with more moderates winning. More voters did participate, but the effect was to produce a super majority of Democrats in the California State Assembly. It also increased campaign spending, and with it the power of special interests. In seven of the congressional districts, there were Democrats battling each other after the primary in the general election.

Following the 2010 census, McCarthy's district had been realigned when it was reapportioned. The realignment caused him to be displaced from the 22nd District. He then ran in the 23rd District to represent California in the House of Representatives. He replaced incumbent Lois Capps, who had been elected in 1998 in a special election on March 10, 1998, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of her husband, Congressman Walter Capps. She was displaced by the redistricting from the 23rd District to the 24th District, which she won. McCarthy remained the incumbent in the 22nd District until January 3, 2013, when he was sworn in as the representative for the 23rd District.

Committee and Other Memberships

McCarthy is a member of the National Council for a New America, which formed in 2009. The Council is composed of Republican Party members who are seeking to change the negative image of the party. They believe that Democrats have been successful in branding the Republicans as the party of "no." The group was created by Eric Cantor and other party leaders. It uses social media formats such as YouTube in order to spread its message.

In the 112th Congress, McCarthy served on the House Committee on Financial Services. He is a member of two subcommittees: the Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance, and Government-Sponsored Enterprises and the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit. In the 110th and 111th Congresses he also served on the House Committee on House Administration. The committee and the subcommittees use a variety of social media, including RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and live Web casts.

Other Social Media Use

Congressman McCarthy's official Web site uses links to videos. It also has links to Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Flickr. There are links to a "Help Center," "Biography," "Media," the "District," and other links including "Share." There is an area in which visitors can sign up to get "Washington Updates." Some of the statements can be downloaded. There is also a link that takes the viewer on a virtual tour of Washington, D.C.

McCarthy's official congressional Web page also has a reading list, including such current works as *The Forgotten Man: A New History of the Great Depression*, *Lincoln on Leadership: Executive Strategies for Tough Times,* and *presidential Courage: Brave Leaders and How They Changed America 1789–1989*. The page can be shared via Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn, Digg, Tumblr, Reddit, and StumbleUpon, and a large number of other social media links from Blogger to Evernote and Myspace.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: Cantor, Eric; Cornyn, John; Hoyer, Steny; McConnell, Mitch; Pelosi, Nancy.

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McCaskill, Claire

In her recent re-election campaign, Missouri Senator Claire McCaskill was frequently stuck between a rock and a hard place. As a moderate Democrat in a state where the Tea Party has a rather strong following, McCaskill needed to separate herself from the policies of President Barack Obama. At the same time, as a Democratic Senator in a red-leaning state, Obama was likely to frequently call on her to attend rallies with him and aid in his fundraising efforts. As the Republican primary season raged on (with multiple strong Republicans in the Missouri race), McCaskill began setting her sights on U.S. Representative Todd Akin. She identified him as the most beatable of her potential opponents, and ran ads discussing Akin's true conservative values. Then Akin won—and opened his mouth.

When asked in a radio interview if women who are raped should have the option of abortion, Akin replied that,

> Well you know, people always want to try to make that as one of those things, well how do you, how do you slice this particularly tough sort of ethical question. First of all, from what I understand from doctors, that's really rare. If it's a legitimate rape, the female body has ways to try to shut that whole thing down. But let's assume that maybe that didn't work or something. I think there should be some punishment, but the punishment ought to be on the rapist and not attacking the child.

The Akin campaign went south shortly thereafter, and permitted McCaskill—who had been largely assumed to be one of the most vulnerable incumbents in 2012—to claim a 15 point victory and a second six-year term. Throughout the campaign, McCaskill remained one of the most prolific utilizers of social media in Congress.

McCaskill has served six years in the U.S. Senate as a Democrat, and has been senior senator for the state since 2010. She defeated incumbent Jim Talent during Obama's presidential election. Prior to the Senate, she was a member of the Missouri House and Jackson County Prosecutor before serving two terms as state auditor. In 2004, she ran a failed bid for the governorship. An early adopter, McCaskill has been recognized as one of Congress's most effective social media users. What makes her social media presence so appealing is her regular inclusion of everyday items into her messages; she does not simply use new technologies to disseminate official messages.

Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism rated McCaskill as one of the four most effective users of social media in Congress. Experienced with both Twitter and Facebook, McCaskill regularly talks about items of common interest, along with serious political matters. Perhaps most impressively, the senator is personally responsible for all of her messages, and personally responds to posts and tweets. Staff do not have access. When thinking about the more serious realm, McCaskill writes in a way that is relatable for average Americans and regularly portrays her as any other human being. She sent

Senator Claire McCaskill shakes hands with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin E. Dempsey on April 17, 2013, at the Senate Hart Office Building in Washington, D.C. Senator McCaskill is one of the more effective members of Congress on social media; she was named one of the Top 10 Notable People on Twitter by Time *magazine.*

this tweet before a lengthy debt ceiling session: "Taking a blanket and pillow to the Capitol. #neveragoodsign."

Researchers have taken to using McCaskill as an example of what good social media politicians look like. Yet, McCaskill on Twitter is quite different than the personality she presents on Facebook. On Twitter, McCaskill is informal, down-to-earth, and even folksy; on Facebook, she is policy driven and formal. This appears to relate to her personal preference in platform. McCaskill, from the beginning, has always seemed to prefer Twitter. She is one of *Time* magazine's Top 10 Notable People on Twitter, and has successfully intermixed politics and personality in the character limit. She uses it as a personal outlet, rather than a campaign tool. As a result, when she mentions politics, she's seen as genuine. On Facebook, however, she is by no means colloquial or impactful. She is formal and professional. As a result, many have overtly wondered how she managed to master one vehicle while struggling so heavily with another.

McCaskill's social media prowess is statistically supported. OhMyGov rates McCaskill 37th in its social media power ranking. This ranking is calculated using her 88,000 Twitter followers, 14,000 Facebook fans, 3,500 tweets, and 1,300 mentions per week. With a Klout score of 81, average citizens are likely to be exposed to McCaskill's words. However, it is how she uses social media that allows her to be seen as successful. McCaskill's most memorable utilization of Twitter was in May 2011. It did not involve politics, policy, or even the country. Instead, it involved her weight. McCaskill tweeted that: "Maybe talking about it publicly will keep me on track as I try to be more disciplined. Off to

the gym." After meeting her goal, she tweeted the news. Hundreds of individuals offered encouragement throughout the process.

While she did not attract them for her politics, she has connected with them, meaning that they are significantly more likely to read whatever she chooses to send out politically. Rather than forcing politics on people, McCaskill has successfully shown how social media can be used to bridge relationships, which opens doors for political conversations later on.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Facebook; Pro-Choice and Pro-Life; Tea Party Movement; Twitter.

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McConnell, Mitch

Mitch McConnell was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1984 as a Republican from the Commonwealth of Kentucky. In 2006, he became the minority leader of the U.S. Senate, and has served continuously in that role through the 113th Congress. Like most Senate leaders, McConnell is considered highly partisan; his comment that the single most important thing for Senate Republicans to achieve during President Barack Obama's first term would be to ensure that Obama served only one term was largely seen as a polarizing comment. McConnell is a strong conservative, but is not a Tea Party favorite, and periodically casts votes that are in conflict with other conservatives. He is an effective fundraiser for himself and his party, and is an opponent of most campaign finance reform (opposing McCain-Feingold, for example).

McConnell's first campaign for the Senate, against incumbent Walter "Dee" Huddleston (D-KY), was hard fought and narrowly successful. That campaign exemplified the power of traditional media as McConnell's "Bloodhounds" commercials were seen as effective attack ads: they made hard-hitting political points in a humorous way. In one commercial, bloodhounds are tracking Huddleston, who appears not to be on the job, but rather picking up checks from special interest groups in exotic locations. In another, Huddleston is portrayed as running away from his record before being treed by the bloodhounds.

Social Media Use

As the media world has changed, though, McConnell has changed with it. McConnell has a presence on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. He also has a traditional Web site, and uses e-mail to send regular newsletters to those who subscribe. As the minority leader, he also plays a role in coordinating messaging among Republicans.

McConnell's official Senate Web site is attractive and traditional. It has a general red, white, and blue color scheme with a bright red cardinal, the Kentucky state bird, in the upper left-hand corner, and McConnell's picture prominently displayed in the center. Links are also prominently featured to provide access to a variety of constituent services, including flag requests, help for those visiting Washington, D.C., and federal casework.

Links on McConnell's Web site will also take one to his comments on select issues, biographical information, and a page that details the Republican Senate leadership. There are also links that will take visitors to audio, video, and photo content.

One prominent difference between McConnell's Web site and that of most senators is that his page highlights some leadership issues. In late 2012, for example, McConnell included comments on Majority Leader Harry Reid's (D-NV) plan to change the filibuster rule, and a call on President Obama to provide leadership regarding the impending "fiscal cliff."

The Web site, while reflecting Republican talking points, is primarily aimed at constituents, and promotes the roles of McConnell as a representative of the citizens of Kentucky and a vote-seeker from those constituents.

McConnell was not quick to take up Facebook. He joined Facebook in June 2010, and his Facebook page uses a standard layout to attract modest traffic and nearly 10,000 "likes." If one is keeping score, Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) has almost four times as many likes. McConnell's Facebook page has content similar to his official Senate Web page—some discussion of Senate leadership and partisan issues, as well as some policy comments—but it also has content that is more casual and reflects his home state interests. Also different is that it lacks the systematic attempt to reach out to constituents with offers to provide services (e.g., providing flags flown over the Capitol Building, or help with federal agencies).

What is also distinctive about McConnell's Facebook page is the large number of negative comments on the page. Those comments are not notably different from that of other congressional leaders, but reflect the terrain that political leaders (and anyone else) must navigate when using social media, particularly Facebook. When negative comments are made, do you allow them to stand? Removing them subjects the page holder to cries of censorship, and seems to undermine the purpose of the page to engage in social or political interactions with others, in this case the public. Leaving negative comments posted, though, can make a negative impression. While there is no articulated policy on McConnell's Facebook page regarding what content is left and what is removed (in contrast to Reid, who articulates his policy in an obvious way), it appears that McConnell allows the bulk of negative comments to remain posted.

McConnell created his YouTube channel in January 2009. He uploads on a reasonably regular basis, having about 400 videos online at the beginning of 2013. At that same time, he had about 850 subscribers, and the videos had about 300,000 views. The vast majority of the videos are Senate floor comments made by McConnell, but there are also a small number of interviews with traditional news media posted. There is also a smaller number of other videos dealing with miscellaneous events, such as comments made during a ceremony bestowing a Congressional Gold Medal to Burmese opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

McConnell's Twitter account is labeled as run by his press office; he has no evident personal account from which he personally tweets. As of the start of 2013, McConnell's office had tweeted about 1,600 times, with about 6,700 followers. In comparison, Reid had about the same number of tweets, but about 74,000 followers. Reid tends to comment on issues of the day, whereas McConnell has been more likely to comment on issues of interest to his state, such as where he is appearing and his support of the University of Louisville joining the Atlantic Coast Conference. His issue content seems to be increasing over time.

McConnell also e-mails a newsletter every two weeks to those who are on his mailing list. The newsletter generally lacks issue content, and tends to talk about personal appearances in the Commonwealth of Kentucky or recent nonpolitical events. The newsletters have links to his official Senate Web site, as well as to his Facebook and YouTube pages and his Twitter account.

Additionally, McConnell has both an independent Web site and a separate Twitter account for his campaign. His campaign site is more political, and has links to enable one to easily contribute money or to volunteer. His campaign Twitter account had about 300 tweets and 2,000 followers recorded at the beginning of 2013.

Overall, McConnell has a presence across social media, but is not a heavy user, and his use seems to be narrow in purpose. They do not form what seems to be a primary means of waging political battle. Maybe that limited use can be attributed to the fact that as minority leader of the Senate, he has plenty of other venues. It should not be surprising that the most content-heavy medium he uses is YouTube, where he routinely uploads floor comments. Since he is a regular presence on the Senate floor, he has many opportunities to do so.

Social Media and the Fiscal Cliff Issue

It is not clear that McConnell differentiates among the various social media venues. An analysis of his social media activity on the two big issues following the 2012 elections may provide

some insight. One issue was how Congress and the president would deal with what was labeled the "fiscal cliff," a key policy issue, and the other was the threat by Majority Leader Reid to change the filibuster rule, a key institutional issue critical to McConnell's role as minority leader.

The so-called fiscal cliff issue was a result of the inability of Congress to deal with the large federal deficit in any systematic manner. In 2011, Congress struggled to pass legislation to extend the debt ceiling. As part of the efforts to deal with that issue, as well as the large deficits, Congress passed and the president signed the Budget Control Act of 2011. The act created what was called the Super Committee, a joint select committee, with the mandate to propose a plan that would reduce the deficit by $1.2 trillion over 10 years. If it failed to do so, a number of fiscal actions would automatically take place beginning in 2013. The failure of the committee to develop an acceptable plan left the nation facing consequences virtually no one saw as desirable. Among the actions that were to take effect were the expiration of the Bush tax cuts and cuts in a wide range of domestic and defense spending programs. Congress and the president, then, spent the time between the election of 2012 and the start of 2013 trying to develop an alternative.

Immediately after the election, President Obama claimed that his victory meant that he had a mandate for his plan. However, shortly after the election, McConnell posted on his various social media a link to a *Wall Street Journal* story where he said that he and other Republicans thought that they had a mandate to not raise taxes. Battle lines were drawn, and after the president's success with various social media, it would be reasonable to expect that the social media would play a role in this debate. Indeed, the White House got a lot of play out of asking Americans to tweet what they would do with the $2,000 they would not lose if Congress immediately extended tax cuts for everyone but the wealthy. McConnell's use of social media, though, was minimal and uncreative by comparison.

Social Media and the Filibuster Issue

The filibuster issue arose when, immediately after the 2012 election, Majority Leader Reid indicated that he was willing to use the "nuclear option" to change the filibuster rule in the U.S. Senate. Many experts believe that when the Senate adopts its rules on the first day of a new session, the change could be made by a simple majority vote. While changing the rule is controversial and support often depends on whether one is in the majority or the minority, many people see the Senate as too cumbersome on important matters, and that some change would be beneficial to the ability of the Senate to conduct its business. Whether changing the time-honored tradition of the filibuster would be a positive step in that direction and whether the rights of the minority could be preserved was the debate.

In the end, the outcome of both issues depend on the votes of the nation's elected officials, but there were important public components to both discussions, and the ability to frame the way the issues would be perceived was important.

Analysis of McConnell's Senate Web site, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter activity shows that both issues were clearly on McConnell's mind. He was frequently quoted in the traditional media on those issues, and was actively engaged in discussions on both. It was also clear that social media were not central to his public approach to these issues. The general pattern McConnell followed when he wanted to publicly share something was to make a statement on the Senate floor, issue a traditional press release of those comments, and then post either the video or the press release to his various social media. For example, on November 29, 2012, McConnell issued a press release summarizing his floor comments, called "Raising Tax Rates During Job Crisis is 'Last Thing We Want to Do.'" Video of those floor comments were put on his YouTube page, and the press release was also put on McConnell's official Web site, his Facebook page, and tweeted. He also broke with his normal pattern and posted the same material in his e-mailed newsletter.

McConnell made no effort to target the content of his comments on either issue by modifying the presentation of his views, either by style or substance. There is no evidence that he differentiates among issues or his audiences, but rather sees them through the same eyes. He seems to use these social media because they are there and available, but they do not seem to serve any strategic purpose.

Conclusion

In sum, McConnell has a presence across the most popular social media, but he is not a major participant. As a summary of his social media presence, McConnell's Klout score is a modest 45. As comparisons, Majority Leader Reid's is 53, and Senator Al Franken (D-MN) has a score of 82. McConnell's use of social media seems to arise from the necessity of using them, rather than as central to any political strategy. There is never any sense that McConnell is personally involved in any messaging. In fact, it seems that the use of the social media is driven by McConnell's focus on traditional media. Nor is there anything particularly creative about his use. He certainly has never done a Reddit "Ask Me Anything." As a Senate leader, he has good access to the traditional media, and has been more likely to rely on them rather than to develop an independent social media strategy.

Gary Copeland
University of Oklahoma

See Also: Boehner, John; Coburn, Tom; Cornyn, John; DeMint, Jim; Fiscal Cliff Crisis; Pelosi, Nancy.

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McCotter, Thaddeus

Republican Thaddeus McCotter served as the Representative from Michigan's 11th Congressional District to the U.S. House of Representatives from 2003 until July 2012, when he abruptly retired from Congress following a major scandal involving his staff.

Thaddeus "Thad" George McCotter was born August 22, 1965, in Detroit, Michigan. His father, a public school teacher, died when he was just 13 years old. He attended Detroit Catholic Central High School, graduating in 1983. He then graduated summa cum laude from the University of Detroit in 1987, with a B.A. In 1990, he graduated from the University of Detroit with a J.D. McCotter entered private law practice after graduation from law school. His wife, Rita Michel McCotter, is a practicing nurse. They have three children and live in Lavonia, Michigan. The family is Roman Catholic.

Political Career

In 1992 McCotter was elected to the Wayne County Commission, which is responsible for administering the county government and its local services. He served on the commission until 1998. During his service, he sought to change the county charter to protect taxpayers. His goal was to require new taxes be allowed only with an approval of two-thirds of the commissioners and 60 percent of the voters. In 1998, McCotter won election to the Michigan State Senate. He served there for four years. Following the 2000 census, he helped to redraw the legislative districts in Michigan, including the 11th Congressional District.

McCotter won the Michigan 11th Congressional District seat to the House of Representatives. The district covers Detroit's northwest suburbs and includes Livonia, Westland, and Novi. He entered office in 2003, and served until July 6, 2012, when he resigned.

Traditional Media

McCotter's appearances in traditional media include guest spots on a variety of television and radio shows. He was a regular on the television show *Red Eye with Greg Gutfeld*, and radio talk show host and comic Dennis Miller hosted him on his show numerous times.

McCotter authored the book *Seize Freedom!: American Truths and Renewal in a Chaotic Age,* which was published by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute. He also wrote for the *American Spectator,* the *Detroit News, Human Events*, and Andrew Breitbart's site *Big Hollywood*, as well as many other publications and partisan Web sites.

Committees and Subcommittees

In Congress, McCotter was assigned to the House Committee on Financial Services. He was a member of three of its subcommittees: the Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance, and Government-Sponsored Enterprises; the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit; and the Subcommittee on International Monetary Policy and Trade.

The Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance, and Government-Sponsored Enterprises in the 112th Congress was focused on the financial difficulties of the federal lending agencies, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, which were still embroiled in the subprime lending crisis. More specifically, the goal of the Republicans, including McCotter while he served in 2012, was to deal with bailouts for troubled federal agencies. All three subcommittees use social media extensively. Besides videos, e-mail, and blogs they also use Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and live Web casts.

In addition, there is a link on the official Committee on Financial Services Web site to a "Minority Site," which is hosted by the Democrats. Their site has numerous links, but it does not have as many social media features as the site for the majority. The most important social media link is the RSS link. RSS allows readers such as Google Reader or Bloglines to be used to display feeds from multiple Web sites.

Caucuses

Caucuses to which McCotter belonged included the Congressional COPD Caucus, the House Sovereignty Caucus (cofounder), The International Conservation Caucus, and the Sportsmen's Caucus. The Congressional COPD Caucus is focused on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). The Caucus is linked with the U.S. COPD Coalition. The Coalition uses Facebook and is linked to Drive4COPD, which uses a number of social media.

The House Sovereignty Caucus was founded by McCotter, along with another member of Congress. Their goal was to inhibit some in the government from engaging in agreements with foreign powers that would reduce the sovereignty of the United States. The Caucus Web site uses a number of social media links.

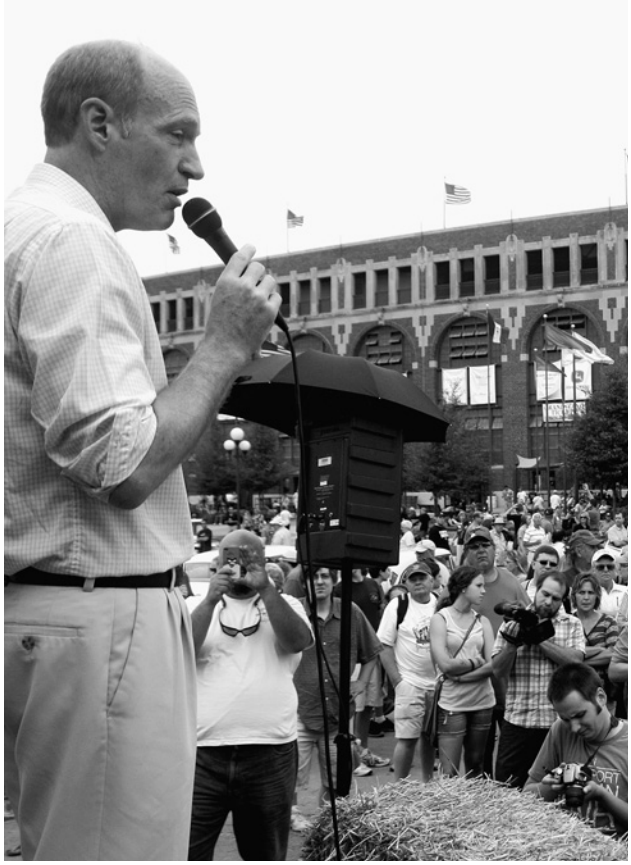
The International Conservation Caucus is composed of members of Congress who believe that the United States should promote conservation of natural resources. The mission of the Caucus is to provide strong American leadership in order to conserve biologically rich and diverse places around the world. The caucus uses hot links on its site, but does not use any social media.

With over 300 members from both the House and the Senate, the bipartisan Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC) is one of the largest and most effective caucuses in the Congress. Its members are from most of the 50 states. The CSC has a site with links to commercial sporting outfitters such as Cabela's. The CSC can be followed on Twitter and Facebook.

McCotter was also a member of the Republican Main Street Partnership, which is considered a moderate group. It uses Facebook, Twitter, and other media. He was also a member of the Republican Study Committee, which is a conservative group. It uses RSS, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

Campaigns and Elections

In the 2004 elections, McCotter defeated Democrat Phillip S. Truran from Novi, Michigan. Truran was president of the Communications Workers of America Local 4013. He had won the Democrat Party Primary with 68.9 percent of the vote, defeating Mario Fundarski. In the 2006 election McCotter did not have any Republican opposition to face in the primary. In the general election, he faced Democrat Tony Trupiano. A progressive radio talk show host from Dearborn Heights,



Thaddeus McCotter speaking at the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines, Iowa, on August 12, 2011. He lost the Ames Straw Poll, held the next day, garnering only 0.2 percent of the vote.

Trupiano was not the challenger. John Tatar was the Libertarian Party nominee, and Charles Tackett was the U.S. Taxpayers Party nominee. The candidates met for debate at a League of Women Voters forum in the middle of October. McCotter won the election with 55 percent of the vote.

The election of 2006 was costly for the Republicans; however, McCotter was confident that he would win his re-election. He made a $250,000 contribution to the National Republican Congressional Committee. After the elections, with many losses for the Republicans across the country, they found that they were the minority party in the House of Representatives. McCotter was elected chairman of the Republican House Policy Committee. The Policy Committee is the principal forum for Republicans to develop forward-looking and principled policy solutions. Its Web site makes extensive use of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, RSS, and YouTube. Election as chairman made McCotter a top-ranking House Republican. It was a position sought by Congressman Darrell Issa of southern California.

In the election of 2008, the Democrat challenger was Joseph Larkin. He also had to defeat the Green Party candidate Erik Shelley and the Libertarian Party candidate John Tatar. He had defeated Tatar in the 2006 election. McCotter received 51 percent of the vote, which was much better than the opposition's fragmented voting returns.

In the election of 2010, Natalie Mosher, a Democrat, was McCotter's opponent. She was a nonprofit organization management consultant and contractor. She was the first woman to run for Congress in the 11th District. Her campaign made extensive use of Twitter. It also used ActBlue, LinkedIn, and GoDaddy.com. McCotter defeated her with 59 percent of the vote to her 39 percent.

In May 2011, McCotter made a run for the Republican nomination for the 2012 presidential election. A surrogate paid the $18,000 fee to allow him to enter the Ames Straw Poll auction in Iowa. On July 2, he announced his presidential candidacy in Whitmore Lake, Michigan, at a rock music festival.

From the beginning of his campaign, McCotter was unable to mount significant interest in his campaign because of his lack of name recognition. When the Ames Straw Poll was held in August 2011, he came in last, with less than 1 percent of the vote. Ending his campaign for the presidential nomination on September 22, 2011, he said that his candidacy had been hurt by his exclusion from the presidential debates and media inattention.

Social Media Use

McCotter made extensive use of social media in order to proclaim a conservative message on issues important to conservatives. He unwaveringly articulated conservative views in every available medium via Facebook, Twitter, and Red Eye, as well as traditional media such as Fox News. His 2012 campaign Web site had links to Digg, Facebook, StumbleUpon, Reddit, Twitter, LinkedIn, Newsvine, Pinterest, Google+, and more.

2012 Scandal

On May 25, 2012, while McCotter was on a congressional trip to Taiwan, Michigan Secretary of

State Ruth Johnson announced that he had failed to qualify for the Republican primary to be held on August 7. It was the first time that a sitting member of Congress had not qualified for his party's primary since the 1940s.

In Michigan, a candidate for a congressional seat has to submit a petition with at least 1,000 signatures of voters in order to qualify for their party primary. McCotter's 11th District office staff had failed him. They had not gathered the necessary signatures, so they had forged or duplicated those that were needed. This left McCotter with the option of running as a write-in candidate in the primary. As the scandal unfolded, four of McCotter's district office aides were arrested and charged with multiple counts of voter fraud. Subsequent research found fraudulent names on qualifying petitions for earlier elections.

On June 2, 2012, McCotter announced that he was not going to seek re-election, but would complete his term of office. Then, on July 6, he abruptly announced his resignation from office and withdrew to private life.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: Bachmann, Michele; Campaigns, Congressional (2000); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, 2012.

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Media and Communication Policy

Communication policies are developed by the government to achieve a specific goal in media industries. They are the result of interactions between government and industry, and reflect the development of media technologies. As new forms of media have developed throughout history, so have the ways in which media are regulated.

Historian of American media Christopher Sterling suggests that American communications policy includes private sector ownership and operation, and public sector regulation and control. He proposes that the basic foundation for communications policy in the United States entails two parts of the U.S. Constitution: Article 1 Section 8 (1789), which gives Congress the power "to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States"; and the First Amendment (1791), which defined government control over communication content (freedom of speech or of the press). These areas of the Constitution have laid the foundation for media policy in the United States by defining government regulatory structure over technology and communication content.

Media Policy Phases

Communication policies in the United States can be defined by three phases. The first phase of media policy was developed to regulate emerging media technologies, such as the telegraph, telephony, and wireless communications. Sterling suggests that initial legislation on telecommunications was concerned with "maritime applications of wireless." These provisions established the requirement for federal licenses to access the spectrum. With little regulation, media industries developed to form a private monopoly. The government's response to this activity was to support communication policies that enforced an antitrust environment and advance industry competition and profitability. As industries developed, emerging legislation and regulation of the radio during the 1920s and 1930s helped to usher in a new form of control where the public's interest was prioritized over commercial interests (e.g., the Radio Act of 1912 and the Communications Act of 1934).

The second phase of media policy was characterized by sociopolitical concerns, and was influenced by postwar social reform. Concerns over freedom of the press, diversity of voices, providing trustworthy information, and quality programming were all supported by government regulation. The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) made attempts to regulate these concerns by reminding broadcasters of their commitment to serving the public (e.g., the 1946 FCC Blue Book).

Sterling suggests that from 1956 to 1969 the federal courts and the FCC made a number of amendments that impacted these issues, such as common carrier regulation. These series of decisions led to the separation of monopoly-regulated services that hindered competitive competition. Politics of the 1980s in conjunction to such rulings later prompted deregulation during the 1990s. The domination of centralized media industries, fragmented audiences, and new communication technologies, which defined the media policy landscape of the 1980s and 1990s, have led to emerging concerns for new communications policy.

The new communications policy phase is defined by changing social, political, and economic advances in American society and abroad. Technological advances have led the government and industry to be concerned with new international markets and economic interests. Globalization has impacted media policy in that it has opened the boundaries to share and receive media in different ways. Additionally, the convergence of media has also impacted the ways in which policy has been defined. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 reflects the growing concern to foster competition by deregulating the industry.

Sterling suggests that the government and industry now face new concerns with the development of new media technologies. The policy concerns in essence remain the same to the extent to which the government is to ensure the quality of services in privately owned and operating digital platforms. The Internet and social media have developed in the absence of any regulatory framework; however, emerging concerns over national security, confidentiality, and copyright infringement have sparked debates about if and how to regulate the Internet and social media.

The Internet and Social Media

Countries around the world have been faced with the challenge of creating communication policies to regulate the ways in which the Internet and social media are being applied for collaborative and personal use. Government regulation of the Internet has dealt with concerns over access to information, rights of copyright holders, pornography, privacy, cybercrime, piracy, and illegal downloading, among others. The FCC and Congress are under pressure to address these issues and other concerns that impact the ways in which content is used and shared over the Internet (e.g., the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act [DMCA]).

Recently, there has been an increased effort to control online activity. The U.S. House of Representatives has introduced two bills, the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and the accompanying legislation in the Senate, Preventing Real Online Threats to Economic Creativity and Theft of Intellectual Property Act (PIPA). The intent of both legislations is to combat the sale and distribution of pirated copyright material via the Internet, such as music and movies. However, the bills have been met with controversy and resistance from online creators. Such legislation could eliminate sharing and collaboration, which fuel innovation on the Internet. These debates point to issues of censorship and blocking the free flow of information that the Internet provides.

As social media continue to develop in their application and use by individuals, it will become imperative to ensure that policies geared toward the new medium will be able to delineate the issues of control, censorship, piracy, freedom of information flow, and diversity of voices. The policy debates will continue as social media provide new common spaces that collapse the traditional and new media in reconfigured forms.

Dominique Harrison
Camille Walfall
Yong Jin Park
Howard University

See Also: Freedom of the Press and National Security; Office of Government Information Services; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security; Social Media and Freedom of Information Act.

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Media Research Center

The Media Research Center (MRC) is a watchdog advocacy group that uses its multiple divisions to research and report on cases of possible liberal bias in the news media. Founded in 1987 by L. Brent Bozell III, the MRC has gained notoriety by its extensive quantitative and qualitative research projects that commonly analyze the newscasts of major broadcast and cable news networks. MRC researchers often employ content analysis, looking for examples of bias in the news media through the selection of stories, sources, and reporters' word choices, among many other aspects of their coverage.

Newspapers and their online companions, the *New York Times* in particular, are also frequent targets of the MRC's pursuit of exposing a left-wing agenda in newsrooms across the country. While many journalists and academics contend that there is no liberal bias, the MRC backs its claims with research that it displays on its Web site and distributes through numerous social media platforms. The Alexandria, Virginia, based organization has effectively used the Web and social media to bypass the many traditional media outlets it routinely critiques. The MRC's popular Twitter account @newsbusters, with over 68,000 followers, tweets numerous links a day that illustrate examples of biased media coverage. It also employs e-mail blasts and e-newsletters to drive traffic to its Web site.

Structurally, the MRC is broken into multiple divisions, including: the News Analysis Division, which monitors print and electronic media coverage on a daily basis to detect examples of bias; the Business and Media Institute, which uses financial data to promote a free enterprise culture; the Culture and Media Institute, which promotes what are described as "traditional American values"; and its Cybercast News Service (CNSNews.com), which distributes news programming from a right-leaning perspective.

Bozell, who first gained national recognition in the early 1980s by working with the National Conservative Political Action Committee, is a frequent television and talk show guest, where the conversation usually revolves around media bias. After developing some political clout by advancing the Barry Goldwater/Ronald Reagan movement, Bozell turned to media criticism and started the MRC in October 1987. In an effort to bring light to the ongoing debate regarding a left-wing bias in the media, Bozell and his team became pioneers in supporting their claims about an oft-debated issue with credible and reliable scientific data falling within established margins of error.

Supporting his claims with data has not prevented numerous news media operations and other left-wing advocacy groups from lambasting Bozell as also having biases. That criticism from the left, however, is what helped Bozell turn his former grassroots operation into an influential Washington political force. In 1995, Bozell once again became a lightning rod of criticism when he parlayed his growing status in the media to found the Parents Television Council (PTC). This group, a joint effort with the Catholic League, gained attention for castigating the landscape of broadcast television programming as less than family friendly.

Syndicated radio host Rush Limbaugh often references Bozell and the MRC's research when he criticizes the left-wing establishment. Other conservative media figures such as Ann Coulter, Mark Levin, and William Bennett routinely laud the MRC's work on radio, television, and the Web. Bozell is also a frequent commentator on FOX News, the highly rated Sean Hannity program in particular. FOX programming provides Bozell and other MRC representatives an outlet to identify examples of mainstream media members acting in a manner sympathetic to the liberal point of view. According to the MRC, a common

perpetrator of using a liberal agenda in the guise of objective reporting is NBC and its cable companion MSNBC.

Aiming its criticism at MSNBC, in turn, has given Bozell and the MRC plenty of attention on FOX's rival network. MSNBC often bases its criticism of Bozell and the MRC as just mouthpieces of conservative ideology with flawed research methods. Other vociferous opponents of the MRC include left-wing groups such as Media Matters and FAIR (a similar organization that researches media content). Liberal publications, including *Mother Jones* and the *Huffington Post*, contend that Bozell's research methods are skewed in order to represent that a liberal bias exists.

In spring 2013, the trial of Dr. Kermit Gosnell, a Philadelphia-based doctor who performed numerous late-term abortions, served as a focal point of the MRC's contentions of a biased news media. Bozell contributed to a letter written to the broadcast networks, calling on them to "stop censoring coverage of the trial." The MRC's research demonstrated that ABC's *Good Morning America* and *World News Tonight* gave the sensational Gosnell story a blackout of news coverage, while CBS and NBC awarded it miniscule coverage. In particular, MRC research found that *Good Morning America* devoted 109 minutes over a 42-day period to other sensational trails occurring at the time, including the one of Amanda Knox, but absolutely zero time for the controversial Gosnell case. The MRC contends that the networks avoided the gruesome details of the Gosnell trail in order to protect the liberal narrative regarding abortion that they prefer to provide viewers.

A year prior to the Gosnell case, the MRC used the Trayvon Martin case to identify flawed mainstream news coverage regarding racial issues. In April 2012, the MRC called upon Congress to:

> . . . investigate Comcast/NBC News for the intentional editing of the George Zimmerman audio that was broadcast multiple times and subsequently flamed the fires of racial hatred and animosity.

Applauded by the right while chastised by the left, the MRC has received the attention it needs to become a key figure in the partisan wars of today's media culture. In less than 30 years, it has evolved into one of the country's most recognized political think tanks and advocacy groups.

Aaron J. Moore
Rider University

See Also: Association of Internet Researchers; Citizen Journalism; Ethics of Social Media in Politics.

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Medicare

Medicare is the federal health insurance program for people who are 65 or older, those under 65 with certain disabilities, and people with end-stage renal disease. Since its implementation in 1965 under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act, Medicare has become a social insurance program that provides health and financial security for vulnerable members of the population. Especially considering the fact that roughly half of all seniors did not have medical insurance prior to 1965, it is no exaggeration to state that the Medicare program dramatically improved access to medical care for a vulnerable and underserved population. Medicare provided health insurance coverage to 47 million people in 2010, including virtually all seniors (39 million), as well as 8 million people under age 65 with permanent disabilities.

Overview

The current Medicare program covers a range of health care services, including hospitalizations (Medicare Part A, hospital insurance),

outpatient physician services (Medicare Part B, medical insurance), and prescription drugs (Medicare Part C, prescription drug coverage). Medicare is primarily financed through general revenues, payroll tax revenues, premiums paid by beneficiaries, and other sources. Medicare has been generally well received by the public, while facing real changes of rising cost and funding limits. Due to increasing health care costs and a rapidly aging U.S. population, total Medicare spending is projected to be a much larger part of the federal budget, increasing from $523 billion in 2010 to $932 billion by 2020. Indeed, the Pew Research Center released a 2006 report stating that 62 percent of the public said addressing Medicare's financial problems should be a high priority for the government.

Besides the financial issues, Medicare and its operation are controversial topics among many citizens. The Medicare Part D coverage gap, also known as the Medicare donut hole, was one of the most problematic parts of the Medicare program. The coverage gap is a temporary limit on what the drug plan will cover. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)'s proposal was to gradually offer coverage to those affected by the donut hole, starting in 2010, and to completely close it by 2020. As a result of this measure, Medicare beneficiaries had saved $4.1 billion on prescription drugs as of August 2012, making it a strong selling point of the new legislature.

Role of Social Media

On the issue of Medicare, social media are often used to reflect public opinions or concerns. Especially since the ACA passed in 2010, Internet users have been voicing their support or frustration on blogs, Twitter, and Facebook. For example, when Republican Paul Ryan of Wisconsin offered a 2011 budget proposal titled "The Path to Prosperity," which would keep Medicare intact for people 55 or older but make dramatic changes on the program for everyone else by privatizing it and providing government subsides, Democrats responded with the statement that "Republicans voted to end Medicare." When this Democratic Party's claim was named the "Lie of the Year" for 2011 by the PolitiFact.com Web site, a Pulitzer Prize–winning fact-checking site, it triggered a heated discussion between conservative and liberal bloggers. The New Media Index from the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism indicates that the debate over the Lie of the Year for 2011 was one of the most discussed topics in social media platforms.

Estimated to cost $617 billion in 2015, Medicare influences millions of beneficiaries and is a key payer in the U.S. health care system. Needless to say, many constituency groups have a vested interest in Medicare reform and are active on social media. KBM Group, a research and consulting organization, issued a Listening Report of Medicare-related activities on social media, which found that the majority of conversations are made by Medicare experts, followed by laypersons wanting more information. There are also professional bloggers and journalists, who use social media forums to publish opinions on the topic. The most frequently used social media sites include Twitter and Facebook, which account for nearly half of the Medicare-related conversations on social media.

Currently, a wide range of Medicare interest groups are active on social media outlets. AARP, a nonprofit organization for the elderly, has been active in the ACA and Medicare debates and offers interactive features on its Web site, including a donut hole calculator. Its earnedasay.org Web site is a one-stop resource where the public can voice their opinions through questionnaires and discussion boards and see arguments for and against changes considered for Medicare. With interactive features such as fact maps, videos, and links to state-specific information on Medicare, the site gives a voice in Medicare's future to the elderly group who are relatively new to the social media world.

It is projected that Medicare beneficiaries are more likely than ever before to take an active role in their health care, and are using social media as tools for empowerment and engagement. A Pew research report indicated that 32 percent of the Medicare population turned to social media for health care purposes in 2011. Seniors are often engaged with social media to search for advice on Medicare and share their experiences. According to the KBM Group's report on Medicare consumers, prescription coverage (Part D) and Medicare Advantage (Part C) are the most

Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius personally greeting senior citizens in Washington, D.C., during an information session on Medicare coverage and open enrollment in November 2010.

prevalent topics discussed among seniors on social media sites.

To comply with President Obama's open government initiative, which focuses on implementing the principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration, many federal agencies started leveraging social media tools. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services also adopted various forms of social media platforms including their official Web site (http://www.medicare.gov/), blog (http://blog.medicare.gov/), official YouTube page (http://www.youtube.com/user/cmshhsgov), and official Twitter account (https://twitter.com/CMSGov).

Private organizations are also responding to the trend of being present and accessible on social media. The UnitedHealthCare group launched a blog, as well as official Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter accounts, offering features such as educational workshops. However, these social media activities mostly rely on a one-way and top-down communication style, and may fall short of facilitating public participation and social interactions. For instance, the official Medicare blog site currently does not allow users to comment on posts. The official UnitedHealthCare group's Medicare Facebook does not allow Facebook users to create original posts, and when users respond to a post, they usually do not receive comments from the page.

Conclusion

Social media have the potential for facilitating civic engagement, thanks to their collaborative and participatory nature. If social interaction is limited or nonexistant, the potential cannot become a reality. Social media are not merely marketing or educational tools anymore; they are evolving into social interaction tools that encompass a range of services. As stated by Ann Sherry, senior director of Kaiser Permanente's Internet services, people "want and need different tools and different interactions. To say we are going to have a social media strategy would not be enough—it's much more than media, it's a social strategy."

Min Liu
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville
Jina Yoo
University of Missouri–St. Louis

See Also: AARP; Age; Health Care; OpenGovernment.org; Social Security; Taxes.

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Meetup.com

Meetup.com provides an opportunity to find and join local groups of people who are interested in meeting to discuss common interests. A meetup is a group of people that come together in the physical, rather than the virtual environment to socialize around a common interest. Meetup.com is a for-profit Internet company launched in summer 2002 to enable users to find others nearby who want to meet monthly about any one of a myriad of potential common interests. Meetup.com does not decide what the list of potential topics will be, and is willing to add any meeting topic that is not pornographic, hate-based, or promoting illegal activity. Users enter their ZIP code or their city and the topic they want to meet about, and the Web site helps them arrange a place and time to meet. Topic listings are also available for users who only enter a location.

Background

The idea for Meetup.com has an interesting history, and came about in the months following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Scott Heiferman, cofounder of Meetup.com, lived a few miles away from the World Trade Center in New York at the time, and he noticed a change in the people around him in the months after 9/11. He found himself talking to neighbors and people around the city more than ever before. Prior to this, he did not place a high value on face-to-face interaction, because he felt the Internet provided enough opportunity for interaction through information sharing and communication. He noticed an important change in the feeling of the city, and thought this terrible event, 9/11, could be the catalyst for bringing people together. Heiferman was also motivated to start Meetup.com after reading Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone*, since he thought he had a technological answer for how to use the Internet to build more social capital. The Web site was launched a few months later. The stated mission of Meetup is to "revitalize local community and help people around the world self organize."

Influence

Meetup boasted 13.4 million members in April 2013, organized into 105,000 groups in 45,000 cities around the world. On Meetup.com, anyone can search for 19 local meetups around all kinds of interests, including outdoor activities, games, languages, animals, and technology. Meetups take place in thousands of cities at bookstores, cafés, restaurants, pubs, and other settings. To ensure the privacy of participants, Meetup gathers no data about individuals' demographics, and Meetup managers do not actually know precisely who attends what meetups.

Meetup can be said to be important in two dimensions: first, through the meetups themselves, participants might expand their social networks, sometimes in ways that cut across race, class and local geography; second, either directly or indirectly, it is possible that through the meetups, participants may take collective action or increase their political power by aggregating their interests.

An early use of Meetup in political campaigns was in the 2004 presidential primary campaign of Democrat Howard Dean. However, meetups were not envisioned as political. As founder Heiferman commented, "We never thought it would be used for politics. We figured that we would attract *Lord of the Rings* geeks and poodle owners." Some speculated that political Meetups would not continue after the ill-fated Dean campaign ended, but the number of meetups has continued to grow, albeit unevenly. Political meetups accounted for less than 15 percent of all meetups by February 2005, but Heiferman claims that the Tea Party was born on the site.

Out of the 2012 presidential candidates, only Ron Paul inspired a great number of meetups. Three things seem especially interesting about political meetups: these meetups tend to be left-leaning, political meetups tend to be dissimilar to other meetups, and meetups are not as candidate-specific as may be expected.

Sule Yüksel Özmen
Karadeniz Technical University

See Also: Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Social Networking Web Sites; Tea Party Movement.

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Membership Communications Project

David Karpf developed the Membership Communications Project (MCP) to provide the research community with an open data resource useful for understanding how advocacy groups utilize e-mail in communicating with their memberships. Karpf, currently an assistant professor in the School of Media and Public Affairs at the George Washington University, created the MCP dataset in 2010, when he was a postdoctoral research associate at Brown University's Taubman Center for Public Policy and American Institutions.

While working on his doctoral dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania in 2009, Karpf noted that despite the centrality of e-mail communication to the work of advocacy groups, there was little systematic analysis in the research literature of how such groups employ the medium. Karpf also discovered that, although advocacy professionals had cultivated a set of best practices in the areas of list building, e-mail fundraising, and online-to-offline engagement, academic researchers were not focused on any of these mundane mobilization tools, but instead were concentrated on emerging technologies utilized in mobilization efforts such as blogs, YouTube, and social networking sites.

Karpf also realized that the only extant empirical analysis of e-mail communication related to activist groups, namely Stuart Schulman's "The Case Against Mass E-Mails," published in *Policy and Internet* in 2009, was in fact a dismissal of e-mobilization via e-mail. Schulman reviewed hundreds of thousands of comments submitted by MoveOn.org in federal agency rulemaking processes related to environmental issues, and evaluated the comments gathered by this activist group from the general public as mostly redundant and overwhelmingly insubstantial. Based on this data, Schulman asserted that mass e-mail campaigns to collect public remarks for influencing decision makers constituted a clicktivism that by soliciting quick online activity was killing traditional activism grounded in collective action.

Based on his experience as national campaign director for the Sierra Student Coalition (the student-run arm of the Sierra Club) at the end of the 1990s, Karpf agreed with Schulman's assessment that comments collected by advocacy groups were high-volume and low-quality, but disagreed with Schulman's statement that such comments had negative consequences for citizen engagement. Karpf had two arguments for rebutting Schulman's theory: He viewed e-comments gathered by groups like MoveOn.org in recent years as different in degree, but not in kind, from photocopied and faxed petitions and postcards collected by groups like the Sierra Student Coalition several decades ago; and he considered a high-volume and low-quality action (either offline or online) as a single tactic in the strategic repertoire of advocacy groups, rather than an entire campaign organized by any advocacy group.

Karpf's research was aimed both at shifting scholarly attention from technologies for mobilization to tools of e-mobilization, and at providing empirical evidence for his counterarguments to Schulman. Karpf's doctoral dissertation, titled "Unexpected Transformations: The Internet's Effect on Political Associations in American Politics," was a qualitative study of advocacy groups' usage of e-mail as part of their campaigns, providing an initial set of evidence and an initial

analysis. However, during his postdoctoral studies, Karpf decided to pursue a quantitative test of his previous qualitative observations, and as such he started the data aggregation project that has come to be known as the Membership Communications Project.

On January 21, 2010, Karpf created an e-mail account via Gmail. He also identified a network of 70 prominent leftwing advocacy organizations, visited their Web sites, and signed up for e-mail lists or outreach efforts provided through those sites. This was meant to answer the question: "What do groups actually ask their online supporters to do?" For the first two weeks of data collection, Karpf used a broad descriptive classification scheme, then refined it to a set of categories based on commonalities between e-mails. The coding scheme resulting from this process included: date, organization, topic, digest/commentary/e-newsletter, action ask, fundraising ask, request for member input, and media agenda link.

Karpf encountered three hurdles in designing the dataset: identification of an appropriate sample of advocacy groups; deciding what to do about conservative groups; and accounting for limitations created by proprietary data. Because he was interested in organizations seeking to mobilize public pressure to affect policy decisions out of concern for the public good, Karpf understood that sampling from directories of Washington lobbying organizations and political action committees would not help because these represented businesses and other private interests.

To create a relevant sample, Karpf included 49 groups from a list provided by Elizabeth Payne, former director of the Democracy Alliance, in her book *The Practical Progressive*, and 21 groups of well-known members of the political left, human rights groups, and environmental organizations. However, when making the selection, Karpf left out advocacy groups representing the political right because he found these to have little connection with human and environmental advocates, and to have vertical rather than horizontal structures. Critics of Karpf's work have suggested that this is a significant oversight. Additionally, when collecting the data, Karpf remained aware that such a dataset could not offer an exhaustive list of e-mail communication between organizations and their membership, because organizations segment their lists in various ways.

The first dataset of the Membership Communications Project was collected during the six months from January to July 2010, and is composed of 2,161 e-mails sent by 70 advocacy organizations. This first dataset was utilized by Karpf as evidence for his article "Online Political Mobilization from the Advocacy Group's Perspective: Looking Beyond Clicktivism," published in *Policy and Internet* in 2010, as well as for his book *The MoveOn Effect: The Unexpected Transformation of American Political Advocacy*, published by Oxford University Press in 2012.

Meanwhile, the Membership Communications Project has become an ongoing effort that gathers mass membership e-mails sent by the selected organizations. As Karpf stated in the article "Social Science Research Methods in Internet Time," published in *Information, Communication, and Society* in 2012, the project provides valuable data not only to its creator, but also to scholars who want to know how advocacy groups mobilized around Obama's Health Care Reform bill or reacted to the Gulf Oil Spill. Such data was public because it arrived on a daily basis in tens of millions of inboxes around the world, but would have disappeared from the Web, had it not been saved in this dataset.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Clicktivism; E-Democracy; Fund-Raising.

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Meme Mapping

In 1976, Richard Dawkins proposed that the term *meme* be used to describe pieces of information or elements of a culture that travel through networks in different forms. Online memes, like lyrics from a popular song, behaviors, pranks, or part of a popular dance, travel through human and online networks via online videos, static images with words, sequences of animated GIFs displaying the lyrics, or videos that use the lyrics. Memes also include slight changes to the tune, tone, dance, and style to convey new meanings as the spread of the original meme increases over time. Memes are also frequently created by users to express their reactions to political campaigns, party platforms, candidate impressions, and some memes "go viral," spreading to larger online user communities.

Memes travel like viruses, spreading and changing as online users adapt and display them on a number of social media sites. When memes are uploaded to the Internet, users can share and forward the memes to one another, further propagating the cultural idea within the image, audio, text, or video. John Paull outlined meme mapping as a process whereby the origins and spread of a meme might be traced in order to understand how the cultural elements move through different communities and change over time. Paull describes his process as one that aids researchers in the ability to trace not only the spread of the meme through the Internet, but also aids in the identification of the events that may have led up to the birth of the meme. This process is also useful for understanding how some memes travel through different cultures or regions more readily than others. For example, during the 2012 U.S. Republican Party convention, Hollywood movie star Clint Eastwood enacted a scene involving a conversation with an empty chair. During the television broadcast of the event, the term *Eastwooding* began circulating on social media sites like Twitter, Reddit, and Facebook. Eastwooding, a meme that came to be understood as speaking or scolding an empty chair, quickly became viral.

President Barack Obama joins in on a meme in this November 15, 2012, photograph at the White House with U.S. Olympic gymnast McKayla Maroney as they both make her "not impressed" facial expression, which went viral during the 2012 Olympics.

In order to trace the spread of a meme to create a meme map and understand the development of the example above, the point of origin would first be entered into any computer program or online tool that creates graphic, visual displays of plot pointed information. Researchers search online for the meme using several keywords or search terms related to the meme in order to trace the

popularity of the trend over time. For example, several online programs can be used to enter multiple search terms in order to trace the terms' popularity based upon regional locations and time ranges. This information can be used to plot points on the visual meme map to display the origin of the specific meme, its spread over time, and any spikes in popularity during particular dates or times. This information also can be used to display the particular sites through which the meme traveled and provide insights into the particular cultural element's spread through specific online communities or regions.

While itis may not be possible to trace the entire spread of a meme through the Internet, it is feasible to trace how the meme travels and changes over time in order to gain a broader understanding of the reach of the element and popularity of spread through particular platforms. In the example above, similar to the structure of a virus, the base element of a person speaking to an empty chair was shared, and users then created pictures of themselves scolding chairs, fake Twitter accounts for the chair, live streaming events of empty chairs, built toy representations of the event, and other visual representations of this unique cultural element. These are just a few examples of how one cultural element circulates online and changes through subsequent user interactions.

Meme mapping enables researchers to trace such changes, and provides a broader understanding of how cultures share information with one another and between cultures. The visualization of the spread of the cultural element, traced through a meme map, provides a visually dynamic way to understand a meme's growth over time and the popularity of particular meme variants.

Jennifer Ware
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

See Also: Artists and Social Media in Politics; Data Mining; Going Viral; Trending Topic.

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Menendez, Robert

Robert "Bob" Menendez is the junior U.S. Senator from New Jersey. A Democrat, he entered the Senate by gubernatorial appointment in January 2006 to complete the term of Jon Corzine, who had resigned with one year of his term unfinished. In the general election of November 2006 Menendez won a full six-year term. In 2012, he was reelected.

Menendez was born on January 1, 1954, in New York City. His father Mario Menendez was a carpenter, and his mother Evangelina was a seamstress. His parents had left Cuba in 1953, just a few months before his birth. The family eventually moved to Union City, New Jersey, where he grew up. He was the student body president at Union Hill High School. After graduating from Union Hill, he entered Saint Peter's College in Jersey City. While in college, he joined Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in political science. In 1979 he was awarded a J.D. from Rutgers School of Law. In 1980, Menendez was admitted to the New Jersey Bar.

In 1973, Menendez led a petition drive against the Union City Mayor, William V. "Billy" Musto (1917–2006). Menendez was still a student at Saint Peter's College and just 19 years old; however, his petition drive was successful. The petition's goal was the reform of the Union City board of education. Even though he had opposed Mayor Musto, this did not end their mentoring relationship because Menendez served as a mayor's aide. Menendez married Jane Jacobsen in 1976; she was a teacher with the Union City Board of Education. They had two children, but divorced in 2005.

Political Career

In 1978, Menendez supported Mayor Musto when he ran for re-election to the New Jersey Senate. In 1982, he unsuccessfully ran against Mayor Musto, who was such a popular politician that on the day he was sentenced to federal

prison for racketeering, he was re-elected mayor. Musto had simultaneously been mayor of Union City and a New Jersey legislator. In New Jersey, election to the New Jersey General Assembly while holding another office such as mayor has been a common practice. In 1986, Menendez again ran against Musto for the office of mayor of Union City; this time, Menendez won. He served as mayor until 1992.

Menendez served in the New Jersey General Assembly from 1987 until 1991. In 1991, he was elected to the New Jersey Senate to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Christopher Jackson. He served until 1993, when he moved to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Congressman Frank Guarini of New Jersey's 14th District to the U.S. House of Representatives decided in 1992 to retire. In the realignment of districts following the 1990 census, the old 14th District was eliminated. Its territory was placed into a new 13th District. The reapportionment of the district changed its demographics into a majority Hispanic district.

In the Democratic Party primary in 1992, Menendez defeated Robert Haney, Jr. The vote was 68 percent for Menendez to Haney's 32 percent. In the November general election, he won 64 percent of the vote. In the subsequent elections in 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, and 2004, he won re-election with 71 percent or more of the vote.

In 1995, Menendez had considered running for the U.S. Senate following the retirement of Senator Bill Bradley, a Democrat. He decided not to resign his seat in the House of Representatives, and instead supported the senatorial campaign of Robert Torricelli, also a Democrat. In 1999 Menendez again considered running for the office as a senator from New Jersey to the U.S. Senate. The occasion was the retirement of Senator Frank R. Lautenberg, also a Democrat. Again, he decided that the time was not right for making this race for office.

U.S. Senate

In January 2006, Menendez was appointed to the U.S. Senate by Jon Corzine, who was vacating the seat to become governor of New Jersey. The appointment was well received by a number of Latino groups. The appointment made Menendez the sixth Hispanic to serve in the Senate. The appointment was to fill the remaining year of Corzine's unexpired term. The Senate seat was open for election for a full six years in the 2006 general election. In that contest, Menendez defeated Republican Thomas Kean, Jr. Kean was the minority whip in the New Jersey Senate. He was also the son of a former governor of New Jersey, Thomas Kean.

During the campaign, Menendez became embroiled in a controversy over a house that he had once owned and lived in with his family in the two stories above the ground floor where he had his law practice. This was the same arrangement used by a physician who was the previous owner of the house. When the family moved to another house, Menendez rented it to a nonprofit agency. Since the terms of the lease allowed Menendez to receive a percentage of the federal funding that was received by the North Hudson Community Action Corporation, there was the appearance of impropriety. A federal investigation began to see if he had improperly profited at taxpayer expense. While Menendez had profited, there was insufficient evidence of wrongdoing to bring charges.

Despite the controversy over the rental property, Menendez was helped in his campaign by the endorsement of the *New York Times*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, and other newspapers. The vote in the 2006 general election was 53 percent for Menendez and 45 percent for Kean.

2012 Election

In 2012, Menendez ran unopposed in the Democrat Party primary. However, the Republican primary was wide open. The Republicans fielded a large number of potential candidates including Diane Allen, New Jersey state senator; Chris Christie, governor of New Jersey; John Crowley, a biotech company executive; Michael Doherty, New Jersey state senator; Tim Smith, financial services executive; and Jay Webber, New Jersey state assemblyman. All declined to enter the race. This was despite speculation by the *New York Times* that Governor Christie, who was guiding a newly energized New Jersey Republican Party, could do well in the race because early polling suggested that Menendez could be vulnerable.

Ian Linker, a lawyer; and Anna Little, the former mayor of Highlands, New Jersey, both

withdrew from the race. David Brown, an inventor; Joseph Kryillos, a New Jersey state senator from the 13th District; Bader Qarmout, a businessman; and Joseph Rullo, also a businessman, all engaged in the primary process on the Republican Party side. The winner of the Republican primary was Joseph Kryillos. In the general election on November 6, 2012, Menendez defeated Republican Party opponent Joseph Kryillos and a small host of minor party candidates.

Social Media Use

During the 2012 campaign, Menendez engaged in three debates with the other candidates. The first debate was at Montclair State University. It was held on October 4, 2012, with only Menendez and Kyrillos debating. The second debate was held on October 10, 2012, at the New Jersey 101.5 (WKXW) radio station at Ewing near Trenton. The third debate was on October 17, at Mercer County Community College.

While the debates were traditional forms of campaigning from which the minor party candidates had been excluded, Menendez also used social media for campaigning. His 2012 campaign Web site used both Facebook and Twitter. His site offered forms for those wishing to volunteer or for donors to use a credit card to give. The site was also available in Spanish.

Joseph Kryillos, Menendez's Republican opponent, used more social media than Menendez. Kryillos's site used Twitter, Facebook, RSS, and e-mail. His site allowed volunteering and donations. Over 8,000 donors contributed to his campaign, which was hurt by the disruption and destruction caused by Hurricane Sandy.

Some minor (third) party candidates also used social media. Libertarian Party candidate Kenneth R. Kaplan used social media links on his campaign site. Besides Facebook and Twitter, there were links to Google, Kaplan's biography on Wikipedia, and the Libertarian Party's Web site. Socialist Party candidate Gregory Pason used the same social media links of Facebook and Twitter on the Socialist Party site.

The Green Party candidate, Ken Wolski, used Facebook on his candidate's site. It also had links to RSS and other media. Gwen Diakos, candidate of the Jersey Strong Independents, used YouTube on her site.

Minor party candidate Daryl Mikell Brooks (Reform Nation) had a thin candidate's Web site without any obvious social media. The American First Party candidate, Inder "Andy" Soni, did not use social media, although he did post an advertisement on TeaPartyCheer.com.

Some independent candidates used social media; whereas others used it sparingly if at all. Totally Independent candidate J. David Dranikoff used a Twitter account for campaigning. He was featured on the news site njspotlight.com. Independent Eugene Martin Lavergne had a personal Facebook page, but did not seem to use any social media, other than also advertising on TeaPartyCheer.com, which costs $500 per month. Robert "Turk" Turkavage established a campaign Web site. He allowed followers to post replies, follow him on Twitter and Facebook, and use RSS feeds.

Menendez was able to outstrip his opponents in fundraising by better than $3 to their $1. He had over $10 million, compared to Kyrillos's $3 million. The minor party candidates had only a few thousand dollars at most. Menendez won a second term in the Senate, with 58.4 percent of the vote compared with Joseph Kyrillos' 39.9 percent. The minor party candidates captured the remaining 2 percent of the vote.

The Senate Web page for Menendez uses Facebook and Twitter. It also has a "Press Kit" link that goes to a "share" link with hundreds of social media and other links available.

Menendez is on three Senate standing committees. The Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee does not use social media, nor does the Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development, of which he is the chairman. He also serves as a member of three subcommittees of the Senate Finance Committee, which also does not use social media on its page. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has four subcommittees on which Menendez serves. This committee also does not use social media, nor do any of the subcommittees on which Menendez serves.

Menendez belongs to several Senate caucuses. The Congressional Armenian Caucus does not have a Web site, but is discussed in a number of online sites. The Congressional Autism Caucus site is run by Mike Doyle (D-PA). It uses social media—Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and RSS

Feeds. The International Conservation Caucus uses Flickr, Twitter, YouTube, RSS feeds, and Facebook. The Human Rights Caucus is now called the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission. It has been renamed in honor of the late Congressman (D-CA) Thomas Peter "Tom" Lantos (1928–2008) and uses Flickr, Twitter, YouTube, RSS feeds, and Facebook. The Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control does not use social media, but does have a Skype link.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Daily Caller; Facebook; Twitter.

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Microblogging

Microblogging is one of the most popular Web 2.0 applications, and is a relatively new phenomenon in online social networks. It is often used as a broadcast medium in the form of blogging, whereby users describe their current status in short posts distributed by instant messages, mobile phones, e-mail, or the Web. Microblogging allows users to write brief text updates (usually less than 140 characters) and send them to their friends and other interested observers. It also allows users to exchange small elements of content, such as individual images and video links, and these small messages are also sometimes called microposts.

A microblog differs from a traditional blog in that its content is often smaller in both actual and aggregate file size, and provides a lightweight easy form of communication that allows users to broadcast and share information about their activities, opinions, and status. It is therefore considered a miniature version of the regular blog. In addition, compared to traditional blogging, microblogging fulfills the need for a faster mode of communication. By encouraging shorter posts, microblogging reduces users' requirement of time investment for content generation. Another difference concerns the frequency of updates among microbloggers. While on average, prolific bloggers may update their blogs once every few days, some microbloggers post several updates a day.

One of the most popular microblogging tools is Twitter. Since its launch in October 2006, it has experienced significant growth around the world. Within eight months of its launch, Twitter had about 94,000 users, and users of Twitter can publish short messages, or "tweets," which are visible on a public message board of the Web site. While tweets are usually directed toward a general audience, if users want to direct a tweet to another user or send it as a response to an earlier tweet, they may add the "@" symbol to the intended user's name. "RT," or "retweet," means that a previous tweet is being sent again by a user. Topics of these tweets range from daily life to current events, news stories, and political opinions.

Because of its popularity, microblogging has revolutionized the ways in which information is delivered, circulated, and consumed around the world. It has also empowered citizens to act as sensors or sources of data, which could eventually become important pieces of information. Since many people are keen on sharing information about events and their opinions about certain topics, including government policies and political issues, microblogs have become an increasingly important source of information.

While the original idea behind microblogging was to provide personal status updates online, microblogging has had an important impact on the political scene in the United States. In

particular, it has been widely used for political deliberation, and such deliberation is often seen as reflecting the political landscape of the offline world. For example, many politicians make use of microblogging to communicate with the electorate and mobilize their supporters. Some politicians use Twitter as a vehicle to promote their political agenda, tweeting about economics and providing general information to their people. In addition, some politicians use Twitter to enhance their popularity, exposing the public to information about their meetings, speeches, interviews, pictures, and videos. One reason for the popular use of microblogging among politicians is that it provides a channel that is not filtered by local or national media, so that they are able to convey their political agendas without censorship or filtration.

One prominent example of the use of microblogging in the political arena was the U.S. presidential elections in 2008. Both presidential candidates, John Edwards and Barack Obama, integrated microblogging into their campaigns for the Democratic Party presidential primaries in 2008. Both of them used different platforms of microblogging to reach voters and other stakeholders, and to keep their Twitter followers abreast of upcoming appearances. In particular, the successful use of microblogging in the U.S. presidential campaign of Barack Obama has established Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, and other social media as integral parts of the political campaign toolbox. It also suggests that microblogging provides new opportunities for online campaigning and electorate engagement, thereby showing the importance of microblogging as a key tool for public relations in organizing the election campaign and political marketing. Some researchers even attribute Obama's victory to a large extent to his online strategy. Obama's social-networking Web site helped him set records in terms of donations and grassroot mobilization. Shortly after his successful election as president of the United States, Obama used Twitter to let the Web community know how he felt: "This is history." As a result of the 2008 campaign, Twitter has become a powerful and legitimate communication channel in the political arena.

There have also been some studies on political Twitter use that focus on parliamentary uses of the service. A recent study found that parliamentary members tweeted primarily to disseminate information, often providing URLs to news articles about themselves or to their blog posts. Congresspeople also reported on their daily activities on Twitter. While these updates did not provide insights into the political process or improve transparency, some of the tweets can be seen as vehicles for self-promotion and for expressing their opinions concerning various political and social topics, indicating a mode of use that is aimed at one-way, top-down communication, rather than actually engaging with the citizenry. In other words, while microblogging in general has evolved toward becoming more conversational and collaborative, such use was rather limited among parliamentary members.

Moreover, microblogging is an important predictor of online political participation. For example, in a recent study, researchers found that microblogging provides alternatives to mainstream media outlets to influence public opinion about politics. It has also been claimed that Twitter is a valid real-time indicator of political sentiment.

Another recent study revealed that Twitter has been exploited as a powerful platform for political deliberation. For example, it was found that the number of tweets reflects voter preferences and comes close to traditional election polls; and the sentiment of Twitter messages closely corresponds to the political programs, candidate profiles, and other reports from the media coverage of the campaign. However, while some researchers view the "Twittersphere" as an indicator of political opinion, others have suggested that the majority of the messages on Twitter are instead pointless babble.

Chit Cheung Matthew Sung
Lancaster University

See Also: Blogs; Moblogging; Moblog.net; Twitter; Twitter Archiving Project, Library of Congress; Twitter Diplomacy.

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Microfinance Initiatives

The creation and circulation of community-based monetary and credit relations is the essence of any financial transaction, either in a local neighborhood or in the international community of nations. In other words, all exchanges and pricing practices exist only insofar as confidence in a specific representation of value is shared by a community through iconic objects such as coins, notes, badges, and other expressions of worthiness. Microfinancing can play an important role in bringing new media technologies to traditionally undercapitalized populations, especially in international environments where social media communications, in particular, can affect the kind and level of political participation those populations can enjoy.

Overview

Local, community, peer-to-peer, or neighborhood-based financial exchanges are older than money and may be a permanent, underlying force in any transaction, market, and financial system. Fiduciary money is an expression of *fiducia*, a Latin word for trust and the root of the word *confidence*. In order to express and enhance the fiduciary essence of any currency, coins have always been minted with images of kings and queens, so that protection of the kingdom's money equals respect for the sovereign. In local and community currencies and credit systems, other icons are often socially selected in order to make the underlying social confidence visible to the traders. In other words, every currency is an economic expression of social communication. Money is (social) media.

Microfinance initiatives, however, are not necessarily founded and funded by locals because global multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank have been supportive of national policies to enhance access to financial services or "bancarization" of poor or underserved communities. In short, complementary or alternative currency systems may result from bottom-up, autonomous community projects, or from policy-led, governmental and multilateral institutional build-up supported by private and public banking systems. The World Bank estimates that 160 million people in developing countries are served by microfinance.

Both local and global initiatives favoring microfinance share an underlying perspective that favors social fund and community-driven development projects. These initiatives are not necessarily pro bono or not-for-profit and oftentimes microfinance initiatives are seen as the "exit door" for low-income, low-revenue entrepreneurs to scale up into small and medium projects and enterprises. Social businesses are also part of microfinance toolkits that start with grants for individual or family income-generating activities in emergency or post-conflict situations.

Microfinance provides basic financial services, such as credit and deposit-taking, on a very small scale, to historically marginalized populations that do not meet the criteria to do business with conventional banking institutions. This covers people who do not qualify for credit because of their lack of access to collateral.

According to the United Nation's (UN's) Capital Development Fund, microfinance helps very poor households meet basic needs and protect against risks, while the use of financial services by low-income households is associated with improvements in household economic welfare and enterprise stability or growth. Moreover, by supporting women's economic participation, microfinance helps to empower women, thus promoting gender equity and improving household wellbeing.

Microfinance and Microcredit

Microfinance is associated with long-term projects, whereas microcredit is usually a short-term operation. The long-term return of microfinance initiatives is associated with the power to generate

economic returns while improving grassroots political and social involvement.

However, grants and social transfers are not seen by multilateral institutions as a sustainable mechanism for the economic development of a community, while individual and family-owned businesses that are privately financed are seen as more prone to success. Local initiatives are led by microfinance institutions (MFIs), such as financial cooperative/credit union networks that are interested in broadening their outreach to geographically underserved areas and in deepening their outreach to the poor.

Community-based, bottom-up initiatives are favored when commercial banks are not present, and may start building informal or semi-formal community financial institutions that may gradually link to the formal financial sector, either directly or through the creation of federations. The microfinance toolkit goes beyond microcredit to include savings, insurance, payment services, and most critically, technical assistance given the low literacy of poor and underserved communities.

Initiatives and Community Dynamics

The creation of social, local, or community currencies (also known as complementary currencies) also constitute the base for bottom-up microfinance initiatives. As a matter of fact, people have always traded or bartered with each other, using different tools and materials to represent and store value in various kinds of transactions, including trade, investment, consumption, production, marriage, kinship, and sacrifice.

In complex urban and global capitalist societies, money expands the potential for growth and accumulation while creating new forms of wealth and power concentration, regulated by central banks, which are more responsive to the interests of private, commercial banks as well as multilateral organizations. Microfinance initiatives anchored in community or complementary currencies offer an alternative solution for local markets deprived or unserved by global or national currencies. During financial crises such as with the euro or the Argentinean peso, these initiatives have been the only way out of total unemployment and the lack of social services in local communities.

Theoretical and empirical studies have demonstrated that a greater "depth of the financial markets" (the ratio of key financial aggregates such as credit or bank deposits to gross domestic product) enhances economic growth potential. These findings have resulted in policy recommendations that target "access to financial services," defined as the percentage of the population that can freely use financial services, and the reduction of poverty and inequality. On the other hand, the fragility of underserved communities is also a major source of difficulties with respect to data collection and analysis, so that empirical studies about access do not give conclusive results with respect to the causes and consequences of low access to financial services.

Another important area for microfinance initiatives has been associated with the global flow of migrant workers. The issue of remittances and the vital role that they play in the lives of migrant populations has been of particular interest to policymakers both in national and multilateral spheres. Private transfers from migrant workers who are considered residents of the host country to recipients in the workers' country of origin have been targeted as yet another frontier for bancarization and microfinance. In this perspective, policymakers are mostly concerned with fiscal policy issues—worldwide remittance flows are estimated to have exceeded $440 billion in 2010, of which developing countries received $325 billion. New digital media and interfaces such as mobile phones in Africa have become a major tool for remittances because prepaid phone credits have become an informal framework for transfers.

Empirical research has consistently produced evidence that shared codes, religious beliefs, and ethnicity—in short, cultural proximity and communication patterns—between lenders and borrowers improves the efficiency of credit allocation. In other words, microfinance initiatives are very close to social media dynamics as long as the depth of financial services is associated to cultural commonalities. Religion and caste of bank officers and borrowers in India induces financial matching between officers and borrowers. Cultural proximity increases lending and improves repayment performance. Further, cultural proximity increases loan dispersion and reduces loan to collateral ratios. Cultural proximity mitigates

informational problems that adversely affect lending, which in turn relaxes financial constraints and improves access to finance.

However, the effect on financial efficiency of cultural proximity between transacting parties is ambiguous. While members of a group tend to do business with one another, this may lead to discrimination or favoritism, thus resulting in the misallocation of resources. Alternatively, if cultural proximity reduces the cost of communication or contract enforcement, in-group transactions may be more efficient. The relationship between communication and cultural proximity on financial efficiency remains an empirical question.

Gender

Last, but not least, gender issues have proven to be a major source of inspiration for microfinance initiatives. Poor women in particular benefit from microfinance services. Women's status, both in their homes and in their communities, is elevated when they are responsible for managing loans and savings. The ability to generate and control their income can further empower poor women. Research shows that credit extended to women has a significant impact on their families' quality of life, especially their children, while women's commitment to repayment is outstanding, so they tend to have the best credit ratings. In Bangladesh, for example, women have shown to default on loans far less often than men.

A Filipina woman using a mobile phone in 2012 to access banking services for a USAID microenterprise program that offered loans to small business owners in the Philippines.

History

The history of microfinance initiatives dates back to 1959, when Akhtar Hameed Khan launched microcredit for a rural development initiative that evolved into the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BRAC), one of the first microfinance institutions. He began lending small sums to entrepreneurs in the slums of Pakistan, and established one of the earliest models for microlending.

In 1973, ACCION International, a volunteer organization providing infrastructure services to the poor, initiated a new program in Brazil, where it began making small loans to the poor for income-generating businesses, instead of offering free services. The loans allowed people to establish self-sustaining businesses that helped stabilize their financial status and lift them out of the cycle of poverty.

The potential of the poor as economically active agents is at the origin of the microfinance philosophical framework as promoted by Mohammed Yunus, founder of Grameen Bank and Nobel Peace Prize winner in 2006. In 1976, during visits to the poor households in the village of Jobra near Chittagong University, Yunus realized that very small loans could make a disproportionate difference to a poor person after lending $27 from his own pocket to 42 women who made bamboo furniture. They made a net profit of $0.02 each on the loan. Thus, he came to the conclusion that their use of very limited resources was extremely effective. The challenge was to translate poor people's economic activism into an entrepreneurial spirit. Based on his observation that the poor (especially women) are hardworking and industrious, Yunus became an icon of policies that take the poor not as

"unbankable," but only overlooked by conventional banking institutions because they lacked material collateral.

Conclusion

Microfinance initiatives result from the adoption of core principles for alternative banking and social inclusion. There must be a commitment to end capital starvation, rather than rely on charity or grants. The main goal is to promote access to and use of banking and financial services by all through new technologies and distribution channels to capitalize assets among the poor, usually stressing cultural or gender-related dimensions of social organization.

While microfinance is keen on alternative banking, it seeks to work within regulations, guidelines, and best practices recommended by domestic monetary authorities and international regulatory institutions such as the Bank for International Settlement Basel II Capital Risk Guidelines, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank. Bancarization also wishes to integrate corporate social responsibility into down-market business strategies and institutions of representation and democratization. The promotion of financial education to encourage responsible banking and finance and avert predatory lending and unethical practices is also part of the microfinance ethos, which has proven to be open to a diversity of local development models for the benefit of either bottom-up or universal top-down financial inclusion policies.

Gilson Schwartz
University of São Paulo

See Also: Nongovernmental Organizations; ONE Campaign; Poverty; Water.org.

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Microtargeting

Political parties and election campaigns have begun utilizing datamining techniques previously honed by direct marketing experts to segment potential voters based on a myriad of factors. After using market information to determine political leaning and likelihood of voting, the parties use various campaign techniques (including direct mail, phone calls, television ads, radio ads, Internet advertising, and e-mails) to deliver personally crafted messages intended to speak to them as directly as possible. The key tactic is to tailor the message to particular subgroups in order to best activate them to support a particular party or candidate and to vote. For example, at the most basic level, if an individual is a National Rifle Association member, ads will be targeted to gun issues because the market research suggests that this issue is of importance to that voter.

While political campaigns have long borrowed ideas and strategies from private sector marketing, microtargeting has been one of the most important developments for strategists since it first garnered national attention during the 2004 election cycle. Without large, sophisticated databases, however, microtargeting would not be possible. In a similar way to how credit card companies or grocery stores track spending habits, voter databases contain information about the voter (like party identification, voting turnout, campaign contributions, and volunteerism), along with other activities purchased from vendors such as Acxiom and Experian Americas. Democrats rely on a database called VoteBuilder,

while Republicans use Voter Vault. Aristotle is the leading nonpartisan database company.

Once purchased, the databases are mined to identify what issues are likely to matter to which voters, along with likelihood of party affiliation and turnout. After combining political and consumer information, voters are grouped together based on their preferences and assigned labels (such as "Soccer Moms").

Computer modeling is used to assure that preconceived notions of campaign workers do not sway group classifications. Once the groups are established, tailored messages can be created and then sent through varying means—assuring that voters receive information that seems like it was customized especially to them. No longer are single ads created and spread to all individuals. This was a wasteful approach given that the ad could equally dissuade some voters as it persuaded others, based on the subject and the beliefs of individual voters. Now, there may be dozens of variations of each, with certain segments or aspects highlighted in order to reach a targeted group of voters.

In this way, microtargeting allows campaigns to put a specific message in front of a specific voter. As increasingly more data has become available, the level of microtargeting has become more sophisticated. The process for microtargeting has also become easier, with continued developments in the Internet and social media. First, a cookie is placed on a user's computer after visiting a Web site. Next, the profile is matched with offline data that is available (like type of car driven, credit cards used, or typical purchases made). Then, political consultants match this data with voting records that are publicly available, including party registration and when they have voted or not voted. Voters are tagged with codes to guarantee anonymity as best as possible, but the effect is typically the same. Instead of simply buying an ad and hoping that the targeted group stumbles upon it, campaigns can buy the audience and then present the ad.

In 2009, Chris Christie ran for governor of New Jersey. Governor Jon Corzine accused Christie throughout the campaign of supporting cuts in health care coverage, including mammograms. By working with a targeting strategist, Christie was able to create a video showing him and his wife talking about his mother's struggle with breast cancer. It ends with him attacking Corzine for trying to scare voters. The ad was aimed at Republican voters searching for information on breast cancer, and attempted to assure them that Corzine's attacks were not correct.

Social media has made the ability to microtarget even easier. Campaigns can pull information from a person's Facebook profile (or even those of their friends) to determine what messages are most likely to appeal. They can similarly analyze someone's tweets and create hyperspecific messages. Social media is largely held as responsible for the increase in distinct bits of data available on each voter. In 2004, there were approximately 300 such pieces available on average, whereas today there are more than 900.

Despite microtargeting's popularity with campaigns, the American public does not seem to be as thrilled with its existence. In a 2009 survey, 86 percent of Americans indicated that such collections of data are an invasion of privacy, and that they would prefer it to stop. Given the success campaigns have experienced with the tool, however, microtargeting is likey to continue.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Data Mining; VoteBuilder.com; Voter Demographics; VoterVault.com.

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Middle East

Across the Middle East, north Africa, and Persian/Arabian Gulf, beginning in the late 1990s, and in particular over the last several years, military personnel, researchers, civil society members, and governments alike have moved their networking online. In doing so, they have followed in the footsteps of the early adopters of offline precursor BitNet and GulfNet e-mail systems in use in the 1980s for private, personal, or closed data exchanges among limited members of military and research communities.

Over the years, governments moved online, largely in an effort to inform and typically speak at (rather than engage with) their subjects and/or citizens, thereby cosmetically replicating transparent two-way communication mechanisms normatively considered essential for democratization and healthy governance by international organizations. Civil society members, on the other hand, moved online as part and parcel of wider cultural expression practices they previously channeled through older media technologies like audiocassettes or performance. This trend has largely been led by young people, with the aim of airing grievances from varying political vantage points and bringing about change to the military, political, economic, and social structures in place. In their case, young people moved to these channels because public space was and remains circumscribed across much of these regions, and older and/or more mainstream media remain largely controlled and/or co-opted. Thus, young people have taken the lead as early adopters of newer social media services to express, network, and organize.

Regionally, users access online social media via platforms like computers, tablets, and especially mobile phones, and offline via face-to-face exchange of mobile phone SIM cards. They access these platforms in stationary locations like homes, schools, and where neither is available to them, telecenters, or simply on the go. Today, regional Internet penetration rates have skyrocketed to 88 percent at their highest (in both Bahrain and Qatar), inching up to the current world leader at 96 percent (in Iceland), but start at just 5 percent (in Iraq), according to remaining International Telecommunication Union (ITU) country-by-country indicators for 2012. Uses to which people in these regions are putting these services, including the forms and contents channeled through them, range drastically.

Across the Middle East, north Africa, and Gulf, governments and/or individual politicians have turned to social media predominantly to establish profile pages, open government sites, tweet about their policies, and/or create virtual states. With respect to government profile pages, these are ubiquitous, and even extend to include pages established by spouses and children of governing royal elites, aiming to provide mediated face-to-face exchanges with their respective populations. Illustrative are the sites of Jordanian Queen Rania Al Abdullah and Saudi Princess Basmah Bint Saud, respectively. Their official Web sites are in Arabic and include mirror sites in English for networking beyond the region, including through their "my Rania" and "contact [us]" pages, respectively. Where individual political parties or movements are concerned, online presence, however, varies drastically. In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood serves as an example notable for its large online presence, using sleek marketing techniques and designs to attract younger users like ikhwantube (paralleling YouTube).

Open government networking that goes beyond not just communicating at but with publics have been especially rare. One notable exception is the mygov.il site established by Israel in 2006. It includes portals in Hebrew, Arabic, and English, each targeted to different audiences in an effort to provide on-demand political, cultural ,and business related-information. Second, and more notably, it enables citizens to set up an online account in order to engage in government transactions. Thus, for example, those seeking to renew driving licenses, order a phonebook or pay bills begin at, or are directed by the other two portals, to a Hebrew page to make their transactions. The unique choice by Israel to move governance online in this case naturally paralleled high online penetration rates by a majority of 73 percent of the population. Consequently, that rate is the fourth highest, following the United Arab Emirates (at 85 percent).

Finally, governments of non-state political institutions and/or non-self governing territories have, likewise, used social media, in their case, to establish virtual states in the absence of literal

or physically existing states. Examples of these include the Facebook page establishing the virtual Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic state, separate of Morocco, or its television station, operated by the Saharawi political leadership, the Polisario. A second example is the Palestinian National Authority and later updated, Palestine Ministry of Foreign Affairs portals, updated to reflect the UN vote recognizing the change from the observer status of Palestine to the observer status of the State of Palestine. The former portal notably and nevertheless, already operated under ownership of a cyber state domain name, namely, "ps." Therefore, since its online origins, despite not literally controlling a state in "real" space, Palestine has nevertheless administered a state in cyberspace.

Popular users, mainly young people who represent not just the larger amount of people online today but the more diverse uses to which social media are being put, have been the most prolific where public exchange of data is concerned. In the last several years, they have both participated by responding to and commenting on social media forms and messages and themselves produced both, through news and entertainment forms. With respect to producing their own political expressions via the underground options social media afford, these span efforts that bear witness to events, cover underreported issues through citizen- and civil-journalism, engage with intergroup and foreign relations, to advocating and networking on behalf of state reforms or specific causes germane to women's and underrepresented ethnopolitical minority and nationalist group rights, among others.

Alternative News Sources

Social media have been employed to document and serve as witness to protests (common during the Arab Spring) and acts of violence. With respect to witnessing violence, uses include filming and unvetted uploading of videos like those famously sneaked out of Libya during the Jasmine Revolution, as for example footage in February 2011 of soldiers purportedly murdered at leader Muammar Qaddafi's orders for refusing to shoot at protesters. A second example includes documentation of acts of harassment and/or physical violence by Jewish-Israeli settlers against Palestinians filmed by Palestinians, Israelis or international observers.

Notably, and controversially, such examples of non-vetted footage, while on the one hand, playing an incredibly vital role, cannot, on the other, necessarily be corroborated (whether according to the acts seen in the footage, or the causation attributed to them). Moreover, in some instances, they have been doctored, and yet in others, recycled from one conflict context or time period and claimed to have occurred in another. As a result, a controversy exists over whether such footage serves as a legitimate source for testimonial for counting of and reporting on human rights violations. For the sake of accuracy and objectivity, now more than ever, the speed at which these are produced and distributed, therefore, implore the need to scrutinize contents deeply and quickly and prior to press or posting.

A third example of using social media to document violence includes the writing of war blogs like Bagdad Burning, which Riverbend began in 2003. In the blog, the author chronicles everyday life as an Iraqi citizen and life in a war zone, including from a woman's perspective. Written in English, she largely directs her blog toward an international audience (including to attract more than the only 7 percent of the Iraqi population that is online) out of the hopes of garnering intervention.

An example of citizen journalism is Mamfakinch. Its Twitter account is @Mamfakinch. Begun in 2011, it was created in connection with the youth-led February Twentieth activist movement's efforts to spark reform in Morocco during the Arab Spring. The organization's social media presence serves to provide alternative information largely unavailable in the Moroccan press in an effort to give voice to and advocate on behalf of underreported issues of reform and rights. A second example is FSNN, the United Syrian News Network, also created in 2011, by Syrian youth whom, likewise were concerned with agendas and frames set by mainstream media sources. In their case, however, their viewpoint differed. They argued that the government, namely the perspective of the Bashar al-Assad regime, and to some extent, also the dominant ethnopolitical group's narrative, the Alawi, have become marginalized. Therefore, they strive to report in a manner that provides the regime with a voice.

Like citizen journalists, professional journalists have turned to social media to establish civic journalism organizations. To that end, they have created blogs and/or made use of Twitter to provide more detail and/or opinion about the news that they cover. Typically, they do so independently of the organizations for which they work. Examples of the former include Palestinian Daoud Kuttab's online independent radio station managed by the Community Media Network in Jordan, Amman Net, and the Moroccan *Lakome* news Web site created by Aboubakr Jamai. Examples of the latter include Twitter accounts by both journalists, as well as an extensive list of others like independent Lebanese journalist with *Now.*, Hanin Ghadar, or those who are employed by global media organizations like the BBC, as in the case of previous Arab Affairs Analyst Magdi Abdelhadi in Egypt. A third use of social media, Twitter, provides journalists with a new tool for following leads; for example, Al-Jazeera's Ayman Mohyeldin did during his coverage of Jasmine Revolution events in Egypt.

Egyptian blogger and director of the Cairo office of the American Islamic Congress Dalia Ziada. The American Islamic Congress is a grassroots organization that works to encourage young people to advocate for civil liberties in the Middle East.

Foreign and Domestic Policy

Apart from news purposes, social media are also popularly being used in the region for intergroup and/or foreign policy relations. To that end, users have made use of social media to engage in conflict as for example, during the so-called Twitter War that transpired in November 2012 between official Israeli and Palestinian Twitter accounts in the context of an escalation in literal conflict. During that time, Twitter was used in real time by the accounts owned by Israel's @IDF Spokesperson (as part of it's military operation "Pillar of Defense" in Gaza) and Hamas's military wing's @Alqassam Brigade. Both used their accounts to threaten and announce incoming military strikes, and confirm hits, to the end result that their live-tweets entered the real theatre of war. Alongside those, per time and location-stamp data social media updates provide, a potential existed that data posted by members of the Israeli and Palestinian public could also be used to more "effectively" plan offline physical attacks.

In other cases, users have turned to social media to prevent conflict, as with the people-to-people "Israel Loves Iran" campaign. Begun by Israeli Ronny Edry in March 2012, he posted an online photograph of himself and his daughter with the headline, "Iranians, we love you. We will never bomb your country." Edry posted the image in an effort to bypass the state amid escalating tensions between Israel and Iran. At the time, concerned over the threat the continued development of the Iranian nuclear program could pose to Israel (if nuclear weapons were developed), and Israel's threat to preemptively bomb Iran's nuclear enrichment facilities, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Ahmadinejad pursued an escalating war of words. In response to Edry's posts, Iranians replied with their photographs, which they accompanied with headlines like, "We love you Israeli people." The campaign developed and today continues under, "Not ready to die in your war."

In other cases, social media have been popularly used to advocate on behalf of statewide reforms, and critique state leaders, governing apparatuses, and associated policies. In efforts expressing such critiques, there is a trend whereby users have moved from covertly protesting via a pseudonym to overtly doing so by using their names. An

example of the latter is the ongoing blogging by activist and North Africa Bureau Director of the American Islamic Congress Dalia Ziada. From the beginning, Ziada blogged using her name, advocating for change on the part of President Hosni Mubarak's regime. As part of her encouraging Egyptians to adopt nonviolent action methods, she garnered international attention after translating the story of American Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, nonviolent protest movement into Arabic in 2007.

Second to the above trend, there has also been a move from the use of social media to disseminate indirect to directly critical messages. Examples of the former can be found in lyrics to music on Facebook and YouTube like that shared by fans of the Egyptian singer, Hamza Namira. His song, "Dream With Me," officially released in January 2009, read as an allegory (or at least was attributed by fans as such). In the video for the song, the dreams of a boy coming of age are depicted, while Namira sang about tomorrow, explaining that "if it doesn't come . . . we will bring it ourselves." On the face of it, the song could therefore pass as addressing micro socioeconomic and human development-based growing concerns. His fans, however, read it as an allegory about the need for the Egyptian masses to rise up against Mubarak's state apparatus if the state did not reform itself.

On the opposite extreme, the sharing of overtly critical lyrics, is the song "President, the Homeland," sung by Tunisian rap artist El Général. In the song, El Général directly criticizes President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, addressing his words to "Mr. President" and referring to the state's leadership and Ben-Ali's wife's family, the Trabelsi elite, as "sons of bitches" who "steal in broad daylight, confiscate property, and own the land" and who have "robbed, dismembered, kidnapped and would not give up the seats [of power]." Continuing with his rhyme, he adds, "there is no one to tell them the word 'stop,' even the law that's in the constitution."

In an effort to bypass censorship, El Général clandestinely "published" this song on November 7, 2010, directly to Facebook. Thus, through the use of social media, he was able to disseminate the song and work to build a fan base and the associated discourse around his music's politically minded themes. As both these examples suggest, social media serve as important services for more widely and efficiently disseminating politically themed music. This is important, given that (as historian Mark LeVine has written) music (in particular, rap and heavy metal), have played important roles in providing vehicles for the dissemination of expressions of popular protest across these regions.

Women, Ethnopolitical Minorities, Nationalist Group

In yet other examples, rights-based organizations across these regions are using social media to advocate on behalf of specific causes like gender-based rights. One example is Meydaan, with a Web site that partners Iranians in Iran with those living in exile and/or the diaspora to campaign on behalf of women's rights. A second example makes use of music to advocate on behalf of women. It involved fans sharing the song by the Palestinian-Israeli band DAM via YouTube, "If I Could Go Back in Time" featuring Arab/Palestinian-Israeli singer Amal Murkus. The song critiqued honor crime-based violence against Palestinian women. Parenthetically, the song itself was criticized as neocolonial, and moreover, if framed in regional statistics establishing that the majority of regional crimes against woman are, in fact, not honor based, also illustrated cultural stereotyping about existing gender crimes. Nevertheless, the song provides an important example of uses of social media for the discussion of gender issues, including limits set on women's rights and opportunities.

Other popular rights-based uses to which social media have been put in these regions extend to the sharing of forms advocating on behalf of an expansion of the rights of state minorities and/or nationalist groups seeking expanded rights, self autonomy, and/or statehood. One example is the circulation of the song "Born Here," also by the Palestinian-Israeli band DAM. The song, which garnered the band international fame and was widely circulated, voiced Palestinian-Israeli state minority and Palestinian nationalist grievances in pursuit of equality and independence.

A second and technologically noteworthy example in this category is the sharing by (once) seminomadic Tuareg diaspora of their nationalist-themed music by blending older with newer social networking tools. Spread across Mali, Algeria, Libya, Burkina Faso, and Niger, and historically

having migrated through and across each of these states, as Baz Lecocq has described, the Tuareg developed a hybrid musical genre known as al-Guitara. Al-Guitara blends Dire Straights and Hendrix-styled rock guitar with Tuareg, in particular Algerian cultural styles, into a form most famously associated with the Malian Tuareg band Tinariwen. Tinariwen's songs express Tuareg consternation with the presumed dichotomies and foreign policies of both Arabs and the West, and the feeling of displacement by the two, in particular in Mali. They expressed a desire to reunite and liberate themselves from both. Their music parallels the 2012 self-declared independence of the state of Azawad in northern Mali.

Importantly, such hybrid al-guitara music circulates via hand-delivered mobile-to-mobile phone SIM card exchanges. That is, via the combination of "old" face-to-face networking and data uploaded and stored to SIM cards, Tuareg musical protests are exchanged in and across vast stretches of the Sahara desert where Wi-Fi capability is unavailable. The result is that the construction and circulation of this musical style preserves, stores and archives Tuareg culture, and provides the soundtrack for their political protest. Most notably, it illustrates both a genre and form that it powerful enough to transcend the very erection of Saharan imposed state borders. That is, it has cut across state borders and politics to the end of having reconfigured the very meaning of the so-called MENA or Middle East and north African regions. As a result, it necessarily alters discussion of just what is meant by politics in the MENA and Gulf, thereby calling into question a need to include the borderlands region between North and sub-Saharan Africa, or the Saharan region into such discussions.

Lastly, two gamers partnered together to create the first ever Arab-themed browser-based massively multiplayer online game (MMOG). They did so, according to the two, to educate and engage in pan-Arab and global networking. The two gamers, Vince Ghossoub and Radwan Kasmiya, of Lebanese and Syrian heritage, respectively, and based in China, created the critically acclaimed MMOG, *Knights of Glory*. *Knights of Glory* serves to bring the online gaming community together to educate players about Arab history, and in particular Arab conquest of the Persian and Byzantine empires. Its aims summarize debates over the naming of the Middle Eastern Gulf.

Social Media Networking Impact?

Whether all these examples are creating regional change is, however, unclear. The Project on Information Technology and Political Islam at the University of Washington, directed by Phillip N. Howard, hosts data demonstrating correlations between online and offline networking. For example, it found that blogs discussing Ben Ali's leadership and "revolution," and to a lesser extent, "liberty" and "economics," peaked with an increase in the size of street demonstrations in Tunisia during the Jasmine Revolution. Likewise, tweet flows that transmitted a "freedom meme" in which people adapted the meaning of the revolutionary successes from Tunisia and Egypt to their experiences, increased across states in parallel with the contagion in street protests. Whether the relationship was causal is a separate matter. Notably, bread-based street protests across these regions transpired long before social media ever came into existence.

However, the uses of social media have, nevertheless, stirred fears of change. As a result, governments and concerned others have responded by creating legal and/or technological firewalls to stifle the channeling of expression and/or protest through them. States have expanded their press laws to include online legal firewalls. Thus, in one example, a 2012 Jordanian law now requires all news Web site owners to obtain accreditation, and holds them responsible for content posted to their sites, including externally posted user comments. The law, requiring them to vet all opinions and commentaries, brings reporting via social media in line with already existing restrictions on legacy news reporting. Second, it stipulates that non-Jordanian-based news sites that do not abide by these laws could be banned from the country. The Jordanian online community has, as a result, expressed concern about how widely and extensively this law will be applied.

More broadly, another concern for those reliant on social media to freely express themselves is the widespread existence of morality laws across the MENA and Gulf. As one case in point, in March 2012, the judge for a case involving the Facebook posting by Tunisians Jaebur Mejri

and Ghazi Bej of naked caricatures of the Islamic Prophet Mohammed handed out the maximum penalty allowed under Tunisian law, namely a total of seven and a half years imprisonment. The two were sentenced for "violating morality" and "disturbing public order." Regionally, such legalities concerning morality versus freedom of expression are situated at opposite ends of a debate in a manner that parallels debates elsewhere regarding what content constitutes incitement, and is, therefore, not permissible under freedom of expression safeguards.

In other cases, states have shut down online access by closing off individual parts of a country, or by shutting down specific sites and/or simply shutting down access to the World Wide Web altogether. As examples, following the posting of the YouTube film *The Innocence of Muslims*, Egyptian state courts ruled that the film breached morality laws for defaming the Prophet Mohammed, and depicting Islam negatively. As a result, they asked Google to remove the film. Since Google declined, the courts ruled that YouTube should be banned. As a result, YouTube was closed for one month in Egypt. In another case, on November 29, 2012, rather than cutting off a specific site or section of the country, Syria cut off all access to the Internet, in effect removing the Syrian state from existence in cyberspace for two days (along with the 23 percent of its online population). Concerned about the leak of information critical of the regime during the ongoing civil war, the state chose this option, and closed all phone services to at least try to retain control over the media front of the war.

In other cases, rather than restricting access to the Internet or specific sights, governments have maintained site or networking viability in order to track and monitor activists' movements. One example was the alleged use by the United Arab Emirates' government of the FinFisher Trojan spyware to track Emirati rights activist Ahmed Mansoor on his mobile phone. Mansour was thereafter physically assaulted, potentially in connection with his movements having been revealed by FinFisher.

It is not only state authorities who have closed or hacked social networking sites, or civil society members who have been their targets. For example, the loosely affiliated and assumedly civil society members of Anonymous hactivists hacked into the Israel Defense Forces Web site, taking down a blog page as part of Anonymous's denial-of-service hacking program. In that instance, they did so as part of the escalation in conflict between Israelis and Palestinians in November of 2012. Likewise, states have presumably targeted one another, as in the case of the Stuxnet virus that disrupted Iran's Natanz nuclear facilities operations. According to many media reports, Stuxnet was created by the United States as part of its Olympic Games cyberweapons program, together with Israel. Media sources further reported that, in order to upload the program the two combined their newer digital networking capabilities with old hand-to-hand sociality, namely by making use of a person with a USB thumb drive. Once uploaded, the worm's end-result, however, was not just virtual. Stuxnet physically disabled the Iranian facility's centrifuge operations, thereby slowing down Iran's nuclear program.

At the same time, targets of these disruptions, whether governments, activists, or just audiences in pursuit of entertainment, manage to circumvent social media use limits. As one example, using technical knowhow, Iranian fans of the Iranian American television show *Parazit* found ways to bypass the state and tune into the otherwise blocked and widely popular series. *Parazit*, produced by Voice of America (VOA)–based operations in Washington, D.C., and created by Iranian expats Kambiz Hosseini and Saman Arbabi in 2008, aimed to foster democratization and mock Iranian state politics by making fun of President Ahmadinejad and other members of the Iranian political elite, like the Green Movement.

Following unrest surrounding the 2009 presidential elections dissemination platforms for the series evaporated. The state confiscated satellite dishes on which the series could be viewed. Additionally, it used smart filters to shut down Web sites critical of it, including that of the VOA's Persian News Network, otherwise accessible to the 21 percent of Iran's online population. Unable to tune in, fans instead tuned in via proxy servers, for example via Facebook. When the state, however, also shutdown Facebook (as it has, on again and off again), fans simply skipped around via a cat-and-mouse-like game to continue to upload and download via new proxy locations.

Whether the above outlined efforts are having a direct impact on regional politics or not remains unclear. The majority of the peoples of these regions remain offline, with many of these efforts instead being targeted to international audiences (whether by their choice to opt for social over older media, whose penetration rates remain higher, and/or by choosing to use English over local languages). Therefore, it may be more useful to consider the expression channeled through social media as a barometer of regional public opinion. That is, since most regional public social networking today is operated by young people, and demographically they represent the majority of the population in most states, and in some, even a vast majority, their expressions provide key insights into regional political opinion. Moreover, since young people under the age of 18 are not counted, neither in so-called public opinion polls or elections, and regardless of however circumscribed an impact elections arguably have on governance in what is the most common form of government in existence across these regions, namely anocracies (middling autocratic-democratic systems), the contents channeled through social media today, therefore, prove invaluable for illuminating and understanding Middle Eastern, north African, and Gulf popular opinion and politics, together with the very definition of where these regions begin and end.

Yael Warshel
University of California, Los Angeles

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Africa, north; Arab Spring; Artists and Social Media in Politics; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Digital Diplomacy; *Innocence of Muslims, The*; Mamfakinch; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security.

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Military-Industrial Complex

President Dwight D. Eisenhower warned against the military-industrial complex in his 1961 farewell address, perhaps the most famous such address since George Washington's. Eisenhower feared that the mounting costs of the Cold War threatened America's future. He saw the emergence of a cozy alliance of defense contractors, military leaders, federally funded scientists and universities, and congressional members who used the Cold War as a justification for military expenditures not essential to national security. Eisenhower acknowledged the need for strong defense, but he also saw that vital social programs such as education and medical care might lose out to the demands of the war industry.

Eisenhower urged the nation to recognize that its economic strength was as vital as its military might

to national defense. The military-industrial complex could undermine democracy. He did not fear the existence of the military-industrial complex, but the possibility that it would abuse its power. It might become so strong that it would resist civilian control. Eisenhower's speech was at least in part a reaction to the election of John F. Kennedy, who had promised to significantly increase defense expenditures and strengthen America's nuclear deterrence during the 1960 presidential campaign.

Modern Industrialized Warfare

The need for a permanent defense industry did not emerge until the late 19th century, when weaponry became so complex that it needed an industrial base for development and production. Once President Theodore Roosevelt decided to create a global navy, a separate defense industrial plant was required. Complex weapon systems needed specialized skills, knowledge, and equipment to manufacture them. Civilian factories no longer could be expected to ramp up to production in time to meet the demands of modern warfare. The technologies, industrial plants, and formal coordination of planning between civilian and military leaders necessitated ongoing programs.

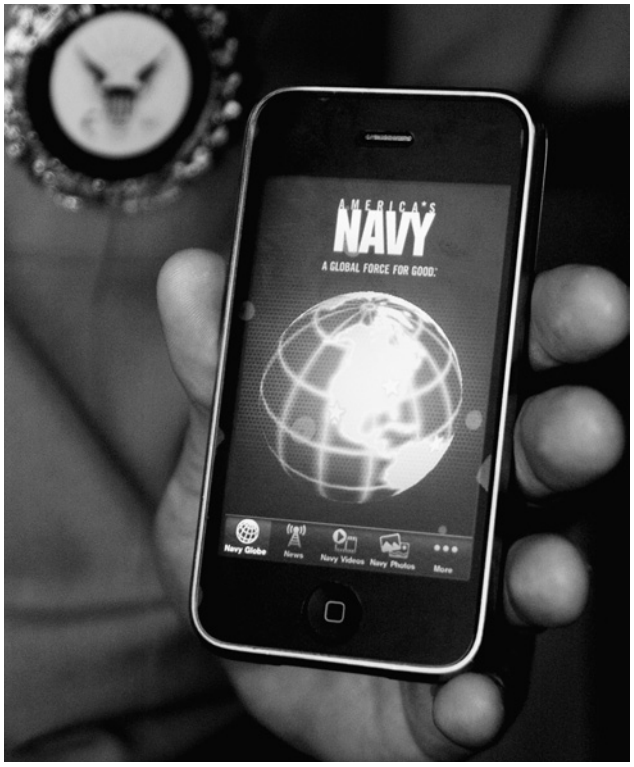
President Harry S. Truman's doctrine of communist containment after World War II prompted the Department of Defense to develop nuclear and conventional arms capable of deterring the Soviet Union and its communist allies. The Cold War was a 45-year era of tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. The two superpowers sometimes tested each other, occasionally threatened each other, and were always posed for the outbreak of war. Some critics of the military-industrial complex were concerned that Cold War fears were elevated by those who thought they would reap the benefits of increased defense expenditures, heightening Cold War tensions between the superpowers, rather than reducing them. Others feared that the undue emphasis on empire building through weapons programs would distort the professionalism of the military, tempting officers to focus on advancing their careers through big weapons projects.

Many critics pointed to the practice of "cost-plus" contracts as the cause of defense overspending. Corporations allegedly offered to produce a weapon at a cost significantly lower than it would cost to produce, confident that the military would ask for additions or modifications that would generate large profits. Members of Congress resisted cutbacks to such programs because jobs in their districts or states might also be cut. The procurement and development process stretches over so many years that programs such as the V-22 Osprey vertical takeoff aircraft stayed alive, despite efforts to close them, because they became too big to allow to fail, a perfect example of investment expectation in action. Defenders of these programs responded that the Soviet threat was genuine, and that only a robust military, equipped with the best arms available, would deter Soviet aggression. While acknowledging that defense spending may aggravate Cold War tensions, they insisted that such spending neither caused nor prevented resolving the tensions. Justifications for a permanent war industry also used the language of economic stimulus to argue that funding such programs increased employment and prosperity.

Today's Military-Industrial Complex

Concerns about the military-industrial complex ebbed as defense expenditures slowly dropped from 10 percent of the gross national product during the 1950s to 3 percent in the 2000s. There has been, however, a significant increase in defense and intelligence expenditures since the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States. During President Barack Obama's first term (2009–13), expenditures for national defense and intelligence more than doubled. The United States is the world's leading exporter of military systems, selling tanks, aircraft, missiles, and the support programs necessary to maintain them.

The interlocking interests of large corporations, high-ranking military officers, and members of Congress help explain the persistence of the military-industrial complex. The rise of think tanks such as the Rand Corporation and corporations focused almost exclusively on serving the military's needs, such as Lockheed Martin and Raytheon, created another set of economic interests that promoted investments in defense. They sought to persuade members of Congress to support defense spending through campaign contributions and lobbying. They located their plants to maximize their leverage with members of Congress representing those locations. The building or expansion of military bases in key states such



The U.S. Navy's "America's Navy" iPhone application was released in August 2010. It was created through the work of the Navy Recruiting Command and the advertising and marketing agency Campbell E-Wald.

as California and Texas, and the intentional distribution of defense contracts in many congressional districts, produced vested interests in Congress supporting and defending a large military budget. They donated to research institutes that then advocated policies such as regime change in Iraq that benefited company sales.

These coalitions of mutually interested groups create a "revolving door" employment system, where military and public officials move into jobs in the defense industry while members of the industry move into the government's bureaucracy. A high percentage of retired military colonels and generals work in the very defense industries they once supervised as officers.

Three striking changes in the military-industrial complex occurred in the late 20th century. The first was the transformation of leading defense corporations such as Lockheed Martin into intelligence and security companies, moving away from the military aerospace niche they once occupied. For example, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) funds a Lockheed Martin project to make battlefield intelligence faster and more reliable. The Social Security Administration paid the company to modernize the processing of disability claims. Lockheed Martin is still the nation's largest weapons contractor, receiving roughly $1 out of every $10 spent by the Pentagon.

The second significant change is the privatization of combat and support represented by such firms as Blackwater (now Xe) and Halliburton. Companies now supply skills and services that once were the domain of national militaries. They provide trained combat squads, security details, and strategic advice to generals in the field. Support firms such as Brown and Root build and maintain military installations, provide expert consultants for training programs, and furnish other specialized military services.

The final change is the erosion of the sharp divide between civilian and military manufacturing. Military research and development programs helped to create leading-edge software and components that, through mass production, become embedded in civilian products such as the cell phone, the Internet, and global positioning systems. Military technology also successfully landed a man on the moon and helped develop modern digital computers. Now, the defense system depends on the same civilian industries that produce microprocessors and chips for the civilian market to manufacture the components that power high-tech weaponry such as smart bombs and drones.

Military–Industrial–Social Media Complex?

Defense contractors and Pentagon media bureaus work with their personnel and friendly journalists in the outside media to protect the dependent relationship between the nation's industries and the military. Businesses offer defense contractors the ability to use social media, not only to recruit employees and gain business, but also to rebut critics and stimulate support for increased military spending. The armed services and the Defense Department have outsourced some of their social media monitoring to private contractors.

The U.S. Army and Air Force have been especially effective in using social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Pinterest to

champion their causes. They have been adept at posting content appropriate to each forum, such as hard news on Twitter, heroic military action photos on Flickr, recruiting videos on YouTube, and even pastry recipes on Pinterest. They know how to strategically add new content so as not to overload or bore followers.

The official U.S. Army social media guide states that social media have become an integral part of all the branches of the Defense Department. The third edition of the guide discusses the appropriate use of missing-in-action and killed-in-action notices posted on social media, security concerns about social networking, and how to use Facebook and social media sites to present the U.S. Army's official position on issues. The U.S. Army has 124,000 followers on Twitter, almost 1.2 million likes on Facebook, and over 2,500 subscribers on YouTube. The U.S. Air Force has a prominent social media presence. It experienced a 140,000 increase in Facebook fans in March 2012. Its Twitter account recorded over 90,000 fans in one month in 2012.

The Pentagon is concerned about how real or potential enemies may use social media to wage a propaganda war against the United States. Its social media in strategic communication program seeks to monitor social media conversations in real time in order to protect troops deployed in war zones. Such programs counter enemy propaganda by using multiple accounts with different aliases, so-called sockpuppets, to make online contacts on Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, and other social media sites used in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The U.S. Navy granted Lockheed Martin a three-year contract in 2012 to monitor social media in order to gauge public sentiment. Lockheed Martin's Advanced Technology Lab tracks and analyzes tweets to monitor social disorder and conflict. The Pentagon's Digital Engagement Team challenges militant messages on Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and online news sites by placing false articles intended to mislead readers on Arabic social media sites. Apparently Defense Intelligence Agency analysts have been unknowingly passed on as real news to the White House false articles planted by other U.S. agencies.

In December 2011, new sources revealed that the Defense Department used software to monitor Twitter discussions about WikiLeaks. A U.S. Army private allegedly sent classified diplomatic documents to WikiLeaks, and WikiLeaks in turn released them to news agencies and on the Internet.

Members of the military-industrial complex aggressively use social media to gain entry into sites that criticize it; however, entry comes with a cost. Social media can open the complex to the scrutiny of suspicious users such as WikiLeaks. Just as modern technology is changing the military-industrial complex, social media may begin to change it as well.

Timothy J. O'Neill
Southwestern University

See Also: Cyber-Jihad; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Pentagon Digital Engagement Team; Sockpuppets; Spending and Debt, Government; United States; U.S. Pentagon Social Media in Strategic Communications Program; WikiLeaks.

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Minimal Effects Theory

The minimal effects hypothesis states that political campaigns only marginally persuade and convert voters. The hypothesis was formulated during early research into electoral behavior

between the 1940s and the 1960s. The hypothesis seemed solid and was associated with the general assumption that voters had clear positions on issues and knew where candidates stood on these issues. Since then, the minimal effects hypothesis has been criticized and empirical research since the 1980s has suggested that voters have uncertainties about candidates' positions, and these uncertainties influence voters' decisions. These findings have led to renewed interest in research into the effects of campaigns, with recent published research appearing both for and against the minimal effects hypothesis. Although research into social media is not extensive, recent studies confirm the legitimacy of the minimal effects theory when testing social media during presidential campaigns.

Paul Lazarsfeld and his collaborators at Columbia University opened a new era of thinking by rejecting the old hypothesis that the media have great power. The minimal-effects terminology comes from the seminal review and summarization of research to date: *The Effects of Mass Communication*, published in 1960 by Lazarsfeld's student, Joseph Klapper. Although Klapper never used the phrase "minimal effects" in the book, the key findings were that only a tiny fraction of voters actually change their vote intentions during an election campaign, that audience motivation and prior beliefs influence the interpretation of persuasive messages, and that messages are often discussed among opinion leaders and friends, leading to mediation via two-step flow, as the narrative is told, reinforcing this minimal-effects conclusion.

Assuming that people are more detached from social institutions that used to provide shared interpretative context, and that information channels proliferated and became more individualized, media effects on people's opinions are minimized and dependent on a largely unknown set of factors. As receivers exercise greater choice over both the content of messages and media sources, effects become increasingly difficult to produce and measure in the aggregate, creating new challenges for theory and research.

Before Lazarsfeld's study, the idea was that media overwhelms people and causes people to withdraw from issues. After his contribution, a new generation of scholars sought to justify the discipline and to demonstrate significant effects through new theories, better measurement tools, and improved methodological designs. Various scholars, such as McCombs and Shaw, hypothesized "not so minimal effects," or demonstrated that if the media could not tell you what to think, they were "stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about."

The polarity between minimal effects and big effects continued as a central thematic, but it gradually lost its appeal by the early 1970s. Current media research has upended the minimal effects theory through the identification of a broader scope of possible effects, such as influence on attitude and knowledge. Iyengar and Simon identify distinct roles of the media that influence the audience. These media effects are now widely addressed in the communication, public opinion, and political science literature under general headings such as information dissemination, priming, agenda setting, and framing.

Social media services, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, FourSquare, Youtube, or Flickr, provide a platform to create online communities to connect people and share information. Because they are also driving forces for transforming citizens, data, and government models, Hong and Nadler undertook an empirical study of measuring the impact of social media use in presidential candidates.

They tested two competing theories of media's effect—the "minimal effects hypothesis," which claims that the competitive edge of a media or technology is minimized as adoptions spread, and the other hypothesis where the media can control, frame, or influence public opinions. They defined the concept of "candidate salience" as the extent to which candidates are discussed online by the public in an election campaign. They quantified this salience by counting the number of mentions that presidential candidates receive on the Twitter social media site. The results showed that high levels of social media activity on the part of presidential candidates (candidates' level of engagement) show the minimal effects theory on the amount of public attention they receive online, even though social media substantially expand the possible modes and methods of election campaigning.

Marco Morini
Macquarie University

See Also: Communication; Network Influentials; News Media; Opinion Leader Theory.

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MIT Center for Civic Media

Originally proposed by Henry Jenkins (director of the MIT Comparative Media Studies Program), Mitchel Resnick (professor of learning research at the MIT Media Laboratory), and Chris Csikszentmihályi (Muriel R. Cooper Associate Professor of Media Arts and Science), and located on the campus of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the Center for Civic Media (CCM) is the product of a joint endeavor between the MIT Media Lab and the Comparative Media Studies (CMS) Program.

Seen as a bridge between the Media Lab (which focuses on the development of future technologies), and CMS (which focuses on the identification and critical assessment of technical and social systems that provide the infrastructure of globally and domestically dispersed communities, that is, virtual communities), the CCM provides a space for the investigation and engagement of civic journalism tools and practices as they pertain to a variety of diverse populations. Operating from a platform that is bolstered by the fusion of the ideal of transforming civic knowledge into social action via new media technologies, and the concept of a fifth estate, defined as a space in which all have equal opportunity to share and exchange knowledge, experience, and expertise, CCM is an international hub of new media research, design, and practice.

The original motivation for establishing CCM is multifaceted and founded on the lessons learned about the power of Internet-based political discourse and grassroots activities during the 2006 election season. The disembodied communication that the Internet facilitated during the 2006 election attested to the global transformative nature of such communication and accompanying virtual communities it established. To better understand, harness, and develop such activities and the tools that facilitated them, the CCM (so named to denote an emphasis on any communication practices that strengthen social bonds among and between community members) was envisioned as providing a space in which collaborations between scholars, practitioners, students, and communities would take place in an effort to do the following:

- Revitalize citizen-driven engagement with their governments and with each other, utilizing new media.
- Assist professional journalists in developing contemporary new media–driven communication models in service of their local constituency.
- Provide local communities with a chance to learn about and deploy new forms of civic media that rely on collaborative partnerships between citizens and public and private bodies.

To realize these goals, a threefold plan of action currently undergirds the activities of CCM. Through engagement of select communities with MIT faculty, postdoctoral students, an administrator, and select group of undergraduates, three main deliverables drive the center's daily practices. Specifically, the deliverables are as follows:

- Develop new media technologies to support and facilitate civic journalism.
- Serve as an international hub for critical study and discussion of civic media tools and practices.
- Organize community-based "test-beds" (i.e., development of innovative

technology-driven models of community outreach, communication, and engagement).

As a product of collaboration between the world leaders of citizen-empowered political technologies, MIT's CCM has evolved into a center responsible for developing, critically assessing, and documenting emerging technologies that aid in both facilitating civic journalism and actuating grassroots political movements and activity. Through the use of a variety of channels (including forums and presentations), resources, and experimentation, CCM actively engages with local communities via a "hand-in-hand" approach, with the goal of community partnerships that result in facilitating what it calls the "creat[ion], design, deploy[ment], and assess[ment]" of innovative, technology-rich tools and practices that continuously emerge and affect contemporary society. For example, the CCM has experimented with technologies involved with civil disobedience and phone texting, both of which have a high impact on daily social activities. Such experimentation fuels a fusion between the creation of theoretical frameworks and practical application, which is evidenced in the curriculum, activities, and communication models generated and documented by the center to date.

Nicole E. Snell
Bentley University

See Also: Citizen Journalism; Legacy Media/Old Media; MIT Media Lab; News Media; Oxford Internet Institute.

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MIT Media Lab

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Media Lab was founded in 1985 by Professor Nicholas Negroponte and Jerome Wiesner, professor and the science advisor to President John F. Kennedy. The Media Lab is a degree-granting program within the School of Architecture and Planning at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It offers a degree in media arts and science, and is also a stand-alone research program. The lab originally developed from the Machine Group within the School of Architecture.

The current director of the lab, Joichi Ito, was appointed in 2012. The annual operating budget is approximately $35 million. Funding for the Media Lab comes from more than 70 corporate sponsors at three different levels. It offers masters and doctoral degrees, but undergraduate students also participate through a research opportunity program. There are 26 different research groups. As of 2012, research is focused on autism and communication technology, the Center for Civic Media, the Center for Mobile Learning, the Center for Future Storytelling, and Consumer Electronics 2.0.

The idea for the Media Lab was conceived in 1980 by cofounder Negroponte. It is known for its interdisciplinary, even antidisciplinary approach to technology, computing, robotics, and machines. Participants are encouraged to draw from any and all areas of interest. In its first decade, research at the Media Lab focused on the digital, specifically in terms of cognition and learning, electronic music, and holography as they related to computing. During the 1990s, the lab's work was particularly well known, and it profited from the technology boom. The focus was on how computing had become part of everyday life, how bits of the digital are embedded into the physical world, such as: wearable computing, wireless communications, machines with common sense, new forms of artistic expression, and new approaches to how children learn.

Approximately 130 start-ups and companies have developed and spun off from the MIT Media Lab. Some key inventions that developed from Media Lab research include the electronic ink technology used by electronic readers such as the Amazon Kindle, Sony Reader, or Barnes & Noble nook; One Laptop Per Child; the game *Guitar*

Children in a school in Peru in 2008 experiment with a laptop from the One Laptop Per Child program, which benefitted from technology originally developed at the MIT Media Lab.

Hero; LEGO Mindstorms; CityCar, a foldable, stackable electric car branded as the Hiriko in Spain; and BiOM, the first bionic lower-leg system for amputees. Researchers who are full members of the Media Lab can share in its intellectual property without paying a license or royalty fee. Nonmembers may use developments two years after the patent or copyright has been filed.

The Center for Civic Media is a joint effort with the MIT Comparative Media Studies Program. It is currently directed by Ethan Zuckerman, author of *Rewire: Digital Cosmopolitans in the Age of Connection* (2013). It defines civic media as any type of communication that strengthens the social connections within a community or develops a sense of civic engagement among the residents of the community. They suggest that transforming civic knowledge into civic action is a necessary part of democracy, so they research and experiment with technologies that might be used for protests, civil disobedience, or instant voting. Members of the Civic Media Team publish academic articles on media and social movements focusing on regions around the world. Publications focus on issues such as Oaxacan peoples' movements, the Occupy movement, same-sex marriage, youth social movements, and immigrants' rights. The center also offers six courses, including those focused on: news and participatory media, networked social movements, and social television.

Nicholas Negroponte (director from 1985 to 2000), professor of media arts and sciences, graduated from MIT, and has been a faculty member there since 1966. He is also the founder and chair of One Laptop Per Child, a nonprofit association that provides children in developing countries with a durable and very affordable laptop that can connect to the Internet while using limited power. Negroponte is author of *Being Digital* (1995), a compilation of 18 articles he originally wrote as columns for *Wired* magazine, of which he was the first investor. Walter Bender (director from 2000 to 2006) was a founding member of the Media Lab and the head of MIT Media Lab's Electronic Publishing Group, founded in 1978. He held the Alexander W. Dreyfoos Chair and was a professor in the Architecture Machine Group. He also founded Sugar Labs, which developed the learning platform for One Laptop Per Child, but runs on most computers as an alternative to traditional office desktop software.

Frank Moss (director from 2006 to 2011) is professor of the practice of media arts and sciences at MIT. He expanded the lab's reputation for doing practical work, researching ways that technology could be applied to help manage health and cope with illness, disability, and the aging process. During his tenure, the lab also drew on the work of product designers, nanotechnologists, and data visualization work. Joi Ito (current director since 2012) is the fourth director of the Media Lab, and is a Japanese venture capitalist. He briefly studied computer science at Tufts University, and physics at the University of Chicago, but does not have an academic degree. Ito has served as a board member of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), and has invested in technology start-up companies such as Flickr and Twitter. He assisted in developing the first commercial

Internet service provider in Japan, and is the cofounder and chair of Creative Commons.

Deborah Gambs
City University of New York

See Also: Education, Issues in; MIT Center for Civic Media; Technology Diffusion Paradigm.

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Mobile Apps

Mobile apps, or mobile applications, are application software designed to run on smartphones, computer tablet, or laptop computers. They may be preinstalled during the manufacturing process, or can be downloaded from various application distribution platforms. Apps assist with specific user tasks such as reading e-mail, the newspaper, e-books, playing games, or making contact on social networking sites.

Some apps are free, whereas others are costly. For apps that cost money, 20 to 30 percent of the revenue goes to the distributor of the app, such as iTunes. The remainder goes to the producer of the app, such as Google. Apps may purchased, downloaded, or updated through the following distributors: the Apple app store, Google Play, the Blackberry app world, the Amazon appstore, the Android market, the Windows phone market place and the Nokia Store. The Apple app store offers downloads from the Apple iTunes Web site. The Amazon app store sells apps for the Google Android operating system. Google Play is an online store available internationally. It sells apps developed by Google specifically for Android devices.

Blackberry app world sells apps for Blackberry mobile phones, including third-party applications. The Windows phone marketplace is a service provided by Microsoft for its Windows 7 platform. The Nokia store is an app store primarily for the Nokia phone. It was launched in May 2009, and uses the Windows Phone 7 operating system. The seven leading mobile platforms include Apple, Android, Research in Motion, Microsoft, Nokia/Intellisync, Sybase, and Java Platform in Micro Edition. Research in Motion both develops and produces the Blackberry.

Social Media Apps

The apps for Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and Myspace have become a conduit for discussing politics, both nationally and internationally. Politicians use social media to remain visible to constituents and build support. Voters can support their favorite candidate through text messaging, instant messaging, and e-mail. Fundraising can also be initiated through text messaging, Facebook, and Twitter. Candidates use Twitter for broadcasting messages to their constituents, and sometimes for challenging an opponent. Social media apps for mobile phones have changed traditional patterns in American politics, allowing campaigning to be done online.

Facebook and Twitter are also important to political movements in the Arab world. Social media have played a central role in allowing activists to organize protests, promote rebellion, and attempt to overthrow dictatorships. Facebook has been used to create an interactive relationship with the masses and to voice protest against authoritarian regimes.

In Syria, three months after the citizens were granted open access to the Internet and social media, the government attempted to restrict it again. It was discovered that these sites were being used to promote rebellion. After the military crackdown, social media sites were used to draw attention to the situation. In Tunisia and Egypt, social media apps were used to organize and sustain demonstrations meant to overthrow an authoritarian regime. They were particularly effective in attracting droves of young people. Mobile apps have made it easier for dissidents to communicate because instead of using a full-fledged computer, one can use a low-cost portable device such as a mobile phone or tablet in conjunction with apps customized for these devices.

Social media apps have also changed the way in which people access information. Due to the opt-in nature of social media, users receive information from people they know and see as trusted sources. Thus, the information obtained through social media applications might have more of an impact than the same information obtained from the traditional media. Users feel closer to, and thus place more trust in, the opinions of those in their network, rather than messages from government leaders. This might contribute to the power of social media use in helping topple authoritarian regimes. As a result, social media applications have revolutionized politics, both abroad and in the United States.

Shirley Crawley
Western Connecticut University

See Also: Arab Spring; HootSuite.com; Mobile/Smartphone Messaging; Obama for America iPhone Application; Platform; Siri; Skype.

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Mobile Connectivity, Trends in Politics and

Inspired by his vision of humankind as "fundamentally, inherently mobile," and by Captain Kirk's gold flip-top "communicator" on *Star Trek*, Motorola engineer Dr. Martin Cooper shaped mobile telephony history on April 3, 1973, when he made a call on the world's first handheld mobile telephone. Forty years later Mr. Cooper, now aged 84, is one of 6 billion cellphone owners, millions of whom use cellphones and other mobile devices in all areas of politics, from fundraising for political candidates to monitoring election results.

Some of the earliest examples of mobile connectivity in U.S. political campaigns occurred in the lead-up to the 2004 elections. Because the uptake of cellphones at that time was greatest among young adults, grassroots groups such as Rock the Vote targeted 18 to 25 year olds with text messages to inform them about voter registration procedures and deadlines, engage them in political issues that affected them, and mobilize them to volunteer for campaigns of their chosen candidates and causes.

In the following two years, Working Assets and Mobile Voter, and their affiliate organization govote.org, conducted text-based voter registration campaigns. Student Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs), nonpartisan organizations that address concerns related to the environment, consumer protection, and government reform conducted face-to-face on-campus, online, and text campaigns that resulted in 75,000 young adults registering to vote in the 2006 elections. Follow-up research indicated that a text message from Working Assets and Student PIRGs on Election Day in 2006 increased the likelihood that young adults would vote by approximately 3 percentage points, and during the 2008 primaries, young people were 4 percentage points more likely to turn in voter registration forms after receiving a text message reminder from Rock the Vote.

Engaging young voters also had early successes abroad as well. In one of the first examples of young people creatively using mobile phones in an election period, a ringtone made from a clip of an intercepted wiretapped telephone conversation between Filipino President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and an electoral commissioner, brought widespread attention to the president's attempts to influence results of the 2004 election. Also that year, in the general election in Spain, a text message campaign encouraging young adults to vote for the Spanish Socialist Labor Party was likely the key catalyst for the party's surprise

victory. Peer-to-peer text messaging has also been extremely influential in mobilizing political causes, from the Arab Spring citizen uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and elsewhere in the Middle East and north Africa to flash mobs and protest rallies in Korea and China.

By 2005, mobile delivery of news had grown tremendously. United Kingdom (UK) mobile phone customers accessing news services doubled from 2004 to 2005, by which time 5 million pages of news and information were being accessed in the UK each week through mobile devices. The BBC established a text news update service in April 2005 for the May election.

From then on, mobile-delivered political news offered an immediacy previously unseen, particularly on election night. In the 2010 midterm U.S. elections, the first iPhone app for local TV news stations was released. Preparing for the 2012 election, news organizations consulted mobile app experts to determine how to best optimize election news content to maximize users' experience through push notifications and interactive results maps. Mobile page views of 2012 election results, compared to those during election night 2010, increased by 350 percent.

Mobile Trends in the Global South

While these figures illustrate substantial mobile growth in the United States and western Europe, mobile trends are the most remarkable in emerging regions. In most newly industrializing regions, cellphones are far easier and cheaper to obtain and use, and, often more pervasive than Internet access. Many areas in the global south that are now covered by cellphone networks were never connected to landlines; thus, cellphones are the only means for one-on-one communication. Further, given vast increases in mobile broadband expansion, defined as high-speed access to the Internet and other data services over mobile networks, mobile communication is changing politics throughout the global south.

In what is considered the first "mass mobile phone" elections in India, the 2007 state elections in Uttar Pradesh saw a shift in caste identity negotiations. The Bahujan (meaning "people in majority") Samaj Party (BSP) that has historically drawn a loyal voter base from the Dalit (the ex-Untouchable, or Scheduled caste), was able to cooperate with Brahmins by using cellphones to directly communicate with voters who had historically been influenced by a hostile mainstream media. The party used mobile telephony to reach a constituency of poorer voters who were limited in their ability to travel or receive information.

In Haiti, where 75 percent of citizens use cellphones, voters use their phones to obtain location-specific campaign and polling information and confirm their voter registration status. Use of mobile telephony was particularly helpful in organizing the November elections following the January 12, 2010, earthquake that killed a quarter of a million people, displaced 1.5 million, and left the capital Port-au-Prince in ruins and the Haitian government in disarray.

Political Accountability

Along with new ways to engage citizens in elections, mobile communication is also beneficial to enhance political accountability and reduce election fraud in the global south. Citizens with camera cellphones now monitor elections outside voting locations, scrutinize conduct of persons entering and leaving voting sites to detect possible theft of ballots, take pictures of posted local election results, and submit the images to watchdog groups and analysts.

Across the African continent, where mobile adoption increased by 550 percent between 2004 and 2009, the cellphone market is the fastest growing in the world. Given the estimated 732 million subscribers in 2012 in Africa, mobile telephony across the continent and in other emerging regions, provides opportunities to reach the broadest number of citizens during electoral periods. Researchers found cellphone usage in Mozambique and Namibia enhanced voter education and participation in provincial and national politics, improved electoral processes, augmented demand for reducing corruption, and increased political accountability. New research has found challenges, however. Whereas the vast uptake of mobile telephony can improve political accountability, it can also facilitate politicized violence.

Future Trends

There have been numerous demands for mobile voting. In the Czech Republic, for example, research reported that 55 percent of Czech nonvoters say

they would cast a ballot if they could vote via mobile phones, which would add 500,000 voters in Czech elections. Numerous municipalities have used Internet voting in municipal elections in Canada. Estonia, where citizens hold national smartcard IDs, has offered online voting since 2007.

Anonymous routing protocols, called shuffles, are currently in development for possible e-voting in the future. Through the protocol, voters encrypt their ballots and submit the encrypted ciphertexts to one of a team of vote talliers who then set up an anonymous network, shuffle encrypted votes, decrypt ciphertexts, and recover votes. E-voting confidentially would be guaranteed because at least one member of the tallying team conceals the permutation used in the shuffling process, eliminating chances of ballots being traced back to specific voters.

Given, as of May 2013, the Pew Internet and American Life Project reports 91 percent of U.S. adults have a cellphone and 56 percent have a smartphone, mobile voting will see increasing demand. However, with 4,600 voting jurisdictions in the United States, diverse election methods and procedures, and concerns of voter validation, e-voting technology may well be in place long before mobile voting policies would be implemented.

Lara Lengel
Bowling Green State University

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, (2012); Developing Nations; Geo-Locational Enabling; Get Out The Vote Drives; Mobile Apps; Mobile/Smartphone Messaging; Obama for America iPhone Application; Poverty; Rock the Vote; Voter Turnout; Youth Engagement.

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Mobile Media User Data Collection and Privacy Protection

Both commercial and political decisions increasingly rest on data analytics and predictive algorithms provided by mining increasingly large databases of user-generated data. Mobile data collection raises privacy concerns that are to a certain extent common to those prompted by data collection in online environments, but are also medium-specific. However, debates about the nature of harm derived from privacy violations run counter to the claim that users willingly give up personal information in return for benefits, such as free access to social media platforms. The new privacy landscape is yet unsettled, although it is not expected to depart significantly from the traditional "notice and choice" approach common to privacy regulations in both the United States and the European Union.

In both online and mobile environments, phenomena such as behavioral advertising (the targeting of consumers based on the recording and

analysis of their past behavior, including combinations of Internet-based, mobile, and offline behaviors) or large-platform user data collection and third-party data sharing have prompted concerns about (1) the meaning of personally identifiable information (PII), given that de-identified user behavior data may be re-identified with the addition of, for example, location information collected by mobile devices or their unique hardware identifiers; (2) the transparency of data collection practices, given both the lack of standardized, readable privacy policies on Web sites, the difficulty of reading privacy policies on a small mobile screen, and the fact that only a small percentage of users actually read these policies; (3) the form and manner of data collection disclosures, including for example at what point in a transaction a Web site or mobile app should display the warning that user data are being collected; (4) the conditions when user consent for data collection is required and the nature of the consent, for example, whether the consent should be explicit or implicit; (5) the availability and form of user means of signaling data collection preferences, for example, whether the user is able to opt out of the data collection process without loss of site or app functionality, or whether the user is able to modify or delete personal data already collected; (6) the distribution of responsibility for protecting user privacy among various stakeholders, given the increasing complexity of the personal data ecosystem; and (7) the nature of such privacy protections, for example whether privacy protection should be achieved via legal instruments or industry self-regulation.

These concerns are magnified in the mobile environment because of the volume and nature of the mobile data collected by various players in the mobile ecosystem, which includes mobile carriers, operating systems, mobile application developers, mobile delivery platforms, advertising and marketing agencies, advertising exchanges, or advertising networks. Certain types of mobile data collection practices have prompted added privacy concerns because of their increased potential for user identification. These data collection practices include the mobile collection and display of location information (considered particularly sensitive because it presents added opportunities for harm, such as stalking or identity theft), the ability of certain mobile apps to access users' contact lists, photos, and other personal utilities on mobile devices without users' knowledge, and the use of unique device identifiers (UDID) by mobile applications in combination with location or other demographic data.

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act

Because of the mass adoption of mobile devices, the privacy regulatory landscape is shifting in both the United States and the European Union, although these developments continue the "notice and choice" approach that puts the onus on the user to self-manage privacy preferences. In the United States, the regulatory framework consists of: applications of existing privacy laws to the mobile environment, most notably the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA); Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommendations regarding best privacy practices in online and mobile environments; and enforceable and voluntary industry self-regulations. Additionally, current legislative initiatives in Congress, as well local legislative instruments, for example the California Online Privacy Protection Act (OPPA), will potentially influence the establishment of national privacy standards.

COPPA, enacted in 1998, requires the FTC to formulate and enforce regulations concerning children's online privacy. COPPA applies to operators of commercial Web sites and online services (including mobile apps) that collect, use, or disclose personal information from children under the age of 13, or have actual knowledge that they are using that kind of data from third-party sources. COPPA requires operators of such services to maintain the confidentiality and security of the personal information collected from children, to retain such information only for as long as necessary to fulfill the purpose for which the information was collected and delete it afterwards, and make their privacy policies transparent by posting notices, obtaining verifiable parental consent before collecting information from children and giving parents access to their children's personal information. An amendment to COPPA rules that went into effect on July 1, 2013, applies directly to mobile data because it extends the definition of personal information to include persistent identifiers that serve

to recognize users over time and across screens, including: geolocation information sufficient to identify a child's address, photographs, and video and audio files that contain a child's image or voice. The FTC applied the COPPA standards against a mobile operator, W3 Innovations, for the first time in 2011.

The FTC privacy recommendations, in a series of 2012 and 2013 reports, outline a comprehensive privacy framework applicable to both online and mobile data collection: privacy by design, simplified consumer choice, and transparency of consumer data collection and sharing, including consumer education. Privacy by design, a concept developed by Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario Dr. Ann Cavoukian, recommends that organizations think proactively about implementing privacy safeguards at the technological design stage and throughout the lifecycle of the data collection and use process. Recommendations pertaining to simplified consumer choice cover the conditions when companies need to provide privacy choices for their customers.

Companies need not provide additional privacy choices when they engage in activities consistent with the context of transaction that a customer already accepted; in contrast, third-party data sharing or "retargeting" (the practice of delivering personalized ads on third-party Web sites based on a customer's history of online activity) would require additional privacy disclosures. Finally, the FTC recommended increased transparency in regard to data collection practices, increased consumer access to personal data thus collected, standardization of privacy notices, and better consumer education. In particular, the FTC recommended the creation of a centralized Web site where data brokers would identify themselves and allow customers to access their personal data.

Industry Self-Regulation

Several industry trade associations, such as the Direct Marketing Association (DMA), have enforceable self-regulatory standards regarding user privacy in the mobile environment that are applicable to any joining member. A notable voluntary self-regulatory mechanism is the Do-Not-Track policy proposal introduced by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), which provides technology that enables online users to opt out of third-party Web tracking. The DMA agreed to honor the Do Not Track system, and the most recent versions of browsers such as Mozilla's Firefox, Microsoft's Internet Explorer, Apple's Safari, and Google's Chrome also provide support for this option. In the mobile environment, Firefox for Android was the first browser to support the Do Not Track feature, and Mozilla is currently developing an open source mobile operating system implementing the Do Not Track standard. Apple has adopted a Do Not Track framework for iOS6, which gives the user a single control to turn on or off tracking through ads, with Google said to honor this option. The main criticism of this initiative is the fact that it relies on companies' voluntary (nonenforceable) commitment to honor user preferences, thus its effectiveness is questionable.

In the European Union, the main legal instrument applicable to mobile privacy is the ePrivacy directive adopted in 2002 and amended in 2009, which regulates the processing of personal data in the EU digital communication sector. The ePrivacy directive requires EU Web site owners to obtain affirmative consent from users before installing and running cookies or other user data collection technologies on devices. Other privacy policies, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (2012), also known as the Right to Be Forgotten, may also be applicable.

Mihaela Popescu
California State University, San Bernardino

See Also: Big Data; Data Mining; Foursquare; Google AdWords/AdSense in Campaign Strategy; Google+; Platform; Predictive Analytics.

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Mobile/Smartphone Messaging

One of the key technologies to facilitate and revolutionize protest movements in the last five years has been mobile phone messaging. Texting has always offered a quick, portable, and mostly secret way of organizing events in real time. The arrival of smartphones has taken this kind of organizing and information dissemination to a new level. Videos shot on mobile phones have been key tools in the hands of people seeking to change the world. The introduction of free messaging apps on smartphone and real-time video chat is pushing the envelope even further.

Mobile phones have gone from being a luxury to a necessity over the last decade. While initially, cell phones were valued for their ability to deliver wireless calling, gradually text messaging has become a predominant use. Text messaging appeals to users because of its low cost compared to calling. However, as with any app, users have been able to extend the usefulness of text messaging far beyond a call replacement app. This is particularly true of younger people, who have come to use text messaging as a primary form of communication, going so far as to create an entire syntax to facilitate rapid texting. The original forms of mobile messaging are SMS and MMS. SMS stands for short messaging service, as the name signifies users are allowed to exchange short messages, generally around 160 words. MMS stands for multimedia messaging service, and allows users to append photos, video, and audio files to text messages. Both these forms can be found on even the most basic of mobile phones. Users are charged for both sending and receiving texts over the service provider's network; however, low-cost bundles are usually available. The pricing for international text messaging is generally much higher than for local or domestic texting.

Mourners at a funeral of a protester use phones and cameras to record a speech in Bahrain on February 18, 2011. Along with texting, Arab Spring protesters posted content from their phones directly to social media networks, including Facebook and Twitter.

Research In Motion (RIM) transformed mobile messaging through the introduction of its BlackBerry messaging service, or BBM. The distinctive feature of BBM was that it allowed messaging with other Blackberry users anywhere in the world for free. Users were able to create profiles on the BlackBerry network, and even if they changed their numbers, their BBM identity remained unchanged. This opened up a new kind of messaging. Not only were users able to reap large savings by avoiding carrier charges, but the Blackberry network also offered them privacy. This meant that people could instantaneously send and receive messages from anyplace for free and without scrutiny.

The arrival of the next generation of smartphones, heralded by Apple's iPhone, has given birth to a whole new industry of messaging called over-the-top (OTT) phone services. Free

messaging services like BBM are the most popular OTT apps. Apps like Skype, WhatsApp, and Viber allow users to send and receive messages for free. Users still incur data charges from carriers, but this can be avoided by using Wi-Fi services. These services go even further than BBM, in that they allow users to exchange videos as well as make VOIP calls from their phones. In addition, popular social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter also have apps that allow users to post updates from their smartphones.

Influence

The power of mobile messaging has been recognized by politicians and citizens alike. In 2008, then presidential candidate Barack Obama announced the name of his running mate through a text message. In 2012, shortly after winning the election, Obama posted an update on Twitter, through a smartphone, that was shared by half a million people. However, the use of mobile messaging for campaigning goes beyond major announcements; it has become an integral part of communication strategy. A study by the Brookings Institute identified three ways in which mobile phones were used in campaigns: to organize activists, to get the message out, and for fundraising.

The power of mobile messaging can also be seen from recent international events, such as the Arab Spring. During the Arab Spring, particularly in Egypt, protesters were able to use mobile messages to organize themselves in real time. In other cases, text messages are used to organize flashmobs. Beyond merely texting, protesters have been able to use smartphones to record video and directly share it from their phones. These videos eventually became the primary way that the world was able to watch the Arab Spring unfold. Particularly with the introduction of OTT services, mobile phone users are able to post messages directly onto social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook. Instead of reaching a few hundred, now messages can instantly be broadcast to thousands of viewers.

Mobile phone messaging has not only been instrumental in organizing protests, but has also been widely and effectively used in advocacy movements. SMS is a widely used tool of information dissemination in developing countries where mass media is not highly developed. Various organizations have been able to use SMS mailing lists to call people to action, update audiences on meetings, and disseminate the latest news.

The success of SMS has led to many governments seeking to censor and repress the use of mobile messaging. Recognizing the ability of mobile messaging to spread information quickly, more and more governments have sought to restrict the use of SMS and social networks during times of unrest. Recent examples include countries such as Iran, Pakistan, India, China, and Sri Lanka. Some countries, such as Pakistan, have even sought to permanently censor certain words from being transmitted through mobile messaging.

Conclusion

Mobile messaging is one of the oldest of the mass social media used in politics and protest. However, the introduction of smartphones and OTT services has pushed the envelope further. Recent years have shown the flexibility and utility of mobile messaging across the globe. However, as with other social media, there continues to be a struggle between citizen effort to use this technology and government attempts to contain the perceived threat from this technology

Saman Talib
Humber College

See Also: Arab Spring; Campaigns, Digital; Demonstrations, Organizing; Flash Mobs as a Political Tactic; Mobile Apps.

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Moblogging

The term *moblogging* combines the words *mobile* and *blogging* to indicate a blog maintained using a mobile device. Before moblogging, bloggers would have to update their blogs from a desktop computer; early blogs were limited in the ways in which users could participate in and/or respond to content. English dictionaries have recognized "moblog" as a term since at least 2003, though both the term and the practice existed before this date.

Canadian Professor Steve Mann is credited with creating moblogging's forerunner when he invented his wearable Wearcam computer in 1980. Joi Ito, the director of the MIT Media Lab, notes that in February 1995, Mann began uploading Wearcam pictures to wearcam.org as he walked through the streets interacting with people. This event is arguably the first moblog post, though the actual term was not coined until November 2002. American Information Architecture expert Adam Greenfield is credited with coining the term, and was an early practitioner of moblogging.

Moblogging was made possible on a mass scale as a result of Web 2.0 and mobile communication technology. *Web 2.0* is the term used to describe how the Internet shifted from a passive and static process, whereby users would read unchanging content on fixed Web pages, to a dynamic and social practice, where Internet users could collaborate in online communities to create, post, and follow ever-changing Web page content via online dialogue and interaction. Some of the first examples of Web 2.0 were seen in wikis and interactive blogs. With the increased popularity and functionality of mobile communication devices and networks updating one's blog or contributing to/following another's blog no longer required the user to be positioned at a desktop computer; thus, moblogging was popularized.

There are two major types of moblogs. Macroblogs are where writers can write at length about a topic and can include other content such as images and/or video. Macroblogs are moblogs when they are created and/or updated using mobile technology, though Internet users tend to associate this blog format with desktop computing because of the time that the longer format takes to create.

Microblogs, by comparison, tend to consist of short status updates, facts, opinions, and trivia with other content such as images and/or video. Some popular formats for microblogging include Twitter and Facebook. Though microblogging can be done via desktop computing or mobile devices, it is more associated with moblogging because of its short format (e.g., Twitter restricts users to 140 character postings) makes it easier to compose when mobile, and because the popularity of microblogging formats increased with the popularity of mobile communication technology. Other moblogging tools include BlogPress, Tumblr, TypePad, and BlogWriter.

One criticism of micromoblogging is that it is more self-centered in its content. This is perhaps due to the fact that the short form of writing that is encouraged does not allow users to engage significant topics, and is a function of mobile communication technology that encourages personal communication by and about the self. Macromoblogs are thought to be better for detailed analysis of more substantive social issues and more in-depth user discussion. Critics also point to the heavy commercialization of moblogging because of its ability to reach consumers on the go.

Many celebrities consider moblogging a key aspect of their marketing strategies as they can create, promote, maintain, and extend their particular brand(s) by giving mass groups of fans access to personal details of their daily lives. Several celebrities have also damaged their personal brands by moblogging racist, sexist, homophobic, and otherwise discriminatory content to fans, only to later apologize for these views via moblogging. Critics also argue that moblogging is a contributing cause to the growing phenomenon of nomophobia, whereby individuals report feeling anxiety when

they are without mobile technology because it constitutes an experience of severe social isolation.

On the other hand, moblogging technology has also been used to advance prosocial goals and causes. Moblogging has been used to foster collaborative learning and social interaction opportunities in virtual classrooms for subjects ranging from philosophy to foreign language study. Also, moblogging played a pivotal role in communicating news of protests, organized opposition, and human rights abuses to the world during events such as the Arab Spring and the Syrian civil war when governments attempted to stay in power by shutting down or controlling mainstream media channels (such as radio, television, or newspapers). In this way, mobloggers have blurred the line between citizens and journalists.

Gordon Alley-Young
City University of New York

See Also: Blogs; Microblogging; Mobile/Smartphone Messaging; Moblog.net; Tumblr; Web 2.0.

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Moblog.net

The term *moblog* was coined by Adam Greenfield in 2002 to describe the practice of mobile blogging. Greenfield helped coordinate the First International Moblogging Conference held in Tokyo in 2002, where organizers defined moblogging as, "a blanket term that covers a variety of related practices. At its simplest, moblogging is merely the use of a phone or other mobile device to publish content to the World Wide Web, whether that content be text, images, media files, or some combination of the above." Moblog.net offers a platform for this user-generated content. Users have the ability to upload pictures on the go with their cellphones to the Internet via the Moblog.net Web site. Users create a moblog via Moblog.net and can share their photos with users following similar content on the site. As with other forms of social media, Moblog.net is instantaneous, and users can upload images and videos to influence and shape activists, mainstream journalism, campaigns, voters, and political culture.

Although moblogs today are sent from cellular phones or tablet computers, it is believed the first moblog post was sent by Steve Mann in 1995 from a "wearable computer" at the University of Toronto. The device was less of a computer, and more of a photographic device intended to take undercover pictures of dangerous situations for human rights workers. On February 22, 1995, Mann posted text from his wearable computer to his server with an image.

Moblog.net and the act of mobile blogging became widespread as the popularity of cellular phones enabled with cellular, video, and wireless technology grew. In 2012, it was estimated that 114 million Americans used smartphones, according to Comscore. The vast majority of adults between the ages of 18 and 54 own smartphones; the overall market is more than 50 percent penetrated.

Influencing Citizen Journalism

The rise of mobile blogging via Moblog.net has simultaneously influenced the rise of citizen journalism, in which public citizens—not professional journalists—share and collect news and information. Citizen journalists do not always seek out stories. Often, they are in the right place at the right time, and can snap pictures of images that tell stories of the political climate from around the world. Some images go viral, with millions of users viewing them, and they become part of mainstream media. The ability to capture footage and images and send them to newspapers, both online and print, and broadcasters alters the balance between traditional media outlets and citizen media.

Moblog.net allows users to search images based on keywords with which the images are tagged. One example of popular political content

on Moblog.net is a user by the name of "kombizz." The user has a profile, and describes him- or herself as someone who grew up in Iran and fell in love with photography. One image taken by Kombizz was taken in January 2012 outside the U.S. Embassy in London where demonstrators, organized by the Stop the War Coalition, gathered against Western intervention in Iran and Syria. A woman holding a sign reading "Choose Peace" was pictured sitting next to Tony Benn, president of the Stop the War Coalition. Other images posted from the protests include citizens carrying signs with the message "Don't Attack Iran." Another user, "taniwha," posted images of military drones, unmanned aerial vehicles, over common land. This post was tagged as one of the most popular posts across Moblog.net between July and December 2012. Kombizz and taniwha, like many users, posts images that spark conversation and dialogue among followers.

Special Features

Moblog.net users can further influence political and popular culture dialogue through the use of geotagging. Many cellular phones are enabled with geotagging features to automatically detect the user's location. Moblog.net also allows users to pinpoint their location on a map. This helps detect where images are taken. Moblog.net also includes a feature that allows for other users to add tags to posts. For instance, if an image or post is tagged as "American Embassy," another user may include the tag "UK" to provide additional specificity to the post. Moblog.net has also integrated groups for shared moblogs.

In addition to Moblog.net, other platforms dedicated to mobile blogging, or blogging platforms that support mobile devices, include Jaiku.com, BusyThumbs, Mobypicture, NowThen, Utterz, Treemo, Twitter, Facebook, and Tumblr.

Moblog.net's overall popularity has waned since the evolution of applications on iOS and Android smartphones. Applications now allow for instantaneous uploading to popular sites such as Twitter and Facebook. However, the site still retains users who have established image feeds and followers.

Marion Jean Herbert
Independent Scholar

See Also: Blogs; Geotagging; Microblogging; Mobile Apps; Mobile/Smartphone Messaging; Moblogging; Tumblr; Twitter.

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MOMocrats

MOMocrats is a national online organization that hosts political blogs written by progressive mothers, supports progressive candidates, and urges women to become more engaged in politics. Their slogan is "Progressive Moms: The Revolution Begins at Home." MOMocrats was founded in 2007 by "mombloggers" Stefania Pomponi Butler, Beth Blecherman, and Glennia Campbell, who invited other prominent women bloggers such as Joanne Bamberger (PunditMom), Stephanie Himel-Nelson (Lawyermama) and Jen (oneplustwo) to join them. MOMocrats has been discussed in print media outlets such as the *New York Times*, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and the *San Jose Mercury News*.

On July 27, 2008, MOMocrats was featured as a *San Francisco Chronicle* blog of the week. Internet sites such as Daily Kos, Politico, the Huffington Post, and Fem 2.0 have covered MOMocrats, and their writers have been featured on CNN, NBC, and CSPAN. They contribute to the *Huffington Post*'s "Off the Bus" feature. During the 2008 presidential campaign, MOMocrats was among the 124 blogs credentialed to cover the Democratic National Convention. A reader survey conducted in 2011 indicated that 99 percent of MOMocrats readers were female, and 86 percent were "Caucasian/white."

Online Presence

MOMocrats has developed a broad online presence. In addition to their primary Web site, MOMocrats maintains a Facebook page, a "MOMochat" podcast, MOMocrats Messenger, and a Twitter account, where they use the popular hashtag "SheVotes." In October 2012, the organization had 2,028 Twitter followers. MOMocrats has participated in new media conferences such as BlogHer and Blog World Expo.

Campaign Involvement

MOMocrats actively promotes progressive political candidates. Its "Run, Mama Run" interactive tool (MOMocrats.com/run-mama-run) allows voters to identify local, state, and national Democratic women candidates and contribute to their campaigns. MOMocrats also supports progressive male candidates. During the 2008 Democratic presidential primary, it backed John Edwards. In 2012 they endorsed Barack Obama and linked to the Obama campaign's gottaregister.com voter registration tool on its Web site.

A number of prominent female political figures have blogged for MOMocrats and/or appeared on their MOMochat podcast, including First Lady Michelle Obama, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Kansas City Mayor Kay Barnes, Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, NARAL Pro-Choice America President Nancy Keenan, and MomsRising.org cofounder Kristen Rowe-Finkbeiner.

MOMocrats has supported issues such as pay equity, reproductive choice, public education, fair trade, environmentalism and green entrepreneurism, expanded access to and public funding for women's health care, and antibullying. It has opposed conservative budget proposals, questioned the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and criticized a number of conservative political figures. Despite its partisan perspective, however, it objected to sexist coverage of congressmember and Republican presidential hopeful Michele Bachmann during the 2012 Republican primary campaign.

Karrin Vasby Anderson
Colorado State University

See Also: Blogs; Bachmann, Michele; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Gender; Gillibrand, Kristen; MomsRising.org; Twitter; Project Vote Smart; Writers and Social Media in Politics.

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MomsRising.org

MomsRising.org was founded by Joan Blades and Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner. Prior to founding MomsRising, Joan Blades and her husband, Wes Boyd, were also cofounders of MoveOn.org, a Web site that began in 1988 to oppose the impeachment of President Clinton. Despite its predecessor, MomsRising.org is defined as a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization. With a social media reach of more than 3 million people, MomsRising.org is focused on a more family-friendly America. This Web site is sustained by the content generation efforts of 700 bloggers, who write about the following campaigns: maternity and paternity

leave, open flexible work, toxic free families, health care for all, early care and education, realistic and fair wages, and sick leave (paid). These are collectively called MOTHERS campaigns.

One of the primary ways that the MomsRising organization communicates with others about maternity and paternity leave is through a traveling display of onesies (one-piece baby outfits) that are decorated and mailed from moms (and supporters) across the nation. This ONEsie campaign serves as a reminder to state and national leaders that lives are positively and negatively affected by family policies. In addition to the ONEsie campaign, MomsRising.org also promotes open flexible work policies through a guide, titled "The Custom-Fit Workplace: Choose WHEN, WHERE, and HOW to Work and BOOST YOUR BOTTOM LINE." To focus on the issues regarding toxic free families/households, MomRising.org urges its members to send a persuasive letter Congress focused on fixing the Toxic Substances Control Act and eliminating the usage of BPA in household items.

To encourage members to advocate for national health care programs (i.e., the Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Medicaid), MomsRising emphasizes the importance of writing members of Congress about health issues. Early care and education is another issue promoted by MomsRising, which encourages members to share their child care search experiences and their opinions regarding affordability of child care services with members of Congress. To promote realistic and fair wages, MomsRising.org urges members to communicate with members of Congress about the importance of the American Jobs and the Paycheck Fairness Acts. Finally, MomsRising promotes paid sick leave for women through the support of the Healthy Families Act.

Upon joining the Web site, each new member is sent an e-mail requesting him or her to invite five family and friends to become members. To reiterate this grassroots membership strategy, MomsRising often sends a holiday-themed "High Five" e-mail to recruit five individuals to join the Web site. To communicate with its members about the importance of women-themed political issues in an alternative fashion, members are encouraged to host house parties to show a documentary titled "The Motherhood Manifesto" to their family and friends. To supplement the documentary portion of the viewing party, hosts are also supplied with a discussion guide to spark conversation about the content in the documentary. The official premiere of the documentary was held in Washington, D.C., in the Senate office building. Senators Ted Kennedy, Chris Dodd, Barack Obama, and Hillary Clinton cosponsored the premiere, and numerous senators attended the event.

The primary blog entries on the MomsRising Web site are contributed by MomsRising readers, ranging from politicians and governmental administrators to full-time and part-time mothers focused on the MOTHERS campaigns. Each of the blog entries features a Twitter button and a Facebook "like" button to share the stories with others on social media networks. MomsRising has a robust presence on Twitter, with more than 23,600 tweets, following over 12,500 people, and 24,200 followers.

One of the ways that MomsRising engages its followers is through smaller social media campaigns such as National Women's Health Week Bingo. Participants share their process on their personal bingo cards throughout the week, and the first 50 people who are participants in this event win a prize from the MomsRising group. MomsRising has over 26,600 "likes" on Facebook. Most of the organization's posts are picture based (memes). The organization's Facebook messages reinforce Facebook campaigns and messages to extend the organization's reach on social media.

MomsRising has almost 40 boards, slightly under 900 pins, and almost 100 "likes" on Pinterest. The organization's boards range from "Pin Your Made in the USA Finds" and "Books Worth Reading" to "Paid Family Leave" and "Brilliant Famous Women." With slightly over 1,200 followers, this organization has an active presence on one of the newest social media Web sites.

Since July 2008, MomsRising has maintained a social media presence on YouTube. With over 110 subscribers and almost 143,000 views, this organization posts almost four videos and playlist contributions per month. These videos range from "Get Your Groove On, Mom—and Go Vote!" to "First Lady Michelle Obama Addresses MomsRising.org's Food Power Conference." To focus on additional women's issues and concerns, MomsRising

features a comprehensive Blog Roll consisting of numerous individual and organizational blogs focused on women's issues and concerns. These blogs range from "A Better Balance" to "The California Work and Family Coalition" blog.

Jennifer Edwards
Sarah Maben
Tarleton State University

See Also: Blogosphere; Blogs; Campaigns, Grassroots; Gender; MOMocrats.

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Monarchies, Social Media, and Politics

The need to communicate over vast empires is not unique to modern monarchies. Poor or abstract communication is cited as a reason for the fall of empires from Rome to Britain. Monarchs in the digital age, however, have an unprecedented array of communication tools that can disseminate information with subjects while creating an appearance of approachability. Rulers who have embraced digital media as a political or social advocacy platform have experienced both the benefits and disadvantages of digital accessibility. Although the use of the Web, Twitter, Facebook, and similar platforms as links between the Crown and its public is becoming an increasingly frequent phenomenon, two cases in particular stand out as models of ways in which social media can be adopted by modern-day monarchies. Queen Rania al Abdullah of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the British royal family are different from one another culturally, religiously, and historically; yet, each has developed an extensive and effective paradigm for how to integrate these intensely democratic communication structures within a monarchial context.

Queen Rania

Born in Kuwait, Queen Rania has a background in marketing, and worked for Apple's marketing department prior to her marriage in 1993. She is a global fashion figure, respected by Western media, and she uses her global visibility to champion the rights of women and children, encourage broadband interconnectivity, and promote the need for education, which she believes is key to improving the economic and living conditions of Jordanians. Within Jordan, however, she is often perceived as having too great an influence over her husband's monarchy. Because of her marketing and technology background, Queen Rania understands how to leverage the power of the Internet to bring about change. This is especially important because there are no Internet restrictions in Jordan. Therefore, she is extremely active on social media and the Internet, using it to communicate with her four children when she is away. Her Twitter account, @QueenRania, is followed by more than 2.5 million people, and she uses the tag line "A mum and a wife with a really cool day job."

Queen Rania has a Web site, Facebook page, YouTube channel, and Flickr and Twitter accounts, all of which are actively updated (appearing to make some of the posts herself) with news of her causes, as well as stories about the royal family. She will also conduct interviews via social media. Queen Rania believes that being a virtual queen allows her subjects to be closer to her and fosters cross-cultural understanding and equal rights. As a result, she was selected in 2010 as the third most influential leader in social media, behind Barak Obama and 10 Downing Street. At that time, only one in five leaders were utilizing social media, according to a Digital Policy Council study. In 2012, she was ranked fourth, but the number of world leaders using social media had increased to three out of four.

While social media has created an international platform for potential change, Queen Rania has experienced increased scrutiny because of her global visibility. On her 40th birthday in 2010, she flew guests in from around the world for a luxurious birthday celebration in the desert

Queen Rania of Jordan, center, stands between Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Gordon Brown at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on January 25, 2008. Others pictured include the musician Bono, President of Nigeria Yar' Adua, and Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki- Moon.

canyon of Wadi Rum. Coverage of this event led to widespread criticism of the monarchy's lavish lifestyle. As a result, Queen Rania was advised to scale back her activities in order to improve her reputation and demonstrate that she does not play a prominent role in ruling the country. Plans for a Queen Rania Foundation have been halted, in spite of a social media design logo contest, and her appearances, especially in the Jordanian press, have been minimized. Such curtailment is crucial because criticism of her husband's reign has grown since 2011. There is a sense that her global connectivity and Western appearance disconnect her from Jordanians, especially traditional Bedouins. It is a Catch-22 that many leaders face with social media and international outreach.

Queen Elizabeth II

Queen Elizabeth II of England has navigated the pros and cons of new technology usage throughout her reign. In 1957, the queen's first televised Christmas message, which had the theme of technology, expressed a hope that the new medium would allow her messages to be more personal and direct. The 2012 Christmas message was delivered for the first time in 3D. Queen Elizabeth also makes personal use of a BlackBerry and an iPod. However, the British royal social media channels, unlike those of Queen Rania, are not designed to provide personal access to the monarchy, but to create professionally produced images of a hard-working and caring royal family.

Embracing Flickr in April 2010, the first photo was of the queen visiting a cancer clinic. The official royal Web site features links to the British monarch's royal YouTube channel, and Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr pages, as well as links to other government sites. The queen was Google's first royal client in 2007, and the YouTube channel had more visitors than the White House channel in its first

two days. In 2008, it had twice as many subscribers as Queen Rania's YouTube channel. The first royal tweet occurred in 2009 (now over 400,000 followers), and the Facebook page launched on November 7, 2010 (over 630,000 "likes"). All of the social media sites are maintained by a public relations firm, which may explain the low numbers of "likes" and followers.

Reporting on the daily activities on the monarchy is not new; George III started the practice in 1803, but Queen Elizabeth was an early adopter of technology. In 1976, before the Internet was commonly used, she sent her first e-mail using a British Army computer. The use of social media by the monarchy, while creating new levels of protocol, is designed to not only communicate with the broad public, but also to help manage perception and create engagement by answering questions and testing ideas. The ultimate goal is to increase confidence in the royal family.

Scandals have marred that attempt. In 1980, Prince Philip was the victim of a hacking controversy when two journalists gained access to his e-mail account. More recently, in September 2012, Prince Harry learned the dangers of allowing cell phone cameras too close when he was photographed naked during a Las Vegas vacation. The women who had been invited to his suite to play strip poker allegedly took the pictures with their cell phones and then sold them to the TMZ Web site. While British journalists were asked not to print the pictures, Rupert Murdoch's *Sun* decided that it would because the pictures had already been distributed on the Internet. Following the Vegas scandal, Prince Harry deleted his personal 400-friend Facebook page that was maintained under the pseudonym Spike Wells. Prince Harry, like other royals, is a member of the millennial generation, which is well connected via social media. Such issues reflect the reason that official social media channels tend to be well controlled and limited in the type of information that is disseminated. However, as Queen Rania has shown, social media can be useful for monarchies as a tool for advocacy.

Pamela C. O'Brien
Bowie State University

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; International Unrest and Revolution; Middle East; Television Personalities and Social Media in Politics.

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Morozov Principle

Based on the writings of academic and frequent media commentator Evgeny Morozov, the Morozov principle encapsulates the necessity of examining both the advantages and disadvantages of the political role of social media, particularly in the context of prodemocracy movements that aim to destabilize authoritarian states. The Morozov principle operates in response to the flurry of optimism that frequently accompanies accounts of social media's role in various political contexts—including the 2009 Moldova and Iranian protests and the 2011 uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt (part of the Arab Spring) that were hailed as Twitter and Facebook revolutions in the Western media. Morozov argues that perspectives hinging upon optimistic assumptions about the use of social media that ignore disadvantages must be abandoned to better contextualize the nature of geopolitical conflicts and work toward formulating more effective means of employing technology and aiding local civil society groups in the service of democracy.

Cyberutopianism and Internet-Centrism

Morozov specifies two ways in which many commentators fall prey to privileging the advantageous role of social media for democratization while often entirely ignoring the disadvantageous role. First, "cyberutopianism" refers to "a naïve belief in the emancipatory nature of online communication that rests on a stubborn refusal to acknowledge its downside." Cyberutopianism fails to examine the underlying assumptions that

engender the belief that social media (and the Internet more generally) predominantly offers a wealth of opportunities for democratization—from the ability to find information online that discredits repressive regimes to the ability to coordinate activities and voice dissent within decentralized spaces. Their assumptions tip the scale toward advantages while avoiding consideration of the opportunities that these digital tools offer authoritarian states wishing to maintain their dominance. Morozov remains unconvinced that the Internet is inherently more useful for obtaining the truth about a repressive regime than for the same regime to repackage their propaganda tools and effectively employ them online.

Second, "Internet-centrism" refers to "a philosophy of action" that unquestioningly places the Internet at the forefront of strategies designed to achieve or promote democratization. These approaches are fundamentally flawed because they prioritize "the tool over the environment" and in doing so remain ignorant of "social, cultural, and political subtleties and indeterminacies." Morozov argues that Cold War triumphalism has prompted and helped to entrench such technologically deterministic perspectives, with many Western leaders and thinkers erroneously elevating the role of information and communication technologies (such as faxes and radio) in the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union. This emphasis omits the role of structural factors and political-economic conditions that contributed to the fall of state socialism, instead highlighting technology as the vital, lethal weapon.

Morozov also points out that adherence to cyber-utopian perspectives can be irresponsible, leading to further negative consequences for the citizens of authoritarian states. For example, the *New York Times*' emphasis on the Obama administration's request that Twitter delay site maintenance in order to avoid impeding the use of the service by Iranian dissidents likely contributed to the Iranian government's belief in the power of Twitter and subsequent efforts toward tracking down and arresting online dissidents. Morozov also describes how a *Los Angeles Times* article inadvertently made dissidents visible to Iranian authorities through a description of their appropriation of a social-networking service called Goodreads. Designed for community-building based on a love of books, Iranians used it to establish a safe(r) space for political discussion.

Social Media and Authoritarian Regimes

The Morozov principle not only emphasizes the need to consider both advantages and disadvantages of social media's role in politics, but also implores the public to consider whether the negative may outweigh the positive. This leads Morozov to detail the many ways in which authoritarian governments have been effectively using social media and other new technologies to advance their goals and quell attempts by the opposition to build support. Strategies include surveillance activities, counter-insurgency tactics, censorship, and shutting down connectivity (entirely or within strategic regions). Iranian authorities have used Facebook to gather intelligence about the organizational strategies of Iranian activists.

While Iranian activists were praised in Western media for documenting their protests and responses by police, the authorities not only compiled their own documentation but also used the images collected and shared by activists to later ask the public to identify individuals who were then arrested. Attempts to censor information have been used to varying degrees by repressive regimes, but many have recognized the difficulty and even impossibility of preventing the spread of information. In fact, the "Streisand effect" refers to the increased publicity that information can often acquire as an unintended consequence of censorship practices. Instead, Morovoz argues that spin is now preferred by many authoritarian states, a concept he calls "spinternet." For instance, China financially employs citizens to promote ideologically appropriate messages online, opting to engage in online discourses.

Morozov also points out that there is no reason to believe that the Internet is only useful for prodemocracy groups. This point illuminates the complexity of the geopolitical regions that cyber-utopian writers (and Western media in general) too often ignore. Morozov details the existence and in some cases strong persistence of groups who support authoritarian regimes or represent perspectives antithetical to the goals of democratic movements. These groups have equal access to social media tools to coordinate, collaborate, and promote their views, as well as take action against

prodemocracy groups and other dissidents by surveilling their activities and requesting that social media services remove dissident material. Egypt's extremist Muslim Brotherhood, Russia's extreme right-wing Movement Against Illegal Immigration group, and Mexico's criminal gangs all use social media tools to, respectively, campaign for release of fellow extremists, employ Google Maps to root out ethnic minorities, and upload gruesome and violent videos to YouTube to intimidate and reinforce their power. Al Qaeda is another group with a sophisticated online presence, using new media tools to their advantage, yet this disadvantageous side of the social media and politics story is rarely dissected or even mentioned in Western media.

iPod Liberalism

Moreover, the Internet can also be seen as yet another "opiate of the masses," offering numbing entertainment and distraction that occupies the minds of the public, deterring them from critique and participation in dissident activities. Morozov offers examples of authoritarian governments actively encouraging the use of the Internet as an opiate by, for instance, providing "dedicated servers full of pirated digital goodies" for free download and consumption. From this framework, the availability of social media tools does not entail or enable political consciousness or even the motivation to seek out information about the immorality of their government that is now available to many citizens of authoritarian states. Morozov calls this "iPod liberalism," and questions why cyberutopianism is accompanied by the assumption that all people who own a particular technology are likely to share liberal values. In the same vein, cyberactivism is commonly heralded in Western media, but cyberhedonism is rarely emphasized. Many Internet users may become "digital captives," downloading pornography and playing World of Warcraft, or simply use the Internet for a variety of benign, social motivations, instead of actively seeking out critical information and activist groups to join.

The Morozov principle incorporates both positive and negative political uses of social media, and in doing so does not conclude that all efforts toward digital democracy be aborted. Instead, Morozov aims to improve these efforts through a cyber-realist approach that incorporates wider contextual factors relating to the particular social, cultural, political, and economic circumstances of each geopolitical region while seeking to empower dissident groups on the ground.

Rena Bivens
Carleton University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Demonstrations, Organizing; Digital Revolution; Hacktivism; International Social Media and Politics; International Unrest and Revolution; Technological Determinism.

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Mosireen.org

Mosireen is an Egyptian media collective with a presence in multiple social media outlets. The group's name is a combination of the Arabic words for "determination" and "Egypt." It was formed during the 2011 Egyptian uprising, and used footage gathered by citizen journalists to counter propaganda from state-run media. The group continued to provide a critical perspective during the rule of the interim military government, and it posted content critical of the current government, which is dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood. Four activists founded the organization during the Egyptian revolution. As described by their Web site, the collective was "born out of the explosion of citizen media and cultural activism in Egypt during the revolution," and aims at "wrong-footing censorship and empowering the voice of a street-level perspective."

After the fall of President Hosni Mubarak, the Mosireen media collective continued to promote the collection of footage related to the 2011 revolution and to the ongoing abuse of power by military forces. This woman was setting up a video camera in order to record the testimony of victims of torture by Egypt's Mubarak regime on November 17, 2011, in a Mosireen workspace near Cairo, Egypt.

In January 2011, thousands of Egyptians gathered in Tahrir Square to protest against political oppression and economic stagnation. In February 2011, after weeks of violent clashes between police and protesters, President Hosni Mubarak announced that he would step down after 30 years in power.

The founders of Mosireen were initially involved with the Tahrir Square media tent; during the January 2011 protests, the tent served as a hub where activists could bring video footage of government attacks on protesters and have it quickly edited and uploaded to an online archive.

After Mubarak stepped down, Mosireen continued its activism; as its Web site notes, "Egypt's march toward the future its millions demanded did not end with Mubarak leaving power, it began." In accordance with this, the organization posted critical videos during both the rule of the interim military government, from February 2011 to July 2012, as well as the Muslim Brotherhood–dominated government of President Mohamed Morsi, who took office in July 2012.

The group functions as a media collective, and according to its Web site, focuses on "supporting citizen media of all kind." It operates on the principle of crowdsourcing; it does not employ professional journalists, but instead relies on footage from amateur activists, often taken using smartphones. To this end, the group maintains a collective space in downtown Cairo, with sound, lighting, and editing equipment; citizen journalists are welcome to use the facility to create or edit videos for upload. Mosireen also runs a program to train potential citizen journalists; the program operates on a pay-what-you-can basis.

During the protests to overthrow Mubarak, the four founders of Mosireen concentrated on gathering footage of government brutality against protesters and disseminating it both inside and

outside of Egypt. In an interview, Salma Said, one of the founders, noted that in the aftermath of the revolution, the group decided to continue its efforts to ensure that the post-Mubarak regime followed through on its promises to implement a more democratic government. In accordance with this, during the nearly 17 months of military rule under the transitional government, Mosireen continued to upload footage documenting army abuses of power, including a massacre of Coptic Christians and an attack on activists engaging in a sit-in outside of Parliament. In addition, while filming, Said was shot with bird shot by the police; when the interior minister denied that the police ever fired upon unarmed citizens, Mosireen posted footage of Said discussing her injuries, as well as x-rays from her hospital visit.

In the months leading up to the one-year anniversary of the revolution, Mosireen launched the Tahrir Cinema initiative; here, the group set up film screenings in Tahrir Square, showing footage from the 2011 protests. The aim was to remind viewers of the goals of the revolution and to fight political apathy. The group also helped individuals set up street screenings of the footage; Said estimated that Mosireen distributed 10 to 20 DVDs of the footage each day for nearly two months, allowing individuals to host private screening in their homes.

Since July 2013, Mosireen has been highly critical of the elected government of Mohamed Morsi. Mosireen's main Web site contains a section titled "Know Their Constitution"; it features videos critical of the new constitution that were written by the Muslim Brotherhood, and urges viewers not to support it. In addition, on its YouTube page, Mosireen posted multiple videos highlighting the Morsi government's corruption and abuses of civil rights. The page also features videos focused on Morsi's failure to deal with basic public service issues, such as the garbage problem in Egypt.

Mosireen maintains a Web site that contains information about the group's mission, political activities, and educational opportunities. It also has a Twitter account with 49,000 followers, and Said maintains a separate Twitter account that has nearly 99,000 followers. Mosireen has a Flicker account to post photos, and a Facebook page with more than 11,000 "likes." Its main Web platform, however, is its YouTube page. Within three months of uploading videos to the site, Mosireen became the most watched nonprofit channel inside of Egypt. As of May 2013, Mosireen had uploaded 255 videos to the site. One of its most popular videos is *Victory to the Martyrs*; the 10-minute film contains footage compiled by hundreds of activists, and documents the killing of protesters between January and November 2011. The film had garnered more than 118,000 views by 2013.

The group has also relied on social media to raise funds for its activities and training programs. In 2012, using the Web site Indiegogo, the group managed to raised more than $40,000 to support its operations. This use of crowdfunding, soliciting many small donations of no more than $1,000, has allowed Mosireen to retain its editorial independence and turn down funding from nongovernmental organizations and the Egyptian government.

Kelly McHugh
Florida Southern College

See Also: Arab Spring; Egypt; 18daysinegypt.com.

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MoveOn Effect, The

The MoveOn Effect is the title of a book authored by David Karpf and published by Oxford University Press in 2012 (the full title is *The MoveOn Effect: The Unexpected Transformation of American Political Advocacy*). The term refers not to the direct effectiveness of MoveOn.org, but to the indirect effect of netroots-driven innovations on the broader ecology of the political advocacy

system. In particular, the MoveOn effect is found in two trends: changes in organizational membership regimes, and changes in organizational fundraising regimes. These two changes, in turn, give rise to a generational shift in organizational structures, networks, and tactics, while simultaneously disrupting longstanding advocacy organizations. The central argument is that these second-order effects have a larger impact on political activism than the direct affordances offered by individual social media tools. Rather than organizing without organizations, the MoveOn effect implies that the Internet's greater impact is through organizing with different organizations.

Membership Regimes

Organizational membership regimes change in response to available communications technologies. In the 1970s, the decreased costs of database management brought about by revolutions in mainframe computing allowed nonprofit civil society organizations to redefine membership from face-to-face participation to check-writing by mail. In prior decades, membership was defined through large, federated membership structures. To be a member of the Rotary Club, the Elks Club, or the Sierra Club meant attending local meetings, building strong social ties, and developing an identity as a "Rotarian," an "Elk," or a "Sierran." These strong ties had many social benefits, but they also demanded substantial time commitments from members and substantial support resources from the organization. With the rise of direct-mail fundraising, organizations were instead able to connect with supporters individually without that local infrastructure. In exchange for a calendar, a magazine, or some other participatory incentives, organizations built their ranks of "armchair activists" who participated by mail but did little else. This innovation enabled the "interest group explosion" of the 1970s, giving rise to a wave of single-issue, professionally managed advocacy groups based in Washington, D.C.

Beginning in 1998, MoveOn.org redefined membership a second time, from check-writing to online membership. While check-writing members are sometimes disparagingly called "armchair activists," Internet-based members are sometimes disparagingly labeled "clicktivists." Interestingly, many of these members do not even realize that they merit the term. Membership has been redefined by the organization, not by the members. Any recipient of MoveOn.org's e-mail messages (or virtually any other "netroots" organization's) is classified a member, whether they provided a donation, took regular actions (online or offline), or simple clicked once on an e-petition.

Both of these changes in membership regimes are rooted in technological affordances. The previous medium of direct mail allowed organizations to "prospect" far and wide for small donors. Each additional piece of direct mail carries a marginal cost, though (stamps, physical paper, and printing). The marginal cost of physical mail creates an incentive for single-issue organizations with member lists made up of supporters who are likely to donate. Membership has to be tied to donations so that an organization does not go broke through member communications.

The marginal costs of e-mail, by comparison, are approximately zero. The cost of adding one additional person to an e-mail distribution list (10,000 recipients versus 10,001) is nonexistent. The lack of marginal costs for online communication creates an incentive for the development of multi-issue organizations with member lists made up of all individuals who might donate their money or time under some circumstances. This redefinition of membership is central to all other elements of the MoveOn effect. Altering the relationship between an organization and its member-stakeholders creates ripples in how an organization builds a stable funding base, what issues it works on, and how it works on those issues.

Netroots organizations take a "sedimentary" approach to building a broad membership. Typically, they focus on high-profile issue campaigns, offering a productive outlet for partisan outrage over the latest political controversy. Timely appeals are more likely to "go viral," spreading beyond the most frequent participants to their broader peer networks. Once the controversy ends, the organization is left with a list of new member/supporters as a sedimentary residue of sorts.

Fundraising Regimes

Organized advocacy groups require stable revenue streams in order to plan and execute long-term strategic information and influence campaigns. In rejecting the direct-mail model of

membership through small donations, the "netroots" generation of advocacy organizations must identify replacement funding mechanisms. MoveOn.org again acted as the innovator in this area, and peer organizations have followed suit. In the area of fundraising, the MoveOn effect consists of a transition from annual general-use member donations to rapid-response, targeted online member donations. This fundraising transition advantages novel tactical repertoires and organizational structures.

A central feature of targeted online fundraising is headline chasing. Unlike direct mail funding appeals, which must be planned weeks in advance and therefore cannot be tied to the current news cycle, online funding and action appeals can be tied to the issue of the moment. The timeliness of the medium enables more specific action requests—commonly, MoveOn will develop a campaign commercial capitalizing on the latest news controversy, inviting supporters to watch the commercial and donate $10 to help put it on the air. The specificity and timeliness of these appeals allow for far more effective fundraising. Netroots organizations like MoveOn have been known to raise $500,000 or more around a timely tactic in a single day.

Headline chasing is particularly well suited to the daily churn of the social media landscape. News cycles move faster in the social media age than they did in the broadcast or cable news eras. This is a function of the "news hole," the amount of time and space that news operations fill daily. When news occupied 30 evening minutes per day, along with the morning paper and the news weeklies, stories moved slowly. Now that news is disseminated and dissected through blogs, Twitter, and Facebook (with the active participation of news organizations), controversies flow more quickly through the system. This is one advantage that netroots organizations have over their legacy peer organizations: Having been built around e-mail and Web-based communication, they are better situated to leverage the technological affordances of those systems.

A second benefit of the change in fundraising regimes is that it forces organizations to play closer attention to the actual interests of members. Groups like MoveOn have developed sophisticated mechanisms for obtaining "passive democratic feedback." One such mechanism is A/B testing of e-mail messages. The organization sends out multiple test versions of an e-mail to randomized segments of its member list. By tracking e-mail open rates, e-mail clickthrough rates, donation rates, and action rates, the organization is able to determine the issue topics, issue frames, and action requests that its membership prefers. Since success in online fundraising is a direct function of message popularity, these netroots organizations cannot stray too far from the will of the membership. A direct-mail-funded organization has much more leeway to ignore member sentiment and act on the preferences of staff and patron donors. A targeted online-funded organization has weaker ties to its small donor-supporters, but also cultivates much richer member communication practices.

The drawback of headline chasing is that its rapid-response nature can crowd out longer-term organizational priorities. Targeted online fundraising works best when focused on the day's headlines, and when devoted to specialized tactics like television commercials. Online fundraising for volunteer training events, deliberative processes, office space, or community organizer salaries is far less successful. Whereas direct mail fundraising provides general revenue that could be turned to any organizational goal, the targeted nature of most online fundraising restricts the uses of those dollars can be applied to—if you fundraise for a commercial, you are required to spend that money on the commercial. In the absence of additional revenue streams—either through patron donors, foundations, government grants, or merchandising—advocacy organizations run the risk of over-reliance on short-term actions that feed on controversy, without moving toward broader strategic goals.

Partisan Orientation

The MoveOn effect is found almost entirely among organizations in the Progressive/Democratic party coalition in the United States. Across the globe, MoveOn-like organizations have appeared internationally (Avaaz.org) and in a number of countries (38Degrees.org.uk and getup.org.au). These global organizations are also left-aligned. Conservative advocacy leaders have frequently attempted to build equivalent organizations, but have consistently failed in doing so. There are multiple

competing theoretical explanations for this partisan divide. One theory, "ideological congruence," argues that there is something inherently horizontal/progressive about the end-to-end architecture of the Internet. Another theory, "outparty innovation incentives," mutes the power of ideology, and instead argues that the party out of power has a range of positive incentives encouraging the adoption of new technologies and experimentation with new organizational forms. In essence, the "team" that is losing in domestic politics is more likely to "fire the coaches" and try something new. A third theory, augmenting the other two, "merry pranksters" holds that the low transaction costs of online communication allow large partisan groups to disrupt the institutional development of opposing competitors during their formative stages.

In all likelihood, each of these theories is partially correct. In *The MoveOn Effect*, Karpf argues that the strongest evidence is in favor of the outparty innovation incentives explanation. Advocacy organizations traditionally gain membership when the opposing party holds power. Major donor networks look to redirect their spending in response to electoral failures. Talented campaign staffers who, if victorious, would have taken jobs in the administration, instead look for alternate opportunities. It is simpler to mobilize partisan outrage to stop programmatic changes to the status quo than it is to organize support for the long, messy process of achieving new policy victories. This argument holds that, had Al Gore claimed the presidency in 2000, MoveOn.org would have lacked the circumstances that let it develop a mass membership. Conservative peer organizations, on the other hand, would have had ample organizing opportunities, producing a far different complexion for the online advocacy universe today. It is also noteworthy that international and cross-national equivalents of MoveOn have all been launched under outparty circumstances, and with advice and training from MoveOn alumni.

Disruption and the Loss of Beneficial Inefficiencies

The MoveOn effect holds the promise of new opportunities for organizations, members, and social movement tactics. It sounds a foreboding tone for longstanding advocacy organizations, however. The shift in fundraising regimes advantages virtually networked organizations with few staff and slim office space. Organizations founded during the direct-mail era built up large staff and physical resources, and this remains a comparative advantage for such organizations. They have organizers, lobbyists, and policy experts that the new groups do not have and cannot support through targeted online fundraising. This is a cause for concern. Online communication is more efficient than older communications media, but the inefficiency of those media offered some benefits. As civil society organizations adapt to the new membership and fundraising practices of the Internet age, there is reason to worry that a few important social functions will be unintentionally lost.

David A. Karpf
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Avaaz.org; Clicktivism; Fund-Raising; GetUp.org.au; MoveOn.org; Social Issues Advocacy, Net-Roots Driven; 38Degrees.org.uk.

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MoveOn.org

MoveOn.org is an Internet-mediated political advocacy organization. Founded in 1998 by software entrepreneurs Wes Boyd and Joan Blades, the organization is credited with multiple substantial innovations within the realm of online politics. With over 7 million members, MoveOn is one of the largest advocacy groups in contemporary American politics. During the Bush administration, the group became a central organizing point

for antiwar protests. It also pioneered a new repertoire of responsive issue-based organizing, mobilizing online membership in reaction to Bush administration policy priorities. Former staff have played key roles in launching similar organizations, both nationally (ColorofChange.org, MomsRising.org) and internationally (Avaaz.org, 38Degrees.org.uk, getup.org.au). The group remains iconic among online political advocacy experts.

History

MoveOn began as an online petition in response to the Clinton impeachment hearings. Boyd and Blades, a married couple, launched a Web site with an online petition urging congress to "censure Clinton and move on." The petition went viral, eventually attracting 500,000 signatures. After these signatures failed to persuade Congress, Boyd and Blades extended their efforts to citizen lobbying and other pressure tactics, treating all of the petition signers as though they were members. The new organization attracted substantial media attention in these early days, primarily as evidence of the Internet's nascent impact on American politics. Though online petitions existed elsewhere, MoveOn's practice of treating petition signers as members was new. The small staff and low overhead costs meant that MoveOn could develop as a new organization, rather than dissipate after the initial reason for organizing had ended.

Indeed, through the remainder of the Clinton Presidency, MoveOn remained a relatively small part of the organized American left. During the Bush presidency, MoveOn's membership grew substantially. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, recent college graduate Eli Pariser launched a Web site calling for a peaceful response to the attacks. That petition also went viral, and Boyd and Blades invited Pariser to join their organization and merge the lists. From there, MoveOn went on to serve as the mainstream hub of the burgeoning peace movement. Pariser became the organization's second executive director in 2004. Throughout this time period, MoveOn's membership swelled to 3.2 million people. Its online membership reacted swiftly, not only to antiwar messages, but also to a wide variety of progressive issues. Those members took action offline and online. MoveOn thus became a central actor among progressive advocacy organizations, adding its substantial outreach capacity to a host of issues as they ripened on the political/media agenda.

In June 2003, six months before the Iowa caucuses, MoveOn held an "online primary" to determine whether and who to endorse. Howard Dean received a plurality of votes, but failed to cross the 50 percent threshold, thus the organization withheld its official endorsement. The MoveOn primary captured significant news attention, serving as an early measure of Democratic partisan enthusiasm in the lean-news months before the primaries. The organization spent over $20 million in that election, mostly raised through online contributions from small donors.

In the 2008 election, MoveOn members donated $88 million to help elect President Barack Obama. MoveOn endorsed Obama in the days prior to the "Super Tuesday" primary elections—much earlier than most other advocacy group endorsements. Nearly 1 million MoveOn members also devoted over 20 million hours to helping elect the president in that cycle. MoveOn's robust electoral work spurred further membership growth. The organization then diverted its energies toward supporting major progressive policy priorities, including an initiative titled "The Other 98 Percent" that took on the same problems of economic disparity that inspired the Occupy Wall Street movement one year later.

Noteworthy Innovations

MoveOn's largest innovations come in the areas of membership relations, fund-raising, and organizational structure. These have been emulated by a host of other online advocacy groups. MoveOn successfully redefined membership from check-writing to online engagement. It demonstrated that engaged online member support could rapidly translate into massive, reliable fundraising for targeted efforts. It also borrowed a practice of "radical decentralization" from Boyd and Blades's former tech firm. The organization has a few dozen staff and no office. These low overhead costs keep the organization nimble and responsive.

MoveOn has been a pioneer in e-mail-based activism. It remains primarily an e-mail-driven organization, with intentionally less engagement on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. The organization uses A/B testing of e-mails to

identify popular issue topics, frames, and action requests among its membership. The "culture of testing" they have developed is taught to other advocacy groups through a series of workshops offered via the New Organizing Institute.

In 2004, MoveOn launched the first-ever user-generated ad contest. Titled "Bush in 30 Seconds," it allowed MoveOn members to develop, submit, and vote on commercials. The winning commercial was then aired on national television. Controversy around overly harsh language in two of the unselected commercials dampened enthusiasm for this tactic and demonstrated that high-profile user-generated content required active filtering and clear rules and norms. MoveOn held a similar contest in the 2008 election cycle.

The organization also pioneered online–offline event management tools, including the successful spread of MoveOn "house parties" and "Bake Back America" fundraiser bake sales in the 2004 election cycle. MoveOn has partnered with documentarian Michael Moore to promote attendance to his films, planning online–offline film events as well. MoveOn has also partnered with celebrities and comedians to produce commercials and viral videos around election cycles.

In 2011, MoveOn launched SignOn.org, a hosting service for Internet petitions. Similar in structure to Change.org and PetitionOnline.com, SignOn allows any MoveOn member to create and circulate a petition. High-traffic petitions can then be elevated to the entire national membership, creating a bottom-up mechanism for issue selection and exposure. MoveOn's staff structure includes a "MoveOn Labs" section that works to develop innovations of this sort.

Criticism

Criticism of the organization has come from three directions. Conservative critics hold that MoveOn is part of the radical left, labeling the organization as socialist or as a George Soros front group. Soros donated to the organization's 2004 electoral efforts. After that election, they ceased accepting donations from Soros and other major donors. Radical leftist critics charge that MoveOn cheapens left-wing activism by reducing it to "clicktivism," and introducing marketing concepts into protest movements that would otherwise be anticonsumerist in nature.

Interest group critics, meanwhile, laud MoveOn for its rapid-response activism, but also worry that the organization's niche leaves little room for longer-term community organizing efforts. This brand of critique is less concerned with MoveOn's activities than with the broader organizational ecology of social movement organizations in the digital age. MoveOn.org is emblematic of some of the best practices in online advocacy, but its organizational limitations also point to some of the possible broader limitations of 21st-century social movements.

David A. Karpf
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Clicktivism; Digital Activism; Fund-Raising; *MoveOn Effect, The*; Social Issues Advocacy, Net-Roots Driven.

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Multiple Leveraging

The term *multiple leveraging* refers to the coordinated use of multiple forms of social media to increase one's ability to engage and influence

people online. The goal of multiple leveraging is to increase online presence and influence by delivering content to as many people as possible, and in turn, motivating political support or action. This goal is commonly accomplished through social media as content that is shared through one channel, such as a Facebook post, and can easily be forwarded within that medium (through "shares" and "likes") as well as repackaged and disseminated in various forms though other social media such as Twitter, Web sites, or blogs. Thus, a fine-tuned social media strategy can leverage multiple forms of social media in order to maximize the reach and effectiveness of political content.

There are numerous Internet-based social media that can be leveraged together. Facebook, the dominant social networking site; and Twitter, the most popular microblogging site, have become standard elements in social media strategies, along with YouTube, the Internet's most popular video sharing site. Multiple leveraging can also include disseminating information through a blog, targeted Web advertising, and e-mail lists. It is increasingly important to also leverage more visual ways of packaging content such as Flickr, Tumblr, Pinterest, and Instagram, and video sites like YouTube. In addition, many political groups simultaneously leverage any number of social-networking sites across the globe that target specific subsets of the population (such as migegente.com, designed for Latinos; and blackplanet.com, targeting African Americans). Additionally, there are a growing number of popular social-networking sites that are heavily used in particular geographic regions (e.g., RenRen, QZone, and Sina Weibo in China; Badoo in Europe; and Cyworld in South Korea), which can be effectively incorporated into international social media leveraging strategies. Finally, political organizations are interested in mobilizing people on the ground, so leveraging social networking sites like Foursquare and Meetup.com that involve the locations and activities of users is becoming central to bringing like-minded people together offline to coordinate political activity.

Strategies

The goals of multiple leveraging are not new; however, the strategies used to accomplish these goals are unique to the evolving social media landscape. Political communication goals have remained relatively steady throughout the last several centuries, as politicians and political organizations have tried to reach the same types of broad or targeted political communication goals. Broad political communication is the simultaneous broadcasting of political messages to large numbers of people or groups. This would include activities aimed at creating and disseminating information and attempting to influence the political agenda. Targeted political communication is the delivery of specialized messages directed at particular individuals or members of groups asking for some type of political action. Targeted political communication can include efforts to recruit supporters to join an interest group or campaign, raise money and resources, and/or mobilize political action.

While these goals have remained consistent, the strategies used by political actors to achieve them have become much more sophisticated with the advent of multiple new information and communication technologies (ICTs) and the innovative use of these political communication tools. Social media is the latest and most sophisticated addition to the tool kit that political actors and organizations can use toward these long-held goals. Multiple leveraging refers to using as many of these tools as cohesively as possible to reach as large an audience as possible and achieve broad and targeted political communication goals. It is used to maximize the synergistic nature of social media content and exponentially increase the online influence of political actors. There are hundreds of articles, blog posts, and Web sites that offer tips on how to leverage content most effectively. Most suggest having a centralized source of information, generally a Web page, more narrowly designed microsite, or blog with easy-to-share information, images, and video. In order to use multiple leveraging to increase online presence and influence, an organization, campaign, or politician must regularly provide new interesting content that can be shared.

2008 Presidential Campaign

The best example of strategically leveraging multiple social media platforms for political purposes was the online campaign of Barack Obama in 2008. While it was far from the first Internet campaign, the Obama campaign integrated social networking into its entire Web strategy, linking online

networks to offline campaign activity by leveraging multiple social networking sites together. Meanwhile, the campaign maintained the Web site my.barackobama.com (or "My BO"), a centralized source of information that doubled as a fully integrated social-networking and political-action site. As with other social networking sites, users could personalize this site by creating profiles, posting pictures, and writing blogs, and they were given the tools to take political action, such as making campaign calls from home and creating personal fundraising pages. The Obama campaign set a new benchmark for successfully leveraging multiple social media, and these methods were quickly adopted by major political organizations and campaigns to compete in the current social media landscape.

Measurement

One constant challenge of maintaining a cohesive and effective social media strategy is determining how much leverage or influence one gains through current strategies. It is not enough to simply identify how many people might view a particular message by counting Facebook friends or Twitter followers, for instance. These numerical measurements merely quantify how many people may see a message, rather than clarify what types of messages are most effective, or how political content did or did not precipitate a change in political attitudes or motivate action.

There are a growing number of companies offering services designed to measure, increase, and effectively utilize online influence. Among these various companies, Klout is arguably the most sophisticated and by far the most popular. Klout provides users with a Klout score, a number from one to 100 that represents the aggregation of multiple pieces of data, or signals, about a person's social network activity. These signals include any online action taken in response to Web content that is created or shared.

Currently Klout's model incorporates information from over 400 signals, derived from seven different social sites. It can be used to not only determine how successful current efforts to leverage multiple social media tools are, but also to provide concrete measurements of individual pieces of content. For instance, most observers of the 2012 presidential election would agree that the Obama campaign built on its dominance in 2008, and used social media more effectively than the Romney campaign. But how dominant was the Obama campaign? A quick look at Klout shows that on Election Day, Obama's Klout score was 99 out of 100, the highest score at that time, compared with 92 for Romney. Furthermore, Mitt Romney's most effective piece of content was a tweet that engaged over 15,000 people, while Barack Obama's most effective piece of content was a photo that engaged over 750,000 people through many different social media sites, 50 times as many people as the Romney tweet.

Ben Epstein
DePaul University

See Also: Blogs; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Evolution of Social Media; Klout Score; Social Media Optimization.

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Musicians and Social Media in Politics

With the rise of social media, musicians have increasingly come to use these platforms as strategic tools for political activism. In the presidential elections of 2008 and 2012, musical celebrities from nearly all popular genres used social media to express political beliefs about campaigns, and more importantly, to endorse presidential and vice presidential candidates. A prominent example of endorsement is hip-hop mogul Jay-Z's support of Barack Obama on YouTube in the 2012 presidential election.

Along with creating three videos supporting the 2008 Barack Obama campaign, which were distributed on YouTube, rapper Jay-Z also hosted this rally for the candidate in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on November 3, 2008, the day before the election. Also in attendance at the rally were fellow musicians and singers Mary J. Blige, P. Diddy, and Jay-Z's wife, Beyoncé.

In addition to YouTube, platforms such as Facebook, Flickr, and Twitter have been broadly used to promote candidates and celebrate victories, representing the most recent iteration of popular musicians' traditional role as disseminators of political ideology and modelers of civic engagement, especially among younger audiences. Even during nonelection years, musicians continue to use social media to express their opinions across the political spectrum, from conservative musician Ted Nugent on Twitter to liberal alternative rock band Cake on Facebook, and there are significant economic consequences for these musicians who take sides in contentious political disputes. Beyond elections, the subjects addressed by politically engaged musicians on social media run the gamut from health care reform to fiscal policy.

Proactive campaign-oriented examples of social activism by musicians include Rock the Vote, Rap the Vote, and Tweet the Vote, the last of which occurs entirely via social media. A nonpartisan, nonprofit organization, Rock the Vote was conceived in the United States over 20 years ago when a Virgin Records executive teamed with an electoral campaign worker who was also experienced in political fundraising. It was founded in response to perceived threats to freedom of speech and political expression among major label artists, and as part of a broader plan to politically engage younger citizens by using the promotional power of the entertainment industry. It quickly established itself as an important organization, helping younger audiences connect politics and popular culture. To date, Rock the Vote has registered more than 5 million young people to vote.

The Rock the Vote organization has employed social media in a variety of contexts, including the 2010 Tweet the Vote Campaign , which partnered with musicians including Faith Hill, Tim McGraw, Maroon 5, and Pink. These musicians tweeted during the midterm elections that year, directing eligible young voters to a Web page on which they could register to vote. This social media campaign generated over nine million impressions in the

course of the election cycle. Rock the Vote and its affiliate organization Rap the Vote have also employed social media via specialized Twitter hashtags, specifically targeting black and urban youth for political engagement. Musicians such as Akon participated in Rap the Vote during the 2012 presidential election cycle, appearing in its YouTube videos recorded throughout the Atlanta Metropolitan Area, which were then shared as content to users of Facebook and Myspace. Rock the Vote, Tweet the Vote, and Rap the Vote have all been covered in MTV's broadcast and interactive channels. Rock the Vote has also employed a variety of additional social media platforms, including YouTube, Myspace, Facebook, and even Flickr.

In 2012, Rock the Vote expanded its social media initiative to mobile devices with its Scan to Vote campaign. In recognition of the growing popularity and influence of mobile applications, the organization's new campaign involved designing and dispensing t-shirts that were embroidered with QR codes, devised as part of a youth voter registration drive. Shirt wearers functioned as voter registration hotspots, directing voters' smartphones to a Rock the Vote Web site, where they were able to register to vote via the mobile Web. To help spread the word, Rock the Vote encouraged supporters to send tweets using the #scantovote hashtag. Musicians who used this new hashtag in their tweets included Christina Aguilera, Maroon 5, Neon Trees, and major labels Def Jam Records, Mercury Records, and Island Records. The campaign began in April of that election year, with Aguilera's use of the hashtag in her tweets regarding the annual House Budget announcements in Washington, D.C.

Reactive examples of musicians' social activism often come in the form of demonstrations and protests. Historically, these have included John Lennon and Yoko Ono's War is Over campaign, and Bob Dylan's performance at the 1963 March on Washington. John Lennon and Yoko Ono's social activism included writing an antiwar anthem, released during the 1971 holiday season, titled "Happy Xmas." The song, which featured the Harlem Community Choir, was the culmination of more than two years of peace activism undertaken by Lennon and Ono. This activism entailed a larger, transnational multimedia campaign that also involved renting billboard space in a dozen global cities positioning war (and peace) as a choice made by citizens, rather than by governments. This strategic coordination of Lennon and Ono's images, text, and music, deployed across a range of mass media platforms, was the direct antecedent of today's social media music activism.

A more recent example of reactive social activism by musicians is Occupy Musicians, a group affiliated with the Occupy Wall Street movement beginning in 2011. Musicians including Lou Reed, John Zorn, Talib Kweli, Tom Morello, Ian MacKaye, Joan Baez, and Saul Williams participated in the demonstrations. Occupy Musicians enabled such contributions by creating a Web site that served as a space to organize performances at Occupy Musicians events, host songs and music videos, and connect musicians to Occupy Musicians locations and fundraisers. Occupy Musicians also created a Twitter handle and a Facebook page, and live performances of songs at protests were shared, both officially and unofficially, via social media such as Vimeo and YouTube. Media organizations such as Village Voice Media, Huffington Post, and *Politico* also helped to promote this content. Musician and activist Stephen Said was central to this process after he was called upon by the Occupy Musicians movement in its first week to help bring artists to the movement's Zuccotti Park headquarters near Wall Street, and to develop its social media strategy, as well as the movement's music distribution arms, Occupy Records and Occupy Music. The Occupy Wall Street movement and Occupy Music also developed an Occupy Musicians Solidarity Council, and Occupy Music Education, both of which had prescriptive advice for political action that was distributed via social-media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

History of Campaign-Oriented Musical Activism

Campaign-oriented social activism by American musicians dates back at least to the presidential election of 1840. "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too" was the campaign song for Whig party candidate William Henry Harrison and running mate John Tyler that election cycle. Harrison was known as Old Tippecanoe for an early career military victory over a Native American chief

at the Battle of Tippecanoe of 1811. Harrison's nom de guerre re-emerged in his 1840 presidential campaign song. The song, which set lyrics by Alexander Coffman Ross to a popular minstrel melody, was witty and catchy, and became widely popular. It played a role in convincing a majority of voters to elect Harrison to the presidency. Harrison's "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too" campaign song represented the first stirrings of modern campaigning, complete with the dynamics of political spectacle, multimedia branding, spin, and hyperbole. These elements have continued to play a key role in more recent national and international political campaigns as mass media and then social media have become dominant channels for information sharing.

2000 Presidential Campaigns

The rock band Rage Against the Machine performed a protest concert outside the doors of the 2000 Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, California. By holding the concert in that location, the band aimed to express its discontent with the two-party political system in the United States. In anticipation of unrest and violence, the band and concert attendees were met by heightened security measures from the Los Angeles Police Department, which arrived armed with riot gear. At the time, these extreme measures at a protest event evoked the recent chaos and social unrest of the Seattle 1999 WTO Protests. Recorded footage of the protest at the Rage Against the Machine DNC concert was featured online, along with a widely viewed MTV News report on the incident. The online coverage was included as a supplement in one of the band's live concert performance DVDs. The protest event was extensively promoted and discussed in online chat rooms, many of which focused on contemporary music, radical politics, social activism, and counterculture issues.

2004 Presidential Campaigns

In the 2004 presidential election cycle, Bruce Springsteen and REM teamed to headline a Vote for Change tour, aimed at electing Democratic candidate John Kerry as president. Tour organizers, working with the DNC, intended to help promote the Kerry vote in key swing states that were identified by the campaign's political strategists that year. Their political intentions were two-fold. First, they hoped the Vote for Change tour would encourage Democrats in these swings states to make it to the polls and vote. Second, the political strategists of the Kerry campaign were ambitious enough to attempt to reach out to Republican fans of Springsteen and REM in these swing states, where they hoped the artists' pro-Kerry messages in the Vote for Change tour would help influence them to vote for Kerry, rather than for Republican incumbent George W. Bush. Employing social media as a political tool was a vital element in the Kerry campaign strategists' plan. At that time, Myspace was the dominant social platform for music-related activism, and the Vote for Change tour was featured on Springsteen and REM's artist pages on that site. Springsteen and REM's fans and friends on Myspace received updates on tour dates, and were able to comment on recent developments posted as related to the tours and support of Kerry's campaign. The multistate tour had representation on Myspace, with an account that gave information about and linked to Kerry's campaign, Springsteen and REM's artist data, and details of planned concerts.

2008 Presidential Campaigns

During the 2008 presidential election, three videos featuring Jay-Z's political activism and support for the Democratic Party candidate Barack Obama were distributed online via YouTube by the campaign's social media team, and soon went viral. The first video featured footage of Jay-Z's poem about the legacy of African American leaders and activists, including Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Obama. The second video posted by the Obama campaign featured a segment of Obama using a hand gesture that Jay-Z had made famous in the music video and lyrics to his song "Dirt off Your Shoulders," in order to show his lack of concern about Republican critics. The third YouTube video that Jay-Z starred in for the Obama campaign provided a detailed briefing on voter-ID rules for Michigan voters. This video, like the others, was specifically intended to mobilize the youth, urban, and minority vote. As a result of these videos and other endeavors, the Obama campaign was widely recognized for its novel and aggressive use of new social media platforms as a low-cost method of targeted messaging, in contrast

to more traditional mass media and direct media approaches used by rivals and earlier campaigns.

Rage Against the Machine attempted to hold protest concerts twice in Minnesota during the 2008 Republican National Convention. In an echo of the band's reception at the 2000 DNC, it was met in St. Paul by police equipped with riot gear. Band member Tom Morello told an interviewer that his band was threatened with arrest by the authorities if they approached the stage. Morello's description of the proceedings was then shared via social media such as Twitter by the interviewer. Other details of the event's proceedings were shared by first-hand witnesses via social-media platforms such as Facebook and Myspace. The band played a full protest concert in Minneapolis on the following day, which was followed by political demonstrations. More than 100 demonstrators were arrested as police equipped with riot gear thwarted the gathering outside the arena where the protest concert was held. Details and photos of the post-concert demonstrations were covered and shared on Facebook, Myspace, and YouTube. In the 2012 election cycle that would follow, the GOP's use of social media in its presidential campaign was marked by an abrupt change from musician-based protest of the party.

2012 Presidential Campaigns

Jay-Z made another YouTube video for the Obama campaign during the height of the 2012 presidential election cycle. The video posted to YouTube by the Obama campaign was more conservative in its presentation, featuring the hip-hop recording artist sitting down in a suit and tie advocating for Obama's re-election. Additional supporters of Obama in 2012 included pop singers Katy Perry and Lady Gaga, who tweeted messages of support for the campaign throughout the election cycle. Perry also sang at Obama rallies in Wisconsin, Nevada, and California. After Obama's victory was announced on election night, musicians such as Perry and Lady Gaga continued to proclaim their affiliations with the campaign by tweeting congratulations and expressing their satisfaction. These messages were retweeted by some of their thousands of followers and shared on other social media.

Kid Rock supported Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney during the 2012 election cycle by performing at a number of his rallies in key swing states toward the end of the campaign. His Facebook and Twitter accounts were also employed to support the Romney-Ryan campaign. Earlier during the GOP primaries, Tom Petty had clashed with Republican candidate Michele Bachmann over the usage of his song "American Girl" at her rallies. News of the dispute was spread via social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and via blogs such as Politico. Petty's agent published a press release threatening legal action if his song continued to be employed in this fashion. This raised a relatively new issue in the ongoing dialogue between musicians and political actors, the question of whether the use of a song within a social media campaign should be construed as an endorsement. A related question surrounded the legal ramifications of music usage by campaigns without permission. Historically, such use is legal at a live event, but not in a broadcast context; by splitting the difference between the two, social media highlighted the changing nature of public political communications.

Role of Musicians in Local Elections

During the 2012 congressional campaigns, Texas GOP Congressman Steve Stockman held a live YouTube chat with conservative musician Ted Nugent. Nugent had previously considered running for governor of Michigan in 2008, during which time he repeatedly singled out high-profile Democratic politicians for criticism via social-media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube. Even earlier, during the 2004 congressional campaign cycle, there was widespread speculation that Nugent was under consideration by the Illinois Republican Party as its candidate in that state's Senate race. Even at that time, he had been especially active and vocal in supporting conservative political views on Myspace, promoting his views and his recorded music.

In 2010, conservative musician Ray Stevens, who has shared his political conservative views via social media platforms such as YouTube, was endorsed for Congress by the Republican Party of Lee County, North Carolina. His YouTube video *Come to the USA* was embedded in the official Web page of that county's Republican Party, with a message above it urging viewers to vote for the musician. Stevens was already a popular YouTube

performer, having released videos for some of his songs exclusively on that social media platform.

Economic Costs to Musicians

The economic costs to musicians of picking sides in political debates on social media have been exemplified by California alternative rock band Cake. Guitarist Xan McCurdy posted a message to the band's Facebook artist page in 2011, asking whether Republicans were intentionally damaging the U.S. economy in order to prevent Obama's re-election the following year. Facebook users left over 600 comments expressing varying degrees of outrage or approval. This was hardly an exception for the band, which had excoriated GOP vice presidential hopeful Sarah Palin on its Web site in 2008. The band's lead vocalist, John McCrea, acknowledged in 2010 that many of its fans were conservatives, including Tea Party members, and he described how this constituency was upset with the band's enthusiastic embrace of liberal political dogma. McCrea claimed that, as a form of political retaliation, some critical fans had threatened to illegally download the band's songs, rather than purchasing them via sanctioned distributors such as Apple's iTunes store.

On the conservative side of the political spectrum, Ted Nugent has been a vocal supporter of the U.S. Republican Party and conservative political views throughout his career. In 2012, Nugent endorsed Mitt Romney for president, a position he reiterated and promoted via social media numerous times during that year's election cycle. Following the re-election of President Obama, Nugent shared his passionate hatred of the president via Twitter and other social media channels. Even more controversially, Nugent has made repeated threats to kill Obama via Twitter, although in several media interviews following his subsequent investigation by the Secret Service, he later described these threats as "metaphorical." They were, however, retweeted aggressively by supporters and pundits. As far back as 2007, he publicly threatened to kill both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton.

Musicians' political views shared via social media can drastically alter their reputation in the entertainment industry and the public at large. Their political thoughts can directly equate to economic costs, both when they channel their political views through music, and when they damage their reputation through hate speech or rhetoric of a controversially political nature that is broadcast over social media.

Dustin Bradley Garlitz
University of South Florida
Aram Sinnreich
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Facebook; Myspace; Occupy Movement; Rock the Vote; Twitter; YouTube.

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Myspace

Self-described as "a place for friends," Myspace was once the world's most popular social networking Web site. With features including customizable profile designs, mood-indicating emoticons, profile songs, and a user comment section, Myspace was the first Web site to make

online social networking a part of mainstream popular culture.

Building on the online social networking concept pioneered by Six Degrees and Friendster, an early version of Myspace was created by eUniverse (later renamed Intermix Media) employees Chris DeWolfe and Tom Anderson in 2003, and was officially launched in January 2004. With DeWolfe serving as Myspace CEO and Anderson serving as president, Myspace reached 1 million users within its first month, and over 5 million users by the end of its first year.

The quick growth of Myspace led to a high profile, $580 million acquisition by News Corp. in July 2005. Underscoring the cultural relevance of Myspace in the media landscape of the time, the acquisition was intended to provide a social media centerpiece that would connect the diverse holdings of News Corp.'s newly formed Fox Interactive Media division.

Profitable and continuing to grow, Myspace added its 100 millionth user account in August 2006, and surpassed Google search and Yahoo! Mail to become the most visited Web site in the United States. The growth continued for the next two years, eventually reaching its peak usage in December 2008, with 75.9 million unique visitors in the United States and 110 million active users.

Influence

The height of Myspace's popularity corresponded with the 2006 and 2008 election cycles. While Web sites and blogs had been a part of political campaigns since the mid-1990s, online social networking was first adopted as a political tool during the 2006 and 2008 campaigns. The development was slow at first. In the 2006 midterm elections, only a small minority of candidates running for state or national office created and maintained profile pages. However, by the start of the 2008 presidential primary campaign season, the relevance of social networking was clear, and all candidates for both the Democratic and Republican nominations had established Myspace profiles. The social networking Web site encouraged this development by launching Myspace Impact, a site that featured pages for presidential candidates and made it possible for visitors to register to vote, volunteer for campaigns, and make donations. Within one day of its launch, thousands of users had friended leading candidates.

In addition to fostering a sense of political fandom, social networking Web sites offered a new way to organize a campaign, and encouraged the growth of grassroots political movements. Further, because the most frequent users of Myspace were in the 18 to 24 age range, the social-networking Web site provided a platform to connect with younger voters who played a key role in deciding the 2008 election.

To further involve younger users in politics, Myspace also partnered with MyDebates.org to offer live streams of presidential campaign debates, and provide a forum for users to submit questions to a town hall debate.

While Myspace was helpful for some candidates and elected officials, it proved troublesome for others. The first Myspace political scandal surfaced in March 2008, when New York Governor Eliot Spitzer was accused of employing the services of Emperors Club VIP escort Ashley Dupré. Photos posted on Dupré's Myspace page were quickly publicized by reporters and circulated around the Web, drawing even more attention to the scandal, and making Dupré an overnight Internet celebrity. The importance of online social networking in political campaigns grew in the years that followed. However, the relevance of Myspace in the political world quickly diminished as the site's popularity faded among the general public.

Decline

Despite its early growth and dominance, limited innovation, an outdated platform, and competition from other social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter ultimately eroded Myspace's popularity. While Facebook was developing a streamlined social networking experience based around creating an online connection with real-world friends, Myspace was earning a reputation for amateurish profile designs, cluttered advertising, and spam.

The decline of Myspace started internationally, and eventually spread to the U.S. market. In May 2008, Facebook's global popularity decisively surpassed that of Myspace, with Facebook attracting 123.9 million unique visitors and 50.6 billion pageviews, compared to Myspace's

114.6 million unique visitors and 45.4 billion pageviews. As Facebook continued growing, visits to Myspace dropped off. A year later, Myspace also slipped behind Facebook within its home market. In May 2009, Facebook surpassed Myspace domestically, with 70.278 million unique visitors in the United States, compared to Myspace's 70.237 million.

While the margin was narrow at first—just 41,000 monthly visitors—it quickly widened as Myspace lost users and the accompanying advertising revenue. In January 2011, Myspace laid off nearly half of its employees, and by February 2011, with unique visitors totaling just 62 million worldwide and 37 million in the United States, News Corp. announced its intention to sell the social networking site. The sale was completed in June 2011, when Myspace was sold to the advertising network company Specific Media for $35 million, just 6 percent of what News Corp. had paid for the Web site six years prior.

By 2012, Myspace had essentially ceded its status as a relevant social-networking Web site to rivals Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, and rebranded itself as a "social entertainment destination." Moving away from its previous social networking model, the company retooled the Web site as a music and entertainment hub, offering audio and video content, and providing tools for bands to create Web pages.

Hans C. Schmidt
Pennsylvania State University, Brandywine

See Also: Cyberculture; Evolution of Social Media; Facebook; Friendster; LinkedIn; Social Networking Web Sites; Twitter; YouTube.

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Myth of Digital Democracy

The Internet's influence on political life and other democratic processes has sown strong hopes for a new phase of democratic governance. Huge numbers of previously inactive citizens are paying closer attention to elections, as evidenced by the proliferation of political blogs and their successful political mobilization through the Web. In North America, some look to the 2004 U.S. presidential elections and how candidate Howard Dean's campaign succeeded in funding its operations through small donations, a feat that President Barack Obama's 2008 campaign successfully emulated. The political ascendancy of blogging and other social media and new communication technologies are ushering in an age of digital democracy and digital citizens. In a *Wired* essay, Jon Katz was among the first to argue that the culture of cyberspace has led to the birth of a digital nation. This digital community espouses a "postpolitical" philosophy that blends "the humanism of liberalism, the economic opportunity of conservatism, plus a strong sense of personal responsibility and a passion for freedom." Katz describes these American digital citizens as "knowledgeable, tolerant, civic-minded, and radically committed to change." They embrace the power of technology to foster a "participatory" culture and contribute to the political process.

Against this optimistic background, Hindman's *Myth of Digital Democracy* offers a rare exception to this unconditional embrace and glorification of Internet-based politics. Two intertwined claims have been central to the proponents of digital democracy: that the Internet fosters political participation, and its diffused infrastructure levels the political playing field. The first central promise of the Internet lies in its capacity to enhance citizens' participation in the political process,

granting different political voices an equal footing in the networked public sphere. For Hindman, this claim remains more of a promise, and less supported by empirical data. While acknowledging the fact that the Internet allows people to speak freely online, there is a difference between who speaks and who is heard. The political blogosphere in the United States shows that those who are heard remain far below the number of those who speak. Only a very small number of political blogs, both liberal and conservative, receive a level of influence and reach to be meaningfully heard and influence the political discourse. Hindman's analysis of the U.S. political blogosphere, its resemblance to traditional media elites, challenges some assertions that the blogosphere threatens the old media monopoly and empowers citizens in the marketplace of ideas. Lack of gender and ethnic diversity among top political U.S. bloggers only emphasizes this gap between rhetoric and reality.

Nature of the Internet

The diffused nature of the Internet's infrastructure lends credence to the claim that the Web provides a level playing field. The current ownership structure means that the monopolistic corporate control dominating traditional U.S. media's landscape disenfranchises large sections of the American people by limiting access and filtering the news. Moreover, corporate control makes it nearly impossible for new entrants to compete and set up media outlets, unless they have large financial resources. Negroponte's *Being Digital* and similar books vehemently argue that the Internet's technological infrastructure lowers the barriers for entry, thus enabling politicians and regular citizens to compete against corporations. This communication technology promises to further eviscerate corporate control because online users can search for whatever they want, and retrieve the information they like, without the filter of corporate control. Hindman's scrutiny concludes that the Internet's architecture, specifically hyperlinking, has failed to truly weaken the power of corporate gatekeepers. Rather than being equal, search engine algorithms, and inequalities in link structure and traffic, create a "winner-takes-all" pattern: Only a few successful political sites dominate the political communities to which they belong.

Moreover, as Hindman argues, the Web is experiencing "Googlearchy," that is, dominance of the most heavily linked Web sites. Empirically, a Web site's visibility and prominence remain determined by the number of links pointing to the site. That makes search engines and online searches a shallow process because they yield only the most linked or familiar sites, but not necessarily the best sites. Since digital content is not cheap to produce, few companies own the largest and most popular sites, further constraining the purported diversity of the Web. Hindman's Googlearchy theory posits that "online concentration comes from the sheer size of the medium and the inability of any citizen, no matter how sophisticated and civic-minded, to cover it all." When factoring in the fact that political traffic constitutes a small fraction of overall Web usage, the political impact of the Web is much in doubt.

Digital democracy is more of a pipedream, a myth that does not withstand empirical scrutiny. This position may thus perpetuate the perennial debate/tensions surrounding the advent of new communication technologies, particularly their sociopolitical transformational impact. As several critics and book reviewers have observed, the impressive empirical case that Hindman assembles does not fully account for the tangible effects of the Internet on quotidian politics. The Internet has effectively challenged the power of the political class to control the message. Social media channels like Twitter and blogs offer myriad ways of interacting and fact-checking partisan propaganda. As to extending political voice, the Internet has made the marketplace of ideas something within reach because new entrants can still create content and compete. While regular citizens may volunteer, vote, and organize online, the Web's net effect has mobilized more people, as small donations attested in Obama's campaigns.

Myth Versus Reality

Hindman fails to account for and empirically analyze the larger effects of the Internet on the political ecosystem, to bust the mythical construction of Internet-based politics. In *Digital Citizenship, the Internet, Society and Participation,* Mossberger, Tolbert, and McNeal conducted such analyses of the Internet's impact on U.S. politics, using data from two Pew Internet and American

Life surveys from the 2002 congressional elections of 2002 and the 2004 U.S. presidential elections. Their results confirmed the positive role of the Internet in politics, leading them to conclude that the Internet enhances civic engagement and political participation.

The Internet's effects on political life in other parts of the world challenge Hindman's assertions. Social media tools, including blogs, Twitter, and Facebook, have been indispensable to activists fighting for political change, from Burma and Ukraine to Egypt and Iran. During the Arab Spring uprisings, social media helped activists and citizens spread dissenting information, share news that countered authoritarian regimes' narrative, and mobilize the populace. Digital democracy does not mean, nor should it herald the end of, collective action and offline political life. In tempering any assessment of new media's political effects, a more balanced perspective would recognize that digital democracy does not necessarily need to translate into an egalitarian, utopian ideal, and that Googlearchy remains a legitimate threat. While it is warranted, a solid critique of the unconditional embrace of the new digital democracy ethos should also propose ways of addressing the democratic risks entailed in the concentration and monopolization of the Web. A balanced critique thus needs to suggest means of safeguarding the openness of the Internet, combating the fragmentation of the public sphere, and ensuring that online public space remains accessible and democratic.

Hindman's work along these lines articulates an importantly unsettling view of Google's role in the "New Democracy." It also raises new and crucial questions about how to study the political implications of online and social media in general, focusing on the need for a sound empirical basis to support the host of political "game-changer" claims currently attributed to them.

Aziz Douai
University of Ontario Institute of Technology

See Also: Crowdsourcing; Digital Citizen; Flash Mobs as a Political Tactic; Googlearchy and Politics.

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Nation of Islam Movement

Around 1930, Wallace Fard Muhammad founded the Nation of Islam in Detroit, Michigan. The Nation of Islam is known as a religion, empowerment organization, new religious movement, or black nationalist/separatist group, depending on the speaker and audience. The Nation of Islam primarily focuses on the needs and interests of African Americans. Statistics vary widely for formal membership and number of lay followers: 19,000 on the low end to 60,000 or more on the high end. Members of the Nation of Islam typically engage with each other in person at different venues and online via social media. The organization's Web presence in particular has several purposes: education, recruitment, publicity, and debates. The communications that occur under these categories contain both religious and political content.

Web Sites

The official Web site of the Nation of Islam serves as an educational repository, recruitment tool, publicity device, and debate forum. The Web site has information about the origins of the organization and its official platform titled "The Muslim Program," which has two parts—"What the Muslims Want" and "What the Muslims Believe"—and covers religious and political values as well as public policy preferences. The Web site also describes the background of key leaders such as Elijah Muhammad, who succeeded Wallace Fard Muhammad in 1934; and Louis Farrakhan, who in 1978 reoriented/revived the organization according to Elijah Muhammad's teachings as a shift from changes made by Warith Deen Mohammed. Additionally, official Nation of Islam statements on a range of topics like education, service projects, support for political allies, and commentary on current events, along with live Web casts every Sunday morning at 10 A.M. central time and a video archive of past speeches, are on the site.

Three separate sites are linked to the main Web site. The first is "The Final Call Online Edition," which is the online companion to the *Final Call* newspaper. Both papers cover national and international news. More multimedia material from the *Final Call* can be found on its YouTube Channel, which had over 6,000 subscribers and over 4.8 million video views as of December 2012. The second link is for the "Nation of Islam Research Group," a site containing blog posts, newsletter contributions, books and DVDs/CDs for purchase, and multimedia (such as video, audio, and photographs).

These two Web sites frequently function as spaces to engage members, observers, and critics

A Nation of Islam member offers the Final Call *newspaper at a Notting Hill street fair in London, England, in August 2011. The* Final Call *now has an online edition and Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook accounts.*

on a variety of controversial issues. Examples include denying the charges of anti-Semitism and racism by the Anti-Defamation League and other groups, especially concerning the two-volume work *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*; drawing attention to political and economic inequalities between racial groups in the United States; challenging the label of "hate group" by the Southern Poverty Law Center; and taking certain stances in foreign policy debates centered on countries like Israel and Libya.

The third Web site linked from the Nation of Islam's main site is for the "Millions More Movement." An extension of the 1995 Million Man March in Washington, D.C., the Millions More Movement consists of local organizing committees across the United States that mobilize volunteers to support the advancement of African Americans in the areas of unity, spiritual values, education, economic development, political power, reparations, prison issues, health, artistic/cultural development, and peace. Most of these online resources are free and open to Nation of Islam members and the general public.

Social Media

The Nation of Islam utilizes other forms of social media besides Web sites. Current leader and minister Louis Farrakhan uses Twitter to inform, counsel, recruit, and publicize events. As of December 2012, there were over 120,000 followers for his Twitter feed. Followers can ask questions of Farrakhan, and he responds to clarify and justify particular religious and political positions. The official Nation of Islam Twitter account has almost 3,000 followers. It is mostly used for publicity purposes. The *Final Call* newspaper account has over 12,000 followers. It directs readers to full-length articles and promotes Nation of Islam activities such as the annual Saviours' Day Convention.

The Nation of Islam also uses Facebook as a technological instrument to advance its religious and political programs. The *Final Call* newspaper has a Facebook page, as do multiple individuals, local groups, and mosques affiliated with the Nation of Islam. Facebook users share news, links, images, videos, and commentary of interest. Facebook is interactive in that it permits users to demonstrate support via a "like" icon, and there is space to share opinions. Although specific statistics for the frequency and range of online participation are unavailable, it appears that Facebook and Twitter are more supplemental than core modes of communication for the organization.

The Nation of Islam understands the role of social media in religion and politics. It strategically makes use of different platforms to support followers and attempts to change other groups' common misconceptions or stereotypes about the organization. Critics of the Nation of Islam continue to employ social media to question and discredit the organization. Time will tell if technology will contribute to the strength and stability of the organization or if technology will hasten its decline.

Jennifer Epley
Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Civil Rights; Economic and Social Justice; Faith-Based Social Change; Islam, Nation of; Islam and Social Media; Race and Ethnicity.

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National Center for Digital Government

The National Center for Digital Government Research and Practice (NCDG) was originally established by Dr. Jane Fountain in June 2002, within the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and is codirected by Dr. David Lazer. A three-year, $1.5 million grant awarded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) originally funded the center, with the early mission to conduct research into ways that burgeoning information technologies were integrated into strategies for governance and civic discourse. Understanding the impact of information technology within the intersections of institutions, individuals, and government was deemed by NSF of paramount importance in advancing research aimed at developing and implementing effective policy frameworks.

Jane Fountain's academic background includes a master's degree in education (Harvard) and Ph.D.s in organizational behavior and political science (Yale), with research focuses on institutional change, virtual governance, and the impact of information technologies on these topics. David Lazer's academic credentials include a B.A. in economics (Wesleyan) and a Ph.D. in political science (University of Michigan); his primary research interests included the role of social networks in governance and the use of technology within the criminal justice system, particularly the use of DNA analysis.

Since 2005, Dr. Fountain and the NCDG have been based at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Its successor program at Harvard, the Program on Networked Governance (PNG), also supported by the NSF, was founded by Dr. David Lazer. Together, these centers have greatly expanded the scope and reach of the social scientific research, training, and applications of information technology and communications originally funded in 2002 to produce a global network linking scientists, researchers, and practitioners with governing bodies, civic communities, and institutions. Related programs within Harvard's Kennedy School of Government are the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, and the Taubman Center for State and Local Government.

Originally established as a relatively simple research network, the focus and influence of the NCDG rapidly expanded. The first activity of the NCDG was a foundational workshop on Developing a Basic Research Program for Digital Government, held from May 31 to June 1, 2002, just prior to the announcement of NSF funding and establishment of the NCDG. Several weeks later, the E-Government Act of 2002 (also known as the Lieberman Bill) was unanimously passed in the U.S. Senate. When it was signed into law in December, a new agency within the Office of Management and Budget—the Office of Electronic Government—was created, charged with overseeing "Web-based Internet applications or other information technology to enhance the access to and delivery of government information and services to the public, other agencies, and other government entities. . . ." That legislation was instrumental in authorizing and funding the original NCDG, as well as rapid expansion of its activities.

In the first two years of the NCDG, Jane Fountain was keynote speaker at the International Conference on Public Participation and Information Technologies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was a featured speaker at an information technology (IT) workshop at the London

School of Economics, was a speaker at a conference on e-governance in Barcelona, Spain, delivered the keynote address at the First Seminar on Digital Government and Governance at the University of Tokyo, was a speaker at an IT conference in Santiago, Chile, and delivered an address on Governing the Virtual State at the European Information Society Technologies Conference in the Hague.

Since the re-establishment of the NCDG at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in 2005, and the founding of the PNG at Harvard the same year, the two centers have pursued similar, sometimes interconnected trajectories toward similar missions. Both are increasingly active on a global scale. NCDG research at Amherst "extends and refines theoretical frameworks in the social sciences to encompass fundamental changes in information processing and communications . . . to advance social and applied social science disciplines and fields as well as an understanding of digital government."

Among more recent research topics at the NCDG are ethics in science and engineering (Jane Fountain and colleagues), networked governance (Jane Fountain), crowdsourcing and the environment (Charles Schweik, NCDG Associate Director), and e-rulemaking and democracy (Stuart Shulman, NCDG associate director, and research group). In February 2013, Workshop in the Knowledge Commons was introduced to examine issues and possibilities related to what has been called an emerging field of study, that of worldwide open access initiatives.

Recent PNG projects and ongoing research focuses have included the PNG Working Paper Series; developments in social network analysis, including focuses on teaching resources, literature, and network visualization; DNA in the criminal justice system, featured on CBS' *60 Minutes*; Knowledge Sharing and networking among state health officials; and connecting to Congress. The connecting to Congress project reflects the mandate of the 2002 E-Government Act to develop and manage information technology that enhances the capacity for effective interaction of civic and governmental entities

Leslie Reynard
Washburn University

See Also: Digital Government; E-Democracy; Innovation and Technology; Open Source Politics.

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National Freedom of Information Coalition

The National Freedom of Information Coalition (NFOIC) is a nonpartisan organization that supports the general public's right to an open and transparent government. As a nonprofit organization, NFOIC relies on the hard work and support of citizens, lobbyists, and advocates of the First Amendment and a transparent government. NFOIC is funded by grants from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, an organization working toward improving journalism around the world. The National Freedom of Information Coalition officially met for the first time in 1989, in Dallas, Texas; at the time, it was known as the National Freedom of Information Assembly. The purpose of its first meeting was to support the growing number of active First Amendment organizations and to protect citizens' rights to public records and governmental oversight.

The coalition's second meeting took place in Dallas, Texas, in 1991, which was the 200th anniversary of the Bill of Rights. At a third meeting in 1992, the National Freedom of Information Assembly was officially renamed the National Freedom of Information Coalition. Today, the NFOIC holds an annual meeting, and is governed by a board of directors. Each board member is elected to serve a three-year term, while the chairman of the board can serve up to two two-year terms. Each year's conference includes guest speakers, panels, and receptions. The NFOIC

headquarters is currently located at the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute, part of the Missouri School of Journalism in Columbia, Missouri. The NFOIC is the oldest and one of the largest freedom of information libraries in the world; it contains more than a million documents and journal articles about the public's right to government information.

The NFOIC considers itself an education and resource center for local and state governments; it hopes to advise officials on ways of maintaining an open government, and ways of implementing new legislation and laws that could further support the flow of information from the government to its citizens. Twice a year, the NFOIC awards monetary grants to state coalitions and local organizations with similar goals and values. It is also responsible for managing the Knight Freedom of Information Fund, which provides financial assistance to limit the costs and expenses associated with court cases relating to freedom of information. These funds help to cover the costs of filing fees, consultation fees, and attorneys. The Knight Freedom of Information Fund has awarded over 30 grants since its inception in 2010. About half of these cases resulted in a ruling that was favorable to the free flow of information.

One such grant was awarded to a local newspaper in Westminster, Maryland, for compelling the local board of county commissioners to release its e-mail distribution list. The newspaper in question received a $12,500 litigation grant after battling with the board of county commissioners for several months. The *Carroll County Time*'s requests for the information were denied several times by the county commissioners, even after legal sources declared that e-mail addresses are not barred from public access. The board of county commissioner defended its position by pointing to concerns for cybersecurity and the potential for cyberbullying if the e-mail addresses were released.

The NFOIC supports many existing state and local-level organizations while helping to create and start up similar organizations. The NFOIC helps many of these organizations work together by aiding in fundraising and by providing forums for networking between members. By holding conferences, running an open government blog on its Web site, and utilizing many other social-media Web sites, the NFOIC facilitates cooperation between different organizations. Education and awareness is another important aspect of NFOIC's day-to-day activities. It prepares reports and publications in order to educate and spread awareness about the public's right to information. Also, the NFOIC attempts to advice and influence appointed or elected officials about their responsibilities to the public; it hopes to establish new advocates and support for its cause. The NFOIC has partnered with many other coalitions and organizations around the country, including the Online Media Legal Network at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

R. Bruce Anderson
Matthew Geras
Florida Southern College

See Also: Open Data; Open Source Governance; Open Source Politics; OpenGovernment.org.

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National Press Club

The National Press Club (NPC) is a Washington, D.C., based professional organization and private social club for journalists. It has more than 3,000 members. Members of the NPC range from current and former journalists to government information officers and to those believed to be sources of news on a regular basis. The NPC offers a place for journalists to socialize and hosts speakers, including leaders in government, politics, business, music, film, academia, and sports.

The NPC also has a nonprofit called the National Press Club Journalism Institute, which provides training for communications professionals on changing media environments, and provides scholarships to journalism students.

The club was founded in 1908 by 32 newspaper reporters, each willing to contribute $10 to the creation of the club. By 1910, the club had begun to establish itself, and welcomed William Howard Taft as the first president to visit the club. As the club became more well known, its membership levels increased, and the organization needed more and more space. In the 1920s, the club decided to build a high-rise building in the heart of Washington, D.C. The building would be home to many Washington news bureaus, and the club had its headquarters on the top floor. The building opened in December 1927, and at 14 stories tall, it was the tallest office building in Washington at the time. It was rebuilt in the early 1980s, and in 2006, a broadcast operations center was added to transmit news globally. Today, the building also houses two restaurants, the Fourth Estate and the Reliable Source Bar and Grill.

When the NPC was first created, its membership was limited to white, male journalists. Because female journalists were not allowed to be members of the club, a group of women, assisted by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, created the Women's National Press Club in 1919. Similarly, as a result of the NPC's discrimination, African American journalists founded the Capital Press Club in 1944. The NPC admitted the first African American male journalist in 1955, and the Capital Press Club still exists today. Members of the Women's National Press Club voted in 1970 to allow men into their club, which they renamed the Washington Press Club. Shortly thereafter, the NPC voted to admit women. The two organizations remained competing clubs until 1985, when they merged to form a new NPC.

In 1931, the NPC welcomed President-elect Franklin Roosevelt to speak at an event that has become the newsmaker luncheon series, which regularly attracts speakers such as Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Nelson Mandela, Yasser Arafat, Golda Meir, Boris Yeltsin, and the Dalai Lama. Many big events have begun or have been announced at the club, such as Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter announcing their presidential bids, and George W. Bush introducing his national security team during the 2000 election. It has also been argued that the club may have contributed to the launching of the Korean War because of a 1950 speech at the club by Secretary of State Dean Acheson, who outlined America's "defense perimeter" for Asia and omitted South Korea. Some believe that Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin interpreted that to mean that North Korea should prepare to invade South Korea.

Press Freedom

In an effort to promote press freedom, each year, the NPC awards the John Aubuchon Freedom of the Press Award to one domestic and one international recipient. The award honors people who have contributed to the cause of press freedom and open government. The NPC also hosts an array of speakers on the topic of press freedom, and has publicly voiced support for journalists in press freedom cases. Additionally, the Freedom of the Press Committee of the NPC offers training courses intended to help reporters understand laws relating to press freedom and journalists' rights.

The NPC received criticism in 2011 when journalist Sam Husseini, an NPC member, was suspended for asking Saudi Arabia's Prince Turki al-Faisal about the legitimacy of his regime. He was suspended for two weeks on the grounds that such action violates the NPC rule prohibiting "boisterous and unseemly conduct or language in or about the club." The NPC received criticism for not allowing journalists to be journalists inside the club because of the incident, and the suspension was later reversed.

Meghan Sobel
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

See Also: Freedom of the Press and National Security; Immersive Journalism; John Aubuchon Press Freedom Award.

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Near-Me Tabs and Political Protest

Near-Me tabs are a function of proximity-based applications (PBAs), applications and functions designed to allow for mobile devices to detect nearby events, people, news, or other happenings within a certain geographical distance in space. The rise of global positioning system (GPS)-enabled phones and tablets, alongside the prevalence of data-enabled devices as part of the "mobility turn" of the 2000s, allowed for new practices of connectivity during this era. However, a PBA allows for temporary, localized connectivity between anyone with a mobile device, either directly through automatic geotagging of items such as images, videos, or social media posts, or through opt-in geomapping through technologies such as Google Maps. These types of technologies were particularly useful in the many protests in 2011 and 2012 that used social media as an organizational tool, particularly the Arab Spring and global Occupy Movement that heavyily used Twitter and Facebook.

Proprietary software protocols or mobile services are necessary to access GPS-enabled mobile devices and applications, which often allow users some degree of control over their ability to be

Proximity-based applications allow for temporary, localized connectivity between anyone with a mobile device. These applications became especially useful to both Arab Spring and global Occupy Movement protestors in 2011 and 2012. This group of protestors checked their mobile phones at a rally for Egyptian democracy in San Francisco, California, in early 2011.

both located and contacted in geographic space. However, the uses of these location-based services have raised concerns over user privacy in terms of both the data available to the administering companies of these applications and to wireless carriers, particularly through sometimes confusing or changing privacy policies. This practice has also raised troubling questions in terms of surveillance by law enforcement agencies.

The uses of PBAs are still being realized as the technology develops and new applications are developed. Stores can send coupons or price discounts to shoppers who are shopping in or passing by a physical location; several large retailers have experimented with these technologies lately. A parent who loses a child in a shopping center can broadcast a localized message to other shoppers nearby through the creation of a Near-Me area network, a localized wireless network between several wireless devices in close proximity to one another. Individuals can be notified when their PBA-enabled friends are within a certain geographical distance of a certain phone. Videos can be viewed through an app like Vidcinity, a geographically based video service of user-generated content. Real estate listings can use GPS data to list local houses for sale or apartments for rent. Facebook briefly experimented with a PBA friend finder in 2012 before canceling the service. In each case, the technology works in a relatively open infrastructure, allowing for interoperability between wireless carriers and network protocols, with a focus more on close geographic proximity, rather than on localized networks.

Political Protest and Massing Publics

With the rise of the global Occupy movement, the Arab Spring, and other protests that emerged in 2011 and 2012, PBA technology allowed for the creation of new networks of information sharing and political action, primarily through Twitter. While some critics argued that accounts of the power of social media in these protests were overblown (the Arab Spring was referred to as the "Twitter Revolution" by many in the Western press), the peer-to-peer contacts allowed these protests to not only remain flexible in their organization, but also mobile in their geographic location. In a moving protest that is taking place in several different locations at a synchronistic time, the advantages of mobile and GPS-enabled technologies allowed for individuals to organize and amass a network-centric multitude, as well as to become aware of events in the nearby vicinity.

This was also similar to the social media uses of the global Occupy movement, particularly the New York City encampment in Zuccotti Park, which used geomapping and Near-Me tabs to keep track of happenings in Manhattan in fall 2011. The Occupy Movement was diverse and had several actions and occupations occurring in different locations, as well as skirmishes with police throughout the city and in its protest marches. These were captured on a number of mobile devices; immediately uploaded to social media, video-sharing, or photo-sharing sites; geotagged; and pooled together to paint a picture of the real-time events that occurred in geographic space.

Doug Tewksbury
Niagara University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Geo-Locational Enabling; Geotagging; Occupy Movement.

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Negative Campaigning

Negative campaigning is trying to win an advantage in elections by referring to negative aspects of an opponent, rather than emphasizing one's positive attributes or preferred policies. Negative campaigning became commonplace in modern electorate campaigns, particularly in the United

States, but also in many other countries such as Russia and the UK. Certain forms of negative campaigning are as old as communities with an electorate. During the Roman Empire, members of the Senate used methods of negative campaigning to achieve their goals. In the United States, the presidential campaign of Lyndon Johnson was seminal for negative ads in the political arena. On September 7, 1964, he launched the advertisement "Peace, Little Girl." It shows a young girl plucking the petals from a daisy and counting from one to nine. Then, a male announcer counts down from 10. With each successive number, the camera jumps to a closer shot of the child's face. At zero, a nuclear blast fills the screen and President Johnson says: "These are the stakes to make a world in which all of God's children can live, or to go into the dark. We must either love each other, or we must die." The commercial aired just once, but caused an instant furor. NBC, the network on which the commercial was aired, was flooded with phone calls and letters. President Johnson's opponent, Senator Barry Goldwater, requested equal time from NBC to clarify his positions on the use of nuclear warheads. Television news programs on all three existing networks at the time featured the commercial and the resulting controversy.

Decades later, campaign commercials are often subject to media coverage. Newspapers and television news programs frequently report on candidates' campaign ads. Another prominent and more recent example for negative campaigning is the electoral race between Vice President George Bush and his challenger Michael Dukakis. In the 1988 presidential campaign, a black man named Willie Horton helped defeat Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts. Willie Horton had committed rape while on furlough from a Massachusetts prison under a program that was actually started by another governor, a Republican. The anti-Dukakis commercial featuring Mr. Horton was spread via an outside group launched by Lee Atwater, a campaign manager for George H. W. Bush. The latter publicly denied that he had been in any way involved. However, the campaign worked. Many voters related Willie Horton's face to Democratic nominee Michael Dukakis. Many of today's third-party advertisements, like the "Swift Boat" attacks that helped defeat Senator John Kerry in 2004, are follow-ups of the Willie Horton campaign.

Scientific Studies

Many scholars have worked on the use of negative attacks in elections and their potential adverse effects on turnout, vote choice, and democracy. They have used diverse investigation techniques like surveys, experiments, and formal models. A great deal of time and effort has been devoted to determining whether or not negative political information works, and how. It was hypothesized that it might drive everything from support for a candidate to turnout and effect on the political system as a whole. For the most part, scientific studies show that there are some effects of negative information, but their direction and impact is difficult to determine.

Scholars have shown in a metaanalytic assessment of the effects of political advertising that for every study showing the damaging effects of negative information, there was a study proving the opposite. Increasingly, negative information comes from sources beyond the candidates or campaigns themselves, particularly interest groups and the media. Both are common sources of information in the campaign context. With expenditures on interest group advertisements totaling somewhere around one-third of the money spent on political advertising, the potential electoral impact of moneyed interest groups plays a crucial role. Interest group advertising can have an informative function, but it can also attack just as strongly as an advertisement coming directly from a candidate. In this context, studies show that information from independent group ads or news story accounts are more persuasive than campaign-sponsored negative information.

Role of Media

Campaign commercials, especially negative ones, are well suited to fulfill the requirements of a good news story. Journalists usually get a good story when candidates attack one another. Allegations of dishonesty and incompetence plant the seeds of controversy and scandal. Even if the charges prove to be false, reporters can rail against the candidate who aired the attack for engaging in unfair campaigning. The political fight then becomes the story. Turning advertisements into news stories allows

candidates to set the campaign agenda, and magnifies the effects of the ads. News coverage of the advertisements recycles the political messages, providing the candidates with valuable prime time in the news, free of charge. The public is usually disappointed by such negative political disputes. For this reason, voters increasingly give election coverage in the United States poor marks. In U.S. states where campaigns were highly negative, people rated the media especially badly.

There are a number of techniques used in negative campaigning. The most common is running advertisements attacking an opponent's personality, record, or opinion. There are two main types: attack ads and contrast ads. Attack ads exclusively focus on the negative aspects of the opponent. Contrast ads contain information about the candidate and the opponent, but the information about the candidate is positive, whereas the information about the opponent is negative. Since contrast ads must contain positive information, they are considered less damaging to the political process than attack ads. Often, campaigners will use outside organizations such as lobby groups to launch attacks and discretely disseminate negative information about the rival candidate. Social media offer many new possibilities in this context. Another common negative campaigning tactic is attacking the other side for running a negative campaign.

In 1992, ad-watch journalism, in which the media acknowledge some degree of responsibility for monitoring the basic truthfulness of content contained in political advertising, appeared on the media landscape. The *Los Angeles Times,* for instance, published more than 20 ad-watch stories focusing on the two races for U.S. Senate in California. Today, ad-watches are standard in print and broadcast outlets at national, regional, and local levels. Ad-watches represent an important shift in campaign journalism. They provide reporters and editors with a tool to clarify their independence and to rebuild the integrity of their media.

Risks and Advantages

The discussion about whether negative political advertising encourages voters to participate in democracy, discourages voters to participate, or only influences voters with particular characteristics and under certain circumstances remains ongoing and heated. Studies on the topic of negative campaigning do not show consistent findings regarding the effectiveness of such a campaign strategy. Negative campaigning may keep people away from the polls for different reasons. One reason is that negative advertising may discourage supporters of the candidate who is attacked. An alternative explanation is that negative advertising makes the public disenchanted with both candidates. That way, candidates unintentionally disappoint their supporters by using negative advertising. Finally, negative campaigning may diminish the power of civic duty, and may undermine the legitimacy of the entire electoral process. Campaigns that generate more negative than positive messages may leave voters embittered toward the candidates and the rules of the game.

Negative ads can produce a backlash. For example, in the 1993 Canadian national election, Conservatives attacked the physical handicaps of the liberals' candidate Jean Chrétien for prime minister. The liberals won anyway, but voters were so disgusted about the Conservatives' behavior that only two Tories were elected to Parliament from the whole country. Previously, the Conservatives had held 154 seats, so the entire party wiped itself out for one election cycle.

During the run up to the 1997 United Kingdom general election, the British Conservative Party ran a campaign that stated that the Labour Party was dangerous, and used posters of Labour leader Tony Blair with "demon eyes" on them. Many voters rejected this claim, the campaign failed, and Labour won in a landslide. Negative campaigning can backfire in many ways. It can turn off voters and can cause opponents to respond in kind. It can cause voters to wonder if the other candidate has some of the same negatives that his or her opponent seems to have, and can create a negative campaign for the candidate's opponent. Because of the possible harm that may arise from being seen as a negative campaigner, candidates often pledge to refrain from such negative attacks.

In commercial advertising, various regulations prohibit false advertising and broadcast campaigns to promote potentially harmful activities, such as advertising tobacco products or alcohol. Similar regulations have at times been proposed by politicians to limit negative political campaigning. They argue that negative political ads

poison the political process. In modern Western societies, however, the proposed regulation of public speech is confronted by strong traditions favoring the open exchange of ideas and opinions, and by fundamental legal protections, such as the Constitution.

Ralf Spiller
Macromedia University

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Candidate Image; Candidates, Political Branding of; Political Parties.

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Network Influentials

In the media and politics domain, Alan Rosenblatt coined the term *network influentials* to describe individuals who, through social networks and social media, reach large numbers of others. This notion, not new to those who study and analyze social networks, is synonymous with the idea of a "super-connector" or a "super-actor," terms used to describe individuals within a given network who are the most connected and influential. Identifying and understanding network influentials can be a key component in dispersing information, swaying public opinion, or organizing a community around a cause. The remainder of this entry discusses some indicators (e.g., Klout scores and LinkedIn connections) of one's network influence, illustrates why network influentials are important, and concludes with a political labor reform example of how network influentials can snowball out their effect and impact public policy and opinion.

Klout

Many policymakers, CEOs, and media executives strive to identify the individuals through whom they can deliver their message, thus resulting in the maximum network saturation (i.e., for the least amount of effort and cost, who will bring the greatest return on investment). As a rough indicator of network influence, crude numbers like the number of Facebook friends or LinkedIn connections an individual possesses have been used in the past, but these are crude indicators and do little to describe the individuals' true influence or connectedness within their network. More recently, Klout.com has elevated the ability to assess the extent to which someone is a network influential with the introduction of a Klout score. A Klout score ranges from 0 to 100, and not only factors in number of connections on social networking sites, but also the individual's ability to stimulate dialogues and inspire actions such as "likes," "retweets," and "shares."

Despite the known importance of network influentials and recent advances in identifying them, much work remains to truly conclude that these mechanisms to identify network influence are valid measures of actual influence. The primary challenge to the validity of these measures of influence is their proprietary nature—many of the algorithms used to calculate scores are kept secret, thus forcing the public to assume that measure is valid without having any way to verify it. Klout scores, for example, as mentioned above are based on some combination of "likes," retweets, and "shares," among other factors. But, how exactly a share is weighted, and how the influence of the person who shared it is calculated (or if it is calculated), are not disclosed. Certainly, a share by former President Bill Clinton's Facebook account, which has tens of thousands of followers, has more influence than a share by a friend from grade school who has only a few hundred followers. How exactly that influence is quantified remains undisclosed.

Netform

Karen Stephenson, an organizational anthropologist, runs Netform, an organization that seeks to map and measure social capital in business and society. Through Netform's proprietary process, Stephenson has conducted social network studies for both government and Fortune 500 company use.

What makes Stephenson's approach to identifying network influentials unique is that she includes the individual's propensity toward action as a key factor in her equation. Stephenson's hypothesis is that most attempts to identify network influentials and exploit their influence fail because the people commonly thought to be the most influential are also typically the most busy, and thus are the least likely or able to take action. Stephenson's approach, one that is used by many governments seeking to stimulate policy change, focuses on identifying individuals who have strong relationships across multiple community sectors; relationships grounded in mutual trust.

In this sense, the focus is not on power or hierarchal structure where a leader with the most direct reports is assumed to be most influential. Instead, Stephenson's work shows that often when seeking to effect change, individuals performing grassroots outreach in the community (e.g., a business person who offers her conference room to host local community organizations) often have the most influence given that they reach a broad array of individuals from different networks and do so in a very trustworthy way.

Example

Perhaps what Stephenson's work illustrates, and all that is know for certain about network influentials, can best be described by looking at the influence of Nell Nelson, a Chicago socialite turned newspaper reporter at the turn of the century. Well-connected socially, Nelson was one of the first female reporters for the *Chicago Times*, and authored a series of articles under the column heading "City Slave Girls." Prior to writing the articles, Nelson spent six months seeking employment and working for various clothing manufacturers in Chicago's garment district. Her goal: to chronicle and shine light on the working conditions to which women and children were subjected. Each day, she would dress in rags, and go from employer to employer seeking work. By the time all was said and done, she infiltrated over 15 employers, documenting physical and emotional abuse, employees fined for talking and charged for cups of water, employers refusing to pay employees as promised (or when promised), and numerous instances of children as young as 12 and 13 years old working 12-plus-hour days in sweatshop conditions.

Through her social connections, Nelson leveraged her position as a reporter to shine light on these workplace atrocities and effect changes in public policy. She used her connections with the Illinois Woman's Alliance, Florence Kelly (the Hull House and National Consumer's League), Elia Peattie (Omaha Women's Club and Nebraska State Federation of Woman's Clubs), and some connections at the *New York World* newspaper to organize letter-writing campaigns, stage protests, and generate public outcry that ultimately led to a domino effect of labor policy changes at the local and federal levels. Nelson recognized, albeit over time, that she had the ability to be influential in her network, and she took action to do so. Thus, action is a key component of a network influential—the individual must be well-connected enough to impact change, and must also be willing to exploit their network in a systematic and targeted manor.

Eric Liguori
California State University, Fresno
Josh Bendickson
Louisiana State University

See Also: Alpha Bloggers; Klout Score; LinkedIn; Opinion Leader Theory; Snowball Effect; Social Capital; Social Network Analysis

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Networks, Political

Traditional social science predominately focuses on actor attributes in explanations, and on individuals or aggregates of individuals (e.g., in group-level measures) as the units of analysis. Social network scholars, by contrast, focus on relationships. For instance, rather than ascribing political attitudes to the socioeconomic characteristics of individuals, network scholars are interested in how political attitudes are diffused and sustained through social networks. Social network analysis can be thought of in three different ways: in terms of particular theories and concepts (such as structural holes), in terms of particular methods (e.g., measures of things like density, centrality, and cliques, name roster survey methods, and network visualization), and in terms of particular substantive problems (e.g., social capital, the diffusion of information, collective action, or attitude formation). More generally, social network analysis can be thought of as a paradigm that encompasses all of these things. A wide array of political phenomena potentially falls under the rubric of political network analysis.

A social network is a set of social units and the interrelationships among them. In social network analysis, the social units are commonly called "nodes," and the relationships are called "ties." Social units can vary in scale from individuals to organizations to nation states. Ties can vary in terms of strength and content. Political networks are social networks that involve political actors and/or political phenomena. At the individual level, scholars might focus on the role that interpersonal social networks play in affecting political opinions, voting, or mobilization for collective action. At the organizational level, organizations might constitute the nodes in a social network, and coordinated activity (such as joint participation in events) in a coalition might constitute ties.

While in contemporary discourse, social media and social networks are often used interchangeably, from the perspective of social network analysis, these are not one and the same thing. Relations made through social media may be considered one type of social network, but other types of social networks exist, and social media should be thought of as a subset of the concept of social network. Digital social networks encompass social media, as well as related things such as the Internet and World Wide Web, mobile phones, and short message service (SMS). The scale of focus of political network analysis can be "ego-networks" or "whole networks." An ego-network is a focal actor, and the set of alters to which the focal actor is tied. The ego-network sometimes also includes ties among alters. A whole network is comprised of all of the nodes, and all of the ties among the nodes, in a bounded social grouping.

Another distinction that is made by network analysts is between one-mode networks and two-mode networks. In matrix terms, in one-mode networks, the rows and columns are the same actors. In two-mode networks, the rows and columns are different actors. For example, the rows might be individuals, whereas the columns might be organizations or events. With regard to the organization example, individuals are linked to one another through their joint membership in organizations, and organizations are linked together through the joint membership of individuals. At the individual actor level, "tie strength" refers to the strength of the relationship between two actors. One conceptual indicator of this is "felt closeness." Sometimes, role relationships are used as a proxy for closeness, such as the

distinction between close friends versus acquaintances. A variety of other indicators are also used in different studies, such as tie multiplexity or frequency of contact. Tie strength can also be used to describe relationships among organizations and actors at other scales. Here, the concept is somewhat less developed. One indicator that has been used is "interlocking directors."

In social network analysis, there are also a variety of concepts and measures of subgroups. The central concept is the clique; that is, a subgroup of at least three actors, where every actor has a direct tie to every other actor in the subgroup. Other related concepts vary the threshold values for these criteria. In terms of digital social networks, ties might be measured by Facebook friendships, Twitter followers, URL links on the World Wide Web, or messages across mobile phones.

Political Networks

Political network analysis seeks to understand how relationships influence political processes. Network studies have been conducted at all levels of politics, from the influence of country-level interactions on world systems to the effect of interpersonal exchanges on the political participation of individuals. This work has helped to illuminate the fact that the political arena is a relational space. Power and influence are exercised between actors in networks, common interests are formed through connections, and information and resources flow through social structures. Social network theories provide frameworks for examining these relational dimensions of politics. Network theory has been applied to the study of political phenomena in three distinct ways. One stream of research has focused on individual political action. This work examines how interpersonal relationships affect individuals' political preferences and behavior. A second stream focuses on collective action and social movements, and seeks to understand how interpersonal and interorganizational relationships influence the coordination of political action. A third body of research focuses on the role that networks play in policymaking processes. This work is based on the assumptions that the policy options that exist, and are adopted by governments, are in part related to the social network structure of policy actors.

Individual Political Action

Social networks play a role in both the formation of public opinion about politics and in the adoption of political behaviors, such as voting. Social connections provide conduits for information to flow between individuals about political issues. This social transmission process also provides a space for political messages to get shaped and reinterpreted to correspond with individuals' political preferences. Additionally, social networks influence political participation by increasing access to political resources via social ties, and by reinforcing norms about the desirability of participation. The link between political behavior and social ties is shaped by two forces: persuasion (or social influence) and social selection. Persuasion theory posits that when people interact, they influence each other's perceptions and actions. Frequent interaction between individuals shapes political attitudes, and creates normative expectations that influence behavior, such as voting choices or participation in political rallies. Social selection theory highlights the tendency of people to make connections to similar others. People choose to form ties to individuals who share their political views, embedding themselves within a network that reinforces their political attitudes. Thus, people's political actions can be shaped by their networks, and their political preferences may also shape the formation of their network.

Collective Action and Social Movements

Collective action refers to a collectivity of people working toward a common goal. When this goal involves trying to either foster or resist social change, this activity is referred to as a social movement. While social movements can overlap with political parties and formal political institutions, they are normally conceived of as entities that are relatively less institutionalized, and as primarily involving organizations that are separate from political parties and government institutions. In recent years, social movement scholars have given considerable attention to social networks in social movements. Four types of network processes have been explored, though these are not entirely separate phenomena: personal networks that are implicated in the initial recruitment and ongoing mobilization of social movement members, interorganizational networks that link members of

distinct social movement groups, network structures that help transmit ideas and other aspects of culture, and networks that produce social capital for group members.

Mario Diani has made networks central to his conceptual definition of social movements. He argues that what distinguishes social movements from other forms of collective action are the connections that occur between independent sites, events, and actors that link them together into a collective experience, with shared identities and goals across time and space. Diani defines social movements as "... networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in political or cultural conflicts, on the basis of shared collective identities." More recently, Diani and Bison argue that social movement scholars should recognize social movements as specific social processes, distinct from other episodes of collective action, including discrete protest events. These individual events should only be considered measures of social movements if there is evidence of their connectedness to each other. In distinguishing between organizations, coalitions, consensus movements, and social movements, Diani and Bison have defined the latter in the following way: ". . . social movement processes ... [are] instances of collective action with clear conflictual orientations to specific social and political opponents, conducted in the context of dense inter-organizational networking, by actors linked by solidarities and shared identities that precede and survive any specific coalitions and campaigns." Thus, networks can be viewed as an integral part of social movement phenomena.

In terms of social media and digital social networks, Earl and Kimport talk about a continuum of online activism involving: e-mobilization, e-tactics, and e-movements. E-mobilization is where the digital networks are used to facilitate the sharing of information in the service of an offline protest action (e.g., United for Peace and Justice's march and rally in Washington, D.C., in 2007). E-tactics include both offline and online components. These are usually low cost, and do not rely on co-presence for participants or organizers. E-tactics provide varying leverages of the affordances of digital networks; for example, the Web site Petition Online. In e-movements, organization of, and participation in, the movement occur entirely online. This is an example of high leveraging of the affordances of digital networks; for example, the Strategic Voting Movement. In *Digitally Enabled Social Change*, Earl and Kimport discuss two schools of thought about the effects of digital technology on activism: supersized, it magnifies traditional processes; and theory 2.0, it actually changes the processes that underlie activism.

Policymaking Processes

Policy network analysis examines the role that actors play in the process of policymaking. This involves studying the influence of different individuals and groups, such as government agencies, lobbyists, and nongovernmental organizations, in shaping policy outcomes. Several different frameworks have been developed to explain the interaction between networks and policy development processes. The most prominent of these are the organizational state perspective, the epistemic community approach, the advocacy coalition framework, institutional analysis, and the social learning model. The organizational state perspective asserts that policy is influenced by the participation of extragovernmental organizations (e.g., social movements, nongovernmental organizations, business associations, and scientific advisory bodies) in state-policy domain events. A variety of organizations are more or less engaged in policymaking processes, and are perceived to have more or less influence, based in part on their relative position within the policy network.

Epistemic communities are networks of knowledge-based experts who define how complex problems are understood, and who identify state interests and policy options. Epistemic communities are characterized by shared normative beliefs and validation criteria, and a common causal understanding of a particular problem. Epistemic communities shape the distribution of knowledge around a particular issue through their network connections, and in turn influence perceptions of available policy choices. The advocacy coalition framework suggests that stakeholders with similar values and beliefs form coalitions so that they can compete for policy influence. These coalitions are not limited to particular issues or policies, but rather form based on similarity of core values, and work together

across multiple policy venues. Network analysis can be used to identify clusters of actors who work together based on shared values, and to characterize different policy communities based on coalition formation across several domains.

The institutionalist approach assumes that policy actors behave rationally, and that they seek network relationships in order to improve individual outcomes via collective action. Actors work together and coordinate policies so that they can achieve results that are mutually beneficial for network participants. From an institutional perspective, policy network analysis can be used to identify the types of relationships that enhance outcomes for both individual policy actors and the network as a whole. The social learning model posits that policy approaches diffuse through social networks via a process of social learning. Individuals and organizations learn about the suite of policy options available to them through their connections. Patterns of policy adoption can be understood by examining the connections between policy actors.

Social Media and Political Networks

The advent of computer-mediated communication has led to a new research agenda in social network analysis that seeks to understand how Internet technologies influence social interaction. The Internet is a constantly evolving space, and thus research on social media and political networks is also evolving. E-mail, listservs, blogs, and social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter provide platforms for forging new network connections, sharing ideas and resources, and shaping political processes. On the whole, research on networks and social media tends to support the idea that Internet technologies complement, rather than replace, face-to-face networks. For example, in a study of 61 million U.S. Facebook users, R. Bond et al. found that political messaging through social media significantly influences political self-expression, information seeking, and voting behavior, but that messages are predominantly transmitted to people who already have existing face-to-face relationships. Similarly, Y. Takhteyev et al. found that geography and language are both significant predictors of Twitter ties, and that a substantial share of Twitter connections are found within the same city, highlighting the significance of pre-existing ties. While social media sites provide new ways to interact, they do not necessarily replace existing face-to-face networks.

The Internet does, however, make building social linkages faster and easier. It also helps people to build connections to others with similar interests because it expands the pool of available connections. Furthermore, information is more readily available online, and the cost of distributing ideas and building connections is significantly reduced. This lowers the expense of collective action, and makes it possible to build transnational networks and conduct political action on a global scale. People can be mobilized to take action through mailing lists, Web sites, and social media campaigns; however, ties formed to social movements through the Internet alone tend to be weaker than those built through existing relationships. In sum, social media provide a range of new tools to support political participation, but face-to-face networks still play an important role in mediating political action.

Case Study: Climate Change Denial Networks

In recent years, global climate change has been transformed from an object of scientific inquiry into the most visible global environmental issue. While the exact consequences are difficult to predict, authors, scientists, and environmentalists warn of droughts, sea-level rise, and increased extreme weather. There is a high degree of scientific consensus that climate change is occurring, and that it is primarily a consequence of human production of greenhouse gases. Yet, at the same time as the scientific community has been calling for action on climate change, a well-organized climate change denial movement has steadily developed, and has been working to derail efforts to combat global warming. The U.S. climate change denial movement has been widely studied, and provides an interesting demonstration of the different ways that political networks act to shape public opinion and policies. The climate change denial movement was born in the 1990s, in reaction to rising global environmental awareness. The movement was initially comprised of conservative think tanks, foundations, politicians, and members of the fossil fuel industry, and was driven by a shared concern about the perceived

impact of climate change legislation on neoliberal economic policies. At the time of its formation, this network could be viewed as an advocacy coalition, a network of disparate actors who banded together around shared neoliberal values in order to gain influence over political processes.

After its formation, the movement quickly sought to gain legitimacy through "scientific expertise." A number of contrarian scientists vocally challenged mainstream climate science in order to sow seeds of doubt about the reality and seriousness of global climate change. Despite the fact that these scientists were not climatologists, and their work was at odds with the overwhelming majority of climate scientists, the media gave denialist scientists press attention in order to present an image of journalistic balance on the issue. Thus, the climate change denial movement had effectively formed an epistemic community of "experts" that was capable of shaping media messages on climate change, and in turn influenced perceptions of whether creating climate policy was a necessary step.

In the United States, the issue of climate change quickly began to polarize along party lines, and the denial movement gained momentum when the Republicans took control of Congress in 1994. Republican politicians formed closer links with climate change deniers, and some began to actively promote the ideas of the contrarian scientists. This shift is consistent with the organizational state perspective, whereby politicians and nongovernmental actors work together to promote particular interests and shape governmental policies. Additionally, this polarization filtered down to public opinion about climate change, and attitudes about climate change began to form cleavages along party lines within the broader U.S. population.

The U.S. climate denial movement spread its influence through a number of tactics. It organized conferences, talks, and "front groups" (grassroots initiatives that were built and funded by corporations and conservative think tanks) to develop climate denial networks and disseminate uncertainty. The movement supplemented these face-to-face interactions with a growing online presence, and began actively exporting its strategies to its networks in other countries in order to prevent global political action on climate change. This approach is consistent with a social learning perspective, whereby the innovations of the U.S. denial movement were spread via networks to other nations. Though the climate denial movement is one among many influences on climate change action, these strategies have had a lasting impact on global policymaking. A well-organized movement that harnessed social networks in order to influence policy, it managed to undermine scientific evidence demonstrating the seriousness of climate change, and as a consequence helped to derail efforts to develop meaningful climate policy. A. M. McCright and R. E. Dunlap documented some of the dynamics of this countermovement, including its use of both mainstream and digital media.

Analyzing Political Networks

A wide array of computer software is available for analyzing political network data. Two of the most popular programs for calculating network measures are UCINET, as introduced by S. P. Borgatti et al.; and PAJEK. For visualizing political networks, two useful programs are Netdraw (which is packaged with UCINET) and Visone. Two programs specifically designed to analyze social network data obtained from social network sites are Netminer and NodeXL. These programs (in some instances with related apps) will allow one to extract and analyze Facebook and Twitter data, and calculate a variety of social network analytic measures. There are also various programs for extracting and analyzing data from other types of Web sites. In order to tease out the difference between persuasion and social selection effects, one needs to have longitudinal panel data on political actors, their relations, and related variables of interest. If one has two or more waves of data (preferably less than two), then one approach is to utilize SIENA modeling, which has been developed by Snijders et al. In the coming years, social network analysis of political networks in general, and social media related to politics more specifically, will become increasingly prominent in the social sciences.

David B. Tindall
Georgia Piggot
University of British Columbia

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Advocacy Groups, Political Branding of; Homophily; Influence

on Elections; Social Networking Web Sites; Strong-Tie Connections Versus Weak-Tie Connections; Topology of Social Networks.

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News Media

News media hold a mediating role between the institutions of society and the public. They include print media (newspapers and magazines), broadcasting media (radio and television), and online media. The emergence of news media in their early form coincides with the emergence of a range of institutional developments that are linked with the early stages of modernity. This coincidence was the result of the institutional transformations that began to prevail in Europe in the late Middle Ages and early modernity. These transformations became prominent in the fields of economic, political, and symbolic power. In precapitalist societies, communication was characterized by the dominance of oral speech and the lack of popular print media. The use of the written word was restricted to privileged classes and dominant social classes. Those days, the carriers of news from the outside world were the moving part of the population: merchants, monks, pilgrims, and soldiers. The development, however, of capitalist socioeconomic relations from the 16th century onward would bring a true revolution in the field of communication. Along with the removal of old modes of production and the boom of capitalistic production, the press was invented.

In the mercantilism era, national economies were developed within the modern state. The nation is formed as a modern state, with bureaucratic organization and increasing financial needs. The new capitalist relations that prevail in the economy require the emergence of new media for communication, which broaden the social base of political participation and deliberation. Within the political and social context that shaped the mercantile phase of capitalism, the press was developed into a true revolutionary power. The actors of this new mode of production were the rising bourgeoisie. The request for participation in the regulation of public life required complete information and knowledge of all the current issues. The press was developed in order to fulfill the needs of the new social class: public policy debate and criticism, financial reporting, and dissemination of ideas and beliefs that reinforced a new urban way of life, thinking, and behavior.

Habermas follows Bücher in identifying three phases in the historical development of the press. In the first phase, the newspaper business is organized as small handloom units. The interest of the publisher for this business is purely commercial, and the activity of the organization consists of managing news circulation and printing. In this phase, the press has no political function. At the later stage, news writing acquires a competitor, literary journalism, converting the newspapers from publishing news institutions to institutions and leaders of public opinion.

During this second phase, the structural transformation of the press is witnessed: the profit-oriented function of the press is minimized, and its role as watchdog of public political institutions begins. The central role in the political function of a newspaper is the lead article of the newspaper. Publishers financially support the press, and are not that interested about the commercial performance of their business. Without the agony of generating profit, the press can become a critical instrument of the political thinking and acting public. The press plays a crucial role not only

in informing the public, but also in shaping and mobilizing public opinion.

Following the ideal type of public sphere of Jurgen Habermas, Brian McNair summarizes the specific functions that news media are expected to perform in the media in democratic societies. The media, therefore, must: inform the public about everything that happens around them (surveillance or monitoring function); provide knowledge on the importance and significance of events; provide a framework for public policy debate between citizens, facilitating the formation of public opinion within which public opinion is formed; expose publicly the party and political institutions (control function); and act as channels for the expression of different viewpoints.

Media organizations are experiencing vast transformations that drastically and rapidly change their role and functions because of the growing popularity of social media. The Internet is changing the media landscape of the 21st century. The transition from the era of print and broadcasting media to the emergence of the new online platforms has structurally changed the flow of information, introducing a nonlinear model of communication that is multidirectional. A distinction that can help show the way that the Internet is incorporating the qualities of traditional media and at the same time innovating is to distinguish between conversational and group media. Conversational media, such as the telephone, allow horizontal communication (one-on-one). On the other hand, group media, such as the television and the press, allow vertical communication from a sender to a specific cluster (one-to-many).

The Internet is good at both: it allows communication toward all directions, supporting direct and interpersonal communication (as a conversational medium), as well as mass communication

A man wears a gas mask to film a protest in Taksim Square, Turkey, using a television camera during the first week of protests in June 2013. During the Arab Spring protests that began in 2011, citizen journalists were often the only ones who could avoid government censorship of traditional media or access remote places; their work was sometimes the only available journalism about certain events.

(as a group medium). It becomes the canvas on which all media converge, and constructs a network with complex dynamics.

Web 2.0 has become the buzzword describing a plethora of social media available on the Internet, including blogs, photos, file-sharing systems, and social-networking sites. Web 2.0, with its social platforms, introduces its users to the possibility to interact or cooperate, offering them the choice to become producers and transcend their passive role as audience of content that was created for them. Digital social platforms change the way that people connect, communicate, act, and interact. They form social clusters on various levels (local, national, and international) as well as around common interests or problems, media, and political agenda.

Citizen Journalism

These new forms of social media and networks enable the active involvement of the public in the news process, causing cracks in the (until recently strictly defined) dichotomy between the producer and the consumer of news. The public can significantly contribute to the agenda of mainstream media, or even set an alternative agenda on alternative media platforms. The lifecycle of news becomes even more complex and difficult to define. News that appears online can be easily ignored, buried in the vast new attention economy. The mainstream media remain powerful in the selection and determination of the public agenda. However, the emergence of new participatory forms of news production and dissemination puts into doubt the certainty that the setting of the media agenda is only one way, and is directed from the mass media to the public. Influences on the determination of the daily agenda are threefold: new professional journalistic standards and practices, a more interdependent intermedia agenda-setting process, and the growing news content produced by citizens.

The field of information and communication is evolving into a more participatory media ecosystem that transforms the news into a social experience. The news becomes a participatory activity in which people contribute their stories and experiences and post their reactions to events. The Internet is changing the relationship between journalists and their audiences from a one-way, linear, asymmetric communication model into an interactive, nonlinear, participatory model. In other words, the Internet allows the opening of a dialogue between the producers and consumers of news. News is no longer static, but open to transformation. In this way, journalists can enrich their produced news content with the views, thoughts, and creative expressions of their audience. For the consumer of news, the digital revolution creates an abundance of options, but can also lead to fragmentation of attention. Existing forms of media are challenged by new online media platforms that offer added values: personalization, interactivity, and feedback.

These innovations are not only changing the structural nature of media consumption, but also signal a new era in which consumers can now act as coproducers and co-distributors of news content. At the other end of the news chain, media organizations require larger volumes of news content than can be produced by professional journalists. To saturate the demands of 24/7 online media platforms, publishers are becoming increasingly dependent on external suppliers for news material from their public. At the same time, they search for new communications applications in order to make their news content more relevant to the needs of the public.

Web 2.0 technologies provide the public with popular and accessible tools that enable them to publish text, pictures, audio, and video. Traditional media, the press, radio, and television are not participatory platforms. However, traditional media are developing new interactive features and experimenting with participatory forms of content production in order to involve and engage the public in the news process. Strong media organizations compete in order to dominate the new emerging field of new media and social networks. The purchase of Flickr (a photo-sharing Web site) by Yahoo! in 2005, the acquisition of Blogger.com by Google in 2003 and YouTube in 2006, and the acquisition of Newsvine by MSNBC in 2007 are a few examples.

In the example of CNN, the media organization developed the collaborative journalistic platform iReport, where people freely publish their content. In cases of censorship of traditional media, especially in the protests associated with Arab Spring, citizen journalism emerged as the

only available news. However, the movement of citizen journalism does not signal the end of the determination of the news agenda by mainstream media organizations. They still set the tone of the selection and hierarchy of the online news agenda. The most significant change is that the dominant traditional media compete to attract the attention of the public with a plethora of online news and entertainment content. This indicates a redistribution of power in the modern media ecosystem, from professional journalist to the citizen.

Dimitra Dimitrakopoulou
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

See Also: Citizen Journalism; Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press; Reporters Without Borders; User-Generated Content; World Press Freedom Index.

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Nongovernmental Organizations

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have been pivotal participants in international politics and governance for over 60 years. While organizations such as Rotary International have existed for far longer, with the creation of the United Nations (UN), the role and position of NGOs was formalized at a global level. Today, the significance of NGOs to international and national politics is such that they are routinely consulted by governments and intergovernmental organizations. However, the strength of NGOs lies in the range of social issues they espouse and the vast numbers of people whose interests these NGOs represent. Considering the complexity and immensity of the task confronting NGOs, social media has been a boon to the activities of these organizations. Social media has impacted every facet of the work that NGOs do, including advocacy, community outreach, and fundraising. Furthermore, social media has opened avenues and opportunities for NGOs that were not previously available. Still, there are challenges that continue to confront NGOs and their effective use of social media.

The term *NGO* refers to a broad variety of organizations operating both at local and international levels. The term emerged out of the UN in 1945 from a need to define the nongovernmental agents inducted into the UN system through consultative status. However, over time, there has emerged an agreement that a definition of NGOs must include at least two elements: method of organizing and outcome orientation. In the methods of organizing, NGOs are characterized as being a nonprofit and voluntary citizens group. As to an outcome orientation, NGOs are expected to be working toward a nonviolent social mission, such as eradication of poverty or provision of health care. In addition, to be recognized by international governing bodies, NGOs are expected to have a formalized structure and accountability to their stakeholders.

Role in Civil Society and Politics

Scholars conceptualize society as constituted by three sectors: governments, businesses, and the voluntary sector. NGOs are categorized as belonging to the voluntary sector where they have played an increasingly significant role over the last 20 years. While initially, NGOs were seen as filling gaps in service and infrastructure left by government and businesses, in recent years, the political significance of NGO activities has been receiving increasing attention. Scholars suggest that NGOs strengthen civil society by facilitating participatory and democratic solutions to social issues. The role of NGOs in civil society has also gained prominence as international organizations such as the UN and European Union (EU) have established formal avenues for consultations with NGOs on policy issues. For example, for more than 60 years, the UN has been organizing an annual NGO meeting at its New York

headquarters. The annual conference is open to the 3,500 NGOs that have been granted consultative status with the UN. As for the EU, after decades of holding consultative status, in 2003 all 400 NGOs holding consultative status were automatically granted participatory status in the European Council.

NGOs play a significant role in international as well as national politics by providing an organized and sustained effort around various social events and issues. Some well-known instances of such activity would be the International Red Cross Society and human rights, Greenpeace and environmental protection, and Transparency International and systematic corruption. NGOs also have traditionally been the vehicle through which individual citizens can have their voices heard on the national and international stage. While it would be difficult for an individual or even a group to engage in advocacy on the national or international stage, being part of an NGO makes this possible. In the case of advocating for women's rights to be put on the global agenda, NGOs and their rigorous efforts at the UN are given credit for the organizing of several international conferences on the issue.

Challenges

NGOs have faced various challenges over the years in their efforts to fulfill their social missions. The dearth of financial resources is a major hurdle that must be overcome. Often, NGOs depend on memberships or individual donations to conduct their work. However, the major source of funding for most NGOs continues to be donor-based funding. Donor funding usually comes with constraints built in by donor agencies. Thus, fundraising and satisfying donors are some of the major activities for an NGO. Most NGOs continue to work under substantial financial constraints that make advocacy, research, and outreach a challenge.

NGOs from developing countries have also had to contend with infrastructural limitations. For these NGOs, gaining access to the basics of communication technology, such as phone and Internet access, can be a luxury. Finally, NGOs face political and social pressures from governments, business, and groups that are negatively affected by the NGO's advocacy and efforts on behalf of disadvantaged populations. This has often put NGO workers and activists in harm's way. In addition, mass media has not traditionally been open to providing sustained or meaningful coverage of causes espoused by NGOs, or of the work of NGOs themselves.

Social Media and NGOs

The rising social and political significance of social media has not gone unnoticed by the NGO community and its stakeholders. Social media have been said to offer vast opportunities to NGOs by facilitating communication and coordination activities. Social media promise to revolutionize the way that NGOs fundraise, connect with stakeholders, disseminate information, and network with other NGOs. While some of this potential has been realized, much ground remains to be covered, and there are challenges that will need to be overcome.

Outreach and Fundraising

One of the most prominent areas of social media impact for NGOs is in the area of outreach. NGOs are able to use social media tools such as Web sites, blogs, microblogs, and videos to share information, tell stories, and encourage action. Social media also allows organizations to introduce, talk about, and discuss their initiatives. Digital storytelling has been a particularly successful strategy for outreach, as evidenced in the case of Hoshyar. Hoshyar, a Pakistani NGO advocating women's education in the Swat Valley, teamed up with Sliderocket to create a video. It went viral, and garnered global recognition for this tiny NGO operating in a geographically secluded area. Stakeholders have the increased benefit of interactivity, of being able to communicate with the NGO, and other stakeholders.

Social Media are revolutionizing the way that NGOs engage in fundraising. While online donations have long been a Web site standard for NGOs, the advent of social media has introduced newer and broader avenues to solicit donations. The American Cancer Society has been using Second Life to recruit virtual volunteers and raise money. Other NGOs have used Twitter and Facebook to highlight issues and solicit donations. The organization Charity: water was able to raise over $200,000 using Twitter. While funding via social

Volunteers lighting candles near the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, Germany, during the Earth Hour Global event in 2012, during which lights were switched off all over the world in what was billed as "the world's largest display of environmental action." The event was an initiative in partnership with the large nongovernmental organization World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

networks has been elusive, it still offers NGOs a platform to engage their stakeholders in such campaigns. Recently, a plethora of crowdfunding Web sites have sprung up on the social media scene. These organizations offer NGOs a way to extend the already successful strategy of soliciting microdonations. Furthermore, mobile phone donations and text2giving microdonations have become popular in developing countries.

Participation Facilitation and Information Dissemination

One of the major barriers to NGO participation is time and travel investment. With the Internet, particularly social media, this barrier has been considerably lowered. Interested individuals can "like" a Facebook page and NGO updates start pouring in. In addition, NGOs are successfully using Twitter as a way to keep their stakeholders engaged and motivated. NGO causes are no longer limited by national borders; they can now draw on an international audience, and involve them on a daily basis. Both Greenpeace and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) have over a million "likes" on Facebook alone, and actively use this platform to promote and facilitate their "members."

It is not the NGOs alone that facilitate participation for their stakeholders. A new kind of social network is emerging on the Internet that serves to connect individuals with NGOs. In Canada, Charityvillage.com provides an NGO database, Web pages for NGO profiles, and listings for volunteers and donations.

NGOs have been able to use the Internet as an effective information dissemination tool over the last decade. However, social media add an additional element of immediacy, interactivity, and the possibility of cross-linkages. Stakeholders no longer need to visit an NGO's Web site and search for the latest data, action items, or updates. NGOs can showcase current research, facts, and advocacy campaigns through microblogging and podcasts, as well as social bookmarking. This kind of selective sharing and highlighting of information also has the opportunity to go viral because social network users frequently repost and share updates from their news feeds.

Community Building and Management

Social media also offer NGOs effective and expansive community management opportunities. Stakeholders often use NGOs' social media posts as starting points to engage with NGO representatives and other community members, thus building a sense of belonging and camaraderie. Individuals can also repost text, photos, and videos within the social network, to other networks, or on their own blogs to show their affiliation and support of an NGO. Online social networks are also used to facilitate offline connections among stakeholders, so that social media can be used to connect people in the same geographical region.

Social media not only allow NGOs to connect with their audiences, but also with other NGOs. The primary sources for NGO–NGO outreach are emerging niche networks like jumo.com and wiser.org that allow NGOs to connect with other NGOs. Donor agencies also maintain substantial and active online presences that provide another avenue for NGO representatives to connect and relate to each other.

Furthermore, social media in all its forms provide previously isolated NGOs with the opportunity to connect with other NGOs in their field of activity. This is particularly true of NGOs operating in countries with oppressive regimes and/or oppressive communication policies. In addition, the viral features of social media have been used quite successfully by NGO activists to spread information and activate support. This is particularly crucial in times when an NGO's representatives and stakeholders might be in jeopardy themselves.

Social Media Challenges

While social media have brought much opportunity to NGOs, they have also brought new challenges. One of the most significant is that social networks allow populations to be self-organized. Movements in Pakistan, Iran, and the Middle East were largely initiated and sustained by individuals using social media. The NGOs in these countries were largely bypassed by the masses in favor of spontaneous organizing initiated and maintained by a core group of individuals. This phenomenon is replicated, albeit on a less dramatic scale, across the global public sphere. People are using social network groups and niche networks to connect, organize, and interact with other individuals. This need not spell doom for NGOs; rather, it can be seen as a need to refine strategy and adapt to the new role that social media has created for them.

The digital divide continues to be an issue for NGOs. While in the United States, 89 percent of nonprofits are using social media, the number is much lower for international NGOs. These organizations, particularly NGOs in those areas of the world requiring the most attention, continue to find challenges in affording the tools necessary for participation in the social media space. It is not only NGOs that are affected; stakeholders are also affected. Social media adoption rates are quite high for stakeholders belonging to developed countries and for upper income populations. However, key NGO populations continue to remain off the Internet and social networks. This will continue the conversation in the NGO community regarding the north–south divide, as well as proportional representation of disadvantaged communities in the global public sphere.

Saman Talib
Humber College

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Organizing; Campaigns, Virtual; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Crowdfunding; Crowdsourcing; Evolution of Social Media; Nonprofit Organizations.

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Nonprofit Organizations

A nonprofit organization (NPO) is an organization that uses revenue for social aid without a profit motive. NPOs operate to benefit the general public or specific groups. Examples of NPOs include charitable organizations, advocacy groups, religious organizations, professional/trade associations, political organizations, and several others. The goal of NPOs is to provide support to a key public through campaigns that stimulate public interest, recruit and maintain volunteers, and raise money.

In order to achieve these goals, NPOs are continually seeking outreach opportunities. Recently, NPOs have shown interest in social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube for public outreach. Although NPOs currently lag behind others in social media adoption, they have recognized the widespread use of social media and seek to utilize this medium. This entry will explain the perceived benefits and drawback of NPOs' use of social media, including discussion of cost effectiveness, image transparency, information dissemination, reaching stakeholders, and building relationships.

Cost Effectiveness

Like other organizations, NPOs find the inexpensive nature of social media appealing. However, implementation of social media has proven not as cheap as initially thought. Staff limitations present one obstacle prohibiting adoption of social media by NPOs. Large-scale social media efforts require a staff and constant monitoring, updating, and responding. It is necessary to designate individuals with the responsibility of performing these tasks and maintaining overall standards for content addition. NPOs experience more difficulties when attempting to use multiple platforms because they tend to have smaller staffs, budgets, and resources. Additionally, those tasked with implementation need some guidance and support as they adopt social media.

Image Transparency

Social media can be an effective way for NPOs to maintain an open and transparent online image. Many NPOs appear to understand the importance of disclosure as they tend to be open and transparent in their use of Facebook. In fact, the use of social media allows NPOs to directly communicate with the media while pushing the message beyond traditional gatekeepers. The ability for quick information scanning afforded by social media allows NPOs and traditional media outlets to monitor one another. As such, NPOs can communicate directly with the media while also allowing the media to monitor the organization and contact it for stories.

The ability to maintain an authentic interactive presence is a valuable asset to NPOs because it can lead to an enhanced public image. NPOs appear to put a lot of effort into managing their images and making a good impression in social media. However, when NPOs lack the resources to effectively maintain their social media presence, they

also fail to keep a consistent identification, which can be detrimental.

Information Dissemination

NPOs have utilized social media to disseminate information to their key publics, the broader community, and the media. NPOs appear to understand the benefits of using social media to spread news, educate the public, get issues on the public agenda, distribute press releases, and ultimately add to the information distributed through traditional media. Social media outlets have also been used to distribute polls and e-petitions, promote events, and otherwise notify potential donors and volunteers.

The information that NPOs share through social media should be relevant, timely, and of mutual concern to the organization and its stakeholders. As such, Twitter is quickly becoming a popular outlet for these organizations. Unfortunately, NPOs are not yet effective at using all types of social media for the distribution of organizational information. In fact, less than a quarter of NPOs actively publicize Facebook and Twitter pages on their Web sites.

Stakeholder Relationships

Reaching stakeholders is a necessary task for NPOs, and is a primary reason why NPOs use social media outlets. This is especially important to NPOs because social media can be potentially used to communicate with target audiences, despite a lack of staffing and resources. Social media provide NPOs with another medium through which they can build relationships with key publics on a topic/issue of mutual interest. Social media also allow organizations to deepen existing relationships with stakeholders through two-way communication, which can cultivate long-term relationships.

NPOs are unique in their reliance on donors and volunteers. As such, relationship building among an organization and these groups is an important task that can now be facilitated through social media. Social media, especially Facebook and Twitter, are now considered a good medium to recognize volunteers and fundraise. For example, Facebook provides an online space where volunteers can share the tasks associated with managing and promoting an organization's efforts. Engaging stakeholders can be useful to NPOs; Facebook and Twitter have proven to be beneficial methods for NPOs to gain public feedback. For example, Twitter has provided public conversation and conflict resolution. Social media outlets also have great potential for offering forms of two-way communication, such as polling opportunities, extending invitations for offline interaction, participating in forums, and signing e-petitions.

Although NPOs are taking steps to use the social media environment to create dialogue with stakeholders and to build relationships, they have not yet taken full advantage of their abilities to aid in relationship cultivation. Additionally, NPOs are currently failing to capitalize on the interactive and multimedia capabilities of social media. Volunteers can play a key role in the positive promotion of an organization by sharing multimedia content. However, this requires that NPOs put effort toward the development of relationships by involving volunteers. Furthermore, NPOs have failed to capitalize on the full potential of social media outlets because they fail to provide methods for supporters to become more involved.

Social Media Implementation Problems

As noted above, NPOs have several obstacles to overcome. One of the biggest relates to implementation and leadership. Staff limitations are a hardship faced by NPOs. Older volunteers have expressed reservations about using social media, and the task of implementing social media is often designated to an existing employee or a young intern/volunteer because of their technological knowledge.

Adoption of social media has also been hindered by the learning curves of those tasked with implementation. Employees and volunteers reportedly lack guidance from superiors and face internal barriers of control. The use of social media is more likely to occur in organizations that offer facilitating conditions and resources, usually in the form of a public relations department.

NPOs have also failed to directly engage with their publics through social media. There is a need to proactively participate in the social media context. However, NPOs do little to foster a two-way

flow of communication, and tend to use social media in a traditional one-way flow. For example, NPOs tend to use Twitter to convey one-way messages, rather than to facilitate dialogue or build relationships. This means that NPOs are not utilizing opportunities to engage in conversations, respond to comments, or answer questions, even though context allows for dialogue and relationship building. The failure of NPOs to utilize the interactive potential of social media results in an inability to use this context to generate meaningful communication with key publics.

Planning and Recommendations

NPOs desperately need enhanced guidance, time, and resources to utilize the full potential of social media. The impact of using social media is greater when it is carefully planned, goals are predetermined, and several outlets are utilized as part of a multiplatform strategy. Campaign planning is crucial for NPOs to achieve predetermined goals. Planning should consider strategies to support the development of long-term relationships.

A multiplatform strategy allows NPOs to interrelate information across online spaces. A multiplatform strategy can be as simple as using Facebook and Twitter alongside a traditional Web site. This allows organizations to utilize the unique capabilities offered by the different social media platforms available. For example, NPOs utilize Facebook more than any other form of social media and have found it to be a good medium to communicate a transparent image and generate discussion. The short, compact nature of Twitter has been found to help NPOs promote and distribute new information to potential donors and volunteers. Additionally, there are benefits of using YouTube and other media sharing sites. Using the informal environment of social media in conjunction with a more formal Web site is also beneficial for NPOs.

Finally, engaging with publics through these online spaces is a necessary task of organizations that use social media. NPOs can effectively increase their engagement by providing updates, directly interacting with publics, encouraging participation, and distributing new information, especially multimedia content. This can be accomplished by making a concerted effort to respond to public feedback, communicate a transparent image, post frequent updates, and provide a wide array of multimedia content.

Weiwu Zhang
Texas Tech University
Sherice Gearhart
University of Nebraska at Omaha

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Organizing; Campaigns, Virtual; Chartered Institute of Public Relations Social Media Guidelines; Crowdfunding; Crowdsourcing; Nongovernmental Organizations.

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Obama for America iPhone Application

With less than 100 days remaining until the 2012 presidential election, Obama for America released its mobile application (app) for the iPhone. The app marked the first time that a presidential campaign created a program that accelerated, aggregated, and customized the flow of resources and information between the different operations of a national political campaign for use on a mobile device. However, the invention of the Obama for America iPhone app also raised questions about the distribution of an app that provided publicly available personal information with minimal oversight.

The Obama mobile app turned mobile devices into a powerful tool for political campaigns by centralizing canvassing and fundraising innovations developed by the Obama campaign. For the 2008 Democratic primaries and presidential campaign, Obama for America launched My.BarackObama.com (MyBO), the first national campaign social-networking site. Built on the architecture and philosophy behind Facebook, MyBO allowed supporters with computers and Internet service to connect with other supporters, call potential voters, organize into groups, plan events, fund raise, and access campaign and election resources. MyBO included the "Neighbor to Neighbor" initiative, a program that allowed volunteers to use their home computers to print out lists of names and addresses of potential voters to contact in a location of their choice. The Obama campaign also started using mobile devices in its fundraising, creating "text-to-give" fundraising programs, and using texting as a way to communicate with supporters and with each other. At the end of the election, MyBO and texting had grown into a sophisticated hub that raised $30 million, held the information of 2 million profiles, and organized thousands of events and groups.

Organizing for America

Elements of the 2008 Obama presidential campaign merged with the Democratic National Committee to create Organizing for America (OFA), an initiative that used the Obama for America infrastructure to encourage political activism in support of the Obama administration and the Democratic Party. On June 23, 2010, OFA released its app for the iPhone. The OFA iPhone mobile app was the first step in moving campaign operations onto mobile practices. The OFA app performed all the same functions of MyBO—it provided supporters with resources about issues and events, ways to share information across social networks, and ways to donate—and added a function to call a constituent's representative in

Congress to encourage congressional support for the Obama administration.

In advance of the 2010 midterm congressional elections, OFA released an update of its app to include canvassing tools. The canvass app provided voter lists and interactive maps, information about the issues and candidates, and a way for supporters to report information about their contacts—such as location, number of contacts made and their political orientation—to OFA field offices and OFA headquarters. In 2008, Obama for America field offices and volunteers performed the same canvassing tasks, but the impact was slowed by the time it took to process information from the field; the iPhone app eliminated the lag between recording information on clipboards and printed lists, and entering the information into the OFA system.

Obama for America

The outcome of the 2010 midterm congressional elections led to gains for the Republican Party in Congress, but the OFA canvass app showed how a political campaign could load its operations onto mobile devices; the challenge was to take the app to scale. For a presidential re-election campaign, major challenges included the reengagement of supporters from the previous presidential election, the recruitment of new supporters, tailoring information and services based on the location of a supporter to streamline engagement, and providing reliable data for the campaign to assess the state of the race and help make decisions in the distribution of resources.

With the Obama for America mobile app, supporters could access important information related to their state as determined by their IP address or zip code. For example, supporters could learn how to register to vote and receive information about voting guidelines, and they could receive a list of voters to contact in their area, and armed with a script, they could contact a voter and evaluate his or her intentions on election day. This data allowed the Obama for America campaign to determine follow-up actions in their canvassing efforts, including the kind of engagement required to mobilize the voter and determining the resources required in the area.

All the information gathered and provided by the Obama for America mobile app was available from public sources. The tactics and data being used by the campaign was the same kind of data and tactics used by marketing and advertising campaigns and by social media platforms like Facebook and search engines like Google. However, privacy advocates expressed concern over the unprecedented aggregation of political data and its use in the future: Anyone could access this information via the app and the question remains unanswered, what will happen to the personal information collected by the campaign?

Also available for Android devices, the Obama for America mobile app proved an essential tool for political campaigns, but the future of the app has yet to be determined. Will the Obama for America mobile app and its information be shared with candidates across the Democratic Party? Or will the mobile app be retired and replaced by a newer version engineered by the team behind the next Democratic presidential candidate?

Konrad Ng
Smithsonian Institution

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional 2010; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Information Aggregation; Mobile Apps.

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Occupy Movement

The Occupy movement is a protest movement focused on social and economic inequalities. Inspired by world events such as the Arab Spring, the Spanish Indignants protests, and the subprime mortgage crisis in the United States, the Occupy movement brought international attention to the economic and power structures that it claims disproportionately benefit a minority of the population, are unstable, and undermine democracy.

The Occupy movement began unceremoniously in mid-July 2011, when the Canadian-based group Adbusters Media Foundation posted a blog post proposing a peaceful occupation of Wall Street to bring attention to growing wealth disparity and the influence of corporations on democracy. The hashtag #OccupyWallStreet was retweeted by a few Twitter users over the next two months, and the idea, while provocative, was slow to gain traction. The movement's message gained substantial momentum on social and microblogging sites on September 16, 2011, the evening before the first organized Occupy Wall Street protest. Within 24 hours, #Occupy WallStreet represented one in every 500 uses of a hashtag on Twitter, a phenomenon credited to hyperlocal tweeters, individuals who cover the happenings of local communities in great detail.

The first visible protest of the Occupy movement was held at New York City's Zuccotti Park, also referred to as Liberty Plaza, on September 17, 2011, coinciding with the 10th anniversary of the reopening of trading on Wall Street following the September 11, 2001, attacks. On the evening of September 17, Adbusters posted "A Modest Call to Action" on the movement's Web site, occupywallst.org, calling on like-minded individuals to engage in a revolution of the mind, as well as the body politic, through protests organized to disrupt the system. The movement quickly grew, spurred on by other organizations such as the Internet hacking group Anonymous, which encouraged its followers to take part in the protests. By October 5, the demonstration in New York City had grown to an estimated 15,000 protesters; by October 9, Occupy protests were occurring in over 95 cities in 82 different countries; and by October 29, there were an estimated 2,300 Occupy protest zones worldwide.

The Occupy movement prompted spinoff movements such as Occupy Homes, aimed at helping homeowners who had lost their homes because of perceived illegal banking practices; Occupy Your Block, linking Occupiers to local community organizations; Occupy Colleges, charged with educating the public about concerns related to mounting student debt; and Bank Transfer Day, which urged Americans to leave corporate banks in favor of community credit unions.

Touting slogans such as "We Are the 99 Percent," "Main Street, Not Wall Street," "Foreclose on Banks, Not People," and "Occupy Everything," and capitalizing on the extensive reach of social media, the movement quickly gained supporters and spawned movements across the world. To date, the Occupy movement has seen protests on every continent except Antarctica, and is regarded as an important global movement symbolizing the reinvention of politics in the 21st century.

99 Percenters

The most pervasive mantra used by the movement was "We Are the 99 Percent." This slogan, proposed on a social-networking site, indirectly referenced the concentration of wealth among the top 1 percent of income earners. The movement contended that the bottom 99 percent were charged with paying for the financial mistakes of the top 1 percent, referencing the mortgage and banking crises of the late 2000s, and frequently asserted that billions live in poverty, whereas the rich control a majority of the world's assets. The movement stressed that existing political systems are highly influenced by the 1 percent, and advocated for the creation of alternative political structures focused on direct action and direct democracy.

In the early stages of the movement, it was assumed that the 99 percenters were comprised of mostly students, the unemployed, and Democrats. However, research conducted by a variety

of organizations and academic institutions challenged these assumptions. The majority of the protesters were white and male, with an average age of 44.5 years old, most were college educated and employed full time, and were not affiliated with a political party or were independent voters. Over half of the respondents voted for President Obama, with nearly three-quarters unhappy with his performance, and nearly all respondents disapproving of how Congress handled its responsibilities.

Leaderless Movement

The Occupy movement focused on embodying the ideals of participatory democracy and demonstrating an overriding commitment to democratic processes. While critics of the movement focused on the lack of a centralized leadership, protesters instead saw this as echoing the larger ideals of the movement, that no one person's opinion or status was more important than that of another. Occupiers collectively negotiated all decisions via meetings of the General Assembly, a horizontal, leaderless, autonomous, de facto decision-making body. During the General Assembly, people were informed of the findings of multiple working groups, assemblies that performed much of the day-to-day work and organization for the movement, and any protester had the right to speak. A consensus model of direct democracy, which featured the use of hand signals and discussion facilitators to increase participation, allowed every protester to have an equal voice in the decision-making process.

Members of the movement embraced consensus decision-making methods that allowed the General Assembly to stay true to the mission of promoting every member's issues and representing the will of the people. The egalitarian process functioned both procedurally and substantively to provide members a high level of satisfaction regarding decisions. Occupiers believed that people would lead by example, step up when needed, or step back when appropriate, and emphasized that the movement was not leaderless, rather it was leaderful.

The commitment to consensus-based decision making produced some challenges. The ability for anyone to speak out during the General Assembly often resulted in many divergent opinions and agendas voiced, causing the meeting to lose effectiveness. In order to ensure that members of marginalized groups were heard, Occupy Wall Street developed a process called a progressive stack. This system allowed women and minorities to speak with facilitators before members of the dominant group; this was criticized for violating the principle that everyone's voice was equal, and for forcing equality. Concerns also arose that the working groups' focus on separate causes resulted in the dilution of the movement's larger initiatives. As the movement developed, members began to worry that it was becoming fractured, with its center of gravity devolving into smaller groups with different agendas and objectives.

Goals of the Occupy Movement

The Occupy movement was heavily criticized for its lack of a central focus or demand. During the early stages of the movement, a myriad of alleged goals were put forth by demonstrators. The goals included a broad range of issues, including more and better jobs, bank reform, and to initiate global changes against capitalism and austerity measures. Additional concerns that were frequently highlighted included the political influence of corporations, social and economic injustices, rising student and household debt, foreclosures, and limited prospects for graduating college students.

As the movement developed, more specific and loftier demands were put forth. Touting the slogan, "Democracy Not Corporatocracy," these demands included a mandate that President Obama convene a presidential commission charged with ending the relationship between money and political representatives in Washington, D.C. Other goals included a broad tightening of banking-industry regulations, the banning of high-frequency trading, and the arrest of everyone involved in the financial crash of 2008. There was also a "99 Percent Declaration," developed by a working group in New York City, which called for the creation and implementation of a system of public financing for political campaigns, a ban on all monetary and gift contributions to politicians, and the repeal of the Citizens United decision by the Supreme Court via a constitutional amendment.

In addition to multiple goals and demands, the movement had shifting goals. In October 2011, Adbusters began forwarding the agenda for a "Robin Hood Tax," or a tax on the financial sectors, and focused much of the movement's attention on a global march in support of the tax. By December, many occupiers had begun to focus their attentions beyond the protest camps, and instead on the projects of the working groups, such as Occupy Homes, and focused more on the need for banking reform, and less on engaging with mainstream politics. What many thought would be heralded as a new political and social dynamic, brought about by a transformation of civic engagement and political participation, got seemingly lost in the plurality of voices of the movement. Critics asserted that the overarching theme and message of the movement was not coherent, and suffered from a lack of unifying purpose and voice. Protesters countered by declaring that the unifying concern, the corrupting effects of money on politics, was evident, and that issuing demands would have served to legitimize the political and power structures the movement sought to challenge.

Commitment to Nonviolence

Essential to the movement were nonviolent occupations of major cities and towns across the world; throughout the demonstrations, nonviolence remained a core strength of the movement. While a majority of the protesters abided by their pledge of nonviolence, there were instances of violent interactions between occupiers and the police broadcast throughout the mainstream media. In September, a video of peaceful female protesters sprayed with pepper spray by a police commander gained significant coverage, and helped to bolster the movement's focus on nonviolence. However, later reports by media outlets regarding the increase of violence among protesters, including allegations of sexual assault and videos depicting physical clashes between demonstrators and police, served to depict the movement in a more aggressive light.

Occupy and Social Media

The Occupy movement mobilized thousands of people around the world, exclusively through the Internet. The decentralized and ostensibly leaderless nature of the movement made the use of Internet technologies ideal because its growth spread virally, from person to person, and not from a central authority. Occupy Wall Street (OWS) successfully and effectively utilized social media to translate online support into offline presence and activism. Social media platforms were instrumental in recruiting and linking supporters, acquiring necessary resources for local occupations, distributing information, creating and managing local encampments, and organizing protests and marches, storytelling, and across-group exchanges.

While multiple social networking platforms were used across OWS, the most prominent was Facebook. Over 450,000 Facebook users joined the more than 400 Occupy-related Facebook pages; these pages included Wall Street Occupation pages, national pages (efforts to symbolically occupy national institutions), state or regional pages, and local pages. On these pages, more than 170,000 people posted or commented more than one million times (a number that does not include people who only "liked" or "shared" a post). Users tended to first be active on local pages, and then matriculate to national pages; 40 of the 50 Occupy pages with the largest number of active users were local pages. The concentration of Facebook activism was most notable in college towns and state capitals, with online participation lowest in the south.

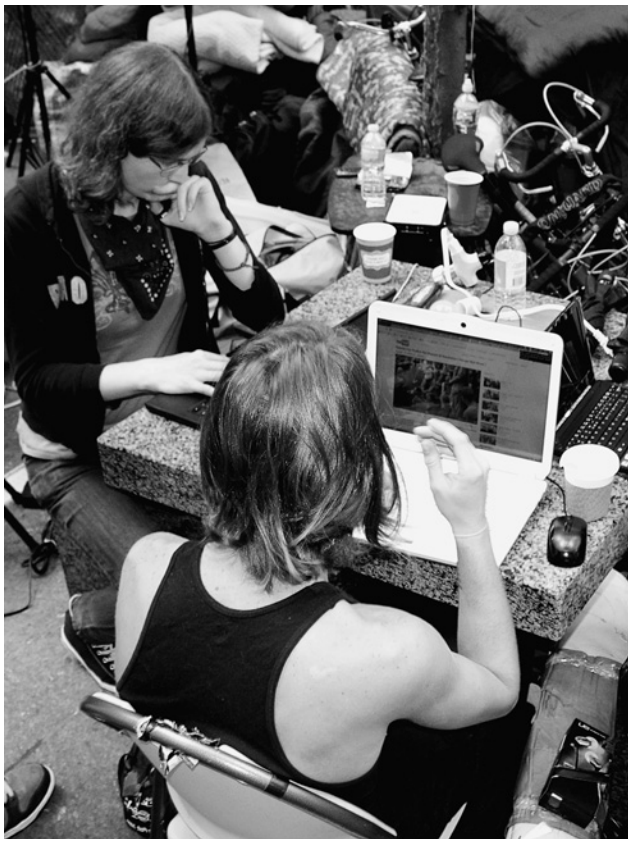
Twitter was also instrumental in broadcasting on-the-ground details of OWS events. Twitter traffic was heavily driven by significant events, such as when over 700 individuals were arrested on the Brooklyn Bridge, and on October 15, when hundreds of protests were held around the world. Usage of #OWS and #Occupywallstreet, the two most common hashtags associated with the movement, spiked during events during which there were police–protester interactions. Because Twitter's interface is specifically suited to highlight current events, it was a valuable platform through which dramatic, compelling, and newsworthy video footage could be instantaneously tweeted to the world.

Videos and images captured and shared through social media were important to the movement because they were frequently picked up by the mainstream media. The OWS movement is an interesting example of the evolving

relationship between social and mainstream media. Although the OWS movement was successful in its goals via social media, it still needed the mainstream media's circulation of vivid pictures and videos to increase the knowledge and legitimacy of the movement. While a movement may be powerful in a social media environment, it still often needs the power of the mainstream media to help gain validity.

Political and Social Impact

Critics of the Occupy movement contend that it had little collective political or social consequence. Yet, supporters believe that the movement made a global impact through altering the terms of the political debate and substantially boosting media coverage of the crises facing citizens worldwide. The movement was mentioned often at the 2011 G20 summit, and in policy responses related to the financial crisis of the late 2000s. It was also paramount in shifting mainstream media coverage in the United States from narratives about the federal debt and deficit to issues of unemployment and unequal income distribution. The movement also brought national attention to the current U.S. tax system, which a 2011 Congressional Budget Office report noted was partially responsible for income inequality. In November 2011, U.S. Congressman Ted Deutch introduced the OCCUPIED (Outlawing Corporate Cash Undermining the Public Interest in our Elections and Democracy) constitutional amendment, aimed at overturning the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision, which in part would ban corporate money from the electoral process, a primary concern of the Occupy movement.



Organizers on September 25, 2011, during the ninth day of Occupy Wall Street in Zuccotti Park in lower Manhattan. Over 450,000 Facebook users joined Occupy-related Facebook pages, on which over 170,000 people posted or commented.

References to income inequality became more prevalent in worldwide political discourse, with former Vice President Al Gore calling on activists to "Occupy Democracy," noting that the political system no longer served the best interest of the electorate. President Obama spoke in support of the movement, acknowledging that the occupations were a sign of the collective frustrations of the American public. It was also widely suggested that the movement influenced President Obama's 2012 State of the Union address, and created an opportunity for Obama to speak about the wealthy paying a greater share of the national tax burden. Although Obama stopped referencing the movement by name, income inequality remained a central theme during his 2012 re-election campaign.

While the tangible political impact of the Occupy movement may not be considered significant, the widespread social implications appear more impactful. The movement generated national conversation regarding the economic problems faced by a vast number of Americans, including unemployment, heavy student loan and personal debt burdens, and social issues such as homelessness and health care deficiencies. References to income inequality, which were not commonplace prior to the movement, proliferated in mainstream print and broadcast media, the terms "1 percenters" and "the 99 percent" became prevalent throughout popular culture, and the word "Occupy" became the most common word on the Internet and in print in the 12-month period following the outset of the movement.

Support for the movement was voiced from around the world, by prominent figures such as Jesse Jackson, who reminded demonstrators that Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., were also "occupiers," and wealthy supporters joining the movement with slogans such as "We Stand with the 99 percent" and "I am the 1 percent—I stand with the 99 percent." A January 2012 global survey of 23 countries, published by a global market research firm, indicated that around 40 percent of worldwide respondents were familiar with the Occupy movement, and over twice as many reported a favorable opinion of the movement than a negative one. The movement also resulted in the forming of the Coalition for the First Amendment, organized by journalists in New York City in response to perceived constitutional violations on the part of the police during the NYPD's eviction of Occupy Wall Street protesters from Zuccotti Park.

The movement also generated a palpable negative social response, with politicians and pundits often characterizing protesters as a growing mob seeking government handouts, and one-time presidential candidate Herman Cain even calling the occupiers "anti-American." Advocates of the movement attribute a portion of the negative social perception to the mainstream media's coverage, which was scant and largely dismissive. The movement received very little media attention between the start of the protests and September 24, 2011, when the first organized march into uptown New York City resulted in the closure of several busy streets and the arrest of 80 demonstrators. Mainstream media consistently characterized the Occupiers as a marginalized group, specifically highlighting violent interactions between protesters and police, although these exchanges were not common, and focused on the financial impact of the movement upon cities.

Future of the Occupy Movement

There is uncertainty about what the future of the Occupy movement holds, or whether it was ever even a movement to begin with. Various organizing factions are coordinating different agendas, and many demonstrators are looking beyond the Occupy label that some feel has boxed in the movement. The emerging ad hoc leaders are considering plans to help propel the movement beyond its initial excitement, and potentially build an infrastructure that will sustain the movement beyond the occupations. The movement continues to evolve and diversify its messages to reach different audiences that it believes are a critical part of the 99 percent.

Whether or not the movement will adopt any concrete agendas is uncertain because the organic and extemporaneous nature of the movement lacked a hierarchy of leaders that may have been necessary to develop and sustain the movement. The Occupy movement provided an opportunity for hundreds of thousands of people worldwide to engage in participatory democracy. Although the impact on political policy has thus far been minimal, the future of the Occupy movement is yet to be defined, and has the potential to grow into a galvanizing political force.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Campaigns, Grassroots; International Unrest and Revolution; Twitter.

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Office of Government Information Services

The Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), created in 2007, acts as a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) ombudsperson by mediating, in situations of contested FOIA requests,

between FOIA requesters and the federal agencies from which the request for information has been made. The FOIA, enacted in 1966, provides that American citizens have a legally enforceable right to obtain access to any federal agency information, provided that such information does not fall under any of the several exemptions from public disclosure. Thus, the FOIA represents an accountability mechanism that ensures the transparency and openness of the government. Although one of the purposes in the creation of OGIS was to assist information seekers by creating an alternative avenue to lengthy and costly litigation in cases of agency noncompliance with FOIA requests, it remains to be seen to what extent OGIS will be able to improve agency response to FOIA requests and provide a meaningful complement to FOIA litigation.

History and Purpose

The OGIS was established by the Openness Promotes Effectiveness in our National Government Act (OPEN Government Act) of 2007 (Public Law 110-175), a bipartisan initiative of U.S. Senators John Cornyn (R-Texas) and Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont), as part of the National Archive and Records Administration (NARA). The Open Government Act of 2007 represented one of the most comprehensive overhauls of the FOIA since the Electronic Freedom of Information Act amendments of 1996. Some of the FOIA amendments passed into law included the creation of a tracking system for FOIA requests, a FOIA hotline service for all the federal agencies, and a mandatory position of chief FOIA officer for each agency tasked to monitoring agency compliance with FOIA requests; the extension of the fee waiver for FOIA requests to Internet bloggers and other Web-based journalists; and the establishment of financial penalties for federal agencies missing the FOIA's 20-day statutory deadline or rejecting requests in an arbitrary and capricious fashion.

Additionally, the bill closed a legal loophole that allowed federal agencies to delay compliance with FOIA requests during litigation until just before a court decision favorable to the FOIA requester. The purpose of this delaying tactic was to trigger the Supreme Court ruling in *Buckhannon Board and Care Home, Inc. v. West Virginia Dept. of Health and Human Resources,* 532 U.S. 598 (2001), which would have precluded FOIA requesters from recovering attorney fees from the agencies that denied their request. The bill clarified that FOIA requesters actually had a right to recover attorney fees in that situation, provided that the requester's claim was legitimate.

However, Congress also found that FOIA litigation, even if attorney fees were recovered, was cost prohibitive for a FOIA-requester. To address this shortcoming, the Open Government Act established the OGIS to (1) review the FOIA-related policies, procedures, and compliance of federal agencies; (2) conduct audits on and publish reports about FOIA compliance among administrative agencies; (3) issue FOIA-related policy recommendations to Congress and the president; and (4) offer mediation services between FOIA-requesters and federal agencies as an alternative to litigation, as well as issue advisory opinions in case of unsuccessful mediation. Thus, the purpose of the OGIS was to function as an ombudsperson for FOIA requests, mirroring at federal level some state-level successful alternatives to FOIA litigation, such as the New York Committee on Open Government.

The stated purpose of placing the OGIS with the National Archive and Records Administration (NARA) was to free the OGIS from the influence of the Department of Justice (DOJ), which oversees agency compliance with FOIA directives and acts on government's behalf in FOIA disputes. However, five weeks after the OPEN Government Act was signed into law, in his fiscal year 2009 budget proposal sent to Congress, President George W. Bush sought to transfer the functions of the OGIS from NARA to the Department of Justice. The administration argued that the proposed functions for the OGIS would duplicate the activities already performed by the DOJ.

However, the argument was considered controversial by open government organizations (including the American Civil Liberties Union, American Library Association, Electronic Frontier Foundation, National Freedom of Information Coalition, and the Sunlight Foundation) and by both the House and Senate Appropriation Subcommittees because the OGIS transfer to the DOJ was seen to directly contradict the mandate of the OGIS as an independent mediator between FOIA requesters and governmental agencies. The OGIS was

eventually restored to NARA with an appropriation of $1 million, and opened in September 2009.

Since 2009, the seven-person OGIS agency assisted in nearly 2,100 FOIA-related instances, and offered suggestions to 17 federal agencies. OGIS success in submitting policy recommendations to Congress is less clear. Although the OPEN Government Act mandated the OGIS to issue policy recommendations to Congress meant to improve FOIA-related agency compliance, OGIS did not do so until 2011. In 2011, recommendations were submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), but the OMB created additional controversy in Congress by failing to forward the OGIS recommendations to Congress for review. In 2012, the OGIS recommended the improvement of FOIA along several dimensions, including facilitating information sharing among agencies, improving the online tracking of FOIA requests, coordinating multiagency responses to FOIA requests, and improving the dispute resolution skills of FOIA professionals. In 2013, the OGIS will be working on examining FOIA fees, which continue to remain a contentious issue for FOIA requesters, and recommending policies to ease up the backlog of cases created by immigration-related FOIA requests by non-U.S. citizens.

Mihaela Popescu
California State University, San Bernardino

See Also: National Freedom of Information Coalition; Social Media and Freedom of Information Act; Sunlight Foundation.

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OhmyNews

OhmyNews is one of the most popular Internet newspapers in South Korea. It was founded by Korean journalist Oh Yeon Ho in 1999, and was officially launched on February 22, 2000. His idea was to establish a citizen-participatory alternative Internet newspaper. The site's name is derived from the comedic catch phrase "Oh my God!" that was popular in Korea at the time. The slogan of OhmyNews is "every citizen is a reporter." OhmyNews provides a public platform to a large number of citizens who had previously not been represented in the media. The site covers all kinds of news, ranging from politics, society, international affairs, education, business, information technology, sports, and entertainment. OhmyNews is widely considered one of the most influential news organizations in South Korea. The South Korean weekly magazine *Sisa Journal* ranked it several times as one of the top 10 South Korean media organizations, evaluating newspapers, TV and radio stations, as well as print magazines.

Role in Politics

OhmyNews played a major role in the presidential elections of South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun in 2002. It provided an alternative news source to the mainstream media. OhmyNews not only served as a news source in the presidential election, but also as a hub for political mobilization and social change. After the election, President Roh Moo-Hyun granted his first interview to reporters of OhmyNews. OhmyNews also played an important role regarding the reporting of a traffic incident in 2002 involving the U.S. military, which resulted in the death of two teenage girls and led to political protests. While Korean mainstream press provided little information on the subject, OhmyNews triggered debate on America's military role in the country.

Citizen Journalists

The alternative Internet newspaper finances itself primarily through commercial advertising. It announced that the company became profitable in 2003, but its business model appears unstable. Mostly young, male, well-educated, and progressive-thinking people constitute the reader and

reporter membership. OhmyNews differentiates between citizen and specialist reporters. Citizen reporters claim their roles by formally registering as members before they are allowed to submit articles. Specialist reporters are employed on a full-time basis by OhmyNews to select and examine the news coming in from citizen reporters. That way, only a selection of submitted items is authorized as OhmyNews articles.

OhmyNews started with 727 citizen reporters who supplied articles. This number increased steadily to 14,000 in 2001, and to more than 40,000 in 2006. All OhmyNews citizen reporters have to provide a profile, and they have to agree to abide the reporters' ethics code and regulations. Articles from citizen reporters comprise the bulk of OhmyNews content. The contributions amount to 150 to 250 articles a day. The OhmyNews model includes monetary incentives for citizen reporters. If a reporter´s article is published in OhmyNews, he or she can receive a small sum of money, depending on whether the article appears on the site. Additionally, readers can "tip" citizen reporters by sending money online or by cell phone. These payments serve more as encouragement than income for the reporter.

In order to be able to compete with the traditional Korean press, OhmyNews has been cultivating the professionalism of its "guerrilla" or citizen reporters. A citizen journalism school was opened in November 2007 on the outskirts of Seoul to act as a collaborative knowledge center, developing new citizen reporters. OhmyNews has published hoaxes, and faces a problem of undisclosed conflicts of interest. The editor filtration system tries to prevent such behavior, but has not been able to fully succeed.

OhmyNews emerged as a response to specific historical, social, and cultural conditions. The increasing differences between different generations and a longstanding skepticism toward conservative mainstream media played a major role. Three traditionally conservative daily newspapers (*Chosun Ilbo, Don-A Ilbo,* and *Joong Ang Ilbo*) had been covering around 80 percent of daily circulation for many years. There are various factors that play a crucial role in the success of OhmyNews. One of them is that the site attracted a new generation that grew up in a more affluent, high-tech society that was more dubious of mainstream media. It also addresses issues largely ignored by established news organizations in Korea. Another important factor is the information technology infrastructure of the country.

OhmyNews relies heavily on Korea's sophisticated and extensive digital telecommunication infrastructure, which is a result of significant government-led policies. Since the mid-1990s, the Korean government has presented national goals for establishing a knowledge-based society. Since then, it has been pursuing a broad information and communication policy by implementing a series of mid- and long-term programs to fund the telecommunications infrastructure. Currently, Korea has one of the highest rates of overall Internet connectivity in the world. On August 28, 2006, OhmyNews started a Japan-based citizen-participatory journalism site called OhmyNews Japan, launched with the financial support of Softbank, a Japanese telecommunication and media corporation. It did not succeed. In July 2008, all staff of OhmyNews Japan was dismissed, and by the end of August 2008, operations had ceased on the site.

Ralf Spiller
Macromedia University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Asia; Citizen Journalism; News Media.

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ONE Campaign

ONE Campaign is an international grassroots advocacy and campaigning organization aimed at fighting extreme poverty and preventable diseases in the poorest regions of the world, particularly in Africa, by increasing public awareness, lobbying global political leaders to take concrete actions, and working together with leaders in Africa to support democracy, accountability, and transparency in using international aid. According to the organization, its name was chosen because the word "one" symbolizes the idea of joining together antipoverty organizations' forces. ONE Campaign officially started in 2004, as a project involving humanitarian and advocacy organizations such as DATA, Bread for the World Institute, CARE USA, International Medical Corps, International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, Oxfam America, Plan USA, Save the Children, World Concern, and World Vision. Moved by a common interest, these organizations joined forces to appeal to the U.S. government to increase its budgetary investment of one percent for the fight against extreme poverty.

The campaign held its opening event in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in May 2004. The cooperation among these organizations continued in 2005 with a series of benefit events around the world, in conjunction with the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland. Ten Live 8 concerts hosting different artists took place in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America on July 2, 2005, just before the official start of the G8 conference and summit. This second social action succeeded in making G8 leaders commit to providing an additional $25 billion in assistance to Africa by 2010. The collaborations between the ONE Campaign initiative and the organization DATA increased during 2007, and in 2008, the two merged ito form ONE Campaign. The organization claims to have over 3 million members supporting its cause.

ONE Campaign is primarily funded by donations made by philanthropists, many of whom are on the board of directors. The board is made of 19 people, including cofounder Bono, the singer of the Irish band U2; Bobby Shriver, cofounder of the organization; Condoleezza Rice, 66th U.S. Secretary of State; Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook chief operating officer; Howard G. Buffett, son of the famous American businessman Warren Buffett; and Morton H. Halperin, senior advisor at the Open Society Institute. ONE Campaign is managed by an executive team of 10 people with the former editor of TIME International, Michael Elliott, as president and chief executive officer, and cofounder of advocacy organization DATA and ONE, Jamie Drummond, as executive director.

ONE Campaign has offices in Belgium, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, and South Africa, but it mostly operates online and through viral activities. The organization leverages the use of social media to spread messages and information on diverse social issues, policy developments, and political discussions. ONE Campaign has a blog as well as Facebook, Flickr, and Twitter accounts, and a dedicated YouTube channel. Activists and volunteers around the world can post their pictures, videos,

ONE Campaign volunteers at a June 13, 2011, rally in London in support of a global project to increase children's vaccinations by 250 million a year worldwide by 2015.

and comments about events and activities that relate to ONE Campaign causes. Videos of celebrities endorsing ONE Campaign causes are also made available through ONE Campaign's YouTube channel. In addition to organizing different events and mobilizing public opinion, ONE Campaign provides policy analysis and information on the challenges and opportunities to tackle important social, economic, and political issues. The organization works with different national and international grassroots organizations on specific projects and actions, including issues such as clean water, education, hunger, trade, and preventable diseases. ONE Campaign is also one of the international organizations supporting global efforts to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

While the organization claims not to be a celebrity campaign but a grassroots movement, many events and activities raising public attention see celebrities involved either directly as ambassadors or indirectly through donations and project-specific actions. Nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations, including international organizations such as the United Nations, have involved celebrities as ambassadors to endorse particular social causes. Because of their positions in the minds of consumers and the general public, celebrities are capable to move mass media and citizens' attention toward specific social and political issues, and by doing so, they increase public expectations toward global leaders' decisions and actions on those issues. For the same reasons, celebrities are often engaged in direct donations and fundraising activities. ONE Campaign claims that it does not seek to raise money for a specific cause, but that its mission is to advocate certain social causes, such as the fight against poverty, and to lobby for concrete political actions and commitments.

ONE Campaign has received some criticism on the actual use of donations it receives, confronted by allegations that in 2008, only 1.2 percent of donations were devolved to charity activities. The organization responded by explaining that it functions primarily as an advocacy group on behalf of fundraising activities, and does not run operational programs, thus asserting that a percentage spending charge is irrelevant as a measure of its efficiency. Other criticisms are more ideological; some scholars, such as David Nolan, claim that ONE Campaign is an example of dehumanizing the poor and the commodification and individualization of poverty, especially through narratives that promote stereotypical representations of celebrities as northern rescuers, raising questions about the use of celebrities in humanitarian actions.

Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Actors and Social Media in Politics; Artists and Social Media in Politics; Cause-Marketing Campaigns.

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140ELECT.com

140ELECT.com is an Internet-based consulting service focused on the successful and effective implementation of Twitter in political campaigns. The service focuses on the integration of strategic and targeted Twitter initiatives that assist in engaging supporters, creating communities, and organizing fundraising. It works to track, analyze, and manage Twitter accounts to provide campaigns with actionable methods for effectively engaging prospective audiences, followers, and voters.

140ELECT Campaign Tools

Through programming tips and consultation, 140ELECT provides campaigns a distinct set of tools geared toward effective political tweeting. A primary focus of 140ELECT is using tactical management techniques focused on the strategic

deployment of tweets and the growth of Twitter pages to increase campaigns' effectiveness. Research, tracking, and metric tools analyze tweets both by and about candidates to identify tweets and hashtags (words or phrases prefixed with the symbol #) that appear to resonate with voters, recognize potentially influential supporters based on their followers, and help target active and potential supporters by state and city. These tools are designed to enhance campaigns' Twitter visibility and success by offering real-time metrics, tweeting advice, and alerts that enable rapid campaign response.

140ELECT also creates custom Twitter pages and engagement Web sites, and provides opposition research tools and alerts. Through custom Twitter pages and engagement Web sites, supporters can find and retweet (repost someone else's tweet) a campaign's most effective tweets, participate in town hall spaces, and engage in community building and fundraising. Opposition research tools provide real-time reports on tweets both by and about opponents, allowing campaigns to identify trending attack tweets and hashtags and to inject campaign messages into opponents' tweet streams (timeline of tweets listed in real-time order). These tools give campaigns the ability to rapidly and strategically respond to critical tweets about the campaign.

140ELECT Projects

During its involvement in the U.S. 2012 presidential election cycle, 140ELECT shifted from focusing exclusively on political and campaign analysis to designing initiatives around political advocacy as well. Through the facilitation of multiple projects, such as hosting the first-ever presidential debate on Twitter, creating unique campaigns for independent candidates, and developing tools like Donate Tweets, 140ELECT sought to increase political engagement.

Unite Blue, one of 140ELECT's political engagement projects, aimed to connect and energize the political left by making it easier for users to connect with like-minded individuals and organizations on Twitter. The site used advanced heuristics and artificial intelligence techniques to locate and centralize the most politically active progressive and Democratic-leaning tweeters. Through BlueRank, a ranking system that analyzed Twitter accounts based on a range of issues, including the frequency of specific types of retweets and hashtags, users were presented with prominent Twitter accounts that they might want to follow. Subscribers to the free service could also have their Twitter accounts analyzed in order to receive a recommended list of Twitter accounts that they were not already following but may find interesting. Unite Blue users could select up to 50 accounts per day to follow, ask those accounts to follow them in return, and find Twitter accounts by state.

Other political engagement initiatives devised by 140ELECT included "2012twit," "Who to Follow," "Obama vs. Romney," and "Romney Attacks." 2012twit served as an election dashboard, providing real-time tracking of Twitter activity during the presidential election cycle. It monitored content such as candidates' total number of followers, mentions, unique mentions, retweets, and unique retweets in a 24-hour period. 2012twit also provided word clouds (visual representations for text data) highlighting trending words in reference to each candidate and hyperlinks that served as search engines for tweets on those topics. Who to Follow was a Twitter directory of the top Twitter accounts to follow during the 2012 election, Obama vs. Romney cataloged all tweets between @BarackObama and @MittRomney following the primaries, and Romney Attacks assembled popular tweet attacks on the candidate, provided easy verification of attack accuracy, and encouraged retweeting.

Conclusion

140ELECT was a prominent social media architect in the U.S. 2012 presidential election cycle. By offering tools and services that allowed for Twitter to be strategically integrated into campaign strategies and grassroots initiatives to increase political engagement, 140ELECT was integral in the prominent role that Twitter played in the 2012 presidential race.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaigns, 2012; Evolution of Social Media; Hashtag; Micro-Targeting; Twitter.

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100Reporters Whistleblower Alley

100Reporters is a community- and collaborative-centered global news organization specializing in investigative reporting on all types of corruption. It connects professional reporters with citizen journalists, citizen watchdogs and whistleblowers, and social and economic justice advocates and activists around the world. Because of the increased use of online surveillance tactics by repressive regimes to locate, torture, or kill human rights and anticorruption activists, 100Reporters created Whistleblower Alley, an online file exchange and communications point to securely and anonymously transmit information. In order to protect the reporters, activists, and advocates who are a part of the 100Reporters community, the organization created Whistleblower Alley so that those wishing to submit reports exposing corruption can do so as safely as is possible, using the infrastructure of the Internet.

As the Internet makes it difficult to silence ideas, information, and images entering a nation from outside it, authoritarian governments that have long controlled communication see a free flow of ideas and information as potentially destabilizing. Various legal protections safeguarding press freedom have increasingly come under attack from many regimes. Correspondingly, there is an intensified need to protect reporters, citizen journalists, whistleblowers, and human rights advocates. In addition, online surveillance of activists, reporters, and whistleblowers is on the rise. WikiLeaks reveals the extent and sophistication of the more than $5 billion online surveillance market.

Online surveillance, considered an "enemy of the Internet" by Reporters Without Borders, is used by repressive regimes to control and silence activists and dissidents through deep packet inspection, a highly intrusive technology that allows Internet service providers to monitor, filter, and suppress specific services or content. Officials from such regimes have openly acknowledged their attempts to track down and punish those who critique them. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, "dozens of journalists; Syrian reporters, bloggers, and activists are regularly followed, arrested, and tortured. Ordinary citizens who came into contact with international journalists are also targeted." For example, one Syrian activist was caught by the national government's online surveillance efforts, and was subsequently arrested and tortured, reporting: "My computer was arrested before I was."

Whistleblower Alley uses various protective measures, including PrivacyBox.de, which allows users to submit files to a secure dropbox. Whistleblower Alley's secure message acknowledgment system uses anonymizing networks, such as the Tor network and the Invisible Internet Project, which defend against online surveillance and aggressive efforts to suppress free speech. Tor protects users by shifting computer-mediated communication around a distributed network of relays run by volunteers to circumvent censorship, and provide tools to evade direct monitoring by governments by preventing surveillance efforts from learning a user's geophysical location.

Whistleblower Alley has also published several pretty good privacy (PGP) public encryption keys, which allow anyone to submit secure messages using Whistleblower Alley's public key that can only be decrypted by 100Reporters. The public key (a series of letters and numbers) is for users who want to submit an encrypted e-mail message to the Alley. To enhance protection, the public keys are set to expire after a few months. Reporters Without Borders (RWB) has developed a similar secure Web site for submission of potentially sensitive reporting and information.

The organization argues, "If war reporters care about their physical safety, they take a helmet and bullet-proof vest when they venture into the field. Similarly, all journalists should equip themselves with a 'digital survival kit' if they are exchanging sensitive information online or storing it on a computer or mobile phone."

RWB has an online survival kit on its Web site. The survival kit explains how to use Tor or virtual private networks (VPNs) for anonymizing communication, discusses the need to purge metadata from files, and offers advice on securing communication and data on laptops and mobile phones. RWB organizational founders argue,

> Journalists and netizens must learn to evaluate the potential surveillance risks and identify the data and communications that need protecting in order to find appropriate solutions, preferably ones that are easy to use. The sophistication of the methods used by censors and intelligence agencies is testing the ingenuity of news providers and the hacktivists who are ready to help them. But the future of freedom of information depends on the outcome of this battle. This is a battle without bombs, prison bars or blank inserts in newspapers, but if care is not taken, the enemies of the truth may sweep the board.

Catherine Cassara
Lara Lengel
Bowling Green State University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Committee to Protect Journalists; Cyber-Vigilantism; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security.

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Onion, The

As one of the finest comedic news organizations in the United States, since 1988, *The Onion* has gone from an obscure Wisconsin college newspaper to a far-reaching producer of humorous political content, both online and offline. From 1996 to the present, *The Onion* has charged into the digital world, playing a role in the political process with daily articles and commentaries, e-mail blasts, and starting in 2007, *Onion News Network* (ONN) online video sketches targeted for distribution through social media.

The Onion is perhaps best known for obscuring the lines between political fact and fiction for satirical effect. While typical news headlines might cover 2012 presidential candidate Mitt Romney's wealthy upbringing, *The Onion* posted columns about, for example, "Romney Just Saying He Grew up Poor in Memphis Now." The comedic publisher often creates headlines and material about major and minor subjects. Its original, trivial content is exemplified by its long-running series of what a nameless "Area Man" is up to, such as "Convenience of E-Mail Takes up 30 Percent of Area Man's Work Day." Yet, just as often, *The Onion* puts a humorous twist upon real political events and cultural trends through infamous headlines like "Drugs Win Drug War," "Nation Shudders at Large Block of Uninterrupted Text," or "U.S. Economy Grinds to Halt as Nation Realizes Money Just a Symbolic, Mutually Shared Illusion." The search engine giant Google has also come in for its share of satirical treatment by *Onion* writers, both for its ability to peer into the private lives of Google search users and for its ability to dominate contemporary social media landscapes.

The Onion has remained true to its type of humor over the last 25 years, but its successful use of social media has been part of strategy of convergence and distribution between different platforms. The Webby Award–winning

theOnion.com boasted an average of 7.5 million unique visitors per month from about 40 million page views in 2013. The Web site is dedicated to newspaper content that is, as its producers assert, "delivered constantly, tweeted at optimum times and posted on Facebook during high-traffic periods. Subsequently, users can easily embed, share, or post articles and videos to their personal Facebook and Twitter accounts." There is much collaboration between the site and its fans, who are targeted both for their laughter and ability to spread viral content.

Aside from these goals, two particular developments have fostered *The Onion*'s success in social media and politics. One has to do with the timing and nature of its content. After the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, most national comedy venues went relatively silent. *The Onion* was one of the first organizations to respond to the events with news headlines like "Hijackers Surprised to Find Selves in Hell." This brazen and fast approach to creating comic news content has propelled the organization into the spotlight amid a 24/7 news cycle.

The other development has to do with the very form of *The Onion's* productions—especially with its creation of the ONN, which copies the televised stylings of networks like CNN. In fact, it might be hard to differentiate the ONN from other traditional news organizations, were it not for slight tweaks in messaging, as in its video report "Poll: Bullshit Is Most Important Issue for 2008 Voters." By parodying bloviating pundits, hyperbolic news graphics, and self-congratulatory titles for media segments like "In the Know," ONN occupies a distinctive place in the political landscape.

While *The Onion's* producers have exploited the Internet's potential to go beyond television's tendency to sanitize or censor much programming, recent trends may call into question how independent the organization will continue to be in developing content free from commercial media pressures. *The Onion*'s Web site is replete with advertising and ONN itself recently moved from the Internet to a show on the AMC Network's channel IFC. Overall, however, *The Onion*'s discourses show no sign of diminishing in public culture, and if headlines like "Number of Users Who Actually Enjoy Facebook Down To 4" are any indication, topics like social media will continue to undergo its trenchant, biting critiques.

Don Waisanen
City University of New York

See Also: *Colbert Report, The*; *Daily Show, The*; *Saturday Night Live*.

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Online Smear Campaigns

The 2008 presidential campaign was characterized by the online smear campaign that claimed that Barack Obama was Muslim. The main source of the smear against Obama was an e-mail chain that spread blogs, video-sharing platforms, and social

networks; subsequently, it was covered by the mass media, which finally prompted the Obama campaign to react. While this was, far and away, the most egregious and conspicuous of the season's smears, it was not the only one. There were probably hundreds of other smear campaigns, but only a few of them reached a greater audience. The main variable for breaking into the news was direct and indirect media coverage.

Nonetheless, some other examples need to be mentioned. John McCain had to deal with several smear campaigns: one that he was senile, one that he sold out his fellow POWs to save himself, and another about a supposed extramarital relationship with a lobbyist. Sarah Palin was the target of a smear campaign based on a series of spoof photographs circulated on the Internet. During the Republican primaries, Mitt Romney also suffered from the spread of statements about religion and personal beliefs that were falsely attributed to him.

Barack Obama

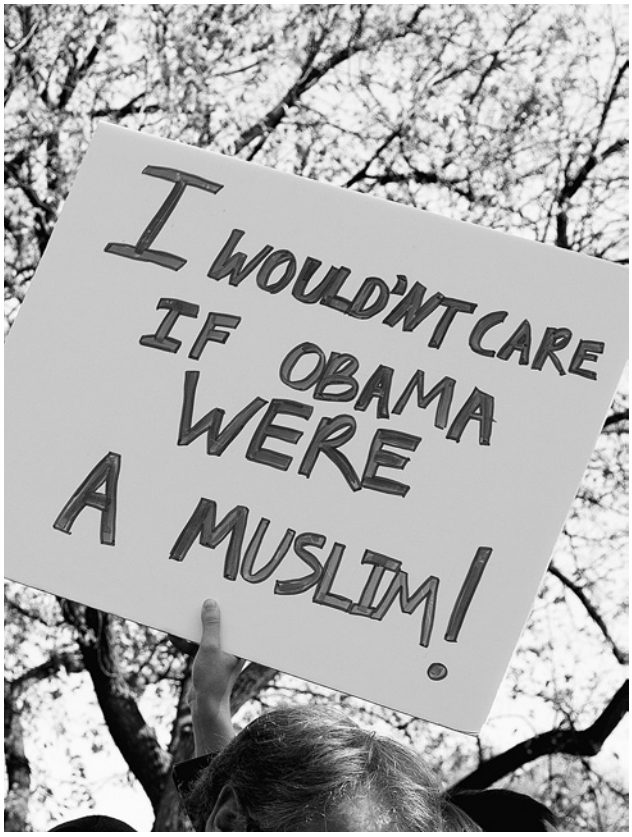
The story of the "Obama is Muslim" smear began on August 10, 2004, when Andy Martin, a former political opponent of Obama in Illinois and contributor to the Web site FreeRepublic.com, posted an article arguing that Obama had concealed his Muslim heritage. Martin wrote that "under Islamic law, Obama became a Muslim at birth due to his father's religion." Then, the first versions of the smear e-mail began to circulate on several Web sites and blogs, such as the U.S. Veteran Dispatch, Snopes.com, FreeRepublic.com, and About.com. *Insight*, an online conservative magazine owned by the Unification Church, published an article that claimed that Hillary Clinton's campaign was questioning Obama's religious background. The fact that Obama's main Democratic rival may have thrown the gauntlet down on the issue heightened the controversy. On January 19, Fox News Channel's morning show *Fox and Friends* broadcast a story based on the article published by *Insight;* on January 23 CNN.com published a report refuting the *Insight* story. The report asserted that the school attended by Obama in Indonesia was not a *madrasah* (muslim school), but it did not clarify many other aspects of the story. Instead of disproving the smear, the coverage of the story by a national cable news channel and an influential news Web site only contributed to making the story more popular.

On February 10, 2007, Obama officially announced his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination. In the following days, the smear e-mail spread even further and faster. Around mid-November, the Obama campaign intervened for the first time by publishing a dossier on its official Web site titled: "Obama has never been a Muslim, and is a committed Christian." On December 5, the Clinton campaign acknowledged that one of its volunteers in Iowa had forwarded a version of the e-mail, and it disavowed him. On January 15, 2008, during the crucial period between the New Hampshire and Nevada primaries, Obama strongly reaffirmed his Christian faith in the Las Vegas primary debate. However, the slander was still leaving its marks on public opinion, as one in 10 Americans thought that he was Muslim.

On May 1, 2008, more than 600 videos referring to "Obama Muslim" could be found on YouTube, and some totaled hundreds of thousands of views. In the same period, there were 540 Facebook pages on the issue, equally divided between Obama's supporters and groups who backed the smear. On Myspace, the query "Obama Muslim" produced more than 1,000 results, most of them favorable to the smear. Finally, on May 12, the *New York Times* published a controversial editorial by Edward Luttwak that partially confirmed the speculations about Obama's Islamic faith and argued that,

> . . . as the son of the Muslim father, Senator Obama was born a Muslim under Muslim law as it is universally understood. It makes no difference that, as Senator Obama has written, his father said he renounced his religion. Likewise, under Muslim law based on the Koran his mother's Christian background is irrelevant.

For the Democratic candidate it was now time to directly tackle the controversy. On June 12, Obama's campaign opened the Web site FightTheSmears.com, a platform through which Obama's supporters could defend their candidate from the smears that were hitting him. Obama's strategy was premised on the idea of replying to the slanders on the same medium where they originated.



One participant's response to the largely online campaign to declare President Barack Obama a Muslim at the satirical "Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear" led by comedians Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert in Washington, D.C., on October 30, 2010.

Substantively, Obama had clear evidence on his side: he had been a Christian since his teenage years, and since the mid-1980s, he had been a member of a powerful Chicago-based Protestant church. However, some elements of ambiguity could have made it difficult to fight back on the topic, beyond the issues connected to the viral and anonymous origins of the smear. Obama's vulnerability came from spending part of his childhood in Indonesia (though Obama also grew up in Hawai'i), his Kenyan father and his Muslim stepfather; moreover, he emerged as a national political celebrity quite suddenly, which left voters little time to get to know his biography and background.

The calumny reached its peak in public opinion in the first months of 2008, when primaries were held in the first few states, and the candidates were not well known to the population. The Pew Research Center found that in January 2007, only 5 percent of Americans thought that Obama was Muslim. The percentage increased gradually, peaking at 13 percent in March 2008, then rapidly decreased. At the same time, the number of people who did not know Obama's religion or refused to answer the question constantly dropped from more than 80 percent in January 2007, to about 25 percent near election day.

The seriousness of this smear needs to be evaluated in the context and political culture of the United States. On the one hand, the memory of the terroristic attacks by Islamic extremists on September 11, 2001, is still vivid and induces in many citizens the controversial equation between Islam and terrorism. On the other hand, historically, a candidate of any religious faith different from Christianity is perceived as uncommon and suspicious by part of the electorate. The religious slander was an attack on the patriotism of the candidate, and questioned his sharing of the values that keep the political community together and that the president, as a symbol of national unity, should embody. Furthermore, claiming that a politician practices a different religion than the one he publicly declares implies the even more dangerous insinuation that the candidate has deceived voters by hiding a central aspect of his personal life and identity.

John McCain

Republican candidate John McCain did not have to tackle one large smear attack, but instead had to face several minor slanderous accusations. One claimed that he was senile. Following concerns about his age (72 in 2008), about him having had previous multiple surgeries to remove melanomas and his notorious, rage-prone, impulsive nature, rumors about him losing memory started to spread when he began accumulating "gaffes." He muddled Al Qaeda with the Shiite branch of the Iraq insurgency, and he misread Korean dictator "Kim Sung Il" as "Kim Sung the second." He had odd explosions with questioners in town meetings during the campaign, referring to one young questioner as a "jerk," and saying to another "you're drafted," and singing his famous ditty "Bomb-bomb Iran." Bloggers noted these bizarre performances, and related videos appeared on YouTube, while others spread questions about McCain's

alleged dementia. Liberal activists were blamed, but these accusations did not have much impact on the race.

After winning the nomination, McCain's campaign had to deal with another dangerous smear campaign: The candidate was purported to have had a relationship with a telecommunications lobbyist, Vicki Iseman, nine years earlier. The Arizona senator was also attacked in a flyer prepared by a group called Vietnam Veterans Against John McCain. The group set up a Web site that detailed the allegations presented on the flyer that McCain was exploiting his POW status and that he collaborated with his captors to save himself and not his colleagues. McCain, however, was able to intercept the attacks before there was major damage.

Sarah Palin

Sarah Palin's credibility as a candidate for U.S. vice president was also undermined by a series of spoof photographs circulated on the Internet. The sexy pictures, which exploit her glamorous image, were published amid a concerted campaign against the former beauty queen, following her surprise appointment as 72-year-old Republican candidate John McCain's running mate. One showed her wearing a leather miniskirt and stilettos, while another had her in a stars and stripes bikini, brandishing a rifle. Palin looked like a stripper, and while the images could be seen as harmless fun, they hindered the relatively inexperienced 44-year-old Alaskan Governor's attempts to be taken seriously as a political candidate. The Republican campaign blamed a vague "liberal lobby" for the images, but no clearly responsible party was found.

Mitt Romney

During the 2008 Republican primaries, a bogus Christmas card "from the Romney family," containing controversial quotes from the Book of Mormon, found its way into the mailboxes of South Carolina Republicans. The holiday greetings appeared positive, with the greeting reading, "We wish you and your family a happy holiday season and a joyful New Year," but the foul play from the covert authors was far from merry. The card included Book of Mormon passages designed to make conservative Christian voters in the state feel uncomfortable with the Mormon candidate. One quote said that God had multiple wives, while another stressed that the Virgin Mary was "exceedingly fair and white." Neither the Romney family nor the Boston, Massachusetts, temple cited on the card had anything to do with the mailing. Fortunately for Romney, the attack was limited, and his race did not suffer much from the slander.

Conclusion

The launch of smear campaigns is easier than ever because of the Internet; extensive advertising budgets are not necessary. The Web is an ideal vehicle for slander for two main reasons: first, attacks can remain anonymous, allowing promoters to escape responsibility for launching them; second, they can be diffused toward selected groups of voters and opinion leaders in a way that opponents cannot immediately discover, which allows the slander more time to spread and gain momentum before targets have the chance to answer. However, the calumny damages the candidate's image as long as it remains under the surface, circulating on the Web and gaining only sparse attention by the mainstream media. As soon as it attracts attention on a larger media stage, a candidate's campaign can promptly react on the same media from which it came, and the untruth of the story may rapidly emerge in both the media and public opinion.

Marco Morini
Macquarie University

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential 2008; Campaigns, 2012; Deception in Political Social Media; Decoy Campaign Web Sites; FightTheSmears.com; Going Viral; Negative Campaigning; Rumors.

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Open Data

Open data is nonprivacy-restricted and nonconfidential data that is produced with public funds and is made available without restrictions on its usage or distribution. Private, confidential, and classified data is excluded because this data is inappropriate to publicize. Public data, available to citizens, should meet certain requirements contained in the open data principles. These principles propose that data must be complete, primary, timely accessible, machine-processable, nondiscriminatory, nonproprietary and license free.

Open government data are all stored data of the public sector that could be made accessible by the government in a public interest, without any restrictions for usage and distribution. Some exemplary realizations, such as apps, mash ups, and services based on open government data can be found in the Web-based portal data.gov of the U.S. government, data.gov.uk of the British government, and the DataSF App Showcase of the City of San Francisco. Linked Open Data are all stored data connected via the World Wide Web that could be made accessible in a public interest, without any restrictions for usage and distribution.

The content of open data can be statistics, geodata, traffic data, education material, scientific publications, medical studies, and even radio and television programs. The term *open data* not only combines stored data of the public sector, but also includes data from businesses or nonprofit organizations. Transparency, participation, and collaboration are the main issues of the integration of citizens in the paradigm of "open government," which acts as an umbrella term for different ideas and concepts. This evolution toward an open state, including open politics and open administration, can be seen as the path toward a government 2.0. North American cities like New York, Chicago, Portland, San Francisco, and Vancouver have begun to release their datasets. The U.S. government has also done so, as have the governments of Australia, Estonia, New Zealand, Norway, and the United Kingdom (UK), along with global organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank. Some countries and cities are fully embracing the idea of opening up their data to the public, while others are still more reluctant to see the opportunities that the availability of public sector data will bring to the public.

Tim Berners-Lee, one of the main proponents of open data in the UK, argues that government data is put online to increase accountability, contribute valuable information about the world, and enable government, the country, and the world to more efficiently function. One example of open data from the UK is the expanded availability of crime-related data, coupled with mapping software, which encourages citizens to investigate the security of their neighborhood. They are then able to draw conclusions about the performance of their local police service. The open data movement's main objectives are to make public sector information available to the public to increase transparency and participation, as well as to achieve greater administrative efficiency and create economic value from public data.

A number of barriers exist to prevent the spread of open data. Such barriers exist at the institutional level, the task complexity of handling the data, the use of open data and participation in the open data process, legislation, information quality, and at the technical level. Since the start of the open data movement, many federal agencies have adopted a rather passive stance to open data programs by indexing a minimal quantity of data while locking more valuable datasets inside closed databases. There are significant differences in national rules and practices regarding the execution of open data policies. Other critics say that open data empowers the already empowered, such as the tech-savvy people who do not need to be convinced that open data can improve government. Various public administrations have established codes of conduct, specifying the uses that can be made of public sector information. The UK code of conduct, published on data.gov.uk, illustrates the conditions that should guarantee the quality of public sector information when it is disseminated by citizens.

Ralf Spiller
Macromedia University

See Also: Open Data; Open Source Governance; Open Source Politics; Web 2.0.

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Open Society Foundations

The Open Society Foundations (OSFs, formerly the Open Society Institute) are a family of donor foundations and offices founded by Hungarian American business magnate, investor, and philanthropist George Soros that support civil society groups around the world. Aimed to build vibrant and tolerant democracies with governments that are accountable to their citizens, the OSFs implement local initiatives that advance justice, education, public health, and independent media. As a global network, Open Society Foundations aspire to build alliances across borders and continents on issues such as corruption and freedom of information. The foundations place a high priority on protecting the rights and improving the lives of people in marginalized communities, shaping public policies that ensure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems, and safeguarding fundamental rights. OSFs projects include the National Security and Human Rights Campaign that opposes detention of unprivileged combatants, and the Lindesmith Center and others dealing with drug reform. The Open Society Foundations also award grants, scholarships, and fellowships.

The name of the foundations was inspired by Austro-British philosopher and professor at the London School of Economics Karl Popper's book *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945). In his view, the open society is a place that permits its citizens the right to criticize and changes institutions as they see fit; he rejected the imposed intellectual conformity, central planning, and historical determinism of Marxist doctrine. According to Popper, any belief system or individual claiming to be an "ultimate truth" is an "enemy" of the open society.

In 1984, George Soros established the Open Society Foundations to help countries make the transition from communism. From that time, the activities of the foundations have grown to encompass the United States and more than 70 countries in western and eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Each foundation relies on the expertise of boards composed of eminent citizens who determine agendas based on local priorities.

Open Society Foundations include the following offices and regional foundations located throughout the world: the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa, Open Society Foundation for South Africa, Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, Open Society Initiative for West Africa, Open Society Afghanistan, Tifa Foundation Indonesia, Soros Foundation–Kazakhstan, Soros Foundation–Kyrgyzstan, Open Society Forum–Mongolia, Foundation Open Society Institute–Pakistan, Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation–Tajikistan, Open Society Foundation for Albania, Open Society Foundations–Armenia, Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation–Azerbaijan, Open Society European Policy Institute, Open Society Fund–Bosnia and Herzegovina, Open Society Institute–Sofia, Open Society Fund–Prague, Open Estonia Foundation, Open Society Georgia Foundation, Open Society Foundations–Budapest, Kosovo Foundation for Open Society, Soros Foundation–Latvia, Foundation Open Society Institute–Macedonia, Soros Foundation–Moldova, Foundation Open Society Institute–Representative Office Montenegro, Stefan Batory Foundation (Poland), Soros Foundation Romania, Open Society Foundation Serbia, Open Society Foundation–Bratislava (Slovakia), Open Society Initiative for Europe (Spain), Open Society Foundation–Turkey, International Renaissance Foundation, Open Society Foundation–London, Foundation Connaissance et Liberte

(Haiti), Arab Regional Office, Open Society Institute–Baltimore, Open Society Foundations–New York, Open Society Foundations–Washington, D.C., and the Open Society Policy Center.

Since civil society initiatives and civic activism have entered online and have started to apply Internet instruments in many countries, they have made new paths to democratization and access to information. OSFs support of social media as a tool to promote change, engage people, and make a significant political and social impact has increased during recent years.

Application of Internet and social media as a space for open communication and uncensored ideas exchange has become an important part of the OSF's work in many countries, especially in countries where democracy suffers from media censorship and control. Besides the funded projects that promote e-governance, OSFs launch new interactive online platforms focused on human rights, transparency, public health, and education, supporting online civic activism. OSFs' grantees utilize Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to share content and initiate public discussions. The Open Society podcast features audio recordings of panel discussions, talks, and book launches. The podcast is delivered through RSS feed syndication and can be played on a computer or automatically downloaded to an iPod or other MP3 player.

Recent projects supported by OSFs have been focused on research about social media's impact on democratic change in different countries. For example, a survey of 1,865 Facebook users, funded by OSFs, explains how Beppe Grillo, Italian blogger and politician, "has used social media to communicate, recruit and organize, growing the Movement 5 Stelle from practically nothing to a major political force in Italy in the space of three years, with it expected to play a crucial role in the 2013 Italian elections." His antiestablishment message has resonated with many against a backdrop of declining trust in political institutions, falling political party membership, and ever-lower voter turnout.

In 2011, the OSFs supported a survey of over 13,000 Facebook supporters of populist parties in 12 European countries, conducted to understand who these "digital populists" are, what they think, and how their online behavior maps onto what they do in the real world, to examine how social media is changing politics and political activism in Europe, and what this means for mainstream and fringe parties. Another example is a study commissioned by the Open Society Foundations that looks at how new technology serves for economic development and more efficient governance in Turkmenistan. OSFs global research project Mapping Digital Media examines media digitalization in 60 countries around the world and looks the changes connected with media digitalization and how it affects news about political, economic, and social affairs.

Anastasiia Grynko
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

See Also: Evolution of Social Media; Nongovernmental Organizations; Nonprofit Organizations.

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Open Source Governance

Open source governance is a term used to describe the application of open source principles and practices to governing institutions. Typically invoked in the context of computer software development, "open source" refers to a transparent and distributed production process, wherein both the final product and the process leading to its development are "open" to multiple contributors and users. In some cases, open source organization leads to peer production: a largely self-organizing group of individuals who negotiate, peer review, and collaborate to produce something that any one participant would not easily be able to create alone. The Internet, and in particular, social

media, with their capacity to host low-cost, networked communication, have supported the rise of open source projects, with the most famous example being Wikipedia.

Proponents of open source governance argue that governing institutions are more democratic, transparent, effective, and efficient when they enable members of the public to contribute to their work. While political parties, legislatures, and governments have begun to adopt open source principles and practices, a number of barriers complicate their efforts.

Drivers of Open Source Governance

Advocates of open source governance typically advance the following three arguments in its favor:

- *Democratic engagement*: Open source governance introduces new and potentially more powerful avenues for citizens to influence their governing institutions. As a result, advocates argue that such initiatives may inspire greater rates of political participation. Additionally, open source governance is thought to strengthen the representative functions of governing institutions, since it can enable these institutions to better understand and reflect the values and interests of the public.
- *Transparency and accountability*: Advocates argue that by making the decision-making processes of governing institutions open to mass collaboration, institutions must share information that might previously have been kept from the public domain (both with regards to the institution's internal processes and to policy issues). As a corollary to this, some argue that heightened transparency will bolster accountability as citizens become "armchair auditors," scrutinizing governing institutions with data released for public use.
- *Effectiveness and efficiency*: Since open source governance enables governing institutions to draw on the insight of a broader base of individuals, advocates argue that it will lead to more effective policies, programs, and services that are developed at a lower cost.

Barriers to Open Source Governance

Governing institutions face a number of challenges when adopting the principles of open source governance. First, these institutions must address the question of how representative the sample of participants is for any given initiative. Research suggests that those who engage in online political participation are not reflective of the general population. Similarly, in online collaborative environments, a small number of users tend to make the bulk of the contributions. If an institution aims to use open source governance to raise levels of political participation, it may not be an appropriate route.

In addition, open source governance raises a series of legal concerns. First, when soliciting information from citizens, governing institutions must ensure that adequate procedures are in place to protect participants' privacy. Second, governing institutions must develop policies on the ownership of goods developed via collaborative processes or that make use of data owned by governing institutions. Third, institutions must consider who is accountable for the outcomes of collaborative processes, in particular, when those outcomes are undesirable. Finally, governing institutions may need to revise policies on citizen engagement, because in some cases, legal restrictions addressing when and how an institution can engage with the public are incongruous with the dictates of open source governance.

Finally, governing institutions steeped in a tradition of hierarchical decision making and unaccustomed to open information sharing may struggle to adapt to the principles of open source governance. Similarly, outdated information technology, weak information management practices, and a lack of technical expertise may hinder institutions hoping to employ new technologies like social media to engage with the public.

Amanda Clarke
Oxford Internet Institute

See Also: Cognitive Surplus; Crowdsourcing; E-Democracy; Open.Dems; OpenGovernment.org; Transparency.

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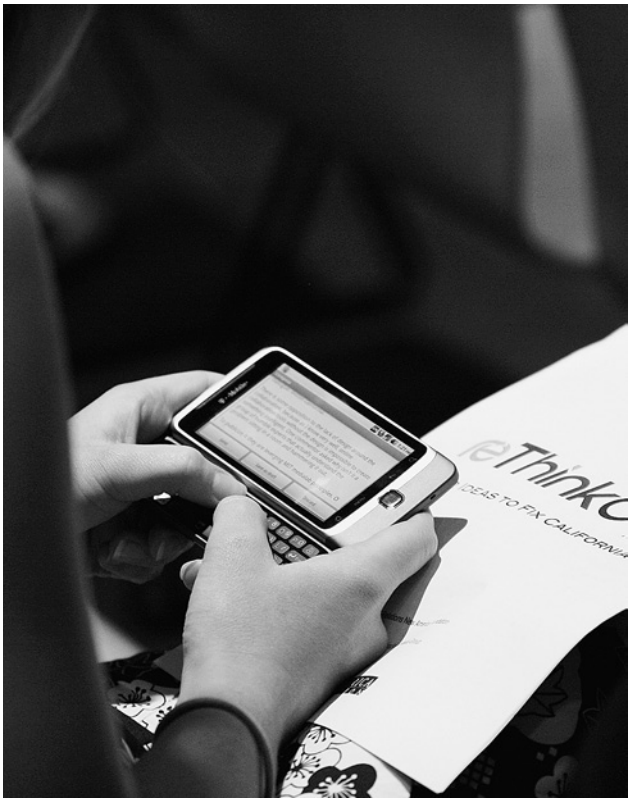
Open Source Politics

The idea that citizens can be empowered to play a more active role in public policy through the use of Web-based collaborative tools is the basis of a new policy model. This new concept—open source politics—sees the political process as a wide and comprehensive wiki, continuously fueled with new or revised contents produced by an engaged citizenry. It aims to enable common citizens to actively participate in the creation of public policy content through online e-participation technologies, and to influence policy decisions on issues of public interest. By engaging citizens in the policy process, open source politics performs more efficiently, more effectively, and produces more just and equitable policy outcomes than those that would result from the narrower perspectives that characterize policy makers and other core stakeholders in conventional politics. In other words, open source politics is seen as an efficient form of bringing into the policy decision-making process different perspectives and a continuous flow of updated knowledge.

The term and concept of *open source politics* has been applied by authors from different academic backgrounds with slightly different meanings. Nonetheless, they all use it to refer to a perspective that aims to apply in the policy process the principles of the open source movement, developed in the software community. Like open source software, which is designed to allow users to alter its code to make improvements, open source politics allows citizens to change or reprogram policies in order to improve them. In open source politics, citizens are regarded as partners instead of customers, in all stages of the policy process and in public service delivery. Citizens can rewrite the "codes" of formal policy proposals by using new digital and online technologies. Open source politics opens the policy process to all sorts of participants, letting them evaluate plans and projects proposed by policymakers, make recommendations, launch new proposals, and influence the shift of resources from one option to another. Open source politics means, to a certain extent, the replacement of current forms of governing by new governance models that allow and enhance direct citizen inputs in the policy process, including citizen coproduction of policy contents. The advent of new digital tools and online collaborative platforms made the implementation of this model of open source politics easier in all political and administrative layers.

Other terms such as collaborative governance, politics 2.0, Web-enabled government, or open source governance, to name just a few, have also been introduced to mainstream political discourse to designate a similar or the same perspective of the policy process. In other fields, similar approaches regarding citizen engagement have also emerged. In the media sector, for example, the term *citizen journalism* is now frequently applied, and the same happens with the term *citizen science* in an increasing number of scientific disciplines. These are just two examples of the deep changes that have been introduced in the way that professionals develop their activities, in particular in the role given to individuals as user-generators of all sorts of content and perspectives. Crowdsourcing is another example of similar changes that are occurring in other fields, from private business to public policy, in this case in all tiers of the political and administrative structure.

Despite the increasing acceptance and widespread use of this concept, some objections have been raised regarding the term *open source*, in particular due to the fact that the technologies used are not open source, as is the often cited case of YouTube and similar Web 2.0 platforms. On the contrary, from another perspective, it can be argued that the term *open source* emphasizes the fact that it is the new information and communication technologies that are making politics and



A participant at an event for reThinkCali reads from the organization's online materials on a mobile device. reThinkCali.com, an online effort to "fix California" with residents' help, claims the "world's first virtual constitutional convention."

the public policy process more participatory and transparent. There are different software applications available that can be used to engage citizens in a process of open source politics. Among the chief instruments of open source politics are the Web 2.0 tools (e.g., open forums, blogs, and wiki platforms), which can be used to compile ideas and proposals from citizens and other stakeholders around specific issues, in the initial stage of the policy process (e.g., the preparation of a policy program or urban plan), or during the implementation, monitoring, or evaluation stages of the policy process.

Advantages and Weaknesses

Open source politics is seen as an open political process that has numerous advantages over conventional forms of citizen engagement in the public policy process. The use of new information and communication technologies, in particular Web 2.0 tools, enhances the ability of common citizens to influence the political, legislative, and administrative processes, at both national and subnational tiers. These tools and platforms can be used to deliver information to specific sections of the population but also to proactively connect citizens and policymakers in all stages of the decision-making process.

Open source politics contributes to the renewal and innovation of policy content, increasing the diversity of perspectives and experiences of participants. It allows input from citizens of other political perspectives, collecting knowledge and intelligence that can rival that of the much narrower and more specialized perspective of the conventional political actor, and may benefit society as a whole.

However, open source politics also faces a number of difficulties and weaknesses. As in other models of participative governance, there is also in this case the risk of control of the policy process by a group of more active citizens. Some political leaders and policymakers tend to see open source politics as a threat to their leadership role within the community, and may boycott its full implementation. Issues of trust, transparency, privacy, and confidentiality are also present in open source politics and require due consideration by those involved in the design of these participatory processes.

Carlos Nunes Silva
University of Lisbon

See Also: Crowdsourcing; Digital Citizen; Digital Government; E-Democracy; Open Source Governance.

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OpenCongress.org

Founded in 2007 as a nonprofit organization, OpenCongress is an Internet resource Web site that is open source, nonpartisan, and free to the public. Created in order to facilitate public tracking of congressional bills, OpenCongress provides more detailed and in-depth information to the public than found in typical news media articles. By integrating articles from the news media with key information surrounding legislation (e.g., sponsors, summaries, status, roll calls, and public reaction), OpenCongress seeks to empower individuals through enhanced context and perspective. In so doing, it has developed into an organization involving over 150,000 members and receiving about 1 million visits each month, making it the most popular government transparency Web site in the United States.

OpenCongress was launched by the Participatory Politics Foundation (PPF) and the Sunlight Foundation, both 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations. While the PPF runs OpenCongress, the Sunlight Foundation serves as its founding and main sponsor. Intended to assist the public in unveiling the behind-the-scenes functioning of the legislative branch and its officials, OpenCongress seeks to help individuals see the political realities (often unreported or underreported by the news media) of activities on the part of their representatives and Congress as a whole.

By combining government information with social media, networking, and avenues for participation, OpenCongress attempts to place Congress in greater context in order to bring about greater accountability by the public. In this vein, OpenCongress provides detailed information regarding particular legislation, along with official congressional reports and analyses by news media and the blogosphere, to provide a comprehensive portrait (big picture) of Congress along with its workings, members, and various pieces of legislation. Thus, individuals unaware of who their representatives are can locate them by zip code, and from there can view their senators'/representatives' voting history, campaign contributors and contribution amounts, recently sponsored bills, and stances on various policy issues.

A key resource for users is the OpenCongress wiki, a collaboratively written "citizens'" encyclopedia on Congress. The OpenCongress wiki began as Congresspedia in 2006, with the mission of shedding more light on the political realities and dynamics of Congress and its inner workings. In 2009, Congresspedia merged with OpenCongress to form the OpenCongress wiki. Continuing the mission of Congresspedia, the wiki seeks to arm individuals and the news media with the necessary information to hold Congress and its members more accountable, and to bring about greater transparency in the system and expose corruption. The OpenCongress wiki allows users to more closely scrutinize members of Congress and to develop informed opinions on congressional activities and the political system in which they take place. Because this resource is a wiki, anyone may add new, or alter current, information. However,

the OpenCongress wiki is monitored by an official editor and staff in order to verify the accuracy of information.

Another major resource offered by OpenCongress, "The Money Trail," focuses on wasteful spending, and targets corrupt practices on the part of politicians. In seeking to hold elected officials accountable, OpenCongress utilizes this instrument to show the inner workings of Congress as well as the potential implications and practical consequences of various bills. OpenCongress places great emphasis on delineating key, underlying aspects of bills such as their supporters, their funding sources, and their proposals, in order to get at the "essence" of bills. The objective is to inform and educate the public in order to empower their political ideas and actions.

On the OpenCongress Web site, individuals can also locate bills that they are interested in by browsing through issue areas. OpenCongress organizes every piece of legislation by issue areas defined by the Congressional Research Service, the nonpartisan research arm of Congress. With over 4,000 issues, users can scrutinize congressional activity in any one of these areas. Users can also examine swing votes by members of Congress and find primary supporters of legislation, allowing more targeted grassroots lobbying campaigns.

In addition to allowing individuals to analyze and follow bills, congressional officials, and policy issues, users can also track events through My OpenCongress, a social network that relies on peer-to-peer communication to share pertinent information on areas of particular interest. Social networking, along with social sharing tools, permits an open exchange of information among individuals. By creating a profile, users can follow, remark, and even vote on items they are concerned about in Congress. In this fashion, users' profiles serve to tailor information to their individual needs and interests concerning bills, the legislative process, members of Congress, policy issues, and more. Along with profiles of individuals utilizing resources on the OpenCongress Web site, the collective social network helps foster personal engagement in the democratic process.

Steven J. Campbell
University of South Carolina, Lancaster

See Also: Information Aggregation; Networks, Political; Open Source Politics; OpenGovernment.org; Participatory Politics Foundation; Peer to Peer; Transparency.

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Open.Dems

Open.Dems (open.democrats.org) is an open source initiative by the Democratic National Committee (DNC), launched in 2010. The Web site serves as a clearinghouse for open source technologies, including APIs and other software, developed by the DNC. Much of what is released through Open.Dems was developed by the DNC's new media shop and innovation labs, under the purview of the DNC's new media director, Natalie Foster, hired in 2009.

Foster was hired after the success of the 2008 Obama campaign in an attempt to maintain that momentum and continue to develop social media outreach and new media initiatives for the Democratic Party. Foster arrived at the job under considerable scrutiny because it was widely known that the Obama for America campaign had an enormous campaign database, and that after its 2008 successes, whoever took over the reins of new media and social media would do so under a heavy burden of expectations. Open.Dems was one of her most noteworthy initiatives.

The significance of Open.Dems goes beyond the availability of open source software. It is intended as a signal that Democrats have adopted the open source ethos and have applied it to politics, blurring the line between professional and grassroots, lowering the fence in order to better collaborate

and better share information and tools. At launch, Open.Dems consisted of three main projects: an open source API clearinghouse; a selection of computer code by DNC developers; and a blog on new media issues relevant to the Democratic Party, fundraising, crowdsourcing, and related matters. One piece of code hailed at the time of release was the Lock Box, a Rails-based code that improved the way that multiple APIs could be combined. (An API is an application programming interface, a protocol app developers use in the creation of Web apps.)

The Open.Dems project released a voter registration API, which allowed developers to create streamlined voter registration apps consistent with local state laws. Developers using the API needed to sign up as a partner with Raise Your Vote, the DNC's 2010-launched voter registration drive. Voter registration apps allow users to either register to vote from the Web site, or access the information they need to register by mail or in person, depending on the registration laws in their state. Like Raise Your Vote, the voter registration API was motivated by the observation that Democratic success in elections largely rose and fell with voter participation. In particular, the 15 million new voters in the historic 2008 presidential election were overwhelmingly Democratic voters, many of them coming from traditional Democratic bases like young people, blacks, and Latinos.

Open.Dems' Polling Place API allowed developers to incorporate dynamic polling place lookup in their applications, to make it easy for users to find their nearest polling place. Open.Dems also released a mobile app, on both iOS (iPhone, iPad) and Android platforms, for Organizing for America, the grassroots registration program that succeeded the Obama for America campaign organization.

The canvassing iOS and Android app released by Open.Dems was praised by many users, providing information about Obama supporters in the canvassed region, as well as bringing up a list of local organizing events and allowing canvassers to take notes on their conversations with voters, which are uploaded to campaign headquarters. Released in 2010, it was considered the most important and effective campaign tool released that campaign season.

Blog entries on Open.Dems have addressed issues like OFA's discoveries of the best strategies for asking supporters to donate money, and in particular the fact that advocacy e-mails with a "donate" button increased the number of unsubscribing recipients, decreased the number of responses, and failed to increase the number of donations. Other issues covered included the use of splash pages in Web sites and the use of Ruby on Rails in the Raise Your Vote's Web site's backend. Open.Dems also runs an associated Twitter account, @opendems.

Bill Kte'pi
Independent Scholar

See Also: Blogosphere; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, 2012; Crowdsourcing; E-Democracy; MoveOn.org; Open Data; Open Source Governance; Open Source Politics; OpenCongress.org; OpenGovernment.org.

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OpenGovernment.org

OpenGovernment.org is an open source, public Web site that was launched in January 2011. Designed to allow users freer access to information on state and local government, the site seeks to arm citizens with the necessary knowledge to hold government and governing officials accountable. Created by the Participatory Politics Foundation (PPF) and the Sunlight Foundation, two 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations, OpenGovernment is a nonpartisan, public resource. By displaying aggregated information on government, together with

information such as campaign contribution data and online social commentary, OpenGovernment seeks to provide the most user-friendly experience available when viewing state- and local-level political information. In addition, OpenGovernment provides avenues for public participation through various instruments in seeking to advance greater civic engagement and transparency at state and local levels of government.

The central goal of OpenGovernment is to provide a comprehensive, easily accessible site for locating political information on state/local government. In order to shed more light on state government, PPF and the Sunlight Foundation founded OpenGovernment as a joint venture along with the community-initiative Open States Project. With information on six state legislatures (California, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Texas, and Wisconsin), OpenGovernment plans to extend its reach to include the remaining state governments—along with a handful of big city governments—in the near future.

Derived from the same group that created OpenCongress.org, a Web site devoted to greater transparency on U.S. congressional members and activities, OpenGovernment was modeled after this project. In attempting to hold state/local governments more accountable, OpenGovernment was intended to serve an analogous role to OpenCongress—that is, fostering greater transparency in government—at subnational levels of government. To carry out this task, OpenGovernment brings together state/local legislative information with news articles, voter/voting databases, blog postings, public online forums, social media commentary, wiki platforms, and other resources to allow citizens to see the true happenings in government. By combining government data and information on state officials with databases, press coverage, and social media, OpenGovernment seeks to facilitate the process of citizens acquiring information relating to important bills, activities of legislators, campaign contributions, and more.

Official state government Web sites, such as those with ".gov" URL addresses, serve as the main foundation for government information on OpenGovernment's site. The Open States Project first processes this data (e.g., bills, roll calls, legislative actions) into a standardized format before sending it to OpenGovernment. Once acquired, OpenGovernment then contextualizes this data with information from sources such as press accounts, the blogosphere, discussion forums, and social media. By complementing this with a range of public engagement instruments, OpenGovernment provides citizens with a user-friendly Web page for acquiring information on a variety of governmental actors, issues, and processes at the state level. Equipped with such knowledge as committee assignments, full texts for bills, interest group ratings, and vote analyses, users can see what really goes on in their state legislatures.

Visitors to OpenGovernment can track bills via RSS feeds, comment on bills, convey information to others via social sharing tools, and contribute to public knowledge of bills via peer-to-peer communication. In addition, OpenGovernment allows users to find, track, and contact their representatives via e-mail straight from OpenGovernment's Web page. With such built-in mechanisms, citizens can organize grassroots call-ins to officials on important votes, and coordinate mass e-mailing to make officials aware their constituents are watching. By providing engagement tools such as the ability to sort bills by "most-viewed," "date," and "most-in-the-news," users can readily acquire crucial information that was previously inaccessible. OpenGovernment's offerings also lend themselves to journalists in their reporting of political news as well as to citizen activists and watchdog groups.

Conclusion

OpenGovernment seeks to ensure compliance by all three branches of government (executive, legislative, and judicial) at all levels of government (local, state, national) with the principles of open government data. These principles include notions such as the following: government information should be readily available to the public, should be made public completely and without delay, and should be accessible to all online in order to foster public trust in the political system. However, OpenGovernment faces the political realities of state governments not living up to these principles and best practices. Public access to even basic government data on bills and voting can be severely limited. Though OpenGovernment

seeks to make such vital information easily accessible to the public, even displaying state legislative actions such as roll calls in real time to the public is still not possible.

Steven J. Campbell
University of South Carolina, Lancaster

See Also: Information Aggregation; Networks, Political; Open Source Politics; OpenCongress.org; Peer to Peer; Transparency.

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OpenLeaks

OpenLeaks is a whistleblowing online project founded in September 2010, by former WikiLeaks spokesperson Daniel Domscheit-Berg with former employees of WikiLeaks. OpenLeaks aims to provide technological tools and know how to every organization or media outlet interested in giving whistleblowers a channel to anonymously submit material and documents on the Internet. OpenLeaks presents itself as a technical framework and knowledge base aimed to enable whistleblowers to disseminate data to third parties.

However, unlike similar Web sites, OpenLeaks' vision of whistleblowing involves working in cooperation with partners such as nongovernmental organizations, media outlets, unions, and human rights organizations in order to share the process of digital leaking. Different from WikiLeaks, which set the standard for online whistleblowing, OpenLeaks does not receive or publish documents on its Web site, but its partners can receive leaked content on their Internet domains via a digital dropbox within the OpenLeaks network. OpenLeaks is one of the major digital whistleblowing projects, which was popularized after the rise of WikiLeaks.

OpenLeaks has often been defined as a WikiLeaks spinoff because of Domscheit-Berg's affiliation with WikiLeaks and some similarities in terms of technology and purpose. The entire OpenLeaks project started as a detachment from Julian Assange's platform. One of the major parallels is the opportunity for whistleblowers to submit sensitive documents in a safe and anonymous way using an online dropbox. However, OpenLeaks focuses more on a collaborative orientation with interested parties. Unlike WikiLeaks, OpenLeaks was not created as a platform to publish documents, but instead to make leaked information available to interested and trusted recipients. OpenLeaks argues that the whistleblowing process has to be rethought: WikiLeaks centralizes all steps in the whistleblowing process, from receiving to publishing leaked information, whereas OpenLeaks wants to abandon this concept by separating submitted documents from their publication. In contrast to WikiLeaks, which tends to publish documents without involving external partners, OpenLeaks aims to give leaked content to the best receivers for editing, fact checking, and publication, acting as a neutral conduit between anonymous sources and recipients.

When submitting documents to OpenLeaks, sources must decide where and how their data will be leaked. Sources can name an organization within the OpenLeaks network to address their leaks, or give the information to the whole community. OpenLeaks' perspective is to increase "direct leaking for socially localized, and not just global, issues," providing a transparent whistleblowing process by involving trustful organizations when it comes to editing and publishing leaked information. In OpenLeaks' vision, cooperation with partners will ensure more transparency and accountability to the platform, together with more protection for people mentioned in the leaked documents. In addition, OpenLeaks' commitment to source privacy and safety confirms

Daniel Domscheit-Berg, now of OpenLeaks, speaking about WikiLeaks at the hacker convention Chaos Communication Congress in December 2009 in Berlin, Germany.

the platform's role as a neutral conduit. Still, as OpenLeaks appears to still be in a preparatory phase, only its declaration of intent can be analyzed. However, OpenLeaks' activities go further than technology and coding—recently, the project has also been working in the field of knowledge sharing, organizing workshops on encryption and digital whistleblowing to encourage other organizations to build similar platforms with proper skills and competence.

OpenLeaks' domain was registered in September 2010, and was launched in December of that year. In January 2011, OpenLeaks was supposed to launch its operations together with the German dailies *Die Tageszeitung* and *Freitag*, Denmark's *Dagbladet Information*, Portugal's *Expresso*, and the Berlin-based Foodwatch nonprofit group. Yet, the operation never started. In August 2011, OpenLeaks staff attended the Chaos Communication Camp (CCC) in the suburbs of Berlin to test its platform with a security penetration test, asking CCC hackers to stress the OpenLeaks infrastructure as much as possible in order to check its safety and reliability. The launch failed again. In April 2012, during the Share 2 Conference in Belgrade, Daniel Domscheit-Berg announced that OpenLeaks had set up offices and workshops to train activists and journalists on how to safely handle digital whistleblowing. The creation of the OpenLeaks structure was instead announced as "on the way," but no leaks appeared. In December 2012, a blog post on the OpenLeaks Web site announced that the project was still alive. At this stage, OpenLeaks was presenting itself as more focused on the transfer of know how for organizations willing to provide a whistleblowing service, while the provision of such a service seemed to be secondary. However, in April 2013, the Web page for OpenLeaks was offline.

The OpenLeaks project has been highly debated in the hacker community and in the media. Daniel Domscheit-Berg left WikiLeaks in 2011 because of intense discord with Julian Assange. Later that same year, he published his memoirs, *Inside WikiLeaks*, revealing details about the organization and mentioning a cache of data that Domscheit-Berg and another ex-WikiLeaks staffer, known as "The Architect," took with them when leaving WikiLeaks. Among the data taken was the submissions system, together with the archive of published documents, and thousands of unpublished documents. The further deletion of WikiLeaks' unpublished documents by Domscheit-Berg and The Architect signaled the height of the internal dispute between WikiLeakers and OpenLeakers. As a consequence of this struggle, Daniel Domscheit-Berg was expelled from the hacker association Chaos Computer Club in 2011, but he was readmitted in 2012.

Philip Di Salvo
Colin Porlezza
Università della Svizzera Italiana

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Hacktivism; TuniLeaks.org; WikiLeaks.

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OpenTunisia.org

OpenTunisia.org is a Web site created at the beginning of the Arab Spring. It reflects a host of online activities undertaken by the Arab diaspora in support of their compatriots' goals of political reform and open and accountable government. This particular site is the brainchild of Internet activist Chemseddin Ben Jemaa, a Tunisian expatriate who registered the domain name toward the beginning of the Arab Spring, in February 2011. According to the site, it is part of a much larger project to promote open governance, access to information, and government transparency and accountability in Tunisia. This effort includes external sites with specialist aims like OpenGov.TN, which hosts discussions and creates white papers on proposed reforms to make the Tunisian government more accessible to citizens.

Open governance and responsiveness and access to the citizenry are difficult goals to achieve for even the most well-established liberal regimes. In the case of Tunisia, there is a long history of government by dictators who allowed wide discretion in personal life, but required loyalty to one-party rule in public life. In order to establish a clean break with its past, activists like Chemseddin Jemaa believe that average Tunisians must have instant access to not just information, but also to tools that help them interpret, interact with, and distribute that information. This is why registered users of the site gain access to an interface with a variety of cloud computing applications. These include common functions like word processing and database management, as well as games and forum creation tools. For people who do not have the funds to purchase expensive software, this removes an important barrier to access of full digital citizenship. More specialized tools, including voting record wikis, contact information lists, and online government reform discussion groups are also easily accessible via the page.

Some of the more influential tools available on OpenTunisia include Mumble, a voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) service that makes telephony affordable to the masses; Dev.TN, a lab in which application developers can access tools to help them innovate new means of creating links between Tunisians and their government; Images .TN and Pad.TN, image hosting and collaboration wiki sites that allow Tunisians to publish photos to a secure cloud service and to work on joint projects or have group discussions in real time; and RoundCube, a free Web mail service. Each of these efforts is a reaction against Tunisia's history of censorship and political repression.

During times of political unrest, it is common for regimes to cut off access to mobile phone networks and social media. However, tools like Mumble allow people to gain phone access as long as they can find a Wi-Fi hotspot for their smartphone, or have alternative Internet access. Although this could also be restricted by a determined government, the potential fallout and signals of threat perception make attempts to shut down local Internet a last resort for most regimes. Likewise, it is essential for regimes to provide work opportunities for their populations, and technological innovation is often an important part of achieving this end. The Dev.Tn platform is a valuable asset because it allows budding application developers to innovate, to access tools they couldn't otherwise afford for making better products, and to gain skills that could make them more employable, while furthering OpenTunisia's goal of improving access to the government.

Image hosting is already available on sites like Flickr and Tumblr, but Images.TN is not a typical image-sharing facility, but rather a hacker space, as its Web banner demonstrates. Its image library and Twitter feed allow users to interact with one another in an online community and to post images relevant to the pro-open information goals of the group. Coupled with the collaborative opportunities from HackerPad (Pad.Tn), this

type of community represents not just a reaction against the former regime, but also an affirmation that the group intends to ensure that the new regime is true to its promises of political freedom and transparency. Finally, RoundCube provides one of the most basic tools for those seeking an online presence, an e-mail address. This effort may seem redundant because the ubiquity of enormous cloud Web mail services, but it is a means of placing a Tunisian identity on a tool that ultimately becomes highly linked to most users' personal lives and identities.

OpenTunisia.org is part of a broad trend in online political activism to require states and regimes to be more transparent, more accessible to constituents, and more accountable when representing their aims and goals. Its suite of basic computing software and community-building and political activism tools are one way in which activists like Chemseddin Ben Jemaa can make technology more democratic, and can potentially make their democracies more stable and responsive.

Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St. Andrews

See Also: Africa, north; Arab Spring; TuniLeaks.org; Tunisia; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring.

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Opinion Leader Theory

Opinion leadership is conducted by an active media user who interprets the meaning of media messages or content for lower-end media users. Typically, the opinion leader is held in high regard by those who accept his or her opinions. Opinion leadership comes from the theory of two-step flow of communication elaborated by Paul Lazarsfeld and Elihu Katz. Despite the enduring popularity of the concept of opinion leadership, academic researchers have only recently begun to explore the ramifications of online opinion leadership. Online opinion leaders differ from their offline equivalents. The major distinction in the online environment is that opinion leaders and nonleaders are much more similar than they are in the offline world.

In 1940, a group of researchers guided by Paul Lazarsfeld investigated how much influence the mass media exerted during presidential elections. They focused their attention on the media's role in the election between Democratic incumbent Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Republican challenger Wendell Willkie. To gather data, they set up an extensive infield study in Erie County, Ohio. The study's results indicated that neither radio nor print had as much influence on voters as had been suspected. The researchers found that most of the people studied relied more on other people for the information they used to make voting decisions. Lazarsfeld then began to study the individuals who were relied on for information, calling them "opinion leaders." He found that an opinion leader could be just about anyone. However, further analysis revealed that opinion leaders were better informed than the average person, and in general, they tended to read more newspapers and magazines and listen to more radio news and commentary.

Furthermore, Lazarsfeld and Katz advanced the idea that one or more of these factors make noteworthy opinion leaders: expression of values, professional competence, and nature of their social network. Opinion leaders seek the acceptance of others and are especially motivated to enhance their social status. They can influence members in the social community because of special techniques, knowledge, personalities, and other unique qualities, and are commonly described as people with high social participation, status, and responsibility. Opinion leaders are seen as trustworthy and nonpurposive. People do not feel that they are being tricked into thinking a certain way about something from someone they know. On the contrary, the media can be seen as forcing a concept on the public, and is therefore less influential. While the media can act as a reinforcing

agent, opinion leaders have a more changing or determining role in an individual's opinion or action. As a result of his findings, Lazarsfeld developed the two-step flow theory of communication. This theory advanced the concept that: the mass media influence certain individuals, and these individuals personally influence others. Subsequent studies of the 1952 and 1956 presidential elections by Campbell, Converge, Miller, and Stokes substantiated Lazarsfeld's findings.

Opinion makers in social media can be bloggers, journalists, or even message board members who command a certain following among their readers. There have been a number of metrics trying to assert the exact influence of social media and its opinion makers, however, the methodologies and approaches greatly differ. Also, there is a heated discussion of whether opinion leaders, influentials, or simply "very central people" (as seen from a network perspective) are able to generate viral postings. With the advent of Web 2.0, Web sites where consumers voluntarily contribute product reviews have prospered. By sharing their opinions on online forums, consumers also influence others' opinions and ideas. This leads to the formation of a network of trust among reviewers, with high-degree individuals acting in the opinion leaders. There are several famous Web sites that provide forums for user-generated content, providing mechanisms under which users can extend links to other users whose opinions or content they value, thus leading to a networked community. Examples of such Web sites include YouTube for sharing videos, IMDb and Rotten Tomatoes for opinion sharing on movies, and social networks such as Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter.

One of the key features of online review communities is that the network structure and individual behavior are dynamically changing over time. Over time, reviewers may receive new incoming trust links and contribute new reviews, both of which increase their attractiveness to other members of the community. Compared with offline social networks, the cost of changing structural and behavioral characteristics is smaller in online settings, and therefore the dynamic properties are salient.

In general, online opinion leaders differ from those identified and characterized in traditional studies of opinion leadership. Both online opinion leaders and nonleaders are more similar than they are different in terms of the interactivity and messages that they post. All posters, regardless of opinion leader status, would classify their posts as "reactive messages" to express their opinion. The popularity of reactive messages challenges the general assumption that interactive messages are the most desired form of communication in the online, networked environment. The general public is not necessarily writing messages to seek information, challenging the assumption that media audiences are primarily information and opinion seekers. The online environment does not encourage interactive message exchanges among discussants; however, it does promote mutual discourse and role interchanges among participants of a news-oriented online community.

Marco Morini
Macquarie University

See Also: Alpha Bloggers; Minimal Effects Theory; Network Influentials; YouTube.

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Opposition Videographer

Opposition videography, a form of video activism, is the practice of shooting political incidents and accounts as documentary evidence against an opposing political faction, such as filming warfare and political statements for release in court trials,

traditional media, and social media to mobilize civic resistance or affect a political campaign. Its dynamic impact on the political agenda has both encouraged and been compounded by the explosion of citizen journalism and the viral distribution of opposition videos through social networks and new media.

An example is witness footage that is e-mailed to others to circumvent social media firewalls, uploaded as YouTube clips, propagated through tweets and Facebook protest pages, and then broadcast via television news and documentaries. New media and citizen journalism is then reintegrated with "legacy" media, transforming one-way transmission media into two-way interactive media.

Videographers range from professionally trained camerapersons contracted to shadow a politician or campaign (such as Hassan Gol Khanban, the Iranian president's videographer who defected while filming the president's attendance at the United Nations), to citizens armed with cell phones, such as the volunteer brigade of video activists filming footage for the Free Syrian Army.

The practice of opposition videography stems from the use of video by political parties as propaganda in fundraising and advertising campaigns, as well as traditions of media activism and advocacy documentary pioneered by filmmakers such as John Grierson.

Filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein theorized that the politicized spectator is made to react demonstratively by the "agitational spectacle" of film, similar to receiving a shock or blow to the psyche. Jane Gaines extends this theory, describing spontaneous audience activism as a sign of the politicized body and an example of political mimesis, in which the sensationalized on-screen body produces a mimicry of emotion and visceral sensation in the body of the spectator.

Arab Spring

Since the Arab Spring, opposition videography has emerged as a growing phenomenon with startling power to mobilize civic engagement, fueled by increasing access to social media and camera phones. With the ubiquity of digital devices, opposition videography is even possible for a bystander with a mobile to create. This makes skills in mobile phone repair arguably more powerful than a tank, challenging the "control paradigm" as discussed by McNair, by subverting the hegemony of society through media control.

Opposition parties now use cameras and social media as weapons, creating new tactics for activism. Video evidence of atrocities wins over new citizen supporters and soldiers to a movement, convinces opponent soldiers to defect and other nations to intervene, and documents evidence for war crimes trials and the court of international opinion on the World Wide Web. This serves as a direct and divisive way of wielding power by a people over a government, corroding the legitimacy of a regime in the eyes of its people and the world, and forcing response from foreign diplomats.

Videos said to incite violence often ignite calls for their censorship or banning from the Web (such as the outcry over *The Innocence of Muslims*), which in turn fuels controversy and debates about freedom of expression. In forcing politicians to respond, the power is proven to sit firmly in the hands of the videographer.

Whereas traditional documentaries often avoid or fictionalize the sight of bodies and ground wars, Patricia Rodden Zimmerman argues that insurgent documentary practice reclaims this ground, and employs reconnaissance and new technologies as a new offensive strategy.

Arab Spring opposition videos are often gruesome, evoking martyrology, which in turn increases their social media virality and becomes a rallying cry for revolution. An example is the death of "Neda," an Iranian woman whose Twitter hashtag transformed her into an icon of Iran's unrest. In cultures such as Iran, where traditions of honoring martyrs and revolting against tyranny are considered duties to God, tribute sites quickly proliferate. Mourning rituals also invoke the commemoration of deaths at cyclical intervals. This triggers further political crisis as the viral dissemination of videos of death then escalates a cyclical contagion of rebellion.

In response, opposition videographers are frequently labeled terrorists or accused of falsification by parties they oppose. Questions of impartiality, authenticity, credibility, and the use of video as propaganda then arise, together with issues of censorship, government controls on media and Internet access, and the safety and surveillance of citizen journalists.

Republican presidential and vice presidential candidates Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan in front of the cameras at a campaign rally in Norfolk, Virginia, on August 11, 2012. Romney's campaign was seriously affected by an opposition video that captured him saying, "There are 47 percent of the people who will vote for the president no matter what . . . who are dependent upon government, who believe that they are victims," at private fundraiser attended by wealthy donors in Boca Raton, Florida, on May 17, 2012.

To suppress activism and the power of opposition footage, regimes frequently impose media blackouts, and journalists become the first targets both on the front line and social media. Media outlets, frequently unable to obtain access or visas for foreign journalists, are forced to rely on footage by opposition videographers. Opposition factions also smuggle in journalists who risk their lives and those of their sources by both shooting and sharing footage. Faces are obscured, by filming over people's shoulders so that opposition supporters cannot be identified by facial recognition software and added to wanted lists.

With the rise of citizen journalism, there have also been sharp rises in the statistics of imprisoned and murdered videographers. One example is Syrian opposition videographer Ahmad Hamada, who filmed his own death during the siege of Homs this year.

Sue Curry Jansen states that inverse surveillance, such as the use of cameras as a "copwatch," becomes another form of activism that challenges existing power relationships. Social media and videography, both technologies of mobilization, are often combined with the use of open software for circumventing surveillance, turning software freedom and information control into issues of social justice. Patricia Rodden Zimmerman argues that the use of emerging technology as proactive ambush achieves an intervention in public discourse and both national and transnational media flows.

U.S. Politics

Video ambushes are frequently deployed both domestically and internationally, as exemplified by U.S. election tactics. Mitt Romney's reputation greatly suffered from the release of

opposition videos during the 2012 campaign. Some press speculated they originated from the McCain camp. The Democratic National Committee also appropriated Sarah Palin's clips into their videos targeting Romney's refusal to release his tax returns. The ensuing media storms effectively undermined and intervened in discourse on Romney's election platform. Technically labeled "opposition videos" because of their deliberate collection or reediting by a political opponent and their opposing position, any such material holds immense power to influence the press, voters, and national debate, particularly when virally disseminated through social media.

Conclusion

With the proliferation of video technology, the number of sites for cultural struggle has also multiplied. Opposition videographers now frequently rely on mapping-enabled camera technology, cryptography for privacy protection, hacking skills, and cutting-edge software to circumvent firewall blocks and surveillance, bringing liberation technology to the forefront of social media and the front line. This has reinforced the use and importance of the digital media landscape as a second battlefield, escalating a digital arms race between opposition videographers and the political parties they challenge.

Wendy Dent
University of Southern California

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Campaigns, 2012; Citizen Journalism; Going Viral; News Media; Online Smear Campaigns; Syria; Vlogging; YouTube.

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Outparty Innovation Incentives

The outparty innovation incentives thesis was first articulated by David Karpf in his book *The MoveOn Effect: The Unexpected Transformation of American Political Advocacy*. In this book, Karpf takes a close look at the organizational layer of American politics, with an eye toward understanding the role of communication technology in reshaping the structure, practices, and tactics of new political organizations. The "MoveOn effect" refers to the new, technologically driven membership structures, as well as the fundraising and mobilizing tactics pioneered by the progressive advocacy organization MoveOn.org, starting in the early 2000s. Following MoveOn's successful example, a new generation of Internet-mediated progressive political organizations has emerged by similarly adopting and leveraging new technological innovations to redefine their membership and mobilize support. Through extensive analyses, Karpf notes that these organizations have mostly flourished on the left side of the ideological spectrum. In addressing the reasons for the gap between liberals and conservatives in Internet-mediated political group infrastructure, Karpf makes the strongest case for the outparty innovation incentives thesis.

Building on the concept of opportunity structures in social movement research, the outparty innovation incentive thesis postulates that the political party out of power has stronger incentives to pursue novel communication platforms, as well as campaign tactics and strategies, and it often more aggressively adopts innovative technological tools. Karpf suggests that this explains increasingly dramatic adoptions of new technological tools on the progressive side, starting in the early 2000s—a direct outcome of the progressive countermobilization efforts in the aftermath of the 2000, 2002, and especially the 2004 elections. In accordance with this main premise, the outparty innovation incentives perspective plays out similarly at three different levels of analysis—the political organization, candidate, and party network levels.

At the political organization level, Karpf's thesis suggests that whereas nascent political

organizations are born all the time, it is primarily during periods of oppositional politics that they fully leverage new technological affordances. Political organizations are more motivated to adopt new communication technologies when the political party they are affiliated with is out of power, and as a result they see the highest levels of donations and volunteer support during periods of countermobilization, when they can serve as outlets for political discontent. As MoveOn.org demonstrated, harnessing technological tools in countermobilization efforts can yield highly successful membership and fundraising patterns. In particular, by thinking of everyone on their e-mail list as a member, these organizations are able to reach the broadest possible audience and target their fundraising appeals to salient issues in the media at any given time.

At the candidate level, the outparty innovation incentives thesis submits that individuals who are thought to be long-shot candidates typically have strong incentives to adopt tactics that are both novel and unconventional. Given that the formal campaign rules established by law are not easily amenable to change, candidates who are widely expected to lose often attempt to alter the rules of the game instead, tinkering with the tactical norms and supporting technologies. As perhaps one of the most notorious examples of innovative campaigning, Karpf notes Howard Dean's 2004 campaign, fueled by a novel communication strategy that allowed supporters to self-organize through social networking sites like Meetup.com. Likewise, Barack Obama's Internet-mediated campaign in caucus states is precisely what sealed his Democratic presidential nomination in the 2008 election, where Hillary Clinton was largely presumed to be a frontrunner. In light of these examples, Karpf further notes that not all technologically innovative campaigns are bound to succeed. Such campaigns are able to alter prevailing strategic norms and rules only when they attract substantial financing and media attention, and when they are highly contested.

Last, at the party network level, Karpf suggests that power is a zero-sum game, whereby funding for innovative campaigning strategies replaces funding for older tactics. Given that new technologically driven strategies come attached to a new set of campaign consultants, at the expense of an older set of consultants, it is only after a string of electoral losses that a party network readily adopts new campaign technologies. This trend, Karpf suggests, is bound to continue for as long as the American political system relies on professional consultants devoted to managing elections, regardless of what the prevailing communication technologies are at any given time.

Beyond the power dynamics among political parties in any given election cycle, there are other possible explanations for the adoption and use of novel technologies in the political arena. For example, one such explanation pertains to the specific makeup of a political constituency of any given candidate or party. Factors such as age, education, income, ethnicity, and urbanization have long been noted as important predictors of both Internet usage and political and civic engagement among voters. Consequently, it is possible that the makeup of the democratic constituency holds more explanatory power regarding Democrats' countermobilization efforts in the aftermath of the 2000, 2002, and 2004 election losses than their out-of-power status.

In addition, while the outparty innovation incentives thesis strikes a largely optimistic note regarding the role of new communication technologies in American politics, some scholars have cautioned against hyperbolizing their overall impact on democratic health. For example, in "The Myth of Digital Democracy," Hindman suggests that despite facilitating important transformation in political mobilization, new communication technologies have failed to give a voice to the voiceless. The vast majority of online political messages, he says, are being created and filtered by a relatively small group of media elites, in stark contrast to the Internet's early promise of citizen empowerment.

Carmen Stavrositu
University of Colorado

See Also: *MoveOn Effect, The*; MoveOn.org; Political Parties.

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Oxford Internet Institute

The Oxford Internet Institute (OII) is a multidisciplinary department of the University of Oxford that carries out research and study of the relationship between society and the Internet. A number of the OII's research projects explore the role of social media in contemporary politics, often by employing innovative research methods made possible by the Web and related technologies.

History

The Oxford Internet Institute (OII) was officially founded in 2001, drawing on the leadership of Andrew Graham, master of Balliol College (University of Oxford), Professor Richard Susskind, Derek Wyatt (former member of the United Kingdom [UK] parliament), and the software entrepreneur and philanthropist Dame Stephanie Shirley, who endowed the Institute. From its inception, the OII has aimed to be the world-leading, independent center for the multidisciplinary study of society and the Internet. In 2002, Professor Bill Dutton was appointed as the OII's first director, succeeded in 2011 by Helen Margetts, professor of society and the Internet at the University of Oxford.

The OII's research base has grown with time, drawing on faculty, research associates, and visiting researchers from a range of disciplines, including law, history, informatics, geography, economics, political science, sociology, computer science, communications, anthropology, and education.

In 2003, the OII introduced its Summer Doctoral Programme, a two-week series of seminars and workshops for doctoral students from across the world studying some aspect of the relationship between the Internet and society. In 2006, the OII introduced a full doctoral program, a three-year course leading to a D.Phil. in information, communication, and the social sciences. The OII again expanded its teaching offerings in 2009 with the introduction of a one-year master's degree in the social science of the Internet.

Research

The OII focuses its research around five broad themes: everyday life, governance and democracy, network economy, science and learning; and shaping the Internet (i.e., governance of the Internet). In exploring these themes, its researchers employ a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods, including traditional social science approaches (e.g., interviews, focus groups, ethnography, and surveys) and more innovative methodologies that are both appropriate to, and in some cases reliant on the Internet and related technologies. These include Web metrics (the study of the underlying structure of the World Wide Web), Web-based experiments, social network analysis, and big data analysis (research that makes use of large-scale sets of data generated by the use of Internet-related technologies by citizens, governments, firms, and social enterprise).

Researchers at the OII have managed major research projects funded by the UK government, the European Union, and private and third-sector donors. In addition, the OII's biannual Oxford Internet Survey (OxIS) serves as the UK's contribution to the World Internet Project. OxIS tracks Internet use and attitudes in the UK over time, beginning in 2003.

Social Media and Politics

While not always focusing on social media specifically, much of the OII's research speaks to the role of social networks in contemporary government and politics. The OII's past and ongoing contributions to this research area include the following:

- *The Oxford Internet Survey* (OxIS): The OxIS tracks online political participation and government-citizen interactions on the Web in the UK. Since 2009, OxIS has incorporated questions on social media use into its survey questionnaire. This allows for the identification and analysis of trends in social media and political engagement, informing debates about the link between online and offline political

participation, and emerging forms of engagement made possible by new information communcation technologies (ICTs) such as social media.

- *Digital-era governance and government-citizen relationships*: Led by Professor Helen Margetts, this project draws on interviews, hyperlink analysis, and experiments to assess how the Internet can enable citizens to contribute to the work of government and better retrieve information from public sector departments and agencies.
- *The Fifth Estate*: This research initiative is led by Professor Bill Dutton and explores the extent to which networked ICTs such as social media enable new sources of accountability in politics and government.
- *Geotag analysis*: Led by Dr. Mark Graham, researchers at the OII collect and analyse geotags (digital labels that attach longitude and latitude coordinates to online data) to identify where contributors to collections of online information and content, such as Wikipedia and Flickr, come from. When these social media sites address politically sensitive topics, such as land boundaries, controversial historical events, or political identities, this crowdsourced information can have important implications for real-world politics.
- *Public opinion and social media*: By analyzing the content of online political discussions on Usenet forums, Dr. Sandra Gonzalez-Baillon has identified a link between sentiments expressed online and election outcomes in the United States, providing an alternative to more traditional polling methods.
- *Collective action online*: Researchers at the OII explore how low-cost, widely used Internet technologies like mobile phones and social media reduce the barriers that have traditionally complicated individuals' capacity to band together in support of common or socially desirable goals. For example, using Web-based experiments, Professor Helen Margetts is investigating the influence that social information cues have on an individual's propensity to sign petitions, vote, or donate to charities.
- *Ethics and the study of social media and politics*: As a new and fast-moving field, the study of online social networks lacks rigorous and agreed-upon ethical standards. The OII is also working to address this gap, an effort that may prove particularly relevant for the study of politics and social media, where concerns about protection of research participants' privacy and anonymity can be especially high.
- *Policy and Internet*: The OII edits a peer-reviewed journal titled *Policy and Internet* (published by Wiley Blackwell) that addresses the relationship between the Internet and public policy.

Amanda Clarke
Oxford Internet Institute

See Also: Berkman Center; Digital Cultures Research Center; MIT Media Lab; Pew Internet and American Life Project.

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Palin Phenomenon

The Palin phenomenon refers to the sudden rise of Sarah Palin on the American national political stage. Her dramatic climb was followed by a relative decline in her political stature.

Palin, then Alaska governor, was tapped by John McCain as the Republican Party's vice presidential candidate on August 29, 2008. After McCain-Palin lost the election to Democrats Barack Obama and Joe Biden, Palin's popularity remained high, aided by her use of social media, a reality television show, two books, and scandals that kept her and her family in the news. She flirted with running for the Republican nomination for president in 2012, before deciding to sit out the race and continuing as a political commentator.

Palin's phenomenal rise from a relatively obscure governor to a national celebrity was spurred by her use of social media. Supporters liked her authenticity, plain style of speaking, strong conservative convictions, and ability to connect with average Americans. Her attractive physical appearance also aided her popularity. Critics focused on her lack of knowledge about government, her use of divisive language and tactics, and her sometimes ultraconservative views.

Sarah Heath Palin was born February 11, 1964, in Idaho. After three months, her parents moved to Alaska to take jobs as teachers. Palin earned a degree in communications-journalism from the University of Idaho in 1987. She is married to Scott Palin and they have five children. She was twice elected to the Wasilla City Council, and then served as mayor for two terms. She became the first female governor of Alaska in 2006.

At her Republican National Convention speech Palin said, "You know they say the difference between a hockey mom and a pit-bull: lipstick." The line propelled many cartoons, columns, and commentaries. Palin often referred to herself as a "mama grizzly" in relation to the instincts of her home state's species of bear to protect their young. She was derisively referred to as "Caribou Barbie" for the reindeer of her home region and a reference to her background as a beauty pageant contestant.

During the presidential campaign, Palin often referred to herself and McCain as "maverick" politicians. When the McCain campaign showed concern that she was "going rogue" by wandering off message, Palin embraced the title. Her autobiography *Going Rogue* was released in November 2009, and became a best seller. She also wrote *America by Heart*, released in November 2010.

The Palin phenomenon was a boon for online sales once she was named to the presidential ticket. Online stores with campaign gear saw huge sales increases with McCain-Palin paraphernalia.

Two days before Palin was picked, there were no items related to Sarah Palin on eBay. The day of the announcement,there were 100 items up for sale. Within three weeks, more than 4,000 items related to Palin were sold. Other unrelated items were marketed with her name on them in order to drive traffic to sellers' sites.

Palin hosted an eight-week reality television show on TLC called *Sarah Palin's Alaska*. She signed a lucrative deal as a Fox News contributor, and did interviews from a studio at her Alaska home.

Social Media

Palin was a prolific user of social media in the months after her run for vice president. She used her Facebook status updates and tweets to announce policy opinions and generate attention. She had nearly 3.5 million "likes" from Facebook fans in 2012. Her status updates get tens of thousands of "likes" and spawn long conversations with hundreds and even thousands of comments. They also serve as a forum for Palin to comment on public issues.

Palin had 873,000 Twitter followers and tweeted nearly 1,300 times from the @Sarah PalinUSA handle. Entries are mostly political commentary, with scattered remarks about her family. There is also a Sarah Palin news account (@SarahPalinLinks), touted as "Communication, Information, and Internet Activism in support of Governor Sarah Palin." It had more than 16,700 followers, and posted nearly 105,000 tweets. A SarahPalinRadio address focused on her radio appearances, and had more than 3,600 followers. There is also a "FakeSarahPalin" dubbed "Snowmobilin' right to the Naval Observatory," a reference to a favorite activity of Sarah and Todd Palin and to the vice presidential residence. The fake site had more than 10,000 followers.

Influence

While Palin played an important part in the rise of the Tea Party movement and Republican electoral success in 2010, her influence soon began to wane. Between February and April 2011, one study found that online posts about Palin fell by 38.2 percent, and social media mentions fell by 32 percent in that period. Part of the problem that Palin had in the campaign came from two

Former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin at the Time *100 Gala in New York City on May 4, 2010. Palin's popularity started to fade after 2010, when a study from February to April 2011 found that online posts referring to Palin fell by 38.2 percent and social media posts dropped 32 percent.*

network television interviews. In her interview with Charles Grodin of *ABC News*, she said that "you can actually see Russia from land here in Alaska." Another interview with Katie Couric on *CBS News* led to ridicule when Couric asked Palin to name a Supreme Court decision other than the proabortion *Roe v. Wade* case that she opposed. Palin could not name one, nor did she specify what newspapers she read.

Palin helped popularize the phrase "lame stream media" to refer to mainstream outlets. She also, through the use of social media, coined a new word. In response to plans to build a mosque near the World Trade Center site, Palin asked Muslins to "refudiate" it in a tweet. After she was criticized, she responded on Twitter that

"English is a living language." "Refudiate"—combining the words *refute* and *repudiate*—was added in 2010 to the *New Oxford American Dictionary*.

Palin was parodied in pop culture through her portrayal by actress Tina Fey on *Saturday Night Live*. Fey resembled Palin, and mimicked her accent and mannerisms. The comedian won an Emmy for her performances.

An HBO movie *Game Change* from a book of the same name documented the 2008 campaign. Based on interviews by journalists, it showed the process of picking Palin, the pitfalls she and the McCain campaign faced in preparing for the vice presidential debate with Biden, and the pressures of the national spotlight. Actress Julianne Moore portrayed Palin in the film. It depicts a scenario whereby Palin was not fully vetted by McCain's advisors before the selection.

In January 2009, SarahPAC was established to support conservative candidates endorsed by Palin. A controversial graphic posted to Palin's Facebook page in March 2010 to solicit contributions gained attention after the January 2011 shooting of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords. The picture showed a map of the United States with crosshairs on the location of 20 congressional districts held by House Democrats targeted by conservatives. One of the districts was Giffords' Arizona 8th District. Giffords was shot while holding an outdoor town hall meeting. No connection was ever found between the shooter and Palin or SarahPAC. After the 2012 presidential election, speculation began that Palin may run in 2016.

Sean D. Foreman
Barry University

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Decoy Campaign Websites; Facebook; *Saturday Night Live*; Tea Party Movement; WikiLeaks.

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Participatory Politics Foundation

The Participatory Politics Foundation is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to increasing civic engagement by developing free Web tools that create opportunities for citizens to participate in their government. Based on their foundational belief that government proceedings should be accessible and understandable to the broad public, the Participatory Politics Foundation produces its flagship project OpenCongress.org. In this project, a blend of primary legislative documents is published alongside related news stories, editorials, and social commentary written by OpenCongress users. Through its maintenance of this Web site, the Participatory Politics Foundation strives to continue its mission to improve political processes by making them more participatory, creative, responsive, and accountable.

The Participatory Politics Foundation was cofounded by Tiffiniy Cheng, Nicholas Reville, and Holmes Wilson, and was publicly launched in February 2007. Since the organization's founding, David Moore has served as the executive director, and is also the program manager of OpenCongress.

The operating structure for the Participatory Politics Foundation is based on six principles that establish its organization as: free for everyone, open source, open standards, nonprofit, and nonpartisan. "Libre content, for social sharing" constitutes a final principle, which means that its content is free for sharing in social venues such as online social media platforms, educational contexts, media outlets, and other civic causes. The Participatory Politics Foundation contends that citizens should do more to civically engage, and that the Internet offers opportunities for citizens to improve communication with political representatives and to become more informed in the government's proceedings.

The creation and operation of the Participatory Politics Foundation's Web site OpenCongress is founded on these fundamental beliefs. OpenCongress was conceived of during the wake of the 2004 election in an effort to sustain the excitement among the electorate that was stimulated by the election. The designers of this project

sought to aggregate existing online news concerning congressional activities, and to package it in a user-friendly interface. After partnering with the Sunlight Foundation in 2006, OpenCongress launched a public version of its site in February 2007. Since this time, OpenCongress has existed as an open source Web site that publishes legislative records with accompanying news stories, summaries of bills, and blog posts. For each bill, there is also a designated area for OpenCongress users to post comments pertaining to given government proceedings. For example, when clicking on H.R. 624, the "Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act," users can view the bill's text, status, sponsors, committees, and votes, as well as an aggregation of news articles, blog coverage, and comments written by OpenCongress users that show their opinions and levels of support or opposition in relation to a given bill.

In comparison to traditional news stories about political issues, OpenCongress aims to provide more detailed and in-depth information concerning legislative action by linking to the text written in bills. Moore and other staff members who maintain the Web site attempt to reduce the complexity of legal language contained in bills by providing relevant context and analysis. To further enhance users' abilities to easily access information, OpenCongress encourages users to personalize their experience by creating a free account, which then gives them the option to track specific bills and receive reminders when topics they care about are scheduled for votes. For example, a user may select to follow the issue of "health policy," consequentially allowing them to gain notifications when major bills related to health policy are approaching a vote, and alerting them of the results.

As part of its objective to increase citizens' political participation and interaction with their political leaders, OpenCongress features comment boards on pages for every bill, senator, and representative. These designated virtual spaces encourage users to discuss issues and evaluate their political landscapes. Citizens can also voice their level of support for each bill by casting an "aye" or "nay" vote, and can give senators and representatives a personal approval rating, using a scale of 1 to 100. Results from these votes and approval ratings are publicly displayed in an effort to demonstrate to members of Congress how the OpenCongress community stands on issues. These features seek to open communication between citizens and their political leaders in a way that was not possible prior to the creation of this site.

OpenCongress.com has generated a vast audience of approximately one million visits per month, as well as a user community of more than 300,000 members. In 2008, the site crashed as a result of the number of citizens attempting to access it following a controversial decision wherein U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson asked Congress to entrust him with $700 billion in taxpayers' money. The online project also attracts viewers from a number of online blogs and news sites such as the *New York Times,* the *Washington Post,* and PBS that have linked to OpenCongress.org on their sites. For example, in a September 10, 2009, article published on *The Atlantic* online, journalist Chris Good linked to a blog post on OpenCongress to provide primary text and in-depth analysis related to a specific bill.

The Participatory Politics Foundation has developed two sibling nonprofits, the Participatory Culture Foundation and Center for Rights, both of which operate on similar principles that citizens should employ the Internet to enhance the openness and accessibility of their government. The Participatory Culture Foundation focuses on supporting democratic media by creating resources for citizens to produce and publish digital videos. By designing open source software applications they allow individuals and organizations to create broadly accessible videos that empower communities. The Center for Rights is a nonprofit that advocates for the public interest, digital rights, Internet freedom, and open Web innovation through empowering individuals to use the Internet for public good by participating in a range of civic campaigns that are linked to its Web site.

Through its continued efforts to maintain and improve OpenCongress.org, the Participatory Politics Foundation utilizes the advantages of open source Internet tools to enhance civic engagement.

Stephanie E. Bor
University of Utah

See Also: E-Democracy; Open Data; OpenCongress.org; Sunlight Foundation.

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Peer to Peer

Peer to peer (P2P) refers to a self-organizing computer network of equals in which each computer (which is an autonomous entity) can act as a client or server for the other computers, thus allowing shared access to various distributed resources (e.g., files or peripherals), without the need for a central server. In the peer-to-peer model, any node (computer) is able to initiate or complete any supported transaction. Peer nodes may differ in local configuration, processing speed, network bandwidth, and storage quantity. In this model, peers can act both as suppliers and consumers of resources, in contrast to the traditional client–server model, where only the server sends, and clients receive.

P2P networks can be set up within the home, a business, or over the Internet. Each network type requires all computers in the network to use the same or a compatible application to connect to each other and access resources found on the other computer. P2P networks can be used for sharing content in a digital format (e.g., audio, video, or data).

The first P2P distributed system platform appeared in the 1990s. P2P gained wide acceptance with the introduction of the Napster file sharing system in 1999. Napster was a pioneering P2P file sharing Internet service that emphasized sharing audio music files encoded in MP3 format. Although it became very successful, the company ran into legal difficulties over copyright infringements.

Today, many widely used applications and tools are based on the P2P model. Skype, the most widely used Internet phone application, was P2P technology. Instant messaging (IM) systems and online chat services are also based on the P2P model. Other well-known applications that utilize P2P are file-sharing systems such as BitTorrent services. The P2P model is quite extensively used on the Internet today. Many Internet service providers claim that more than 50 percent of Internet traffic is generated by P2P applications.

The P2P model offers many advantages. The failure of one peer does not compromise the whole network. The decentralized nature of P2P networks increases robustness because it removes the single point of failure that can be inherent in a client–server-based system. Also, the lack of a system administrator makes the network easier and faster to set up and maintain. Each peer is responsible for controlling its data and resources. Of course there also disadvantages. Risky or illegal data can be distributed on P2P networks because peers are connecting to untrusted sources, as opposed to an administrative server. Also, the removal of such data is not an easy task because there is no central control that manages the content that circulates in the network.

The P2P concept has inspired new structures and philosophies in many areas of human interaction. P2P is not restricted to technology anymore, but also covers social processes. Social P2P processes are currently emerging throughout society. The P2P concept can be applied as a general technical/social/cultural movement to provide content and services. Each peer (computer or the user that operates it) can be a creator or distributor of content to other peers, not simply a consumer of content provided by a centralized system. The more peers who participate in such peer-to-peer networks will result in more content available to all peers—this is also one of the main characteristics of social networks. Yochai Benkler has proposed the term *commons-based peer production* to designate collaborative projects (e.g., free and open source software such as Wikipedia).

Associated with peer production are the concepts of peer governance, peer property, and peer distribution. Peer governance refers to the manner in which peer production projects are managed.

On the other hand, peer property denotes the type of licenses that recognize individual authorship but not exclusive property rights (e.g., the General Public license and the Creative Commons licenses) and peer distribution refers to the manner in which peer-produced products are distributed. Finally, it is worth noting that emerging collaborative P2P systems are investigating the concept of diverse peers who can bring in unique resources and capabilities to a virtual community.

Andreas Veglis
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

See also: Communication; Digital Revolution; Evolution of Social Media; Instant Messengers, IRC and ICQ; Skype.

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Pelosi, Nancy

Nancy Pelosi is an American politician from California who served as the first female speaker of the House of Representatives, and who has held leadership positions for House Democrats for more than a decade. As the representative of one of the nation's most strongly Democratic congressional districts, Pelosi is considered to be very progressive in most of her positions. Because her district represents an area near California's Silicon Valley, Pelosi has often voted for legislation that favors companies involved in high-technology endeavors. Pelosi was an early adopter of many social media, and has used these channels to communicate with constituents and other interested parties. Perhaps because of her interest in social media, Pelosi was an adamant early opponent to the proposed Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA).

Background

Nancy Particial D'Lesandro was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1940. The sixth and youngest child of Annunciata "Nancy" Lombardi and Thomas D'Alesandro, Jr., she was educated at the Institute of Notre Dame, an all-girls Catholic high school in Baltimore, and received a B.A. in political science from Trinity College in Washington, D.C., in 1962. Pelosi's family had a record of public service, and many of her relatives were involved with the Democratic Party. Married to Paul Pelosi in 1963, she and her husband moved to New York City after their wedding, ultimately moving to San Francisco in 1969.

Pelosi and her husband have five children: Nancy, Christine, Jacqueline, Paul, and Alexandra. Although Pelosi devoted much of her time to rearing her children after the family's move to California, her political heritage is strong. Her father served as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1939 until 1947, at which point he ran for and served as mayor of Baltimore for 12 years. Her brother, Thomas D'Alesandro III, also served as mayor of Baltimore between 1967 and 1971. Pelosi's brother-in-law, Ronald Pelosi, was a member of the San Francisco County Board of Supervisors, and was well-connected in Democratic Party circles in California. As a result, Pelosi found easy entry into Democratic politics, soon becoming friends with Phillip Burton, the representative from California's 5th Congressional District, and one of the leaders of the California Democratic Party.

Political Career

Pelosi was elected to the Democratic Party's National Committee as a member from California in 1976, a position she would hold for the next 20 years. Pelosi was elected as the northern California Democratic Party chair in 1977, and

Speaker Nancy Pelosi in 2007. Pelosi served as the first female speaker of the House during the 110th and 111th Congresses after serving as the House minority leader after Richard Gephardt's resignation in 2002.

also served as the chair of the California Democratic Party from 1981 through 1983. In these positions, Pelosi was able to form a network of political allies across the United States. Working as the finance chair of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC), Pelosi raised campaign funds for candidates across the United States, serving in this role from 1985 through 1986. Although she was defeated by Charles Manatt in her 1985 attempt to be elected chair of the Democratic National Committee, the death of her friend Phillip Burton in 1983 would eventually open up the seat that Pelosi has held through the past several decades.

After Burton's death, his widow Sala won a special election to his position and won re-election to the House in 1984 and 1986. When Sala Burton was diagnosed with what proved to be terminal cancer, she tapped Pelosi to be her successor. Narrowly defeating City of San Francisco Supervisor Harry Britt with 36 percent of the vote to his 32 percent in the special election that was held after Sala Burton's death, Pelosi was elected to Congress for the first time in 1987. Pelosi's district, which comprises 80 percent of the City of San Francisco, is reliably liberal, comprised of the largest number per capita of same-sex couples in the United States, and covering only slightly more than 110 square miles. Pelosi has been re-elected each time since she first ran for the seat, often pulling more than 80 percent of the votes cast.

After becoming a member of the House of Representatives, Pelosi was appointed to the Appropriations Committee and the Intelligence Committee, serving on the Intelligence Committee until she joined the Democratic leadership in 2001. In that year, her party caucus chose Pelosi to serve as House assistant minority leader (minority whip), serving under Minority Leader Richard "Dick" Gephardt of Missouri. In 2002, Gephardt resigned from the House of Representatives in order to pursue the Democratic nomination for president. At that time, Pelosi was selected to replace him, becoming the first woman to serve as minority leader for either the Democratic or the Republican parties. After the Democrats took control of the House of Representatives following the mid-year elections of 2006, Pelosi was nominated by her caucus to serve as the first female speaker of the House, assuming that office in January 2007. In addition to being the first woman to serve as Speaker of the House, Pelosi was also the first Italian American and only the second person from the west coast to be selected to that office.

Before the 2006 elections, Pelosi had announced a 100-Hour Plan that detailed legislation that the Democratic Caucus would attempt to pass during the first 100 hours of the new congressional term. The 100-Hour Plan agenda included reforming House rules so that lobbyists' influence was curtailed, instituting a pay-as-you-go plan to reduce the deficit, enacting all recommendations of the September 11 Commission, increasing port security, granting federal funding to stem-cell research, requiring Medicare to directly negotiate with drug manufacturers to reduce the cost of prescription medications, halving interest rates on student loans, and ending large subsidies to petroleum companies. Under Pelosi's leadership, the House passed all of this legislation between January 9 and January 18, 2007, taking only 87 business hours to do so. While some of this legislation died in the Senate, the 100-Hour Plan helped Pelosi establish herself as an effective leader who was able to push through a legislative agenda.

Pelosi served as speaker of the House through the 110th and 111th congresses, stepping down only after the Democratic Party's loss of 63 seats, and the majority, to the Republicans. Although she was forced to step down as speaker, the Democratic Caucus again elected Pelosi House minority leader following the 2010 and 2012 elections. In this role Pelosi has worked to promote President Barack Obama's legislative agenda while serving her constituents and her party. In particular, Pelosi has been known for advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights, increasing environmental protections, raising the minimum wage, protecting civil liberties, tying foreign aid to reductions in human rights abuses, and opposing military spending and the war in Iraq. Pelosi was a major advocate for President Obama's Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, delivering 219 House votes in favor of the legislation. Proponents of the health care legislation praised Pelosi for pushing for health care reform's passage at a point when its prospects for passing seemed bleak.

Use of Social Media

Like most politicians, Pelosi uses a variety of social media to communicate with her constituents, the general public, and those interested in a variety of issues she supports. To that end, Pelosi maintains two Web sites, a Twitter account, Facebook page, Flickr account, and news feed service. Pelosi's office Web site contains a variety of information, including updates on legislation, news releases, ways for constituents to contact her, community funding resources, answers to frequently asked questions, ways to seek assistance with federal agencies, a synopsis of her congressional district, and biographical information. Her second Web site, democraticleader.gov, chiefly focuses on her political agenda, and includes a blog, photographs, a calendar of appearances and meetings, summaries of proposed bills, and links to the *Congressional Record*. Pelosi's Twitter account, which has over 250,000 registered followers, transmits regular tweets related to news events or pending legislation. On her Facebook page, Pelosi includes photographs, links to other organizations, and postings related to her activities and travels. Pelosi's Flickr account contains a variety of photographs, including those of the minority leader, her family, constituents, and those involved in causes she supports. Pelosi also offers a news feed service that allows constituents and other supporters access to legislative updates and political speeches.

Stop Online Piracy Act

Since the Internet became popular with the general public, the holders of the copyrights for recorded music, films, television programs, and other intellectual property have struggled to control access to their property and to minimize the pirating, copying, or other unauthorized sharing of that material. Between 1999 and 2001, for example, the peer-to-peer file sharing service Napster permitted users to share audio files, often in an encoded audio format known as MP3. While some transactions via Napster included the legitimate sale of audio files, the vast majority of the service's 25 million users shared over 80 million files, many containing copyrighted material, for free. This filesharing was in violation of the copyright owners' and performers' rights, and amounted to billions of dollars of lost royalties. Filesharing also was alleged by the major record companies to have caused their sales to precipitously drop. In response, the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA)—the trade association representing the record companies—filed suit against Napster and others for copyright violations. Although the RIAA was ultimately successful in forcing Napster into bankruptcy, a variety of other Web sites and services almost immediately sprang up that allowed unauthorized file sharing to continue. While the RIAA and others continued to file lawsuits to stop illegal filesharing, relief came too late to stop the decline in sales.

The creators of intellectual property and the copyright holders of those creations lobbied Congress to grant them further protections to prevent unauthorized sharing. In response to these requests, a bipartisan group of congressmen and senators worked to develop legislation that would curtail online piracy. Representative Lamar Smith, a Republican from Texas, introduced SOPA in the House of Representatives with 13 cosponsors. SOPA was related, although somewhat different, to a similar bill in the Senate, thePreventing Real Online Threats to Economic Creativity and Theft of Intellectual Property (PROTECT IP) Act (PIPA),

introduced by Senator Patrick Leahy, a Democrat from Vermont, and 33 cosponsors. SOPA was intended to thwart online piracy of copyrighted intellectual property and counterfeit goods. To do this, SOPA proposed giving law enforcement agents increased ability to fight such infringements. SOPA allowed law enforcement agents and rights holders to identify infringing Web sites, and then seek a court order barring advertisers and payment facilities from engaging in business with the infringer. SOPA also permitted court orders that would bar search engines from linking to infringing Web sites, and to require Internet service providers to block access to the offending Web sites. SOPA made unauthorized streaming of copyrighted material illegal, and increased maximum penalties for violating the law to five years in prison.

SOPA enjoyed broad support from an array of rights holders, creative types, and labor unions. Specifically, SOPA was supported by such organizations as the Actors' Equity Association; CBS, Inc.; the Directors Guild of America; the Association of American Publishers; the National Basketball Association (NBA); the National Football League (NFL); Warner Music Group; the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA); Random House; the National Governors' Association; the International Brotherhood of Teamsters; and many others. Both of California's senators, Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, supported the legislation. The supporters of SOPA maintained that the act was necessary to strengthen the enforcement of copyright laws, especially as they applied to Web sites owned and operated by those outside of the United States.

Despite this, Pelosi opposed SOPA. Pelosi believed that SOPA threatened free speech and innovation, while also giving law enforcement agents the ability to block entire Internet domains in order to be able to block a lone offending Web page. Although initially Pelosi was one of the few public opponents of SOPA, this stance was not totally surprising. Historically, Pelosi has been an ardent supporter of civil liberties, so her unwillingness to impede speech is not a shock. Some have also suggested the involvement of many of Pelosi's constituents and donors in companies affected by the law, such as Yahoo!, Google, Facebook, Twitter, and eBay, all of which opposed SOPA.

Pelosi was joined in her opposition by conservatives such as California Republican Representative Darrell Issa, and libertarians such as frequent presidential candidate Ron Paul. In this opposition, Pelosi was joined by many colleges, universities, and libraries, who felt that SOPA would unnecessarily impede their operations. A variety of online protests took place, and many technology companies worked to stimulate opposition to SOPA. After President Barack Obama stated that he would not support legislation that could lead to the diminishment of innovation, limitations on free speech, or reduced Internet security, opposition to SOPA grew, culminating in a vote postponed in both the House and the Senate. Pelosi continues to oppose legislation that would impede social media.

Stephen T. Schroth
Jason A. Helfer
Knox College

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Campaigns, Congressional (2008); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Identity Politics; Musicians and Social Media in Politics; Voter Turnout.

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Pence, Mike

Elected to the U.S House of Representatives in 2000, Congressman Mike Pence (R-IN) quickly became a leading conservative voice in Congress. By 2005, the conservative weekly publication *Human Events* named Pence its "Man of the Year." After only eight years in Congress, he was unanimously elected by his peers to the third-ranking leadership position in the House—chair of the House Republican Conference. In this

capacity, Pence led the development and dissemination of the GOP caucus message and promoted its members. As a former radio talk show host, Pence understood the need for regular, ongoing communication with a wide variety of constituents. He was an early adopter of communicating with constituents via the Web and social media. Conservative activists and the media speculated about Pence as a potential GOP candidate for president in 2012, but he chose instead to run for Indiana governor. In 2012, Congressman Pence was elected governor of Indiana, succeeding fellow conservative Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.

Early Life and Career

Mike Pence was born in Columbus, Indiana, on June 7, 1959, to Nancy and Edward J. Pence, Jr. He attended Columbus North High School, and graduated from Hanover College in 1981 with a B.A. in history. Pence earned his J.D. from the Indiana University McKinney School of Law in 1986. On June 8, 1985, Pence married his wife, Karen, an elementary school art teacher.

Following graduation from law school until 1991, Pence worked as an attorney. However, he entered politics early, running for Congress only two years after graduation. He lost that race to veteran Democratic Representative Philip R. Sharp. He attempted again two years later to take over Sharp's seat, but lost by 19 points in a largely negative campaign. After the bruising congressional race, Pence took a break from politics and in 1991 began serving as president of the Indiana Policy Review Foundation, a nonprofit education foundation focused on state and municipal issues.

By 1994, Pence's local conservative talk radio show, *The Mike Pence Show*, grew into syndication and began airing statewide on 18 radio stations. The show ran weekdays until September 1999. From 1995 until 1999, Pence also hosted a Sunday morning public affairs television show in Indianapolis. The experience Pence acquired during this time was invaluable. His familiarity with the media would serve him well in later elections and in his capacity as spokesperson for the House Republican Caucus.

Pence never gave up on running for elected office, and in 2000 he ran for the 6th Indiana Congressional District following the retirement of fellow Republican David M. McIntosh, who unsuccessfully ran for governor. This time, however, Pence beat five other Republicans in the primary election, and a Democratic lawyer in the general election, to win the congressional seat he would hold until December 2012, leaving only after winning his race to become governor of Indiana.

Congressional Service

Pence served as chair of the Republican Study Committee from 2005 to 2007. The committee is made up of conservative Republican House members, generally advocating for an agenda they describe as supporting limited federal government, strong national defense, individual and property rights protection, and measures that support traditional family values. When Pence left the leadership of this organization, membership had grown to more than 110 members.

In 2006, Pence ran for House Minority Leader, but was trounced by Ohio Congressman John Boehner by a vote of 168–27–1. Undeterred and with the support of Boehner, Pence ran in 2008 and was unanimously elected by his peers to the third-ranking leadership position—chair of the House Republican Conference. Pence served in that position until resigning to run for governor of Indiana.

Before leaving Congress, Pence served on the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs. He was vice chair of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia. He also served as a member of the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary. On that committee, Pence was vice chair of the Subcommittee on the Constitution and a member of the Subcommittee on Intellectual Property, Competition, and the Internet.

Social policy. In his official biography, Pence describes himself as "a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican, in that order." This quote defines Pence and his approach to politics. It has consistently reflected the positions, votes, and issues that Pence has championed throughout his public life and career. In fact, Brian Howey, longtime Indiana political writer, wrote after Pence's election to the governorship that he would be the "most socially conservative governor in modern Indiana history."

Pence voted 100 percent in support of the positions taken by the National Right to Life

Committee in each of the congressional sessions since 2000. He has a 100 percent lifetime rating from the American Conservative Union, and in 2011, he scored 100 percent in *National Journal* ratings as a "conservative on social policy." He also scored 100 percent in 2011 from the Family Research Council, a national nonprofit Christian advocacy organization.

An example of Pence's commitment to conservative social issues is found in his introduction and longtime defense of the Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act. Originally introduced in 2009 by Pence, the bill sought to prohibit federal funding for family planning to any organization that performs abortions, including Planned Parenthood. Pence maintained his fight for this controversial measure, which became known as the "Pence Amendment," until April 2011, when it eventually passed the House by a vote of 241–185–1.

Fiscal policy. Pence is a vocal supporter of smaller government and an outspoken opponent of federal deficits. He opposed all the corporate bailouts, including the bailout of the auto industry, even though U.S. automakers are important employers in the state of Indiana. He has supported tax cuts, flat tax proposals, and a multitude of measures aimed at reducing federal spending and federal deficits. He has done so without regard to political party, opposing both Republican and Democratic presidential measures that would increase federal spending.

He often cites Ronald Reagan as his touchstone on fiscal policy. In a 2010 address to the Detroit Economic Club, Pence outlined an "incentive-based, growth agenda" he called S.T.A.R.T. The acronym stands for sound monetary policy, tax relief and reform, access to american energy, regulatory reform, and trade. This address encapsulated Pence's longtime views on supply-side economics, smaller government, and lower taxes that he championed throughout his career in office.

Two striking examples of Pence's commitment to his economic philosophy includes his cosponsorship with Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-Texas) of a constitutional amendment to limit the amount the federal government could spend to only "one-fifth of economic output of the United States of America," and his pledge not to request any federal spending earmarks. The latter of which he remained committed to, even when local civic leaders in his own congressional district requested federal financial assistance to pay for reconstruction after serious damage was caused by a series of tornadoes and floods.

His strong commitment to conservative fiscal policy has earned him 100 percent favorable ratings from groups such as Americans for Tax Reform, Citizens Against Government Waste, and FreedomWorks, a grassroots advocacy organization that supports limited government and low taxes.

Social Media and the Internet

Shortly after arriving in Washington in 2001, Pence joined the Congressional Internet Caucus. The caucus is a bipartisan group of House and Senate members who advocate for greater government Internet utilization and for members of Congress to use the Internet to better communicate with constituents.

Almost immediately, Pence provided online access to his office. In 2002, Pence was awarded a Golden Mouse, and in 2003, a Silver Mouse from the Congressional Management Foundation. The foundation recognizes members of Congress who "best use the Internet to communicate with and serve citizens." In 2010, Pence was recognized with a Platinum Mouse for his leadership of the House Republican Conference's Web site.

When Pence was elected chair of the House Republican Conference, President Obama had just won the election and ushered in a new era of political campaigning via social media. At this time, the Republican Party lagged the Democrats in adoption of new media. To remedy the disparity, Pence launched a number of measures including the first New Media Competition, which pitted Republican House members against one another to demonstrate who could gain the most followers, friends, and subscribers to the respective social media platforms.

According to the House Republican Conference, when Pence took over as chair in 2009, only 56 percent of House Republicans used YouTube, 37 percent used Facebook, and 28 percent used Twitter. By 2010, social media adoption increased dramatically to 89 percent, 79 percent, and 64 percent, respectively.

Facebook

While the Republican Party was discovering the power of social media, Congressman Pence had already deciphered the code to communication in the new age. At the Republican National Committee Tech Summit in 2009, Pence remarked that he ranked ninth among members of Congress in the number of friends on Facebook. This milestone is not surprising, since he began using Facebook in 2008.

Pence quickly adopted the platform as a formal communication tool. Most notably, he announced his intention to run for House Republican Conference chair in 2008, announced to supporters in 2010 his decision not to run for the U.S. Senate, in 2011 announced of his candidacy for governor of Indiana, and in 2012 announced his choice of lieutenant governor on his Facebook page. By the time he left Congress, Pence had more than 53,000 "likes" on his Facebook page.

Pence did not include links to his Facebook page from his congressional Web site. Because he only has one official page, he has used it for both political and congressional business. Given the political element, it is possible Pence chose not to feature a Facebook link on his official Web page for that reason.

President Barack Obama talks with Governor Peter Shumlin (D-VT), center, and former congressman and now-Governor Mike Pence, (R-IN), after a meeting with the National Governors Association at the White House on February 25, 2013.

Twitter

Pence began officially tweeting in early 2010. He utilized a Twitter handle specifically for official congressional business, @RepMikePence. With over 38,000 followers, Pence's tweets ran the full spectrum, from local items such as job fairs based in his district to national issues such as healthcare reform and military concerns. He tweeted on average eight to 10 times per month on his official handle. His Twitter feed was prominently featured on his official congressional Web site. Constituent tweets were to remain on the feed; however, the congressman largely chose not to respond via Twitter to constituent comments or questions.

Pence also adopted Twitter for campaigning, utilizing @pencecampaign throughout his bid for Indiana governor. Twitter was regularly used, sometimes tweeting as much as 10 times a day. The campaign tweeted under three different hashtags: #mike4gov, #pence, and #HoosierFactFriday, where he also tweeted about Indiana history and trivia.

YouTube

In Congress, Pence utilized YouTube, displaying his channel, Congressman Mike Pence (IN-06), prominently on his congressional Web site homepage. By the end of his 2012 term, he had nearly 700 subscribers and over 643,000 video views. His congressional use of YouTube dates back to early 2009, with over 230 videos posted in that year alone. Pence's congressional channel had nearly 520 videos posted by the time he left Congress in 2012.

His posts varied widely, from local television interviews on district issues to in-depth interviews on *Meet the Press* and C-Span. On the channel,

constituents can find video on the congressman's House testimony, major policy speeches, news conferences, and public service announcements.

The congressman added more than 150 video clips to his favorite playlist. These include many clips of Speaker of the House John Boehner, House Republican leadership news conferences, other House Republican members speaking on a variety of policy issues, and weekly Republican video addresses. Particularly poignant clips include memorials to an Indiana guardsman killed in Afghanistan, tributes to the U.S. military services and victims of natural disasters.

While his official YouTube channel is extensive, his campaign channel, Pence4Indiana, is not as comprehensive. Started in 2011, the campaign channel hosted more than 40 videos, largely comprised of advertisements from the 2011 to 2012 campaign. This video channel includes clips from his wife Karen, as well as other more personal appeals directly from the congressman. While only comprised of a small number of videos, they were viewed nearly 37,000 times.

Conclusion

Mike Pence's background in media and his recognized talent as a communicator may contribute to his interest in and use of social media platforms. Additionally, his choice to cochair the Congressional Caucus for Freedom of the Press highlights his interest in open access to government and congressional action. While his use of social media is not exclusive or exhaustive, it is, however, deep and defining. He was an early adopter of new media, and would be expected to continue to lead through use of the various platforms as he continues in elected office.

Katherine R. Fleck
Ohio Northern University

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2008); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Facebook; Political Parties; Social Media, Adoption of; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; Twitter; YouTube.

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Pentagon Digital Engagement Team

The Pentagon Digital Engagement Team (PDET) is an initiative developed in 2008, aimed at enhancing the United States' online presence in the Muslim world in order to rebut Islamic extremists who use the Web and social media to disseminate anti-American propaganda.

The PDET, which is based in U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), uses the practices of public diplomacy in an effort to sway public opinion in strategically important areas of the world.

Public Diplomacy and the War on Terror

The PDET is part of a broader U.S. effort to use diplomacy and persuasion to counter the rhetoric of extremists in countries where the United States is militarily involved. During the war on terror, the United States has sought to supplement its military efforts with diplomatic initiatives aimed at winning the "hearts and minds" of individuals who are vulnerable to extremist propaganda. In contrast to traditional diplomacy, which focuses on persuading the political elites of countries, public diplomacy relies on interaction with the general public in a target country. This interaction

can include U.S.-sponsored radio and TV broadcasts, educational exchanges, and in the case of the PDET, interaction between U.S. officials and people in the Muslim world via Web sites and social media.

Operation of the PDET

U.S. efforts in the area of Internet diplomacy began in 2006, with the formation of the State Department's Digital Outreach Team, based in the Department's Bureau of International Information. The 10-person team was tasked with commenting on Arabic, Persian, and Urdu language blogs and Web sites that featured content critical of U.S. foreign policy; when commenting, the team members would identify themselves as representing the U.S. government, and would challenge the factual premises of anti-American statements.

The PDET, the Pentagon's version of this effort, was developed in 2008, and was launched in January 2009. The team is located at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida; this is the headquarters of CENTCOM, which is responsible for U.S. military operations in the Middle East, central Asia, and north Africa. Major David E. Never, the former chief of the team, told a reporter for the *New York Times* that the PDET seeks to "counter extremist ideology, promote cultural awareness and explain U.S. interests." As Never notes, the team wants to engage in dialog with individuals who are moderates, rather than radicals; unlike extremists, moderates are more likely to be receptive to new information offered by team members.

The team, which is comprised of CENTCOM officials and private contractors, includes 20 speakers of Arabic, Dari, Persian, Pashto, Urdu, and Russian, and focuses on Web sites and social media outside of the United States. When commenting on a Web site, members of the team acknowledge that they are with CENTCOM, and are attempting to advance the interests of the U.S. government. When anti-American messages or articles are located, the team aims to provide a rapid turnaround. Specifically, after identifying postings or articles that distort U.S. policy, members of the team request "Permission to Engage" from the team leader, and then compose a response; this process is usually completed within a single day.

According to Never, in these interactions, members of the PDET seek to "respectfully deflect baseless and often irrational insults, confront adversaries with factual evidence and expose extremist propaganda that might otherwise go unrefuted." An article in the *Tampa Bay Tribune* recounted a typical exchange between a team member and an anonymous Internet user. In this case, Lieutenant Commander William Speaks, a public affairs officer, participated in a discussion thread for an online news story about explosions in the Pakistani city of Lahore. In response to a commenter who claimed that the Obama administration had "dragged" Pakistan into a war for U.S. gain, Speaks pointed out the harm caused by the domestic terrorists in Pakistan. He noted, "it is your countrymen that are conducting these attacks, it is homegrown insurgency and your own war."

In another instance, a Persian-speaking contractor working for the PDET engaged in an extended conversation on a comments thread, attempting to rebut posters who argued that the alliance between the United States and Pakistan was of no benefit to the people of Pakistan. The team has also dealt with claims that Osama bin Laden is still alive, as well as false claims of indiscriminate violence against Afghani civilians committed by U.S. soldiers.

Engagement Versus Cyberwarfare

Although the aim of the PDET is open exchange with those critical of U.S. policy, other aspects of the United States' online strategy have been done in a covert manner. In 2011, several news outlets reported on CENTCOM's 2010 contract with Ntrepid, a company that produces software designed to obscure the identity of users. Specifically, the $2.7-million contract would provide software so that U.S. personnel could create up to 10 online personas, and use these so-called sockpuppets to leave pro-American comments on foreign blogs and news sites. Moreover, the software can obscure the location of the user's IP address, making it appear as if a user was located outside of the United States. Like the PDET, this program would focus only on users and sites outside of the United States, and would exclude popular social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook.

The United States has also directly targeted the Web sites of extremists, with the aim of disabling

them or altering their content. For example, in May 2012, in a speech to Special Operations Command in Tampa, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton revealed that the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications at the State Department had successfully hacked a Web site run by Al Qaeda in Yemen. The United States then replaced the anti-American content with information about civilians killed in Al Qaeda attacks.

Effectiveness of Digital Engagement

Proponents of these programs argue that in order to succeed in the war on terror, the United States must adopt the persuasive tactics that are used successfully by extremist groups. For example, in 2011 testimony before the Senate Armed Services committee, former CENTCOM Commander General James N. Mattis argued that it was crucial for the United States to challenge the enemy narrative. He noted that due to the use of the Web as a propaganda and recruiting tool by terrorist groups, the Internet had become a front in the war on terror, and should be given the same importance as the physical domain in which terrorists operate. Philip Seib, the director of the Center on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California, has also praised the program, noting that it represents an effective use of American "soft power."

Even backers of the effort, however, acknowledge that ultimately, programs like the PDET operate on a small scale relative to the number of individuals, especially young men, who are vulnerable to extremist propaganda. The counterargument to this is that these young men represent a small but crucial component within the larger target population, a claim that can only be tested over time. The veracity of either perspective will be difficult to prove empirically since it will manifest in things that did not happen (that is, conversion to a more radical political stance or actual acts of ideologically motivated violence), as opposed to those that did occur and could, consequently, be observed and recorded.

Kelly McHugh
Florida Southern College

See Also: Cyber-Jihad; Foreign Policy; U.S. Pentagon Social Media in Strategic Communications Program.

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Personal Democracy Media

Personal Democracy Media is an independent media organization that focuses on providing a global forum for discussing issues surrounding technology, the Internet, politics, and society. The term *personal democracy* is based on the idea that advancements in Internet technology increasingly allow citizens to participate more fully in government processes. Cofounded in 2004 by Andrew Rasiej and Micah Sifry, Personal Democracy Media organizes the annual Personal Democracy Forum conference, and publishes the award-winning online news site TechPresident.

Personal Democracy Media's organizational manifesto is motivated by the notion that democracy is changing as a result of new technology, which provides citizens with novel tools for enhancing their participation in politics. In contrast to an older political system that limited media participation to those who could afford the costly expense and labor associated with broadcast media, the Internet enables citizens to be active reporters, community organizers, publishers, and political leaders for virtually no monetary cost. Personal Democracy Media is founded on the belief that the Internet has promoted a revival of civic conversation because it allows like-minded individuals to connect and expand their social networks. They maintain

that citizens want a voice in their government, as well as increased openness and transparency from government and corporations. According to its organizational manifesto, Personal Democracy Media strives to provide a place for people who are challenging the status quo to meet and collaborate to "discover the tools powering the new civic conversation, spot the early trends, and to share in understanding and embracing this dynamic new force."

Prior to initiating Personal Democracy Media, Andrew Rasiej counseled national and international politicians, offering new media advice to congressional representatives and political leaders such as Hillary and Bill Clinton. In 2003, he was named chairman of the Technology Advisory Committee for presidential candidate Howard Dean's revolutionary digital media campaign. Since founding Personal Democracy Media, Rasiej has continued his involvement in other nonprofit organizations and leadership positions dedicated to promoting the use of the Internet for enhancing citizen involvement in politics and increasing government transparency and accountability. Cofounder Micah Sifry's experience prior to Personal Democracy Media included working with the nonprofit organization Public Campaign, which was focused on issues of campaign finance reform. He also served as editor and writer of the magazine *The Nation* for 13 years, and authored several books on politics. While serving as the editorial director of Personal Democracy Media since 2004, Sifry has also worked as an Internet consultant for various political organizations, campaigns, nonprofits, and media entities.

In an effort to achieve its organizational objectives, Personal Democracy Media produces physical and virtual forums throughout the year. One of its largest events is the Personal Democracy Forum, which is an international cross-partisan conference that allows political professionals, activists, academics, and technologists to come together to explore and analyze technology and its impact on politics and government. The first Personal Democracy Forum was held in New York City following the 2004 presidential campaign, and focused on discussing the ways that the Internet was used by electoral candidates to fundraise, generate votes, and organize communities of supporters. Additionally, conference sessions explored the dynamic and convergent roles of bloggers, journalists, and politicians during the 2004 election.

Since this initial meeting, Personal Democracy Forums have been organized in New York City each summer. The theme of its ninth annual conference following the 2012 election was "The Internet's New Political Power." Among the topics discussed by speakers and attendees included Internet privacy policy, global Internet issues, hacking and activism (hacktivism), and dynamic power shifts that have stimulated social and cultural change. Panels and discussions also explored new strategies for effective online organizing and campaigning, and examined how technology affected and reshaped politics during the 2012 election.

Beginning in 2009, Personal Democracy Media began organizing a series of European conferences that have occurred in various cities throughout Europe (Barcelona in 2009 and 2010; Brussels in 2012; Warsaw in 2013; and Paris in 2011 and 2013). Additionally, a Personal Democracy Forum was held in Santiago, Chile, in 2010. Past sponsors of Personal Democracy Forums include Microsoft, Google, Facebook, AT&T, and the Harvard Institute of Politics. Notable speakers have included Arianna Huffington, Lawrence Lessig, Eliot Spitzer, and Joe Trippi.

Personal Democracy Media also publishes TechPresident, which is an online news outlet dedicated to covering news about how technology is changing politics, government, and civic life. TechPresident journalists report on organizations' and political campaigns' uses of the Internet and social media, as well as activists and citizens who are using new technologies to change political processes. In 2007, TechPresident received the Knight-Batten Award for Innovations in Journalism for its coverage of the 2007 to 2008 presidential campaigns. This distinction rewards news and novel approaches to information exchange that enhance opportunities for digital engagement.

Social Media

In an effort to further communicate with citizens, Personal Democracy Media has adopted multiple social media platforms. It also maintains a Web site that features information about its organization and opportunities for citizens to become

involved in its initiatives. Its Web site hosts a digital library that holds an array of multimedia content, such as recordings of past Personal Democracy Forums and other relevant special events. A subscription-based area of its Web site, Personal Democracy Plus, offers further opportunities for citizens to stay informed of the latest news, tools, and resources for understanding how technology is utilized in government, politics, and advocacy.

Through producing conferences and events, as well as tracking and analyzing news, Personal Democracy Media attempts to provide resources for citizens, politicians, and advocates to understand democracy as it evolves with new advancements in technology. The global reach of its organization and communication outreach enables individuals to engage in international collaboration and discussion concerning the ways that digital media are used to facilitate a more participatory, connective, and transparent world.

Stephanie E. Bor
University of Utah

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Bottom-Up Campaigns; E-Democracy; James K. Batten Award.

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Personalization

Personalization is a key term in understanding contemporary transformations in the economy, technology, media, politics, and culture. In its narrow sense, it means the drive of firms to market products, cultural goods, and information differentiated according to individuals' preferences. Personalization impacts the production, circulation, and consumption of goods, media, and services. Firms evaluate the personal qualities, tastes, and experiences of citizens and consumers. To do so, they take advantage of digital developments in new media such as the Internet, mobile phones, and social media sites, which enable users to communicate through networks of personal contacts, and thus provide fundamental platforms for the personalization of products. In less familiar parlance, personalization refers to the intensification of media politics. Politicians persuade citizens by communicating to them their "authentic" personalities, tastes, and experiences, rather than by articulating policy platforms in more formal political settings. In both meanings, personalization is connected to major social transformations.

Background

The principal force behind the personalization of goods, services, and information flows is the need of the capitalist economy to boost consumption after the mid-1970s recession that halted economic growth in advanced capitalist countries. Since the 1940s, this growth had been based on the standardized mass production and consumption of commodities. In response to the 1970s crisis, and with the goal of increasing consumption, companies customized their production of commodities, targeting them toward niche markets. This shift toward flexible production transformed products in every sector, from automobiles to media commodities. This produced changes impacting all citizens and consumers, but they are especially relevant for the lifestyle of a new petite bourgeoisie: a middle-class segment characterized by an ethos of personal pleasure.

Digital technology accelerated this trend to customize products according to individual preferences. More sophisticated computers, new software—such as customer relationship management, a system of management applications to contact and communicate with consumers—algorithmic methods, Web 2.0, and social media facilitated the reprocessing of individual data. These innovations were so impactful that marketers

apply the term *personalization* to that set of personalization technology and means of communication such as e-mails, text messages, and applications connecting smartphones, social media, and Web sites. Online and social media corporations are central agents in personalizing products. Two of the most successful of these companies are the online bookseller Amazon, which instantly reprocesses feedback from all customers and recommends books to each customer in real time, and the social network site Facebook, with a news feed that is personalized according to individual preferences indicated by users' online behavior.

Cultural Controversies

Companies contend that personalization is an efficient tool to satisfy the genuine needs of consumers, customers, and users. They claim that personalization increases opportunities for citizens to participate in cultural life, increasing their knowledge while satisfying their desires.

On the other side of the debate, scholars and media activists are concerned that personalization allows companies to commodify data; companies convert individuals' personal information into items to be exchanged for financial gain. Scholars point to the cases of online search engines like Google and social network sites like Facebook that actively encourage the self-disclosure of personal information. They argue that Internet corporations sell this information to advertisers, which then target customers by personalizing the marketing of products online.

Tradable user-generated content includes demographic data, online activities (e.g., searches, e-mail communications, Internet links clicked, type of smartphone used), interpersonal communication and personal profiles—but not individuals' identities—in social media. Scholars' concern is that online users—termed "prosumers" or "produsers" because they consume, use, and produce economic value—are not paid for those activities of production. Further, they contend personalization entails the surveillance of citizens, and could be detrimental to civic life because companies personalize information flow—for example, in online newspapers linked to social network sites—thus hindering the development of civicness on common ground in daily interaction.

Politics

Interacting with those marketing developments, there has been a shift toward the personalization of politics in contemporary democracies. Political parties often experience difficulties in communicating their messages to stable electorates. This is related to the fact that the neoliberal and global restructuring of the economy has increased temporary contracts, part-time labor, and unemployment. This process fragments the working class and the middle classes, while eroding the link between group identities and political ideologies. Under these conditions, citizens receive political information from the media, turning the media into the principal space for political discourse.

Further, in a media-saturated environment, politicians must simplify their messages. Politicians thus focus on constructing the credibility of their personal images while deconstructing the personal images of their rivals—the politics of scandal becomes a form of political competition. As result, media politics employs the dramatic tools of television to produce celebrities and villains, while the personalization of communication, such as targeted advertising and social media, facilitates interaction with citizens. Finally, and related to the crisis in political ideologies, scholars observe that citizens tend to set political demands according to lifestyle expectations, shaped by cultural images both represented in and targeted via the media.

Pablo Castagno
Universidad Nacional de La Matanza

See Also: Algorithmic Authority; Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Candidate Image; Privacy; Social Media Strategies and Tactics.

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Persuasion Niche and Political Messaging

A persuasion niche is a niche market that is the target for a specific persuasive message tailored or best suited to that niche as part of a marketing or political messaging endeavor. In the private sector, a niche market is the subset of the overall market at which a product is aimed, but in politics, the "market" for a political product—whether a candidate, ballot issue, or cause—consists of all eligible voters. In political campaigning and messaging, "niche market" refers not to the market at which the overall campaign is aimed, but to a smaller and clearly defined subset to which some approaches and aspects of the product will be more appealing than others.

A simple example is the energy conservation campaign, which has taken numerous approaches to convincing audiences to use less electricity, appealing to some with environmental concerns (the lesser damage wrought by more conservative fuel use), to others with economic concerns (using less electricity is less expensive, despite one's opinion of global warming), to still others with foreign policy concerns (diminishing dependence on foreign oil), or the very specific side effects of the overuse of electricity, such as light pollution and its effect on stargazing. In marketing, this is also called precision marketing, which emphasizes not general or universal points of appeal about a product or message, but the specific relevance of the message to specific elements of the public.

Political niche markets are often defined in geographic or demographic terms, such as mountain state voters; voters in Oxford, Mississippi; young voters; Hispanic female voters; independent voters; or non-Hispanic white voters over 65 years old. How large a target can be while still being a "niche" is essentially a function of the scope of the campaign. A local political campaign is already aimed at a relatively small number of voters; for instance, compared to a statewide or national campaign. Likewise, a primary campaign is focused on a relevantly different group of voters than a general election is (i.e., a group that may be more persuadable if the candidate affirms his or her commitment to party ideas than by a candidate who, during the general election, emphasizes his or her moderate stances and willingness to work with the other side). Primary candidates with a reasonable expectation of nomination may bear general election voters in mind even during the primary, to avoid making or supporting statements that could be used against them by their general election opponent.

The larger the scope of a campaign, the more diverse the group of voters to which it is marketed, which—as with the energy conservation example—necessitates emphasizing different (not contradictory) messages in order to reach different segments of the population. This is not a new phenomenon; even the earliest American political campaigns had to deal with the very different political concerns of the free north and the slaveholding south, and the different lives and economic realities of urban Americans and rural farming Americans that constituted the earliest rebels against the new American government. More recently, various Democratic congressional re-election campaigns in 2010 and 2012 focused on the specific benefits of health care reform that were being or would be reaped by different segments of the candidates' constituencies.

Internet and Niche Messaging

The Internet has made niche marketing a more popular technique throughout the public and private sectors. The 2008 Barack Obama campaign

was especially forward thinking in the way it tracked the different results of differently worded fundraising e-mails, not only in terms of each draft's relative efficacy, but also its appeal across different niches. The discovery of untapped niches, or niches that can be leveraged to one's favor, is an important part of the field. An important related concept is that of the "long tail"—the subset of a set of objects that is distributed far from the center of its distribution. When political campaigns are targeting the same groups of voters, the center of distribution, it is advantageous to find ways to attract or persuade voters in the long tail.

Niche marketing is easier online, where messages can be precisely narrowcast at target markets, instead of broadcast at large audiences like on television or on billboards. The overwhelming majority of American adults are regular Internet users and have regular contact with both e-mail and online advertising. Al Franken's 2008 senatorial campaign was one of the first to provide a case study of persuasion niche marketing, targeting, or "nanotargeting" (in the parlance of the campaign, referring to the very small and tightly focused nature of the marketing efforts) more than 125 different niche groups for less than $100,000, resulting in 2,500 separate donors, 20,000 clicks, and 5,500 e-mail signups.

Persuasion niche marketing is very specifically targeted, not only according to demographics, but also by issue. The Franken campaign tied different Google ads to very specific keywords so that they would be triggered by searches, or in the case of Gmail users, e-mails containing the relevant phrases. These keywords represented various issues of concern to the targeted niche groups. Franken's strongest campaign material—his or her various positions, articles on Franken, and endorsements—were paired with the niche groups for which they would be the most persuasive, and the ad campaigns were accordingly arranged.

Bill Kte'pi
Independent Scholar

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Advertising and Marketing; Cultivation; Cynicism, Political.

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Petraeus, David

In November 2012, David H. Petraeus, director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and a retired four-star general, resigned after revelations that he had engaged in an extramarital affair with Paula Broadwell, his biographer. The affair came to light during a federal investigation into threatening e-mails Broadwell sent to a social acquaintance of Petraeus, who Broadwell perceived to be a competitor for his affections. Petraeus's resignation ended a decades-long career during which he was instrumental in reviving and applying counterinsurgency strategy in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Biography

David H. Petraeus was born in 1952 in Cornwall-on-Hudson, New York. He gradated from West Point in 1974, and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. In 1983, Petraeus graduated first in his class from the U.S. Army Command General Staff College. Subsequently, he attended Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson school of Public and International Affairs, earning a Master of Public Administration in 1985, and a Ph.D. in 1987. His dissertation was titled "The American Military and the Lessons of Vietnam: A Study of Military Influence and the Use of Force in

General David Petraeus meets with U.S. Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV) in January 2007. Petraeus drew national attention when he testified before Congress in 2008. Some Republicans viewed Petraeus as a possible 2008 presidential candidate, and although that did not occur, he was appointed commander of International Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan by President Barack Obama in 2010.

the Post-Vietnam Era"; it focused on the application of counterinsurgency in modern conflicts. He later used his expertise to oversee the rewriting of the U.S. Army's *Counterinsurgency Field Manual.*

After earning his doctorate, Petraeus briefly taught at West Point; he then returned to active service. Notable assignments included membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Stabilization Forces in Bosnia, and serving as commander of the 101st Airborne Division in Baghdad, Iraq. In 2007, after a rapid series of promotions, he achieved the rank of general, and was selected as commander of the Multi-National Forces in Iraq. In October 2008, Petraeus became commander of U.S. Central Command, headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida.

During the later years of the Iraq War, Petraeus became a national figure. In 2006, Petraeus was part of a group of civilian and military officials who argued that the United States should cease its troop withdrawals and instead send more soldiers to Iraq to focus on population security and winning "hearts and minds"; this policy was dubbed the "surge." In January 2007, President George W. Bush adopted the idea of the surge and announced that he was sending more than 20,000 additional soldiers to Iraq. By 2008, the surge had led to a marked reduction in violence in Iraq, and Petraeus's subsequent testimony before Congress garnered him national attention and praise, with some Republicans suggesting him as a 2008 presidential candidate.

Petraeus continued to occupy a prominent role during the Obama administration. In 2010, the president appointed him commander of International Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan. Subsequently, in 2011, Obama nominated him

to as director of the CIA. He retired from the military to accept this position, and in June, the Senate unanimously confirmed him. He served as director until his resignation in November 2012.

The Affair

Broadwell and Petraeus first met in April 2006, when Petraeus gave a speech at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government; Broadwell was enrolled in a Master's program there. Broadwell, who transferred to King's College to pursue her Ph.D., made Petraeus's leadership style the subject of her dissertation. She interviewed Petraeus through e-mail, and eventually traveled to Afghanistan to meet with him in person. Her unfinished dissertation became the basis for her best selling biography of Petraeus, titled *All In: The Education of General David Petraeus*. The book was coauthored by Vernon Loeb, and was published in 2012.

Like Petraeus, Broadwell, who was born in 1972 in North Dakota, was a graduate of West Point. Broadwell then received a Master's degree from the University of Denver, and served in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserves. In August 2012, she achieved the rank of lieutenant colonel. The Army Reserves, however, later revoked this promotion when her extramarital affair came to light. Broadwell was married, and had two children.

According to news reports, the affair between Petraeus and Broadwell began sometime in late fall 2011, after Petraeus retired from the military and was confirmed as CIA director. The affair ended in mid-2012.

The Scandal

The roots of the scandal were in messages Broadwell anonymously sent to Jill Kelley, a wealthy resident of Tampa, who frequently hosted and attended parties for top military officials at MacDill Air Force Base. The e-mails contained details about Kelley and Petraeus's social activities, and warned Kelley to stay away from an unnamed man. In response, Kelley contacted a local FBI agent, and requested that he investigate the source of the e-mails.

Since the e-mails contained details about Petraeus's schedule that were not public knowledge, the Justice Department also became involved in a formal investigation into potential security breaches. The investigators eventually traced the e-mails, sent from multiple accounts, to Broadwell. Subsequently, federal investigators also found that Broadwell was using the accounts to communicate with Petraeus. In an attempt to avoid an electronic record of their communication, Petraeus and Broadwell would use a Gmail account to compose messages, and then save them in the draft folder.

In late October 2012, both Broadwell and Petraeus admitted the affair to investigators. By early November, when it became clear that the story would become public, Petraeus decided to resign. On November 8, two days after Obama's re-election, Petraeus offered his resignation, which the president accepted the following day. The investigation is ongoing, and federal investigators have searched the homes of both Broadwell and Petraeus to discover if either possessed classified material. In March 2013, the Senate conformed John O. Brennan to replace Petraeus as CIA director.

Kelly McHugh
Florida Southern College

See Also: Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Foreign Policy; Google+.

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Pew Internet and American Life Project

The Pew Internet and American Life Project is a nonprofit, nonpartisan initiative that aims to collect and disseminate information on the social impact of the Internet in the United States. The Pew Internet and American Life Project is one of seven projects that are coordinated by the Pew

Research Center whose motto—"numbers, facts and trends shaping your world"—aptly summarizes its mission. The Pew Research Center describes itself as a "fact tank" because it places emphasis on generating data and facts on important issues affecting the United States and the world. The center does not offer policy recommendations or endorse any industry, organization, or individual. The umbrella organization, the Pew Charitable Trusts, was established in 1948, and provides the bulk of financial support for the Pew Research Center, yet it upholds the center's independence and neutrality.

The Pew Internet and American Life Project was established in 1999 with the help of a $5.9 million, three-year grant by the Pew Charitable Trusts. The idea was conceived when Pew Charitable Trusts staff members recognized the need to generate reliable data on what people do online, and how their Internet use was affecting their lives. Because existing research at the time predominantly centered on the commercial role of the Internet, project creators decided to fill the gap by researching the wide social implications of this new medium, thus placing special emphasis on families, communities, education, health, politics, and news.

The Pew Internet and American Life Project became part of the Pew Research Center in 2004, when the Pew Charitable Trusts announced that it was consolidating all its research projects under one nonprofit subsidiary. The Pew Internet and American Life Project director is Harrison "Lee" Rainie, former managing editor of *U.S. News & World Report*. The offices of the Pew Internet and American Life Project are located in Washington, D.C., and the project currently employs a staff of nine research experts.

The first report, titled "Tracking Online Life," was published in May 2000, and examined the role of the Internet in Americans' everyday lives. Some of the early reports were based on surveys completed in the 1990s by Andrew Kohut, who is director of the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press and founder of the Princeton Survey Research Associates.

With time, the scope of the Pew Internet and American Life Project research expanded to include timely examinations of such emergent Internet issues as online piracy, blogging, online banking, and cloud computing. Since its creation, the project has produced more than 350 reports over 30 different topics. The Pew Internet and American Life Project reports can be divided into three broad categories: activities and pursuits, demographics, and technology and media. Special emphasis is given to teens, health, and broadband adoption. The project also provides separate trend data on adults and teens, as well as infographics on key research topics. The project makes it clear that it does not take a position on policy issues related to the Internet.

The data collection methods of the Pew Internet and American Life Project are aligned with the rigorous research methods of the Pew Research Center, and are grounded in public opinion polling and social science research. The project's research reports are often regarded as an authoritative source among policymakers, scholars, journalists, and bloggers.

The project's Web site lists hundreds of media mentions by such prestigious news organizations as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, PBS, the Associated Press, and Reuters. In line with its research focus, the Pew Internet and American Life Project maintains an active Web presence, with regularly updated profiles on all major social networks. The project also makes available for free the full versions of its reports and its data sets on its Web site, but users need to follow its user policy guidelines.

Maria Stover
Washburn University

See Also: Berkman Center; Focus Groups; Infographic; Oxford Internet Institute; Polling.

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Phishing, Political

Phishing is the act of enticing a person into revealing private information by masquerading as a trustworthy entity. Phishing can be used to steal any type of restricted information (e.g., money, hospital records), and can be accomplished through any communication technology (e.g., e-mail or voicemail), as well as in person. In the political realm, phishing refers to the theft of personal information by masquerading as a political entity, most commonly a politician running for office who requests donations from supporters. In this case, the victim gives money to the phisher, rather than to the politician. As a result, both the campaign donor and the legitimate politician who might have benefited from the donation are defrauded.

Political phishing can also refer to conning politicians and government officials into disclosing confidential information, such as national security intelligence and plans for political campaigns, which can then be used for terrorism, espionage, or sabotage. Studies show that phishing is prevalent in the United States and results in substantial monetary damages, although there are no such statistics currently available on political phishing in particular.

Several remedies have been proposed to reduce the impact of phishing attacks. These include both technical solutions (i.e., developing blacklists of phishing sites and removing them from the Internet, building better antispyware software) and user education programs on how to recognize fraudulent e-mails and Web sites. Both have shown effectiveness.

The term *phishing* is believed to be a word play on "fishing," because it refers to the baiting of individuals through illicit messages, with the initial letters standing in for "password-harvesting." The majority of phishing attacks are perpetrated over e-mail, with phishers pretending to be a bank or financial institution, and requesting users to login to their accounts in order to verify information or change their personal identification numbers (PINs).

The e-mail directs users to a fraudulent Web site, where their private information is captured and later used to steal money. Another common phishing technique is installing malicious software (malware) on users' computers when they simply click on a fraudulent Web site or open an infected e-mail attachment. The malware then steals private information from users' computers through key logging or downloading Internet browsing caches. The most successful type of phishing, known as "spear-phishing" because of its highly targeted nature, involves including some personal information, such as names, dates of birth, and the last four digits of credit card numbers, in e-mails sent to potential victims. The users interpret this information as a sign of e-mail credibility, when in fact it is mined from the Internet by the phishers, or is simply made up.

Political Phishing

Campaign donations are a particularly ripe target for e-mail phishing. First, politicians have exempted their campaign donation solicitation e-mails from the CAN-SPAM Act, which prohibits the promotion of commercial products and services through unsolicited e-mail. As a result, the public is less suspicious of receiving campaign donation requests from politicians via e-mail. Second, political domain names tend to fluctuate, which makes the public less able to distinguish between real and fake ones. For instance, President Barack Obama may use barack4president.com, obama12.com, or barackobama.com. All of these Web sites appear legitimate, yet some of them may be phishing scams. By contrast, financial institutions maintain strict consistency in their domain names precisely in order to avoid confusion between their real Web sites and a phishing impersonator. Third, it is relatively easy to mine for information about political affiliation in

order to create personalized spear-phishing campaigns. This information can be found on social network sites or on records of individuals' prior campaign contributions, which are publicly available online, as required by law. Finally, political phishing may be less detectable than other types of phishing. Provided that phishers do not steal more money than the intended campaign contribution, the victims may not even realize that they have been defrauded. Political phishing Web sites may then be less likely to be blacklisted and taken off the Internet.

To combat political phishing, politicians have adopted two noteworthy tactics. One is brand consolidation, or funneling campaign donations for multiple politicians through a centralized donation Web site, the Democratic ActBlue and the Republican RightRoots. The other is enabling donations through users' existing accounts with PayPal and Google. These strategies help avoid confusion between candidates' domain names, and forgo the necessity of inputting financial information for every donation, thus reducing contributors' susceptibility to phishing scams.

Catalina L. Toma
University of Wisconsin–Madison

See Also: Campaigns, E-Mail; CAN-SPAM Act; Data Mining; Decoy Campaign Web Sites.

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Picasa

The proliferation of broadband Internet, digital cameras, and smartphones has made photo sharing a popular communication practice. Picasa is Google's Web- and desktop-based application for sharing digital photographs. Created by Lifescape, initially Picasa was a software package for organizing and storing photos for Microsoft Windows. In 2004, Google acquired Picasa from Lifescape, released it free of charge, and developed it for Windows, Mac operating system (iOS), and Linux. Picasa is a part of Google's attempt to establish an entire ecosystem of software services that include social networking, e-mailing, photo sharing, and file or document sharing. The role of Picasa in this all-inclusive system is to act as a hub for the storage and circulation of photos. Any Google service that can carry image-based content will automatically sync with the user's Picasa account. For example, files stored on Picasa can be uploaded to another Google service, such as Blogger, while any files uploaded to Blogger will automatically appear on the user's Picasa account, and can then be recirculated to another service such as the social network Orkut.

In addition to making the software available across a range of operating systems, Google developed Picasa Web, the online portal of Picasa. Most users use Picasa Web to upload, store, and share their photos in photo albums. Like many other forms of social media, Picasa's organizational structure works with tags, which are searchable by the general public. Users can disseminate the content of their photos in several ways. For example, customized user-generated tags let Picasa users browse through their photo albums or other people's photo collections in an associational way. Users can also contribute to threaded discussions regarding photo content by making comments and sharing photos on their other Google accounts, thereby generating traffic. This networking functionality allows users to partake in a form of asynchronous social interaction around photos in the online domain. Similar to Flickr, the threaded discussion acts as an archive of social interaction that can be added to at various times.

Image-centric social media developments such as Picasa are changing both online and offline

viewing practices. Picasa's search functionalities facilitate the organization and display of photos in that they can recognize all image files on the user's hard drive. From there, one can upload all the photos, or a selection, and organize them into folders to showcase for their family and friends. Picasa also provides an offline photo sharing and viewing platform with a slideshow. Additionally, movies can be made with Picasa's Movie Maker editing tool, shared across other Google services, and most importantly, uploaded directly to YouTube. This cross-platform flexibility and range of interlinked functions means that a variety of users—ordinary citizens, professional photographers, photo agencies, and magazines—all take advantage of Picasa.

One of the benefits of Picasa is its potential for those interested in photojournalism as a part of citizen-driven social media. With Picasa, users can attach photos to their e-mail, or immediately upload them to social media sites like Twitter or Facebook if they have a network connection. Newspapers often source photos of international events downloaded from Picasa when they want to showcase "citizen media." Potentially useful during times of political protest or civil unrest, Picasa developers have created plug-ins that allow users to directly post photographs to non-Google-owned networks such as Facebook and Twitter. However, Picasa's plug-ins are not as well integrated with mobile phone services, limiting its use as a form of citizen-based media-making during a crisis. Crucially, (at present) Picasa has no free, proprietary iPhone app, and its Android equivalent is a paid service, whereas other major social networking apps for mobile devices feature free mobile services for photo sharing, such as Facebook's Instagram.

Those engaged in citizen media-making as of late 2012 tended to rely on social networks such as Twitter and Facebook for instantaneously photo-publishing to a dedicated group of followers. While Google's ubiquity is persistent, Picasa's future remains uncertain. According to the most recent data, its use, along with Flickr, is stagnating because of its poor mobile integration. The ubiquity of 3G mobile phones is a key factor in social media pervasiveness. Without an easy way to upload and share photos, citizens are less likely to use this application for real-time sharing. Social media is about accessibility and speed. Picasa's structure is more conducive to long-term storing and archiving of photos.

Magdalena Olszanowski
Kim Sawchuk
Concordia University

See Also: Aggregation; Citizen Journalism; Facebook; Flickr; Google.

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Piccadilly Riots, London

August 6 to August 11, 2011, represented a time of widespread rioting and civil unrest throughout London and the surrounding area. What began as a peaceful protest against the rising poverty and unemployment in areas of north London was quickly transformed into a violent situation when Mark Duggan, a young man and father of four, was killed in Tottenham. During these five nights of unrest, there were over 4,000 arrests and 5,112 individual riot-related crimes. Slightly more than half of the crimes were committed against commercial shops. This was not an isolated event—on several occasions earlier in 2011, groups of students and youths had rioted throughout London. The August 2011 riots were unique because of the use of social media.

Reactions to Social Media Use During Riots

This riot in London represented one of the first large-scale uses of many types of social media

that functioned to help rioters organize, gain recognition (e.g., posting photos of people rioting), and spread information in novel ways. People used Twitter and Facebook to publicly post information that was retweeted and broadly shared, and they also used private messaging networks through services like BlackBerry Messenger. By using social media, ordinary people gained the power to observe and participate in diverse digital conversations—practices previously reserved for governments, police departments, and organizations with access to private networks. This extensive use of social media prompted a new type of blame game. Social media became a player, along with the actions of individuals, and it was easy to blame these new communication tools for fueling and even causing the riots.

One of the more controversial reactions to the prolific use of social media during these riots was that of David Cameron, the prime minister. Quite early during the riots, Cameron made broad claims that were interpreted by the media and citizens as an intent to limit free speech. Cameron talked of banning the use of social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook, in addition to requiring the media to turn over any unused riot footage. Cameron also had the home secretary, Teresa May, meet with representatives from Facebook, Twitter, and Research In Motion (the manufacturer of the BlackBerry mobile device). Government officials attempted to pressure the companies that were providing these new social communication tools to shut down networks, monitor conversations, and limit the type of conversations. The discussion of these bans on social media use during times of unrest continued for a month following the riots, but were later dropped.

These riots also represented one of the more public accounts of how police reacted to the use of social media, and in particular, the use of private networks through BlackBerry Messenger, to help rioters organize. Police officers have protocols concerning when and how they intervene during times of unrest. Yet, with claims of racism and prejudice in the air, police found themselves in a pivotal position: do little and watch the destruction abound, or act with force and risk criticism. The combination of this uncertain time period and the explosion of communication through

Firefighters attempt to extinguish a large fire at a Party Superstore on Lavender Hill, Clapham Junction, August 8, 2011, during riots. The majority of crimes committed included vehicles being set on fire and commerical shops ransacked, looted, and set on fire during the five nights of unrest in north London.

social media forced the police to deal with new forms of organizination and a crowd temperment that required faster investigations and reactions than in past civil violence situations. As a result, individuals were arrested for statements posted on social media platforms if the content was believed to be capable of inciting violence. A report generated by the United Kingdom (UK) government made formal recommendations concerning the riots, and suggested that not only the Metropolitan Police Department, but all police organizations maintain a regular presence on Twitter.

The Plurality of Social Media

The reactions and realizations resulting from the use of social media during the London riots mimic those found in other types of organizational crises and emergencies. While much of the rhetoric surrounding limiting social media use during the riots was couched as a limit on free speech, in reality, controlling messages and communication channels is likely to be logistically impossibile. While networks can be shut down in a given area, so many different social media platforms exist that getting total cooperation when time is limited is highly unlikely. This shift in the speed and transparency of communication has forced many organizations to rethink their role in crafting and controlling messages. The entire field of public relations now encourages organizations to embrace a new way to approach communication—one where joint messages are created and the social aspects of these new media are harnessed.

These riots also demonstrated the power that social media has as a conduit for groups of like-minded individuals to organize and perpetuate activities like riots. When people can simply touch a button and share information with their entire contact list, even the metaphor of "spreading like wildfire" seems too slow of a description. In a short period of time, the Web of influence can experience extreme distribution.

However, this type of rapid self-organization does not mean one cannot model, predict, and learn from these crowd behaviors. Several studies have used the London riot data to generate predictive models to help justify the number of police needed and approaches to take if these situations occur again.

Differences in Social Media Use

After the riots, *The Guardian* partnered with the London School of Economics to conduct a number of studies that they titled Reading the Riots. Extensive interviews were conducted with a wide range of stakeholders involved in the riots. This included rioters, victims, police, and court officials, and the study covered a wide geography. In addition, 2.5 million tweets were analyzed, and researchers found that Twitter played a big role in clean up after the riot, but only a small role in actual riot conversation. The hashtag #riotcleanup was posted by more than 12,000 people and the messages were retweeted more than 31,000 times. The messages on Twitter helped people, find others who were also interested in rebuilding their community. While the vast majority of the reports surrounding the use of social media during the riot focused on their destructive impact, it is hopeful to have documentation that there were also many people organizing clean-up efforts, collecting donations to help victims, and combining efforts to rebuild businesses.

BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) was actually the dominate communication channel used by the active rioters. This may seem odd because BlackBerrys are often considered the tools of business communicators. Yet, in London at the time of the riots, BlackBerrys were fairly inexpensive because mobile users could pay for services by the month. Once that low fee was paid, BBM messages could be sent to a user's entire contact list very quickly with no extra fees. These mobile devices became very popular with young and poorer people in London. Combine the low cost of service with the fact that BlackBerry operated an encripted private service that could not be monitored by the police, and it is not surprising that this tool became the dominant device used to spread riot information.

One major lesson that should be learned from discussions of the role of social media during riots is that social media perform different functions and lumping them all together is inaccurate. An industry social media researcher, danah boyd, has studied social network sites and how they function differently than social tools that facilitate private communication and information sharing. In the UK riots, BBM was the chosen tool of rioters because most of them did not want to post information publicly and risk arrest. The rioters and

bystanders who chose to use more public media like Twitter and Facebook likely did so knowing that there was a risk involved. This risk was outweighed by the publicity they garnered for themselves and their causes. When the content shifted from illegal activities to organizing for cleanup and rebuilding, the more public social media emerged as a dominant communication channel.

This multiday UK riot will be remembered as one of the early crises where a mix of communication technologies, including social media, was used to perpetuate, publicize, and clean-up from an emergency. The resulting mixed messages and blame on technology highlight the complex information and communication technologies that will continue to morph into new forms and communication practices.

Keri K. Stephens
University of Texas at Austin

See Also: International Unrest and Revolution; Quebec, Canada 2012 Student Riots.

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Pinterest

Pinterest is a social networking site through which users share their favorite images of interests, hobbies, and activities. It is estimated to be the fastest growing and third-largest social media site, behind only Facebook and Twitter, with over 48 million users as of April 2013. According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 12 percent of online adults and nearly a fifth of online women (19 percent) use Pinterest.

The user space is the equivalent of virtual bulletin boards, within which one can pin or collate images from across the Internet. Users can have multiple boards for different topics or themes. Postings are called "pins," and users can either use Pinterest buttons embedded by owners in their Web sites, or a "Pin It" button in their Web browser to create a pin. Each pin includes a caption, a short descriptions of the image, and links back to the site from which it originated. Other users can comment on pins and repin items to their boards. Users can easily post their pins to their Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Uses

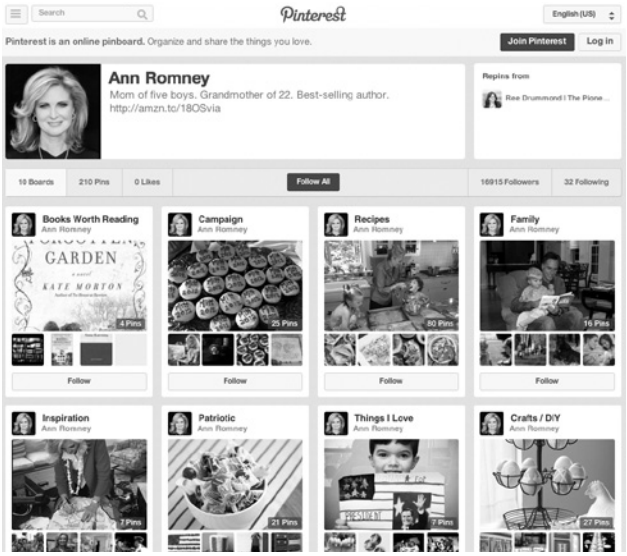
Pinterest is only limited by the imaginations of users. Also, while the original use of Pinterest focused on visually beautiful images, it did not take long for companies and corporations to add it to their social media campaigns to advertise products and services. Both individuals and organizations have adopted the site to advocate for their social causes and advance their messages through social marketing.

For example, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) created a Pinterest board called "Really Want These" (pinterest.com/AmiMusa/really-want-these), which helps users view the world through the eyes of a fictional girl from Sierra Leone. The items portrayed are the basic necessities of everyday life such as grain, water, and soap. Following Hurricane Sandy, the ad agency of Y & R Midwest created a board "Helpin," which allowed families to create boards identifying the items they needed. Purchases were made through Amazon.com and shipped directly to the family's home. Petfinder.com posts pictures of adoptable pets to Pinterest to help find homes for animals. Pinterest also offers educational opportunities for

curating collections of course resources and the development of class projects.

Web site owners have become aware of the importance of the quality of their images to increasing their visibility on Pinterest. Recently, Pinterest added the ability for business users to list a link to their Web sites, which appears at the top of their Pinterest page, right under their account name and description.

Users can now click and go directly to the original Web site. Along with this convenient and expedited Web access, Pinterest also introduced Web-based analytics to help Web site owners track and analyze how Pinterest users utilize their Web sites. Site owners can track the number of pinners and pins used, as well as the number of pins and repins from the original first-generation users. They can also track total impressions and reach on the network, as well as referral traffic, both in clicks and unique visitors via data sent back to their sites.



Pinterest page of Ann Romney, wife of 2012 presidential candidate Mitt Romney, still had nearly 17,000 followers at the end of 2013. The page contains sections such as "Books Worth Reading," "Things I Love," and "Inspiration."

Pinterest and Politics

Social media use has grown in recent years as a tool for political action and civic engagement. According to the Pew Research Project on American Life and the Internet, 39 percent of all American adults participated in some sort of political activity on a social-networking site during the 2012 campaign. And while this study specifically looked at Facebook and Twitter users, several of the political activities they described could also be performed on Pinterest, including: posting links to political stories or articles, following a political candidate or other political figure, encouraging others to vote, voicing one's opinion on political candidates or issues, encouraging others to take action on political issues of importance to the poster, or belonging to a group on a social networking site involved in advancing a political or social issue.

Individuals can use Pinterest to advance their political views, just as fans might create a board for a celebrity. Such pages do not necessarily have the approval of the candidates they support. In addition, other users may create anti-candidate or anti-policy boards that portray negative views of individuals, political parties, or programs. Political cartoons and satirical material are easily pinned and repinned. If one types in "politics" in the Pinterest search engine, hundreds of pins and boards show up. Interestingly, a review of major newspaper Pinterest boards shows that they focus primarily on beauty, fashion, food, entertainment, sports, and so on, with little emphasis on politics, while the TV news networks include political boards and top news stories boards that may include political articles. Individuals can easily repin these to their boards.

As might be expected, political candidates, campaigns, and parties have embraced Pinterest as part of their social media campaigns. "Politics" does not exist as a topic on the drop-down menu of categories in the Pinterest menu. A little research leads to the discovery of many political boards and pinners. President Obama is a social media savvy politician with an official page run by the Obama for America 2012 presidential campaign (pinterest.com/barackobama). Both the White House (pinterest.com/whitehouse) and the United Kingdom's Prime Minister (pinterest.com/number10gov), among others, have Pinterest boards to share news and photos with their constituents. Governmental units such as the U.S. Department of State (pinterest.com/usdos), the CDC's National Prevention Information Network (NPIN) (pinterest.com/cdcnpin),

and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (pinterest.com/hhsgov) maintain Pinterest presences. A search for "senator" or "representative" located numerous pages for state and federal Congress members. Searches for both the Republican and Democratic parties found sites for state and local committees. Both potential First Ladies Michelle Obama and Ann Romney used Pinterest to create a sense of "homey connection" with voters during the 2012 presidential campaign.

Conclusion

Pinterest is a relatively new social media networking site, only opening by invitation for beta testing in 2010, yet it already has a significant following of individual and organizational users. One can expect that it will continue to be used for political as well as educational and recreational activities. Its multiplatform applications (for smartphones, tablets, and computers) allow individuals to easily curate images and content from across the Internet about candidates and political and social issues.

Adele Weiner
Metropolitan College of New York
Kim Lorber
Ramapo College of New Jersey

See Also: Facebook; Flickr; Social Networking Web Sites; Tumblr; Twitter.

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Pioneers in Social Media and Politics

Pioneers in social media are individuals, groups, and institutions that offer innovative leadership in finding more effective ways of providing technological and human interchanges and connection. Traditional systems of communication that depend on unidirectional flows and top-down models have been revolutionized by modern social media, which have democratized the process by empowering individuals, groups, and hitherto marginalized populations into becoming active players in governance and participatory politics.

Debates on the exact meaning of social media, the pioneers of the phenomenon, and its impact on politics rage throughout the world. Hence, a broader view, tracing the highlights of the revolution without having to attribute exclusive credit to particular individuals or single events, is imperative. Social media in its contemporary form emerges from the confluence of advances in technology and movements for pluralism, expanded public space, and connections among citizens. Movements for social change and networks joined with revolutions in the technologies of communication and information to produce social media as a vehicle for facilitating political change.

History

In tracing the pioneers of social media, the multiplicity of human agencies as well as institutions, policies, and movements in collectively shaping its trajectories of change cannot be overemphasized. Visionaries, leaders, scientists, artists, technology experts, entrepreneurs, and individuals committed to creating new worlds have all contributed.

Framed in historical context, the advance of science and technology is described by Freeman J. Dyson in his book, *The Sun, the Genome and the Internet: Tools of Scientific Revolutions to Underscore the Joint Human Heritages of the Brain and*

Hands as the Basis of Civilizations. From ancient times to the industrial and contemporary revolutions, he notes that abstract thinkers have had to forge relations with practical inventors and craftspeople. This practice has continued today, as centers of scientific research are ensconced among industry, as seen now with involvement by, for example, Stanford, Harvard, MIT, Princeton, and Rutgers in technology centers such as Silicon Valley and Route 128 in Boston, which also thrive as interdependent environments. Other analysts corroborate this observation by showing the contributions of public policies to providing semiautonomous research institutions such as the U.S. Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) and its successor ARPANET, and the European laboratory for particle physics, CERN. All are complemented by the imaginative efforts of independent technology experts and hobbyists, as well as business and social entrepreneurs from such organizations as IBM, Bell Labs, the National Science Foundation, and RAND.

Blaise Pascal's calculator in 1642 introduced the modern era of automation. Gottfried Leibnitz and Isaac Newton's work, which improved on Pascal's calculator, is believed to have laid the groundwork for Charles Babbage's further refinement of the concepts for a mechanical computer in the 1820s. Ada Lovelace's great contribution in building on Babbage's analytical engine using the first algorithm earned her the standing of the "world's first computer programmer." The computer has been described as a complex piece of machinery comprising multiple parts, often considered as separate inventions credited to different individuals. The list of inventors ranges from Konrad Zuse and John Atanasoff to Howard Aiken and Grace Hopper. Institutions involved in its development include many universities, General Electric, the Bank of America, IBM, and Microsoft, among others.

Innovators as diverse as governments, investors, hobbyists, consultants, political and civic leaders, journalists, visionaries, and tech wizards have all been associated with the rise and development of the new media made possible by computers. They include the founders of Apple, Steven P. Jobs and Stephen G. Wozniak; Internet service providers such as AOL and Yahoo!; and Microsoft developer Bill Gates. Other notable social media pioneers include Facebook developers Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Severin, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes; Twitter heavyweights Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Florian Weber, Evan Williams, and Biz Stone; Google leadership Larry Page and Sergey Brin (with Andy Bechtolsheim as a visionary early funder); and YouTube inventors Steven Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim.

Like the computer, the Internet is also viewed as a byproduct of multiple innovators with competing narratives. Credit is due to government, business, and high-tech entrepreneurs. Responding to public debates attributing the Internet to government guidance and Al Gore's claim of shepherding it through Congress, Bob Kahn and Vincent Cerf, often called the fathers of the Internet, noted his support for the growth and development of the Internet for an extended period beginning in the 1970s in a paper titled "Al Gore and the Internet."

Social Media and Politics

The development of social media has brought about greater grassroots engagement and the democratization of access to information, especially through its reduction of the cost of communication. In *The Creation of the Media-Political Origins of Modern Communications*, Paul Starr argues that the modern media, symbolized by the leading role that the U.S. system has played in the world, is a byproduct of the political structures and ethos that have created environments of pluralism and decentralized governance. Social media, with its inclusion of a broad array of actors from scientists, technical experts, visionaries, public servants, ordinary citizens, community groups, and grassroots institutions, set the stage for the empowerment of individuals or marginal groups to establish power centers.

In the organizational column are entities such as ARPA, which paved the way with the first e-mail message in 1971, and CompuServe, which was at the forefront with its dial-up technology and service, enabling members to participate in common forums. The bulletin board system (BBS) provided online meeting places for users to share files and messages, while America Online (AOL), which has been described as "the Internet before the Internet," blazed a trail with innovative

platforms of interactive information paradigms. Pioneering transformations in integrating the social and political followed from companies such as Friendster, LinkedIn, Myspace, Facebook, and Twitter.

As mentioned previously, individual pioneers playing leading roles in mass movements in technology and social change include Tim Berners-Lee of CERN, who offered the technical basis for the operation of the World Wide Web; Steve Case and Kim Kimsey, cofounders of AOL; Tom Anderson and Chris DeWolfe, cofounders of Myspace; Steve Chen, Jawed Kim, and Chad Hurley, cofounders of You Tube; and Larry Page and Sergey Brin, cofounders of Google. Jack Dorsey's Twitter has also demonstrated its extensive impact on social networking and politics with its growth in membership and geographic spread.

However, Mark Zuckerberg's Facebook has had the most profound impact on politics and society, as David Kirkpatrick emphasizes in *The Facebook Effect,* which illustrates its influence by its operation in 75 languages and its transformative impact on global politics and society, although many political analysts feel that Twitter is also emerging as a political game-changer, particularly in light of its conspicuous role in the U.S. 2012 presidential election.

Because of the fusion of technological, social, and political movements in driving transformations, distinct boundaries between pioneers in particular areas cannot be drawn. On the foundations laid to revolutionize communication from the traditional top-down and linear paradigms, pioneers in politics have fully utilized social media in conveying their visions and ideas, mobilizing followers and establishing alternate organizations. As noted in the preceding discussions relating to different fields of endeavor, whole movements and group efforts have gone into the pioneering work of politics.

The building blocks of social media and politics, including the creation of relationships, direct transmission of information, and establishment of supportive networks, are believed to have been practiced long before the current terminology limited it to the modern technological revolution. As such, a large number of visionary leaders, activists, and change agents are placed in the category. Some observers point to leaders such as Franklin Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy as pioneers. Others even point to Jerry Garcia as the innovator who operationalized the ethos of social media.

The difficulty of tracing visionaries and participants in pioneering social media and politics is illustrated by countless individuals' overlapping contributions and competing claims to ownership of particular technological innovations, sociopolitical ideas, or even terminologies. Regarding a debate over who first coined the term *social media*, Ted Leonsis responded to a contested narrative about Tina Sharkey's claim of the term's authorship by pointing out that the concept developed from his and Steve Case's attempt to craft an instant messenger that fused technology and communications with social networking. Digital innovators, political leaders, bloggers, social activists, and forerunners of change all contributed to the transformative phenomenon.

In the United States, a leader in the revolution, pioneers representing different aspects of the process include Evan Williams of Blogger, Jim Bumgardner's The Palace, Adrian Scott's Raze, as well as Rick Sanchez with his use of social media to bolster news, as well as Elizabeth Lindsey, Jude Owner, Maddy Harland, and scores of visionaries as founders emphasizing varied dimensions. Social media pioneers in politics such as Joan Blades and Wes Boyd, with MoveOn.org, introduced the creative power of social media to mobilize grassroots involvement in national politics.

Pioneers in Politics

Globally, pioneers in politics mirrored the American experience with social media as the new alternate mode of communication enabled movements, parties, and individuals to rise or fall from critiques raised by the new platform. Political movements organized and facilitated by social media led to the ouster of leaders or governing parties in the Philippines, Spain, and Moldavia. Egyptian and Tunisian uprisings largely spurred by the media resulted in attempts to curtail this freedom, and the fall of oppressive leaders. Attempts at suppression have occurred in Iran, Belarus, Zimbabwe, Angola, Russia, and China. Occupy Wall Street protests in such cities as New

York, Oakland, Quebec, Barcelona, and Chicago challenged the status quo of finance and politics.

To put human faces on the pioneers, mention could again be made of the prominent exemplars whose workings on politics and organization are considered transformative by the social media of the world. The United States is credited with introducing social media into high politics. Other figures like Governor Howard Dean of Vermont laid the groundwork of digital activism for political causes and office. However, Barack Obama is rightly celebrated as the political figure who pioneered such methods and changed political communication, fundraising, and mobilization worldwide.

Candidates to congresses and parliaments, governors, and leaders in public institutions now engage their constituencies through digital media. A good example of the power of the Facebook effect has been Oscar Morales, a Colombian citizen who confronted the guerrilla politics of kidnapping. His mobilization of demonstrations throughout world's cities using Facebook resulted in the release of a hostage.

In Russia, Aleksei Navalny, an anticorruption blogger, is acknowledged as a maverick who sparked an opposition movement through a Russian equivalent of Facebook, Vkontakte. Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei is recognized as a voice of alternate politics mediated by social media. Wael Ghonim, who spearheaded the mobilization of followers in Egypt through Facebook and Twitter, is honored as a pioneer in the region. Ory Okolloh's online campaign on Ushahidi moderated the brutality of political violence in Kenya. Kim Ou-Joon and his colleagues, with their satirical weekly podcast called *Neneuen Ggomsuda*, also pioneered a political paradigm of multilateral engagement of public discourses with academic and political constituencies.

The list of innovators and participants linking social media and political pioneers with momentous events and transformed realities is long. Nevertheless, the salience of the revolution and its huge number of actors spanning geographic, cultural, and ideological boundaries cannot be exaggerated.

Alem Hailu
Helen Bond
Howard University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Facebook; Twitter; Zuckerberg, Mark.

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Platform

Microblogging sites such as Twitter, video-sharing sites such as YouTube, and social-network sites such as Facebook are social media platforms. The metaphor of a platform refers to a horizontal structure raised above a particular situation; for example, a stage for public speakers. Translated to the digital realm, the platform renders social media sites accessible for ordinary people to voice themselves. This understanding of a platform as an empty vessel of communication rests on the combined notions of equal opportunity and technological neutrality. Framing social media sites as neutral platforms, however, tends to conceal a key tension in their relationships to politics. The public use of social media platforms for political discourse is structured by the commercial imperatives behind these sites.

Social media platforms have become strategic political fields, as citizens across the world use them to gather together, express their opinions, protest injustices, and mobilize around civic initiatives. Politicians also use them as platforms for campaigning and public communication. The

large user base of platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter are the product of not only their usefulness in communication practices, but also of the profit incentives guiding their provision of a "free" communication infrastructure. The drive to profit from user data and behavior shapes Web site architecture and policies primarily in the service of private interests, rather than public spheres.

The central function of the term *platform* in this context is to elide the power differential between commercial actors and "ordinary" users. At the same time, however, the political activity of ordinary people using social media platforms is significant. Especially in massive political mobilizations such as the Arab Spring of 2011 or the Québec student protests of 2012, social media platforms played a central role in facilitating physical demonstrations that in many cases led to political change. As ordinary people increasingly circulate their views on the Web, for the first time in history, the breadth and scope of citizen perspectives and debates becomes archived and accessible.

However, as Tarleton Gillespie argues, platforms are not neutral. The promise of the platform as a level playing field for social participation obscures asymmetrical power dynamics between users and corporate powers that exploit and appropriate user participation. Advertising is the central mechanism through which social media platforms exert control over users. Personal information about users is collected in exchange for their access to commercial social media sites, in accordance with the terms and conditions agreed to upon signing up. Further, user behaviors online, such as page visits, clicks, and search terms, are also monitored and compiled as part of "behavioral advertising" models that seek to predict future consumer behavior based on the patterns of individual users.

Ultimately, the advertising imperative that underlies social media platforms effectively limits the scope of users' online action by consolidating Web content into the interface of a particular social media platform. Facebook, for example, compiles various online content in its newsfeed, and at the same time, Facebook's trademark "like" button is ubiquitous across the Web. The corporate monopolies of Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter are leading to an increasing enclosure of users' radius of online action. Instead of an open and accessible network, the Web is increasingly fenced off in proprietary walled gardens.

Thanks to the apparent equality and neutrality of a platform, this transformation and its attendant power dynamic tends to go unnoticed in everyday social media use. Most users remain unaware of how their actions and personal information generates value for platform owners. The political consequence of this is a widespread penetration of surveillance practices into the very architecture of social media platforms. While this surveillance is ostensibly a function of the platforms' advertising models, it can also be used for political ends, such as in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, in which particular organizers were identified and targeted by repressive governments through their social media activities.

On the surface, social media platforms seem to provide an equal opportunity for all users to participate in public debate over a neutral communications infrastructure. Yet, the commercial motives behind sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter seriously undermine the political promise of platforms in rendering users into commodities through what are effectively practices of online surveillance. The consequence of having commercially owned public spaces can be seen especially in politically turbulent situations, when corporate control over the means of communication tends to side with powerful private and authoritarian interests, as opposed to the public interest. In this way, platforms are not neutral; they structure and regulate political discourse and freedom of expression.

Koen Leurs
Utrecht University
Tamara Shepherd
Ryerson University

See Also: Activists and Activism; Advertising and Marketing Aggregation; Arab Spring; Privacy; Social Networking Web Sites.

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Podcasts

Podcasts are audio recordings that are disseminated via the Internet through a sound file. According to the latest Pew Research Center's 2012 State of the News Media report, there are approximately 91,000 podcasts in existence and 25 percent of Americans reported listening to podcasts in 2011.

Podcasting began as an offshoot of blogging, when technology evolved to a point that it became possible to embed audio files into a blog post and disseminate them through the same channels as a blog. The term *podcast* was developed as a derivative of Apple Corporation's iPod, an audio device that facilitates digital downloads and playback of audio files. The earliest appearances of the word in the lexicon date back to 2004; however, its adoption was quite rapid, as the *New Oxford American Dictionary* named "podcast" the word of the year for 2005. The term *podcast* is a bit of a misnomer because it infers that podcasts are only available for consumption via an iPod device, when in reality, they can be consumed via any computer if the proper software is downloaded. The podcasts are usually produced as an MP3 file for convenience because most players can accommodate that file type. Podcasts can be produced quickly and easily, and disseminated through a variety of social media channels. There are millions of podcast episodes in existence across a wide variety of genres, from education to sports, science to news, and politics. Listeners interested in a particular podcast series can also subscribe via an really simple syndication (RSS) feed, so that each new episode will automatically download on the user's device, instead of the user having to search for it on the Web. A variation of the podcast is the video podcast or "vodcast." This is similar in concept to the podcast, but adds a visual element.

Attributes and Drawbacks

Podcasts offer the user the benefit of convenience and portability. They can be listened to during a commute to work or during an evening run, whenever and wherever is convenient for the listener. Improvements in technology even allow an amateur to produce a podcast that sounds as good as something a professional might create. However, this does not mean that every podcast is created equal. Without planning and attention to details such as acoustics, vocal quality, ambient noise, and good content, a podcast will fail. To be successful, podcasts should be relevant, on topic, and thoughtful.

It is important to recognize that almost anyone can produce a podcast and claim to be an expert on a topic. Podcasts are often not put through the same sort of editing or fact checking as would a piece produced by a media company. As a result, finding podcasts that are worth the time invested to listen to them is a challenge. If a podcast is embedded within a blog, there is often an opportunity to preview the content through an episode guide or synopsis so that the listener can evaluate the creator's credentials and credibility and determine whether or not it is worth the time to listen. Podcasts are also one sided. They do not allow the listener to engage with the speaker as they might during a live broadcast. However, if the podcast is embedded within another medium like a blog, the author can use the comments feature in the blog to allow for interaction with the listeners.

Access to technology should also be considered with regard to the appropriate use of podcasts. Though it may seem otherwise, not everyone has Internet access. As a result, only a fragment of the population may be able to benefit from a podcast.

Podcasts and Politics

Podcasts have been used by a number of different political entities. Both major political parties and individual politicians have podcasts. At last count, there were over 250 different podcasts listed under the "News and Politics" category heading

on iTunes, Apple's library of downloadable podcasts. *The New Yorker* magazine, for example, produces the *Political Scene Podcast*, hosted by the magazine's executive editor, Washington correspondent, and others. The podcast discusses the previous week's White House activity. As private individuals can produce a podcast almost as easily as *The New Yorker*, it is now easier than ever for interested parties to contribute their voices to political discourse.

John Dolan
Pennsylvania State University

See Also: Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Blog Syndication; Blogs; Embedding; RSS Feeds; User-Generated Content; Web 2.0.

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Polarization, Political

Political polarization is a process by which political opinions in a given population diverge toward extremes, generally along party lines. This process leads to a reduction in dialogue between people of different political views, and to a decreased chance of political compromise between them. Social media can be seen as both a causal factor in this process and a force that is shaped by it. The content of social media is often not original to that platform, but instead consists of articles, images, or videos that are shared from other media outlets. Coupled with the rise of partisan news channels, talk radio, and Web sites, there is a substantial amount of information that is presented in a way that confirms the views of its consumers, often offering only a token of dissent or none at all, which can be posted to a person's social networking pages and shared with their social networks.

This in turn allows these polarized versions of news stories to "go viral" and quickly circulate among these political communities. The effects of this polarization are debatable, and the extent to which social media increases polarization is likewise contentious. However, there is a substantial discourse surrounding political uses of social media, and their impacts on political polarization and this discourse seems likely to be influential for the foreseeable future.

Pro-Polarizing Effects

Much of the political discourse on social media tends to reinforce and accelerate the processes of political polarization. This is because social media users tend to subscribe to news from sources that share their ideological perspectives, and that are unlikely to challenge their views in any significant way. The sheer abundance of choice in this politically tailored media can even give the impression that one is exposed to a multitude of views, which is supposedly essential for the effective running of democratic governments.

However, the fact that people can see an enormous number of commentators and reporters echoing the same views and purported facts means that this impression is not only likely to be in error, it is also highly probable that their politically polarized views are reinforced by the sense that most people agree with this view. In other words, this self-selection of media is compounded via social media to create false impressions of majority belief and the unquestionable rationality and truth of one's political preferences. Genuine shock at election results that contradict one's expectations can result. Although this surely existed before the rise of social media, the potential problem for democracies is that this shock could be translated into questioning the validity of the results and the political process itself, which undermines the ultimate legitimacy of the

government and makes it more difficult for leaders to actually govern.

Twitter is one of the most popular social media platforms in the world, boasting roughly 200 million regular users. Its popularity is partly because of its constraints on the number of characters allowed in each tweet, and the ease with which people can share a link to a longer article, site, or media clip via the platform. Political interaction with this social media platform occurs in at least three distinct ways. People can subscribe to Twitter feeds from political people and organizations, making it a fast way of getting bite-sized political messages from trusted sources. Alternatively, people can post political thoughts and links on their Twitter feeds, meaning that their ideas are shared with those following them. Even more popular is the practice of rettweeting, which means simply forwarding existing political tweets on ones' feed, again creating the potential for a viral dynamic to emerge on a political issue.

Unlike other social media platforms, which often focus on relationships, the brevity of Twitter lends itself to use for quickly distributing brief thoughts that do not necessarily create much of a relational dynamic between users. Furthermore, the hashtag system, which allows Twitter users to identify relevant topics for their tweet, and which often have millions of potential followers, means that politically minded users can subscribe to specific party, issue, and candidate hashtags that conform to their views. As such, people are more likely to subscribe to Twitter feeds that correspond to their political views, and to have followers who are relatively politically homogeneous.

Social media interaction via YouTube videos tends to be highly impersonal. People may be sharing clips with others they know, but viewers are unlikely to have personal connections to those in the clip or those producing them. This means that comments sections below the clips can be notoriously vicious. These may range from disagreement with issues, to disparaging remarks about the content, to personal attacks on other commenters. Clearly, these factors mean that there is a low political trust factor, low personal interaction factor, and high risk of polarizing effects. The sorting of YouTube content into customized channels from already polarized partisan news and political sources further exacerbates these effects.

Polarization can also occur via mashups of clips to make a larger partisan point about how "wrong" the other political side is on a given issue, or to mock candidates or positions. It can also occur via "gotcha" moments where candidates are exposed making significant gaffes or offensive remarks, often without the awareness that they are being recorded. These clips can then be reposted to other social networking platforms like Twitter and Facebook, and then used as a sort of opposition viral information effort to rally the politically like-minded around a given candidate or cause.

One of the other key social media sites is Facebook, which boasts regular user numbers of over 1 billion people. This makes it potentially one of the most important political tools in the world. Consequently, a great deal of effort has been spent by politicians and other political actors in democratic regimes in creating a meaningful presence on the site. As with other social media platforms, political actors hope that their messages will go viral through reposting or sharing across users and platforms. Indeed, it is difficult to think of a single major political figure in any democratic state who does not have a Facebook page with significant numbers of people who "like" or "follow" it.

There is some debate over the polarizing potential of political activity on Facebook. People are more likely to "friend" those who they know in the nonvirtual worlds of work, school, and more, and more likely to have a politically heterogeneous set of contacts on the site. Still, the opportunity to subscribe to updates from like-minded politicians and groups and to forward those posts and articles to one's friends creates the possibility of continued media selection and echo chamber dynamics. This is especially true given that it is easy to block the posts of people who politically disagree without actually "unfriending" them or losing access to chat, see their photos, or manually check their updates.

People can thus filter out those who disagree and further reinforce politically polarized social networks that extend to offline social relationships. Facebook's carryover effect into the real world makes political polarization that occurs via

its platform potentially more powerful and lasting since people are often interacting with others whom they care about, know very well, and/or view as trustworthy.

Anti-Polarizing Effects

Despite the wealth of research demonstrating the potential of social media to foster political polarization, there is likewise a significant body of evidence that demonstrates it can conversely be used for obviating polarization and increasing dialogue and even tolerance. In some instances, social media is even used as a simple means of information gathering for those wanting to make better informed decisions as voters, and can offer a genuine avenue for political persuasion.

Younger voters in particular are likely to gather information online. Prior to the rise of social media and social networking sites, this would have involved search engine queries, visits to major news and political sites, and perhaps a look at official party or candidate platforms on their Web pages. This information-gathering method is relatively passive and noninteractive, though it certainly makes access easier and faster. The addition of social media to this mix means that people can not only gather information online, they can also see how others are interacting with that information, including people whom they know from their own social networks, and who consequently would have a higher quotient of political trust. The type and nature of the discourse can widely vary depending upon the personalities of the social media users, nature of the topic being discussed, and use of escalating rhetoric within posts. The social media platform also has an important role to play in the type of discussion taking place.

Although Twitter is among the more likely platforms to have a polarized audience due to its use of hashtags and the ease of filtering information according to political preferences, it nonetheless has significant potential as a dialogue starter, not only because of the ease of use and rapidity of distribution mentioned before, but also because it is immensely popular as a publicity tool for sports figures, celebrities, and other public figures. In these cases it is entirely plausible that people may subscribe to tweets from people in public life that they enjoy in a public consumptive capacity, who may nonetheless have political views that are not aligned with their subscribers. This is especially true of people in the film industry, who might hold leftist or progressive views, but whose fans often come from regions of the United States that are more conservative. Alternatively, some sports like NASCAR or music genres like country-western are more likely to feature people who are conservative, yet they may very well have more liberal fans who subscribe to their feeds for updates on their latest activities.

There are also far less influential Twitter feeds in terms of subscriber numbers that may have more impact on individual voters because any individual can have an account. This means that when someone subscribes to the feed of someone they actually know, and consequently are more likely to trust on political issues, they may be exposed to alternative political ideas, or at the very least to internal critiques and refinements, or partisan political messages. Polarization has pushed people more firmly into the U.S. two-party system, but that does not mean that there are not very distinct constituencies within them that have unique concerns and outlooks on particular issues, and thus provide an element of internal debate and self-correction toward a political mean.

While YouTube is relatively impersonal and more prone to online trolling and abuse, it is one of the primary sources of information for people looking to make informed decisions about politics. They can subscribe to channels from nonpartisan sources, or even from direct government sources like the White House or Congress. This allows politicians to directly speak to voters without partisan news filters, though this does not mean people do not filter the news via personal partisan lenses. It is also an excellent resource for those who want to engage in and watch substantive political debates as various expert roundtables and even candidate debates are easily accessed on its portal. Although polarization does not disappear in these venues, they do make the existence of debate and the possibility of alternative political beliefs more concrete and could theoretically also foster greater tolerance for and awareness of divergent views.

Of all the most popular social media sites, Facebook is probably the most likely to foster

political tolerance and genuine discourse. This does not completely mitigate the polarizing influences of friend selection, the existence of echo chamber effects due to regional political trends, and social or religious networks, all of which will likely be reflected in a user's friends list. However, its key distinction is this very same personal relational element. As mentioned before, this is a crucial component of what is referred to as political trust. The more political trust a user has in someone else, the more likely it is that their opinions will matter and be influential. A lack of trust equates to an easier time ignoring information or opinions that run counter to one's own.

Various studies have been done on actual Facebook posts and their political content. These have generally rated the opposition factor of opinions and the tone of the discourse involved. To date, most of these studies have shown that discourse is surprisingly civil, and is centered on discussing the facts and merits of given political topics or candidates. Researchers Matthew Kushin and Kelin Kitchener, for example, have found that there is little evidence of widespread polarization on Facebook or at least that Facebook is not a causal factor in polarization in most instances. In fact, it was shown to potentially increase political tolerance and discourse precisely because the people involved already have personal relationships with one another that exist outside of a political context. This means that unlike many other online spaces where anonymity or at least the lack of offline connections exist between users, generating a sense of alienation toward other actors and general lack of accountability for how one behaves, Facebook actually encourages substantive and polite conversation because normal social rules apply as they would in the offline real world.

Conclusion

Improving the effectiveness of social media efforts is part of a major drive by both major U.S. political parties to increase turnout among voters. They are also seen as critical parts of building an online brand that can generate user loyalty, with the aim of ultimately improving not just voting but also citizen engagement with politics. Due to the use of social media platforms to republish material from partisan news outlets and other self-filtering sources, it often has the effect of amplifying the echo chamber effect of people surrounding themselves with those who agree with them politically to the extent that they no longer view opposing beliefs as legitimate or even rational. Once one's opponents cannot even be seen as possessing logic and common sense, there is little ground left for respectful dialogue, let alone genuine compromise.

Furthermore, the viral nature with which information is distributed on these platforms and their emphasis on quickly grabbing attention and making political statements with the utmost simplicity and brevity means that polarization can be further worsened, simply through a lack of factual substance and grounding of political argument with observed effects in the real world. Ideology thus trumps experience and empiricism, and in this scenario, it is difficult to see any means of extricating political debate from this polarizing dynamic.

Despite these many tendencies toward polarization, social media, particularly as seen on sites like Facebook and in conjunction with nonpartisan open information and government accountability groups, can actually foster not only easier access to relevant political information, but also far more substantive and tolerant debate between people with divergent views. If these educational and relational components continue to rise in popularity as social media functions, then it may very well have a significant role to play in allowing political partisans to be exposed to alternative viewpoints, and even to hosting the conversations that are necessary for finding solutions that are acceptable, if not optimal, to people of all political persuasions.

Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St. Andrews

See Also: Blogosphere; Campaigns, Digital; Cynicism, Political; Facebook; Going Viral; Hashtag; Political Base; Political Parties; Twitter; YouTube.

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Polis, Jared

Jared Polis is the U.S. representative for Colorado's Second District. First elected in 2008, Polis serves on the Committee on Rules and the Committee on the Judiciary. Polis is also a member of the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee of the House of Representatives. Despite his relatively recent tenure Polis leads as a Democratic Caucus regional whip, co-chairman of the New Democrat Coalition Education Task Force, chair of the Immigration Task Force of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, cochairman of the U.S.–Mexico Congressional Caucus, cochairman of the Congressional Caucus on Nepal, and co-chairman of the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) Equality Caucus. Additionally, he is a member of the U.S. Air Force Academy Board of Visitors.

Polis and his parents created the online greeting card Web site www.bluemountainarts.com, later selling it for $780 million. Polis launched ProFlowers on his own, an online florist that was eventually acquired by Liberty Media Corporation in 2006. By 2008, when he was elected to Congress, Polis was one of the 10 wealthiest congresspeople, worth approximately $66 million.

In 2000 Polis signaled his commitment to educational opportunity with his establishment of the Jared Polis Foundation (JPF). The JPF runs the annual Teacher Recognition Awards to spotlight outstanding educators. It also administers the Community Computer Connection program, which supplies schools and nonprofit organizations with refurbished computers—more than 3,500 each year. The JPF also produces a semi-annual report on education.

In 2004, Polis founded the New America School, which has four campuses that serve immigrants ages 16 to 21 years old. Polis next co-founded the Academy of Urban Learning, which helps at-risk Denver youth. He has received many awards for his philanthropic efforts, including the 2006 Outstanding Philanthropist, the Boulder Daily Camera's 2007 Pacesetter Award in Education, the Kauffman Foundation Community Award, the Ohtli of the consul general of Mexico, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Colorado Humanitarian Award, and the Boulder Community Builder Award through the Anti-Defamation League.

Political Career

In 2000 Polis began a six-year term on the Colorado State Board of Education. He served until his district was eliminated in January 2007. The election that brought him into this position was one of the closest in the history of the state of Colorado; Polis won by only 90 votes.

Starting in 2006, Polis joined Coloradans for Clean Government as cochair. On this committee he advocated for Amendment 41, which sought to ban lobbyist gifts to elected officials and established an annual $50 restriction on nonlobbyist gifts. It further mandated a two-year waiting period for former elected officials who wish to begin lobbying, and established an ethics committee to be independently regulated. In 2006 the measure was approved by Coloradans.

In 2007 Polis cochaired a campaign for school bonds, which was approved. In 2008 Polis succeeded Mark Udall as representative for Colorado's Second District in Congress, and he was reelected in 2010. Polis is openly gay, and became the first gay parent in Congress in 2011.

In 2011 Polis and Senator Joe Lieberman sponsored the Race to the Top Act, H.R. 1532, which dealt with school innovation, charter schools, and teacher compensation. Polis also sponsored the School Lunch Improvements for Children's Education Act, SLICE, in response to the congressional definition of pizza as a vegetable. SLICE would require healthier meals for students, would

count tomato paste based on its actual volume, set targets for sodium reduction, and allow a U.S. Department of Agriculture whole grain requirement. SLICE is opposed by agribusiness giant the Food Institute.

Polis sponsored the Student Non-Discrimination Act, SNDA, with Senator Al Franken that would apply Title IX of the Education Amendments Act to LGBT students and therefore federally prohibits sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination in all schools. Work continues to make this a bipartisan enterprise because only two Republicans had signed onto SNDA by December 2012. Polis also sponsored the Defending Special Education Students and Families Act, which would fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This legislation regulates how government agencies intervene in special education cases.

Colorado Congressman Jared Polis's speech titled "Financing Mechanisms for Developing Human Capital" at the TEDxBoulder event in 2010. Polis discussed how small investments in education could yield big results for the economy.

Polis also introduced the Computer Science Education Act, which was designed to provide computing vocational training. Polis also sponsored the ACE Act to provide funding for chronically low-performing schools.

Polis has consistently opposed the Iraq war. He also supports removal of all troops from Afghanistan. Polis voted in favor of sanctions against Iran. He has called for the U.S. State Department to investigate human rights abuses against LGBT Iraqis and to take action to stop violence against the Honduran LGBT community. An outspoken opponent of the USA PATRIOT Act, Polis has called for restoration of civil liberties and privacy rights in Congress. Polis was also critical of certain aspects of SOPA, PIPA, and CISPA, all acts designed to fight piracy, protect intellectual property, or allow online surveillance by authorities.

Polis is an active advocate for the LGBT community. He has called for the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), and asked for the recognition of LGBT marriages in the United States as an original sponsor of the Respect for Marriage Act to repeal DOMA. Polis voted for the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." Polis also cosponsored the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which would fund federal investigation of hate crimes, and has pressed for the inclusion of LGBT domestic violence victims in VAWA provisions.

Social Media Use

According to OhMyGov, at the end of 2012, Jared Polis enjoyed a Media Power Rank of 48th among 541 peers; Poleet.com also reported that Polis had a Klout score of 82. In December 2012 he had just under 19,000 fans on his Facebook page and more than 37,000 Twitter followers. In a 2012 interview with *Politico*, Polis said of his social media use: "I use these platforms myself, so they have an authentic voice. You're not going to connect with users with nothing but canned messaging and press releases. You have to 'get' the unique language of each medium."

In 2012 Jared Polis was the winner of the Member Online All-Star Competition among Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives. This three-week-long competition, which was in its third year in 2012, was designed to boost the social media presence of Democratic members of

the House. Polis put his online experience and familiarity to work and campaigned on Reddit and on his profile pages. Polis is also a Second Life player, and has posted on the League of Legends forum with a positive response. House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer announced in August 2012 that Polis was the winner, and that Democratic House members gained in excess of 139,000 new fans on Facebook, followers on Twitter, and subscribers on YouTube during the three-week contest. This represents a gain of more than 82,000 over the 2011 contest results. This was not Polis's first run as MVP; he also won the first contest in 2010.

Polis's Republican counterpart in 2012 was Congressman Justin Amash, the Republican New Media Challenge MVP. The Republican New Media Challenge is a nearly identical yearly contest in which Republican Representatives compete to attract the highest number of new followers on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Also in August 2012 (and in the wake of his MVP victory) Polis was highlighted by the Independent Voter News (IVN) in a feature called "The Social Ballot." This segment of the online publication is devoted to recognition of "politicians, candidates, and political organizations who are utilizing social media in effective and creative ways." IVN attributes Polis's likeability in the social media world to his personal management of his social media presence, his regular and consistent tweeting, and his attention to trending topics on Twitter.

Polis's social media intelligence is not limited to gaining new followers. He has also proven that social media use can be a very effective tool for advocacy. In December 2012 University of Colorado (UC) President and Republican Bruce Benson e-mailed alumni a warning about the UC risking a loss of almost $1 billion based on the decriminalization of marijuana. The argument was that the UC receives a substantial amount of federal funding, and that federal guidelines prohibit marijuana use.

Polis was quick to respond on Twitter, denouncing the e-mail as "false" and attributing Benson's motivation to personal disagreement with Amendment 64, the decriminalization initiative. Polis tweeted that the amendment did not require that UC allow marijuana on campus, and that just as alcohol is banned on campus despite its legal status, marijuana will also continue to be banned. Polis also e-mailed an official statement countering Benson's message. This rapid response in online fora highlights Polis's effective social media presence.

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

See Also: Hoyer, Steny; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights; Pelosi, Nancy.

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Political Base

A political base is a group of individuals that supports a candidate or party based on a set of agreed upon core values. The core values form the basis of a political agenda or platform. A

continuum for identifying a political base moves from left to right. On this continuum a left-leaning political base is more liberal, whereas a political base leaning right is said to be more conservative. Moderates, or those in the middle, may lean in either direction-based on the issue. Politicians have quickly recognized the advantage that social media such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, blogs, text messages, and similar virtual tools, provide as instruments for keeping in touch with their political base. Other examples include GoToMeeting, which provides virtual presentations for anyone with Internet access. Skype has similar features and offers the opportunity for cheap or free calls. Politicians use these particular social media options quite often to make presentations and provide Webinars for their political base.

For most of the 20th century the dissemination of information followed a basic two-step flow theory. Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet introduced this theory in 1948, noting that procedurally, information flowed from radio and print media to leaders, and from leaders to the sections within the population who are overall the least active. In 1995 Deborah Baldwin, commenting on the interaction between interest groups and the Internet, stated that for interest groups, the Internet presented a new way of lobbying individuals and groups. The current environment and its strong reliance on social media has turned the two-step flow theory on its head: an individual sending a tweet, posting on Facebook, or sending a text may now also become a leader. The news is no longer entirely the possession of television, radio, and print media outlets.

Social Media and the Political Base

Politicians have come to use social media approaches like Twitter feeds, Facebook posts, texts, podcasts, and discussion forums as means of reaching their base. Robert Merton called leaders who can only manage one area of influence "monomorphs," while those managing to influence several areas are "polymorphs." In the current political environment, with the potential for a political base to be extremely varied, a politician must expand his or her range of influence on many different issues, as well as increasingly the number of ways in which he or she reaches that varied political base.

Social media also offer the opportunity to gather information about various bases of political ideology while seeing responses to an issue develop in real time. Because social media do not include every member of a particular political base, at best, the results will only be conclusive for that particular group responding by social media; and at worst, the results will be limited in the perspectives that can be shared by the particular group responding via social media.

Contemporary writers remarking about changes in political bases and on techniques for reaching a base often cite the belief that, depending on the form, social media will have both a temporary as well as a permanent impact on base politics. Specifically, Malcolm Gladwell believes that social media's influence has been exaggerated. He has called for caution regarding the use of social media for reaching a base in networks he sees as loose and leaderless.

Since the 1960s, politics have shifted, and issue influence has tended to crowd around visible concerns that spark emotion and action in a political base. Social media documents this shift in real time as noted by blog or article comments, tweets, or texts sent during a live debate on TV or radio. Social media also provides a steady stream of live numbers that can be easily captured. Prior to making a statement on an issue in the recent past, a politician would assemble his or her team of advisors and hash out a script to read to assembled supporters. Now, a social media specialist may first consult on where to place the content. This base can be local, state, national, or global, and an effective consultant could make a judgment on the reach and base in a matter of minutes.

International Reach

A local political base is not the only base of supporters that social media can reach on a daily basis. A global political base can also be accessed for ideas and suggestions as they receive communications once limited to traditional media, airmail, faxes, or personal visits. The notion that any leader of any country can stay in contact with his or her political base from abroad is now a way of life. At any time, a leader can visit another country, make a speech in that country

on an issue or a concern, and have that speech streamed live by any number of social media outlets. Anyone watching the streaming version of the remarks can instantly become a part of the political base, thus making any issue around any subject a potential international issue. These additions to the political base come with the opportunity for further information dissemination, collaboration, and opportunities for additional means of funding for particular projects.

Today, a political base has become a virtual community. The 2011 Arab Spring is an example of a political base that expanded with every tweet, Facebook update, and text message to include new supporters from around the world. When these users are a part of a political base, the core values that were once so simple may become more global in nature and design. Politicians who understand this will become the leaders of the future, directing an ever-growing and ever-changing population of supporters.

Lisa Saye
Independent Scholar

See Also: Constituencies, Social Media Influence on; Digital Citizen; Digital Government; Occupy Movement; Voter Demographics; Wikis and Collaborative Project Websites.

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Political Economy

The political economy of social media refers to the effects of capitalism in shaping, affording, and constraining social media, as well as to the role of social media in capitalist society. The term also refers to the intellectual paradigm that investigates social media in the context of capitalist society.

Drawing on the Marxist-inspired political economy of the (mass) media, the political economy of social media seeks to uncover the social, legal, cultural, and technological arrangements embedded in social media, and examines the social implications of such arrangements. The political economy of social media, then, investigates social media as economic organizations operating within the contours and logic of a capitalist society, and at the same time seeks to decipher the role of social media in the economy at large.

At the most fundamental level, the political economy of social media assumes that the new space of social media cannot be thought of merely in terms of the technology that enables it or the communication forms it affords; rather, it is also set within the broader socioeconomic space of capitalism. Social media is ommonly treated as a new means of communication, enabling new forms of expression and social exchange in varied spheres, from political mobilization to economic activities. The political economy of social media, however, attempts to locate social media as caught within the Web of capitalist political economy. Rather than viewing social media as a transparent, neutral communication tool, the political economy of social media points to the ways by which it embodies and constitutes social power relations. Most fundamentally, the fact that the most prominent social media Web sites are owned by commercial companies is not incidental to the analysis of communication, but is rather highly consequential. Countering the hegemonic approach that focuses on the communication that takes place within social media, the political economy of social media focuses on the Web of social power relations established through this seemingly neutral technical platform.

Like any voluntary market exchange, in social media, both parties act out of self-interest and gain something from the exchange: Consumers

use social media for free and producers sell advertising space. Contrasting this view of a market exchange between equals, the political economy of social media sees social media as embodying power relations. While few dimensions of power relations emerge as central themes in the political economy of social media, they all seem to collate around the focal point of audience labor. It would be useful then to organize this discussion around this key concept, not least because of its roots in the political economy of the mass media and its link to a central debate in political economy generally about the labor theory of value.

Such an analytical move would also allow the underlining of how the political economy of social media is different from the (traditional and established) political economy of the (mass) media. And last, exploring audience labor would allow one to offer a political economy critique to the notion of "participation," which in popular and academic discourse is seen as the key revolutionary aspect of social media.

Audience Labor

The notion of audience labor emerges as a critique of traditional political economy of the media, which regarded audience as located outside the sphere of (capitalist) media production. Traditionally, the political economy of the media analyzed media as a means of production in capitalist society, investigating issues of media monopoly, media corporations' mergers and consolidations, links between government and the media, and employment schemes of media workers. The essential claim of this approach was that all elements of the media ecology, such as media corporations, journalists, and public service broadcasters, cannot be understood outside the institutional and structural positions they occupy. News organizations are also commercial enterprises thriving on the sale of advertising; news reporting may be constrained by legal or regulatory dictates; and journalists are wage earners. The political economy of the media sought to highlight those economic and political facets and investigate which effects they have on the media and in turn, on society.

Traditionally, then, the political economy of the media considered the audience as laying outside of the accumulation process, as passive consumers of media content. In 1970, the political economy of the media was greatly revised by Dallas Smythe, who analyzed media as a site of production unto itself, thus highlighting the productivist role of the audience in the creation of media value. He suggested that what goes on in the mass media was not primarily audience consumption of media content but the selling of audience attention to advertisers. This formulation rendered the audience an active participant in the political economy of the mass media. The audience performs cognitive and emotional work—learning to desire and buy commodities—and it was the attention of the audience that was sold as a commodity to advertisers. This rendered the media a vital component in the chain of capital accumulation. In return for the "bait" of programming, the audience remains glued to the television screen, thus watching advertisements, which become an ever-important driving motor for consumption. Smythe assigned the mass media and the audience central roles in advanced capitalism: the audience is put to work in marketing commodities to itself.

As a theoretical outlook and a research program, the political economy of the media emerged during and within the context of the mass media. The emergence of social media poses new challenges to this approach, given some fundamental differences pertaining to the relationship between the media and its audience. Social media companies provide the audience a platform for communication rather than content, and the seemingly passive audience has been rendered into active "users," critical to the production of the media. These transformations in the relations of production between audience and media has also led to a change in the research program. While in the political economy of the mass media, the notion of audience labor remained relatively peripheral; in the political economy of social media, it has focused on the labor process as well as its product.

The centrality of audience labor in the political economy of social media is anchored in the increased involvement of the audience in the production of media. Indeed, the popular discourse on social media is dotted with a variety of terms describing new production practices and new products entailing audience involvement facilitated by social media: cocreation,

mass collaboration, social production, commons-based peer production, mass customization, prosumption, produsage, crowdsourcing, open source, social production, user-generated content, user participation, folksonomics, and wikinomics. Take, for example, the category of the media "prosumer" (or "produser"). Whereas in traditional media, there was a relatively clear-cut separation between producers and consumers of media content, social media is characterized by the blurring of these boundaries. Consumers (or users) are at once also producing that which they consume. This is seen in popular discourse as empowering individuals, rendering the passive audience of the mass media into the engaged audience of social media.

While popular discourse celebrates these new modes of media production as having empowered the audience, the political economy of social media uncovers new relations of power that these modes create, pointing to the ways by which these multiple production forms enhance the ability of media companies—compared to the mass media—to mobilize audience labor into capitalist accumulation. The political economy of social media seeks to explain how value is created in social media sites, and uncover the role of the audience in the creation of its value.

The audience of social media may potentially work more, create more surplus value, and be more exploited than was the case in the mass media. It participates in three moments along the value chain of social media. As in the mass media, an audience is mobilized to watch ads, leading to consumption. However, relative to the mass media, in social media, advertising schemes tend to blend commercial messages with social communication, thus leading to greater consumer mobilization. For example, Facebook's Sponsored Stories are regular posts rendered into ads, thus representing both a real-life event and a commercial message, and are regarded as more effective than conventional ads.

Audience Data

The audience of social media is central in two additional moments of the value chain. First, the networked and interactive nature of social media and its affordance of audience participation enables social media companies to access a huge amount and variety of data produced by users. Such data includes demographic and personal information, content of communication, online and offline behavior, and metadata about online usage patterns. This huge amount of data—leading to the establishment of big data "warehouses" of social media companies—is a key force of production in an information economy, an economy that thrives on data, information, and knowledge. Big data allows an intimate knowledge of the audience, both as individuals and in aggregate. The ability of social media companies to have (free) access to such big data—produced by the audience in return for (free) platforms—and commodify it is at the heart of their business model, which is the sale of advertisements, which become more personalized and targeted.

An example of the commodification of big data is predictive analytics, which seeks to predict individuals' consumerist behavior and bolster it. To a large extent, predictive analytics based on big data substitutes statistics in providing knowledge about human behavior based on real-life data (rather than data collected from interviews or surveys) and the whole population (rather than a sample of the population).

One issue emerging from the production of data is a new form of inequality between audiences using social media and companies that own them—dubbed the "big data divide"—which is based on differential accessibility to the data. While the audience produces the data, only social media companies can access it. The valorization of personal, mundane data, produced through what the autonomist school of Marxism refers to as "immaterial labor," is a testament to an increased reliance on life itself—taking place outside the traditional sites of production—in contemporary capitalism.

Social media are technically and ideologically structured to make users produce as much data as possible. Indeed, what goes on in social media is not primarily the collection of pre-existing audience data, but rather the production of data by the audience, data that has been hitherto almost inaccessible to harness for capital accumulation, including personal, communicative, mundane, and behavioral data. Such data are produced within the context of regular communication and the sociability of social media users.

In addition to watching ads and producing data, the audience also engages in marketing. Social media audiences construct and maintain multiple networks within social media, which are founded on—to varying degrees—familiarity, similarity, and mutual trust and influence between networks' members, as well as affording them a peer-group, sharing common interests and lifestyle. The "viral" or "organic" nature of commercial messages in social media (as they are called in advertising lingo) derives precisely from the construction of such networks, and leads to a new type of audience labor where audience members do not merely market products to themselves (as Smythes put it), but also market products to other members of the audience.

Surveillance and Privacy

Notwithstanding the importance of consumption and marketing, it is the production of data and metadata by users that lies at the heart of the political economy of social media. As audience-generated data becomes a central force of production, an inextricable link is created between social media and surveillance because audience data needs to be accessible to social media companies in order to be commodified. The political economy of social media is conditioned by the willingness of an active audience to surrender private and personal data to social media companies, and often also to third-party companies; by construction, such data loses its status as private. The centrality of surveillance to the political economy of social media poses a threat not only to privacy, but as noted above, but also affects the way that social media is designed in order to maximize the production of media, and may be consequential in terms of inequality (i.e., the big data divide).

More broadly, this issue points to the contradiction, embedded in social media, between social norms that consecrate privacy and a political economy that thrives on surveillance. This has indeed been an issue of intense public debate. In a similar way, and leading to much public debate as well, is the intrinsic contradiction between social norms and institutions consecrating private ownership and authorship over products, and the collective and social nature of production in social media. In contrast to the mass media, social media companies are able to create big data, and audience members are able to communicate with each other, cooperate, and collaborate. By construction, then, the product of audience labor is communal. A Google search result is based on previous queries of users, and a user's Facebook news feed is a communal product of other users. The legal and normative institutions of intellectual property rights were founded on the notion of a cultural product having a single, recognized producer or author. They were construed in the context of the mass media and fitted its political economy, which assigned media companies with exclusive rights over content.

Noncommodified Social Media

Social media undermines the foundations of this normative arrangement since the product is by construction collective, representing the "general intellect" of the audience. In reality, sparse efforts have been developed, alongside the hegemonic capitalist model of private intellectual property rights, to build nonmarket based projects of social media, the most exemplary of which is Wikipedia, the online collaborative free encyclopedia. As are all social media, Wikipedia is also the product of audience labor; but unlike commercial social media, audience labor on Wikipedia is not commodified. Such and other exemplars of noncommodified social media have led political economists of social media to point to an alternative political economy that would reconstitute social media as the commons—noncommercial, common, cultural products to which everyone contributes and has access to—as a project that transcends the contradictions of contemporary capitalist social media. The political economy of social media, then, proposes to radicalize the notion of social media by suggesting that its production is truly social, and hence its value should also be socially shared rather than privately owned.

Conclusion

The political economy of social media also points to the ideological role of the media in justifying its model of political economy and the political economy at large. In the mass media, political economists have pointed, for example, to a press that accepts the basic premises of liberal democracy and capitalism, to the content of programs naturalizing racial and gender inequalities, and to

advertisements advancing a consumerist lifestyle and facilitating a consumerist society. The analysis of social media has pointed to the ideological mechanisms that drive audiences to produce as much personal data as possible: from the dictum to share one's mundane life with others through text and photos, to the call for audience members to be part of an emancipatory, participatory, democratic, antielitist and collaborative culture, and express themselves—all of which are aimed to encourage audience labor in social media.

At the heart of the political economy of social media are two contradictory trends. On one hand, social media represents the unprecedented "socialization of communication," where the means of communication are democratized, where every Internet user can communicate, tweet, create a blog, be a citizen journalist, and be part of a custom-made social network. Socialization here refers not only to the decentralization of expression to each member of the audience, but also to the ability of users to cooperate among themselves on a social-wide scale—communal, national, or transnational—and create a media that is radically social, of the people, by the people, for the people.

On the other hand, social media also represent a trend toward the unprecedented "commodification of communication." The audience's social communication is increasingly commodified and sold on the market, becoming a staple force of production in the political economy of social media. Social media sites are predominantly commercial spaces, structured and run according to the rationale of capital accumulation rather than social communication. As immaterial products of data and information, communication and sociability become increasingly important forces of production in contemporary capitalism, and as their production is increasingly taking place within digital media, so the commodification of communication ensues.

These two trends are dialectical; they are contradictory and complimentary, and above all tenuous and dynamic. The more media is socialized, the more it mediates the production of social communication and in turn boosts the commodification of communication. At the same time, the socialization of communication, the ability of the audience to communicate among itself, may also undermine and disrupt commodification, as is the case with Wikipedia, where the socialization of the media led to the creation of a knowledge commons rather than commodification.

The trend toward the commodification of data and communication and the exploitation of audience labor occurs along with enhanced opportunities for the audience to express themselves, collaborate with each other, and participate in the reproduction of society through a fairly accessible media. Indeed, the political economy of social media is founded on social media being a juxtaposition of a means of communication and a means of production, an arena for sociability and a site of labor. These trends are also dialectical: they feed into each other, but can also disrupt one another, leaving the field of political social media dynamic and open for change.

Eran Fisher
Open University of Israel

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Big Data; Data Mining; Information Aggregation; Predictive Analytics; Privacy; Viral Marketing.

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Political Information Opportunity Structures

Social change triggered by popular movements occurs when the actions of like-spirited individuals whose shared values and goals related to particular

A protest in Boston on June 20, 2009, in support of the Iranian Green Movement and condemning the Iranian government's violent response to protesters in Tehran. The current information environment allows groups to organize and demonstrate without long-term planning or extensive resources.

issues mobilize them to sustained collective action, generally moving forward in stages. However, not all social movements will survive the early stages of emergence and coalescence. The importance of context or sociopolitical structures is critical to understanding which social movements will fully develop and how they might do so.

Social Movements and Political Opportunity Structures

Sociologist Robert Merton established that societies are dynamic, sensitive to functional (and dysfunctional) outcomes of actions, with social institutions ultimately emerging as the integration of factors. Michael Lipsky observed that social movements tend to progress in stages and waves, with potentials and outcomes dependent upon many variables. Merton emphasized that institutional structures are not the only providers of societal survival functions, but that a variety of social and cultural alternatives exist, including the "deviant" actions of social movements.

Social scientists use the concept of "opportunity structures" to examine factors external to the movement or individuals within it that inhibit or facilitate the viability of a particular movement in a particular time and place. Peter Eisinger, in his study of 1960s-era riots in 43 American cities, coined the term *structure of political opportunities*, stating that these opportunities emerge from the cultural mood and ideological climate of a given time and place. They arise from situation-specific "soft spots" that might offer fertile ground for social movements to take root and develop. The structuralist approach emphasizes that the importance of those factors external to the movement are at least as important as factors relating to the goals, values, and characteristics of actors within the movement.

Sociologist Douglas McAdam, an early theorizer of the "political process model" for social movement analysis, explained that these external factors (or political opportunity structures) can be described along four spectra: (1) how open or closed to action the political institutions within a particular field of action are; (2) how stable or unstable the collectivity of elites who are operating at that time and place is; (3) whether or not those elites are affiliated with other entities outside their collectivity; and (4) whether or not the political institution(s) governing a particular field of action are willing and able to repress the movement. The particular integration of positions along these spectra can expand or contract political opportunities for the social movement, for other social movements, for opponents of the movement, or for elites and their allies.

Media Regimes and Political Information Opportunities

While shared norms, customs, traditions, values, and institutions have been the ground on which sociopolitical movements have taken root prior to the 21st century, the basic building block now is information and access to channels that empower actor-agents to construct and disseminate social meanings. Now, informational bonds construct sociopolitical bonds. Technological channels not only impact the venues and contexts of political interaction, they also construct them. Government is embedded in its publics in a radically new way and is increasingly vulnerable to networked collective action locally mobilized via global information technologies. Information fields are vastly expanded and far more complex, with fewer gatekeepers. Access to politicized information and the

power to transfer it widely is, with the emergence of digital communication modes, information technologies, and the global networks these generate, a new form of opportunity structure.

Bruce Bimber, political scientist and founder of the Center for Information Technology and Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara, has contextualized the current technological revolution and its impact on American democratic processes within a historical overview of the relationships between political information and institutional adaptions to advances in informational linkages. Bimber calls the current information environment—the rise of the Internet—the "fourth information revolution," the key characteristic of which is "information abundance." By this is meant that virtually anyone can produce and distribute it worldwide at little or no cost.

In this era of "post-bureaucratic pluralism," the power to act quickly, effectively, and economically has produced what Bimber calls a new "media regime." Absent the need for formal organization or interest groups, long-range planning, and extensive resources, some theorists expect increased political participation on an increasingly democratized field of action. Other theorists take issue with what they see as an overapplication of the concept of "political opportunity." These theorists fear that in attempting to offer a broad and comprehensive explanation, concrete and useful application will not be possible, especially because there appears to be a lack of consensus as to what a "political opportunity" actually is.

Nevertheless, the centrality and effectiveness of social media in generating, mobilizing, and sustaining the wave of revolutionary demonstrations and protests in nearly two dozen countries in the Middle East and north Africa beginning in December 2010, collectively named the Arab Spring, has been extensively studied. The relationship between social media (or "rebellious communication") and social movements generally is a growing subdiscipline of sociopolitical research; other focuses have been the Occupy Wall Street movement, the Iranian Green movement, animal rights activism in Poland, women's social networks in the United Kingdom and Germany, and *Kony 2012*, the viral video about Ugandan warlord Joseph Kony, which was reportedly viewed by up to half of young Americans, having tallied over 100 million views within six days of its release.

Leslie Reynard
Washburn University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Immersive Journalism; Social Authority; Technological Determinism.

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Political Parties

Political parties use social media to provide information, communicate about party issues and candidates, connect constituents and politicians, and ultimately to mobilize supporters to take action through volunteering, voting, or spreading the word. The two major political parties in the United States have taken different approaches to

the use of social media, while third parties seek to build social media capital through networks of online supporters, hoping to mitigate the financial disadvantage that they face during political campaigns and their exclusion from public debates. The Democratic Party, particularly during the 2008 and 2012 campaigns of Barack Obama, has incorporated social media into every aspect of its political campaigns.

In the 2012 election, both parties were expected to spend a record percentage of their advertising budgets on Internet advertising. While the Republican Party has also employed various social media platforms, it has not been as active in using them as tools for mobilization and engagement for constituents and supporters. Third-party candidates and supporters depend on social media to establish a presence in a market that requires significant campaign cash to compete for advertising time on broadcast media. In terms of content, the Democratic Party and the president also employ a more visual strategy when it comes to social media, relying on images and graphics with stylized text that are designed to be easily shared on any social media platform. For both Democrats and Republicans, especially during campaigns, social media activity is centered on the accounts of national candidates.

Ideologies

The United States is dominated by two major parties, representing two major ideologies, it is useful to examine how the parties' use of social media reflects their underlying ideologies, most commonly defined as conservative and liberal. Conservatives favor individualism, tradition, order, and well-defined structures of power. Liberals promote notions of equality, collective responsibility, and inclusion. Thus the Democratic conversation in the United States is about the value of collective rights and responsibilities versus the rights and responsibilities of the individual, and the role of government in facilitating those differing priorities. As many scholars have noted, social media may be a more hospitable environment for citizens with liberal values, who are generally more tolerant of the chaotic, democratic nature of online discussion. The Pew Research Center found that citizens who describe themselves as "liberal" consider social networking sites a valuable source of political news to a much greater degree than citizens who describe themselves as "conservative" or "moderate," although there were no significant differences between liberals and conservatives in overall use of social media. There is also, however, evidence to support the theory that social media's ability to distribute both authored and anonymous messages quickly, widely, and often spontaneously exacerbates political polarization on both ends of the liberal/conservative continuum.

Social media provide political organizations and actors with a two-way channel of communication. Members of the online public are able to respond to and reframe messages, and can serve as amplifiers or spoilers of a party or politician's preferred narrative. The Democratic Party advantage may be attributed to three factors. The first is the Obama campaign's early adoption of social media as a medium for speaking directly to supporters. The second is the recognition that effective use of social media means entrusting supporters to not only share campaign messages, but also to craft them. The third dimension of this strategy comes from the daily generation of content by the campaign, through both a candidate channel and official White House channels, which provide a constant stream of "president at work" messages and images.

Political parties are also represented in social media on the state and local level, by party accounts as well as local candidates, organizing and speaking to constituencies in their communities. At the national level, the tasks of communication and information are the focus, and supporters play a critical role in distribution of messages through sharing and retweeting. Both Democrats and Republicans maintain Facebook pages for their congressional and senatorial campaign committees, and both have attracted as many "likes" as the official party pages.

During the 2012 national elections, the Democrats further integrated social media into its campaign, creating a social media–style dashboard that allowed real-time tracking of volunteers and their campaign activities, thus maximizing the campaign's time and resources. The dashboard also provided the campaign with constantly updated information about voters. Post-election, President Obama has continued to regularly use social media

in his efforts to move legislation forward, encouraging citizens to contact members of Congress through Twitter and Facebook and express their support for his agenda. Using empirical methods, the Analyst Institute, a think tank organized and funded by progressives, continues to pursue data-driven strategies for connecting to and mobilizing voters, strategies that are fully grounded in the cell phone, Internet, and social media–connected world. For the Republican Party, the election campaign of Mitt Romney saw the development of an application dubbed ORCA, a voter tracking system that was criticized by campaign watchers as ineffective and undertested. This battle over the technological tools of persuasion and motivation represents an entirely new front for political campaigns.

Social Media on Official Party Web Sites

The official Web pages for the Democratic and Republican parties are similar in design. However, the content is presented quite differently, with the Democratic Party opting for visually focused content, providing images of the president, as well as talking points presented in stylized graphics that are designed for social media sharing. Both parties have included tools for social media–sharing on their pages, but in slightly different ways. On the Republican page, each page has a floating "share" button, requiring clicking through headlines to individual pages, which can then be shared on social media. On the Democrat's homepage, stories are presented on the home page with "share" buttons, requiring one less click for sharing to Twitter, Facebook, Google+, and other sites.

Facebook

Typing "Republican Party" into the Facebook search function does not bring up the official Republican Party page. "Republican National Convention" brings up the official "GOP" page with over one million "likes." Typing "Democratic Party" immediately brings up the Democratic Party Facebook page, with the recently updated, minimalist logo design. This page has over a half-million "likes." Both party pages represent miniscule followings in comparison to their national candidates, with Mitt Romney and Barack Obama listing more than 11 million and 33 million "likes," respectively, on their individual pages. President Obama also posts on Facebook as "The White House," a page that has just over a million subscribers.

President Obama posts on Facebook every day, sometimes multiple times per day, sharing content that is overwhelmingly positive, and primarily visual—smiling faces, images of the family and the family dog, and images of President Obama interacting positively with citizens. This approach is consistent with findings by the Pew Research Center, which suggest that users of social media see them as environments for primarily positive exchanges and content. There are frequent posts with humorous themes. There is consistency, although not duplication between the "White House" page and the "Barack Obama" page. For example, on the "Barack Obama" page, the image posted to celebrate Thanksgiving 2012 was a snapshot–style portrait that was clearly taken before the 2008 election, of a much younger Obama family, while the "White House" page shared a family photo that was a recent, and very formal, White House portrait.

Candidate Mitt Romney and the Republican National Committee (RNC) were not as frequent with their postings, and generally not as playful as the posts made on behalf of the president. Humor is rarely employed, nor are the posts as image-heavy as those of the Democrats. The RNC posted a single sentence wishing subscribers a "Happy Thanksgiving," while former candidate Romney posted an image of himself and his wife posed quite informally in their kitchen, a post that stands out on his Facebook page as uncharacteristically intimate. The post was shared more than 16,000 times, in comparison to the RNC's text-only greeting, which was only shared by 104 people. It is clear that for politicians and parties, a compelling image can dramatically increase the chances that a post will go viral on Facebook. In fact, the record for the most "liked" image ever on Facebook is now held by the Obama campaign by its celebratory message posted as results were announced in the 2012 election.

Twitter

President Obama's advantage of three to one on Facebook is even more dramatic on Twitter. Governor Romney amassed 1.7 million followers during the 2012 presidential campaign, whereas

President Obama has more than 20 million Twitter followers. In comparison, the Democratic Party official Twitter account (@TheDemocrats) has only 200,000 followers. At just under 200,000 followers, the Republican Party (@GOP) Twitter account is similarly dwarfed by its most recent national leader.

Twitter limits users to 140 characters, but allows for embedded content from image-sharing sites, including YouTube and TwitPic. It favors the clever retort over the long-winded argument, and allows users to address any other Twitter user via the @ symbol, known as a mention, whether they are connected through "following" or not. Twitter was widely used during the presidential debates of 2012 in a practice known as "live-tweeting." The most striking aspect of live-tweeting was the instant emergence of memes that influenced news media coverage of the debates. At other times, Democratic and Republican citizens can be found tweeting with the hashtags #p2 and #tcot. In this way, participants on Twitter connect with like-minded citizens, and also seek to provoke and engage political opponents.

YouTube

Both parties maintain a channel on YouTube. Neither of the party channels is very active in comparison to the channels of their most recent national candidates. The RNC channel has more views than the Democratic Party channel. Again, President Barack Obama has established an audience that dwarfs his opponents and his party to an exponential degree. Results of YouTube searches also demonstrate how candidates benefit from an active online following that creates and redistributes media among themselves. Searching the candidate or party name produces a number of user-generated tribute videos for President Obama, while critical parodies and satire are prominent in the search results for "Republican" and "Mitt Romney."

Other Parties, Other Platforms

Politicians and parties seem to have focused most of their attention on Facebook and Twitter, but the Democratic Party can also be found on Pinterest, as well as the mobile phone image-sharing application Instagram. The Republican Party is not easily found on these platforms. President Obama has a Myspace page that has been idle for more than a year; the parties are not present there at all. While the parties do not have a significant presence on Tumblr, a site that is dominated by a young demographic, President Obama does have an account, "ObamaFamily," which posts a stream of images from the official White House photographer. Third parties such as the Libertarian and Green parties have a presence on Twitter and Facebook, but their followers and subscribers represent a proportion of citizens that is similar to their nominal percentage of the popular vote in federal elections.

Conclusion

For political parties, social media has generated a new landscape that must be navigated, but also one that provides opportunities to maintain an ongoing conversation between politicians and constituents. The Republican Party has established a presence on social media sites, but has not yet fully deployed strategies designed to take advantage of the unique features of social media. Visual content, including many images of smiling faces, and political positions expressed as easily sharable graphics are the assets that are most likely to encourage supporters to share and retweet to their friends and family. The Democrats are also easier to find on social media, maintaining a consistent image across platforms.

The disparity between followers of high-profile politicians and parties raises the question of how parties can create and sustain a coherent social media presence when terms are over or politicians are unsuccessful in an election or re-election campaign. For the Democrats, Barack Obama has become the face of the party in the realm of social media. The challenge for his party will be to redirect his followers once his second term is over. For the Republican Party, this question is even more urgent because the party out of power finds itself without a national representative between presidential elections.

Jeanette Castillo
Ball State University

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Facebook; Twitter; Voter Turnout; YouTube.

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Politico

Politico is a fast-paced, innovative Web site (and accompanying newspaper) with an audience of 60 million visitors. The site changed the face of political news reporting by helping bring the news cycle down to 15 to 20 minutes, as opposed to network coverage that is typically on a 24-hour cycle. *Politico* is staffed with over 150 employees working to provide a mixture of politics, trade journalism, real-time chat, blogs, information on political jobs, and advertisements in a minute-by-minute format. Through the use of social media, *Politico* delivers political news and conversation in a real-time manner.

Launched on January 23, 2007, by Editor-in-Chief John F. Harris, Executive Editor Jim VandeHei, and Publisher for Allbritton Communications Robert Allbritton, *Politico* has quickly become one of the leading nonpartisan news media companies, covering national politics and Washington, D.C., news. *Politico's* daily newspaper has a circulation of over 30,000, is distributed free on Capitol Hill, and features content on the president, Congress, lobbyists, and media. In addition to the site and newspaper, readers can access and participate in *Politico*'s conversation through Twitter, Facebook, TV, and radio. Owned by Allbritton Communications, *Politico* is affiliated with the ABC Network, which is owned by the Walt Disney Company.

Editor-in-Chief John F. Harris has worked in journalism for over 30 years, working for *The Washington Post* as a reporter for 20 years until becoming interested in editing. Harris posits that becoming an editor allows one to become immersed in conversations about the future, contemplating "What's next?" During his brief editing career at the *Post,* Harris worked with then editor VandeHei, who had over 15 years of experience reporting on Washington politics. They began brainstorming about collaborating on a new political publication. In 2006, Robert Allbritton, chairman and chief executive of Allbritton Communications, offered Harris and VandeHei the opportunity to start a nonpartisan media company, which became *Politico*.

Though *Politico* continues to be a successful political news organization, the progressive watchdog group Media Matters for America has accused it of having a Republican slant. Media Matters for America is *Politico*'s strongest competitor, and has also been accused of being a "mouthpiece" for President Barack Obama. Despite *Politico*'s naysayers, it has proved that people want to read "fast, fresh, and forward looking news." It is this type of trend-setting reporting that gives *Politico* an edge over its competition. Media critics have given it mixed reviews; however, the positive reviews largely outweigh the negative ones.

Politico has embraced new technology, providing its audience an opportunity to download apps for smartphones, receive e-mail alerts, and voice their opinions on blogs. The newer forms of social media allow *Politico* to distribute stories that can instantaneously drive the conversation about politics and government. Erik Wemple, a media critic who writes for the *Washington Post*'s Web site, says that *Politico* has a credibility that comes from old media combined with the speed, TV, and social-media tools that define new media.

Politico's innovative means of news reporting on Capital Hill, Congress, and the president now has a spinoff Web site called *Politico Pro*. *Politico Pro* is a subscription-only product launched in February 2010, reporting on policy in a *Politico* style. According to social media critics, *Politico* is

for political "news junkies," whereas *Politico Pro* is for political insiders.

Jennifer Summary
Southeast Missouri State University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; *Drudge Report*; *Huffington Post*; Townhall.com.

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PolitiFact.com

PolitiFact.com, begun in August 2007, is a Web-based project of the *Tampa Bay Times* and partner news operations. The Web site researches and rates for accuracy statements made by public officials, including the executive branch, members of Congress, candidates, political party leaders, political activists and political action committees (PACs), advocacy groups, lobbyists, officials at all government levels, those testifying before Congress, and those who contribute to discourse in American politics such as pundits, columnists, interviewers, and talk-show hosts, and even widely circulated chain e-mails. They research statements using original reports, original sources, and impartial experts, rather than news stories; the end results of multiple sources and original reporting reflects its goal of arriving at the truth. The final step is a rating of the accuracy, truthfulness, or status of promises made in the statements.

The *Tampa Bay Times* (originally the *St. Petersburg Times*) was owned by the Poynter family since 1912. In the 1970s, its owner Nelson Poynter (who also cofounded the *Congressional Quarterly* with his wife Henrietta), devised a plan to keep his paper independent. He created a small nonprofit school for journalism, originally called the Modern Media Institute (later renamed the Poynter Institute), and left the school his shares in the Times Publishing Company (which owned the newspaper) when he died in 1978. Control of the newspaper is unique: a single executive manages all operations and then picks the successor. Partner news organizations, include newspapers such as the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *Austin American-Statesman*, and *The Oregonian*, as well as one radio partner, New Hampshire Public Radio.

Launching PolitiFact

PolitiFact, the paper's Web-based project, accepts underwriting funding from foundations involved with the improvement of civic discourse or news coverage, such as the Knight Foundation, Craigslist Charitable Fund, and the Collins Center for Public Policy. However, PolitiFact claims that it is an independent, nonpartisan news organization that does not answer to any corporate, political, or government interest.

Launched in August 2007, initially to fact-check the 2008 presidential race, it expanded in January 2009 to fact-check members of Congress and the White House. In 2009, PolitiFact was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for News Reporting for presidential election coverage in 2008. PolitiFact has developed a number of rating tools that evaluate the accuracy of statements or the solidity of positions. The Truth-O-Meter, the centerpiece of the Web site, investigates the accuracy of discourse by candidates, elected officials, political parties, interest groups, pundits, and talk-show hosts. Among the guiding principles for Truth-O-Meter ratings are the precision of the statement's wording and the context in which the statement was made.

Although PolitiFact tries to verify statements, the burden of proof for providing evidence to substantiate claims is on the person who made them.

PolitiFact staffers read many statement sources daily, including news reports, press releases, advertisements, Web and Facebook postings, speeches, and interview transcripts. They select which statements to research, report on, and rate for accuracy, based on a series of criteria involving the significance of a statement, the likelihood that a statement will be repeated by others, the verifiability of a claim (they do not fact check opinions), and the perception that a statement leaves an impression that may mislead or cause the audience to wonder "Is that true?" Recent topics range from gun control to sexual assault in the military, and from immigration reform to terrorism.

After an article is written and edited, it is reviewed by a minimum of three editors who establish a panel that assigns the rating. The ratings are offered in a hierarchy: the lower the rating, the more the deceitfulness (or the less truthfulness). A rating of "true" means that the statement is accurate, with nothing significant missing. A statement rated as "mostly true" is accurate, but needs additional information for clarification. If rated "half true," a statement exhibits partial accuracy, but leaves out details or presents information out of context. A rating of "mostly false" means that there may be an element of truth but the statement ignores information that would offer a different perception. If a statement is not at all accurate, it is rated "false." The lowest rating, given to statements that are ridiculously false, is "pants on fire."

Each Truth-O-Meter rating is accompanied by a list of sources and includes links to those sources so that readers can decide if they agree with the rating. An annual "Lie of the Year" has been awarded since 2009, with the first going to Sarah Palin's claims of the government death panels that would result from the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (also known as Obamacare). The same issue garnered the 2010 award for opponents who claimed that the act was a government health care takeover. In 2011, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee was cited for claiming that Congressman Paul Ryan's budget proposal would end Medicare, which was untrue. Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney gained the 2012 award for his false claim that President Obama had sold Chrysler to Italian nationals so that they could build Jeeps in China.

Another rating feature is the Flip-O-Meter, which rates the consistency of an elected official's issue positions. Rather than providing a value judgment of shifting positions (which might demonstrate an ability to compromise or adapt), the articles presented with the Flip-O-Meter offers analysis of the shift and then rates the amount of change based on three ratings. It follows the identical standards and process for writing, editing, and rating. A "no flip" rating signals that there was no significant change in position. A partial change rates a "half flip." A total alteration of the initial position receives a "full flop."

Promise Meters rate the status of campaign promises made by elected officials. The first was the "Obameter," which compiled over 500 campaign promises made by Barack Obama during his presidential campaigns in 2008 and 2012. Campaign promises are rated as "not yet rated," "in the works," or "stalled"; if an action has occurred, it is rated as "promise kept," "compromise," or "promise broken." A summary of the status of all promises is created, and the Obameter also sorts promises by subject, such as energy, taxes, the economy, and the military. An additional Promise Meter, the "GOP Pledge-O-Meter," reviews Republican congressional leader promises made during the 2010 campaign, and uses the same rating system.

PolitiFact has received criticism from both sides of the political spectrum, with conservatives and liberals claiming bias. This is because some facts that the site claims to have been checked could not possibly have been examined. However, PolitiFact has received praise for some of its efforts. With the motto "Sorting out the truth in politics," and its mandate to employ ethical, strict journalistic standards, PolitiFact's fact finders attempt to confirm the accuracy of discourse that impacts daily civic life.

Beth M. Waggenspack
Virginia Tech

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; FactCheck.org; Lobbyists; Political Parties; *Politico*.

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Polling

A straw poll is an informal survey of attitudes about an issue, candidate, or event that does not have binding consequences in the arena in which it takes place. The first political poll, which was a straw poll, was introduced during the election of 1824 in Pennsylvania. This poll predicted that Andrew Jackson would win over John Quincy Adams, and Jackson did win the popular vote but lost the electoral college (which was not the object of the survey).

Over the next century, the process of data collection evolved into direct-mail solicitations through the magazine of the day, *Literary Digest*, which contacted millions of potential voters as its sample and successfully offered predictions on presidential elections from 1916 through 1932. In 1936, *Literary Digest* opted to base its sample on motor vehicle registrations and phone numbers, which biased its sample, and led to the prediction that the more affluent candidate, Alf Landon, would be the next president. Of course, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was re-elected for the second time, and due to its errors, *Literary Digest* lost credibility and soon went out of business.

Instead of collecting data from millions of people, as had been the practice by *Literary Digest*, George Gallup and Elmo Roper used representative sampling methods of fewer people to predict the outcome of the 1936, 1940, and 1944 elections. Gallup and Roper began using the modern scientific approach to polling by implementing a probability sampling technique and a margin of error. In 1948, Gallup, along with other pollsters, predicted that Thomas Dewey would win the presidency. Yet, Truman won re-election, and the polling error is reflected in the famous photograph of Harry Truman holding the *Chicago Tribune* newspaper with the headline "Dewey Defeats Truman." This catastrophic effort was explained by embarrassed pollsters as "late deciders" breaking for the president.

Since the 1950s, polling has become an important part of the political campaign process for a variety of reasons, including the media's penchant for horse-race-oriented campaign stories to entice and keep market share, as well as campaigns' attempts to formulate messages that reflect a candidate's strategy in winning the election or success in a public policy initiative. Polling has proliferated in recent times. In 1972, there was one national presidential poll during the last three weeks of the election; in 2008, there were 24.

Why Use Polling?

Polling is utilized in politics to gauge the public's attitude toward a person or issue, and to learn what message could persuade a particular type of voter to support a particular person or issue. Polls can measure candidate viability through the ballot test question, and evaluate the effectiveness of a particular communication strategy. For instance, polling allows a representative sample of 1,000 people to share their opinions on a candidate or issue, thereby providing the researcher the ability to extrapolate such findings to the overall population.

Polling provides data on key segments of constituents of the population's attitudes toward a particular issue, in contrast to the overall population. Standpoint theory affirms that it is problematic to truly understand someone else's perspective of the world because every person is shaped by multiple factors and individual experiences. Polling provides a vehicle to understand trends, similarities, and the differences of subgroups within the general population.

Data Collection

There have been many changes in collection methods of data over the last 100 years. For instance, the straw poll, which was popular in the 19th century, is now viewed more as a fundraising gimmick, rather than a legitimate and accurate measurement of public opinion. For example,

The Ames, Iowa, straw poll has been important to the Republican Party since 1980. Fred Karger speaks at the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines, Iowa, prior to the straw poll. Karger was a Republican candidate for the 2012 presidential election.

the Ames, Iowa, straw poll has been used by the Republican Party since 1980, but has accurately predicted the eventual nominee only twice (1996 and 2000).

Direct mail and face-to-face interviews for data collection were the most popular techniques used in the early 20th century. Direct mail continued to be popular into the late 1980s. Yet, the increased cost of postage and the decrease in responses adversely impacted the reliability of this data collection method. The face-to-face interview also became too costly, and was hampered by potential interviewer bias. In response, the modern polling industry adopted the telephone as its favored means of data collection.

Live-operator phone calls continue to be the standard practice because they allow access to most of the population and there is no limit on what sample of the population one can access via cell phones. A total of 11 of the 22 national polling firms use this telephone method.

For the last decade, telephone data collection has evolved with voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) and interactive voice recognition (IVR) software, known as auto calls or robocalls. This system of data collection allows for a prerecorded message to be played to all recipients. Recipients respond with keypads to enter their choices. According to Nate Silver, the most accurate pollster in 2008 and 2010 was Scott Rasmussen, and in 2012 Public Policy Polling; both use IVR data collection.

One explanation for the accuracy of IVR data collection is the trend for increased automation in people's day-to-day lives, including touch systems for customer service, self-banking, and even self-checkout at stores. However, there are challenges as IVR may lose its legitimacy in data collection, given that the FCC has made it illegal to call cell phones, which limits the sampling frame. Internet data collection is growing in popularity with the ability to ask longer questions and have a representative sample. Firms like Ipsos/Reuters and Google Consumer Surveys were remarkable successes in 2012.

Aggregate Polling

Known as "the poll of polls," aggregate polling has been around since 2000. The distinguishing characteristic of aggregate polling is that statisticians do not actually conduct any polls themselves but rather collect polls and use a weighting system to predict the outcomes of races. Critics argue that aggregate polling compares apples with oranges, as each poll has different margins of error and different data collection processes. Nonetheless, proponents argue that the reliability of results as accurate predictors proves the validity of the method. Real Clear Politics was the first to introduce this method to the mainstream, and aggregate polling is now very popular in the media, as is evidenced by the *Huffington Post* and the *New York Times*' blog by Nate Silver, www.fivethirtyeight.com.

Web Analytics

Today's pollsters are opting for noninvasive ways of measuring attitudes as a means of countering the Hawthorne effect, which suggests that the act of observation will affect behavior. Web analytics examines the dynamics of individuals on the Web. As people surf the Web, data is constantly collected about which pages a person visits, how long he or she stays on a page, and how many comments are generated by a story or quote. Some analytics include the number of "likes" or

"friends" on Facebook, the number of followers on Twitter, or the number of views on YouTube. One critical concern is that social network sites can be artificial or have purposefully inflated counts due to advertising.

Types of Polling

Cross-sectional polls are the most common type of polling used in political campaigns. These are snapshots-in-time polls, where a poll is conducted in a few days or less. Such polls are also called benchmark polls and brushfire polls. These types of polls are limited in value because there is only one result to analyze, as opposed to longitudinal studies.

Tracking polls are popular in determining the effects of how messages are received by voters. Tracking polls are conducted through a series of shorter polls over the course of days, weeks, or even years.

Overnight and flash polls are typically used to learn the effects of a particular event, such as a debate, or if an advertisement or direct mail piece is having the intended effects. These polls are done in one night, and have a few questions that directly examine a communication phenomenon.

Bellwether polls use a sampling technique that identifies a region or city/town of a state that closely reflects the voting trends of the entire state. This region is polled and the results are generalized to the overall population.

Push polling is a message strategy technique that is designed to resemble a scientific poll. The purpose of push polling is not to measure the attitudes or feelings of a potential voter, but rather to persuade a voter through the use of leading questions.

Exit polls are conducted the day of an election; voters are asked to tell interviewers who they voted for and about their demographics. The U.S. Constitution calls for a secret ballot, and in order to learn the demographics of voter support for a particular candidate or issues on Election Day, pollsters will visit various voting locations to interview voters after they have cast their votes.

Polling Effects

There are multiple theories on the effects of polls on society, but the extent and magnitude of such effects is up for debate. Some advocate that a poll early in the campaign, that shows a candidate winning will create a bandwagon effect as people want to be associated with a winner, and will support a candidate early in the process, thereby limiting the ability for a challenger to persuade voters.

In contrast to the bandwagon phenomenon is the underdog effect, based on the notion that people root for the underdog, as witnessed by the David versus Goliath narrative. When a poll shows a candidate losing, this theory postulates that people will rally around the candidate and support him or her in opposition to the presumptive winner.

Immediacy theory argues that people are intensely interested in the results of elections, and that instead of waiting for Election Day to count the votes, there is a need to know who is winning at any given point. As a result, the popularity of polling has increased. This horse race phenomenon provides pundits something to talk about during the campaign dependent upon the polling results. However, LaPiere's studies of the 1930s that found that attitudes do not necessarily reflect behavior, and several indicators, such as favorable opinion, may not result in an actual vote.

Question Design

Two key concepts regarding polling are validity and reliability. Validity asks, "Are we studying what we claim to be studying?" and reliability looks at the consistency of the instrument used to collect the data in terms of its ability to measure the same thing the same way each time. Such factors as the time of day a survey is administered, the day of the week, and the weather can influence the results and lower the reliability of data.

Basic survey format includes a screening question, name recognition questions, followed by ballot tests, then issue and message strategy questions, and finally demographic questions.

Screening questions are used to qualify a person to participate in the survey. Most polls for electoral politics will ask if the person is registered or likely to vote in order to qualify for the survey. Yet there is a caveat, which will be discussed subsequently, in the "likely voter model."

Name recognition is a product of favorability questions, where respondents are asked if they have a positive opinion, negative opinion, no

opinion, or have never heard of the candidate in question.

Ballot test questions are asked after the name recognition questions, so as to not influence the former. These questions focus on who voters are going to vote for. Most pollsters write and order the responses based on what the voter will see on the ballot on Election Day. Issue and message strategy questions focus on identifying what issues are most important to voters. Demographic questions focus on age, party affiliation, gender, socioeconomic status, education level, home ownership, marital status, race, ethnicity, and children, and so on. Open-ended questions allow interviewers to freely choose their answers, but can be difficult to analyze because they need to be categorized and coded. Most polls use forced choice question design.

Polling can be used as part of a media audit to determine where voters get their news, what programs they watch, or what other sources they use throughout the day in order to target messages to these individuals.

Wording of questions can bias the validity of a poll. For example, using loaded words such as if a person "supports the killing of babies" would likely result in an answer of "no," but the question of whether someone "supports abortion" could elicit a "yes" response. Other examples include double-barreled questions in which two questions are asked at once. Leading questions are characterized by an assertion that predisposes the recipient to a particular response.

Sampling Methods

A sample is a subset of the population. Probability sampling refers to the opportunity for everyone in a population to have an equal opportunity to be chosen. Since political polling is protected as political speech, the "do not call list" does not apply and all phone numbers can be dialed. The exception is that if one is using an automated data collection method, one is not allowed to call cell phones.

The two most common types of probability sampling employed by pollsters are random digit dial (RDD), and using a random sample from a list of registered voters. RDD is a probability sampling method that randomly generates telephone numbers by using area codes, followed by three-digit local exchange code, and then a random assignment of the last four digits. An important caveat with this technique is if one generate one's own RDD list, one must make sure to eliminate any emergency numbers, including police stations and hospitals.

Registered voter lists can be acquired from the Secretary of State's offices normally for free, or for a nominal cost, However, many private vendors provide this data to candidates and campaigns as well. A typical random sample provided by a vendor costs $350 to $500 depending on size and any stratification requests.

Data Analysis

Polls are analyzed through top-line results (referred to as frequencies or marginal), which are the percentage of responses given for each answer to each question. Most pollsters only use cross tabulations as further analysis, and do not employ advanced statistical testing such as Chi Square, Anova's, t-test, correlation, and regression analysis.

Before results are published, most pollsters will determine if the sample that answered the poll is representative of the entire population, based on a set of parameters such as age, gender, and party affiliation. If the sample is not representative, then the pollster will use a system of weighing prior to analyzing the results.

Weighing is the process of assigning more value to one demographic and less value to another. For example, if a sample has 100 respondents, and 70 were women and 30 were males, but it is known from voter registration numbers that gender is split 50/50, then one would devalue the results of women by dividing 70 by 1.4 and multiplying men 30×1.67 to create a representative sample of 50/50.

Using multiple demographics is more complex and there is no universal, agreed-upon weighing principle used by all pollsters. Yet, the general rule is to either collect a large enough sample in order to eliminate enough respondents to match the parameters set by the demographics, or after each weighing of one demographic, making adjustment in other demographics.

Perhaps the most important criteria for weighing is party affiliation, and some firms use a likely voter model (LVM), which accounts for the

variance in survey results for any given race. Pollsters use a variety of techniques to determine the LVM of any given election, including exit polling and party registration numbers. Some pollsters do not weigh their results, claiming that the randomness of the sample is what makes the results representative of the overall population.

Margin of Error

Margin of error (MoE) is a statistic used to determine how much sampling error is contained in the results of a survey. It is a standardized value primarily related to sample size, assuming a random sample research design. It quantifies the amount of unavoidable error that is built into the sampling process, since there can never be a 100 percent match between a sample and the population from which it is drawn.

A MoE is calculated based on the size of the sample, and to a certain degree, the size of the overall population. Simply put, in a random sampling design, the more people who answer the survey, the lower the MoE. Sample error is then used in further calculations, including the linked numbers' "confidence level and confidence interval." Once calculated, the numerical value of the margin of error is then applied to the "average" or mean response to a question, first as an addition, then as a subtracted number (since one does not know if the error is "too high" or "too low" relative to the unknown true value), resulting in a range of percentage values along which the accurate measurement can be presumed to lie. This is called the "confidence interval." "Confidence level," a related term, refers to the relative proportion of all possible cases that any particular confidence interval can be expected to describe, using the mean value as a point of reference and expanding in both directions (positive and negative valences) to cover increasingly large areas of the Bell Curve that describes the total population.

Social science research typically uses a 95 percent confidence level, which in clear language means that it calculates the range of values revealed in the survey, and along which the "real" value (in the population) is presumed to occur, to describe 95 percent of all possible cases. This is also frequently expressed as being "95 percent confident" in one's results, or as being confident that one's results are accurate "95 times out of a 100," although such colloquial interpretations can sometimes run the danger of sliding toward over-simplification.

Challenges for the Future

Equifinality suggests that there are multiple ways to reach a desired outcome, and this certainly applies to polling. Methods of data collection and analysis have continued to evolve from the days of the first straw poll conducted during the 1824 presidential election, and the challenges presented by the *Literary Digest* approach to public opinion. For example, over the last decade, modifications in techniques have changed to ensure a representative sample, with younger people opting for cell phones and abandoning landlines. In order to reach subgroups of the population, multiple methods of data collection will become more prominent in the future, including the use of Web analytics and the Internet.

An example of how different forms of data collection can lead to bias responses is a study conducted by Pew Research Center (2010), which suggests that people who answer the polls on landlines are biased toward conservative values by about 5 percent versus those who answer via cell phones. Those successful in gauging public opinion via polling will remain vigilant and cognizant of such changes within the public and its means and manner of decision making. To do so increases the likelihood that polling predictions mirror reality, which is the bottom line in the credibility of any pollster.

Spencer H. Kimball
Emerson College

See Also: Data Mining; Focus Groups; Forecasting Elections; Inferring Sentiment; Information Aggregation; Predictive Analytics; Push Polling; Voter Turnout.

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Pornography, Revenge

The term *revenge pornography*, or *involuntary pornography*, refers to Web sites where users post sexually explicit images of individuals, primarily women, without their consent, often along with their full legal names and detailed contact information, including Facebook profiles or other social media identities, so that third parties may harass them. It also refers to posting this type of sexually explicit material on other people's online and social media sites in order to give the impression that the owners of those sites consume pornographic material, when in fact this may not be the case. Typical "revengers" are the depicted individuals' ex-partners. Nude images, however, may also be posted by hackers. Apart from nude images and contact information, users may also post false information that creates a negative image of the person who is subjected to further humiliation. Revenge pornography Web sites subject individuals to severe emotional injury, pecuniary loss if they lose their job, and a significant likelihood of being stalked and harassed in cyberspace and real life.

Misconduct

Revenge pornography Web sites refer to the generic group of social media. Similar to social networks, Internet forums, and blogs, revenge pornography Web sites offer a site for interactions among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas. Just as YouTube or Facebook host other people's images and videos, revenge pornography sites enable users to post nude images and videos for vindictive purposes, whereby the person submitting information accepts full responsibility for uploading it.

Although revenge pornography Web sites may feature private information of men and couples, women's images are prevalent and constitute the majority of profiles. Sexually explicit images are often acquired by victims' ex-partners in the course of the romantic relationship. They may be obtained with the consent of the woman when she, for instance, sends intimate "sext" messages, sexually explicit text/video messages via a cell phone or social media networks, to her partner. Alternatively, nude photos may be attained by hackers clandestinely from victims' PCs, social media profiles, and cell phones. Revenge pornography sites are large repositories for amateur pornography and online discussion platforms where users can share opinions about the contents. They also serve as easy sources of private information, including revenge subjects' names and city of residence, as well as screen shots of their social media pages.

Despite the sexually explicit content of revenge pornography sites, revenge pornography should not be confused with conventional forms of pornography. Traditional pornographic materials are produced by consenting adults. Revenge pornography is nonconsensual pornography, whereby those individuals whose nude images are posed online are denied the rights to consent to be used as sex objects by Web site users. The very purpose of revenge pornography is to allow users of the Internet to post, exchange, and comment on nude images in order to shame, humiliate, and destroy the lives and reputations of hand-picked targets.

Although defenders of revenge pornography argue that the information they use is already available online through multiple sources, critics counter that these Web sites deliver private information while making women, without their express consent, subjects to sexual harassment and sexual fixation for (cyber-)stalkers and trolls. Revenge pornography sites allow posting comments that are cynical and sarcastic remarks on intimate photos. Most of them mean to shame those who are featured for their provocative

content. Because revenge pornography sites reveal detailed private information about victims, stalkers are provided with sufficient information to find victims, follow them, and research them through their use of social media profiles, work Web sites, forums, and online directories. Stalking via smartphones, social networking Web sites and in real life may present risks to the victims' emotional and physical health.

Allegations and Lawsuits

Intrusion into an ordinary person's private sexual sphere may generate considerable profits. Promising fast and easy revenues, revenge pornographers have demonstrated persistence and creativity, filling in a gap in the amateur pornography market.

Revenge pornography seems to have first come to the public eye with the launch of the site IsAnyoneUP.com in 2010. Founded by Hunter Moore, IsAnyoneUP.com was the materialization of an idea that came from a woman who continuously sent Moore sexually explicit shots. Moore created a blog for his collection of images, which was quickly expanded to include other nude pictures sent by Internet users. Revenge-seeking users rapidly upgraded Moore's unexceptional blog into a well-known online database of nude images and personal information.

IsAnyoneUP.com garnered over 30 million page views a month, and earned up to $10,000 a month until Moore decided to shut it down on April 19, 2012, following mounting public pressure. Because the site attracted a great deal of condemnatory attention, much of which was related to child pornography, defamation, and privacy invasion, Moore was subjected to investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). He faced numerous lawsuits, such as one by James McGibney, in which Moore was found guilty of defamation and was fined $250,000 in damages.

In February 2013, John S. Morgan sued and shut down another revenge pornography site, www.Texxxan.com, citing copyright infringement under Texas state law. The lawsuit on behalf of more than two dozen local women claimed that the site was designed to cause humiliation and emotional distress. The lawsuit also alleged invasion of privacy, gross negligence, emotional distress, and civil conspiracy on the part of the Web site operator. CajunWins.com and DirtyBlast.com disappeared when Texxxan.com went offline as a result of the pending lawsuit. Pinkmeth.com, maintained by anonymous individuals, is still in operation with a pending lawsuit in Denton County Court, Texas, by Shelby Conklin. She claims punitive damages of $1 million from Pinkmeth.com for intrusion on seclusion, public disclosure of private facts, appropriation of her name and likeness, and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

Criminalization and Legal Remedies

Revenge pornography has been subject to much controversy. Law enforcement officers and prosecutors face increased pressure to work with cases of nonconsensual pornography. Victimized individuals have resorted to suing site owners or those associated with revenge pornography for hosting nude images displayed online. Revenge pornographers make money by posting nude images and have little incentive to create policies that make it easy for victims to remove the submitted photos. More refined legislation is necessary to more narrowly define the conditions under which the victims of revenge pornography are protected. Such legislative maneuverings are very likely to be pushed back by companies and organizations that seek to keep content restrictions on the Internet as minimal as possible.

Revenge pornography sites, as much as other social media Web sites, enjoy certain protections from liability for the contents posted by users in the United States under the Communications Decency Act (CDA) of 1996. Section 230 of the CDA immunizes Web sites from liability resulting from the publication of information provided by others. As long as published material is not illegal to post (e.g., child pornography or copyrighted material), Section 230 provides immunity for Internet service providers, including blogs and Web sites, that publish information provided by third parties. Protections under the CDA, however, are not without limitations. Section 230 does not protect the third parties who post illicit content on the Internet. Administrators of revenge pornography Web sites could face liability for facilitating the violation of Section 230.

Given the proliferation of revenge pornography in a legal environment that makes it very difficult to criminalize legal pornography, a series of lawsuits

against revenge pornography Web sites instigated the launch of a public campaign against involuntary pornography supported by petitions for both state and federal laws in the United States. Petitioners urge fighting revenge pornographers who post intimate images without permission. They call for the amendment of cyberstalking laws and enactment of an invasion of privacy statute that would criminalize revenge pornography.

Florida is the first state in the United States to attempt to take an action against revenge pornography. House Bill 787, effective October 2013, makes posting revenge pornography a felony punishable by up to five years in prison and a $5,000 fine. It made it a third-degree felony for a person to knowingly use a computer, or other device capable of electronic data transmission or distribution, to transmit or post to a Web site or any other social networking service, or cause to be posted to a Web site or any other social networking service any photograph or video of an individual that depicts nudity and contains the depicted individual's personal information, or counterfeit or fictitious information purporting to be such personal information, without first obtaining the depicted person's written consent, unless the victim was photographed or videotaped in public.

Hacktivists Against Revenge Porn

The owners of revenge porn sites have been under attack by online advocacy groups. Anonymous, a group of unidentified Internet users engaged in a controversial online resistance movement on a number of sociopolitical matters, declared war on Hunter Moore in 2012. Although best known for targeting corporate Web sites, Anonymous's operations were to "make a real difference in the lives of hundreds of bullied teenagers and protect them from real harm such as rape or stalking."

In Operation Hunt Hunter, Anonymous hacked and distributed Moore's personal information, including date of birth, address, phone number, parents' names, social networking details, internet protocol (IP) addresses, and a list of pending lawsuits. In another operation, Operation Darknet, Anonymous hacked into and stole users' e-mails and passwords from several child pornography Web sites, later releasing them to the public. Despite the pronounced antipornography agenda, Anonymous attacked YouTube with pornographic film clips disguised with tags of teen idol musicians to avoid detection and increase their chance of exposure across the site.

Evaluations of Anonymous's activities thus vary. On one hand, Anonymous's philosophy and modus operandi have received wide public support. On the other hand, hacking activities have been criticized for making Hunter Moore a victim, as is anyone else who is picked on by hackers promoting a particular set of sociopolitical ideals.

Yuliya G. Zabyelina
Masaryk University

See Also: Anonymous; Antibullying Campaigns; Cyberculture; Cyber-Vigilantism; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Evolution of Social Media; Privacy; Sexting.

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Portman, Rob

Rob Portman, the junior senator from Ohio, has been considered twice as a potential vice presidential candidate and often serves as a nemesis for Republican candidates during debate practice. His relative low profile belies his conservative policies and accomplishments. Democratic Senate Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad has said, "He is a person of credibility and decency that commanded respect on both sides of the aisle." Former President George W. Bush called him a "good friend, a decent man, and a skilled

negotiator." These two statements sum up Portman's character.

Portman was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on December 19, 1955, to Joan and William C. Portman II. When he was young, his father borrowed money to start the Portman Equipment Company, a forklift dealership. The company grew from a small business in which Portman, his siblings, and mother all worked, to a sizeable and successful enterprise that employed more than 300 workers.

Portman graduated from the Cincinnati Country Day School in 1974, and Dartmouth College in 1979, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts. In 1984, Portman graduated from the University of Michigan Law School. In July 1986, Portman married the former Jane Dudley, who worked as an aide to then Democratic Congressman Tom Daschle. The Portmans have three children: Jed, Will, and Sally.

Portman and his siblings own the Golden Lamb Restaurant and Inn in Lebanon, Ohio. The property has been in his family since 1926, and has a reputation for being haunted. Along with the inn, Portman's interest in history runs deep. He penned his only book to date, with coauthor Cheryl Bauer, about an Ohio Shaker Village founded in 1805. The book, *Wisdom's Paradise: The Forgotten Shakers of Union Village*, was published in 2004.

Outside of politics, Portman enjoys physical challenges. He bikes, canoes, and kayaks. He has kayaked two major Chinese rivers, and the entire Rio Grande.

Legal Career

After graduating from law school, Portman moved to Washington, D.C., to work for the law firm Patton Boggs, where he practiced trade law and lobbied on behalf of clients. From there, he moved back home to Cincinnati and joined the law firm Graydon Head & Ritchie, where he practiced business and international law.

It was not long before Portman returned to Washington. In 1989, he joined the White House staff of President George H. W. Bush as an associate counsel. He quickly moved up to become deputy assistant, and then director of the White House Office of Legislative Affairs, where he served as the president's chief lobbyist on Capitol Hill until 1991.

In 2007, after another stint in the White House, this time serving under President George W. Bush, Portman returned home to Cincinnati and legal practice. He joined the law firm of Squire Sanders as part of the firm's transactional and international trade practice, where he practiced until winning the Senate seat that was vacated by the retirement of George V. Voinovich in 2010.

presidential Appointments

Shortly after winning a second term in office, President George W. Bush nominated Portman to become the U.S. Trade Representative. He quickly won Senate confirmation and was sworn in on May 17, 2005. Upon taking office, Portman became the first sitting congressman in history to hold the post. With trade law in his background and years on Capital Hill working on trade issues, Portman quickly advanced and successfully gained congressional approval for trade deals with Bahrain, Peru, Oman, and Colombia.

Portman successfully navigated approval for the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) after a bruising battle. Portman's power of persuasion served him well during intense congressional debates. The Senate eventually passed the measure with only a nine-vote margin. However, victory in the house was even more difficult. The House passed the bill with only a two-vote margin, 217–215, on July 28, 2005.

Following his success on CAFTA, President Bush called on Portman again to take on a tough assignment. On April 18, 2006, Bush nominated Portman to become director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The Senate unanimously confirmed Portman on May 26, 2006. Portman stayed in the position for only one year. In a later interview with the *Hill*, he lamented, "I was frustrated when I was there about some spending issues—specifically, as you know, I wanted to offer a balanced budget over five years, and a lot of people didn't." However, Portman's skill for gaining consensus helped him persuade Bush to submit his first plan to balance the budget and eliminate the deficit by 2012. Even though he was "frustrated," Portman remained loyal to Bush.

Congressional Career

With the encouragement of his friend Congressman John Boehner (R-OH), Portman decided to

run for Congress in 1993. He won the special election to fill a spot vacated by his friend and mentor Bill Gradison. Portman had worked on Gradison's earlier congressional campaign for the seat he would eventually win, and hold for 12 years.

From 1993 to 2005, Portman represented the 2nd Congressional District of Ohio in the U.S. House of Representatives. He won seven consecutive congressional elections with over 70 percent of the vote. Portman worked on a wide range of issues and championed many diverse causes. For example, he worked to gain passage of a ban on unfunded mandates, supported welfare reform, passed a measure to eliminate capital gains taxes on home sales, and cosponsored a bill to swap Costa Rican debt for preservation of tropical forests. In 2004, he teamed up with Louis Stokes, then a Cleveland-area Democratic congressman, to pass a bill that would create the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati.

U.S. Senator Rob Portman (left) pins the Silver Star medal on Sergeant Thomas Gdovin (right) on November 8, 2011. Gdovin was awarded the medal for risking his life to save a wounded soldier while under enemy fire during the Vietnam War in 1968.

Over the course of his House career and tenure in the executive branch, Portman was known for his willingness to work with Democrats to ensure important legislation was enacted, all the while maintaining his devotion to conservative ideals. While in the House, Portman voted with the Republican majority 90 percent of the time, and garnered consistently high approval ratings from conservative organizations such as the National Right to Life Committee, National Taxpayer's Union, Americans for Tax Reform, and the Christian Coalition of America.

When Ohio Senator George V. Voinovich announced his planned retirement from the Senate, Portman immediately formed a team to seek the seat. Portman won a decisive victory in 2010 by a margin of 57 to 39 percent of the vote. Since joining the Senate, he returned to the traditional issues he has focused on for much of his career—the country's debt and economic recovery.

In August 2011, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) appointed Portman to the high-profile Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction. This bipartisan panel was created to recommend ways to reduce the federal budget deficit by $1.5 trillion over 10 years. When the effort bogged down, Portman left disappointed, telling the *Columbus Dispatch*, "I am very sad about this process not succeeding because it was a unique opportunity to both address the fiscal crisis and give the economy a shot in the arm."

In the Senate, Portman serves on the Senate Committee on the Budget and the Senate Armed Services Committee, where he is the ranking Republican on the Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee, a member of the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, and a member of the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces. He also serves on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, where he is a member of the Subcommittee on Energy, the Subcommittee on National Parks, and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Portman is also a member of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, serving as a member of the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and

International Security, and as the ranking Republican on the Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight.

Communication and Social Media

While Portman has been an integral part of the governance of the country for more than 20 years, his name is not as well known to the public outside of his congressional district. He has been quietly and intensely working inside the "Beltway" to pass legislation, but not working the media or social media. While he is on multiple platforms of social media, he is a relative newcomer.

Portman's Senate Web site links to the social media platforms on which he is active. These platforms include: Flickr, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Portman also posts audio files to his online newsroom. These files are often public service announcements or discussions on important issues. There are no favorite videos posted on his YouTube channel; instead, he posts certain videos directly to his Senate Web site. Weekly columns are used like blog posts to his Web site and cover a range of topics and issues.

There are more than 200 photos posted to Portman's Flickr photo-sharing account. The photos vary from a meeting with police officers in Lima, Ohio, to a picture of Portman looking out over Paktika Province on a visit to Afghanistan. The majority of the pictures he shares are of folks in his native state of Ohio—constituents, business owners, and veterans. Sprinkled throughout is the occasional head of state or foreign trade representative next to Brutus the Buckeye, Ohio State University's mascot.

Portman also utilizes Twitter to connect with constituents. In just over a year, he gathered nearly 23,000 followers. His tweets are more personal in nature, such as congratulating college sports teams, tweeting pictures of himself and a teammate winning a kayak contest, and asking constituents for movie recommendations. However, he does not shy away from tweeting about disagreements with Democratic policies or supporting Republican candidates for office. He also will retweet articles and information that he wants to share with his followers. His communication style is casual and unassuming. The Senator does not tweet as often as other members, but he uses the platform nearly every day.

Portman's Facebook page dates back to February 2011, when he used his first post to announce that he was "up and running" on social media and inviting constituents to communicate with his office via Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. He quickly paid tribute to his mentor and friend President George H. W. Bush by posting an article and congratulating him on being awarded the presidential Medal of Freedom. He uses Facebook often, sometimes posting more than once a day with updates on votes, links to his YouTube channel for floor speeches, pictures of Ohioans, and even a proud post showcasing a stint as a guest blogger for the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank.

In a little more than a year on YouTube, the Senator had more than 54,000 views of only 166 videos. The Senator also links to his Google+ account from his YouTube channel, inviting viewers to "hangout" with other Portman friends. Unlike his approach on Twitter and Facebook, Portman's videos are decidedly more policy heavy and more partisan in nature. Videos showcase the Senator testifying on specific bills, criticizing Democratic policies on national news shows and video responses to questions from his Twitter and Facebook accounts about health care reform.

The Senator maintains only a shell campaign Web site at robportman.com when he is not actively campaigning. While visitors can sign up to receive e-newsletters, the blog, newsroom, and other functions are not active when the campaign is not active.

Portman uses his Senate Web site and social media effectively as tools to provide information to constituents. While he is not prolific, his communication seems genuine and appears to reflect his overall communications style—understated, but clear. As is his style, there are very few vanity pictures, posts, or videos. Instead, the information Portman provides reflects back to the issues he has championed and that voters in Ohio want to know and follow.

Katherine R. Fleck
Ohio Northern University

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2010); McConnell, Mitch; Project Vote Smart; Spending and Debt, Government.

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Poverty

Poverty is the lack of sufficient resources to meet one's basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing. In the United States, this is measured by a theoretical poverty threshold calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau, while eligibility for welfare programs and benefits is measured by poverty guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Poverty is relative to the cost and style of living in a particular community. The level of income established as "poverty" in the United States can provide a very comfortable lifestyle in other parts of the world. A 2011 United Nations (UN) study, "The Global Social Crisis," warns that between 47 million and 84 million more people fell into or were trapped in extreme poverty because of the global financial and economic crisis. The World Bank suggests that what makes people poor is not just low income level, but also being illiterate, having high health risks, and living in squalid conditions. This creates a profound deprivation in wellbeing.

Another approach to understanding poverty is the capability approach of Amartya Sen, the 1998 Nobel Prize winner for Economics. This model extends the definition of poverty to include vulnerability to risk, lack of voice in society, and powerlessness. This builds on the notion of wellbeing to develop an awareness that poor people need the capability to function in society. Capabilities included both the access to meet basic needs (food, clothing, and shelter) but also access to education, health care, security from violence and other risks, and political empowerment and equality.

Closely related to the notion of poverty is inequality, which highlights the gaps between the rich and poor. These gaps include differences in any of the indicators of wellbeing and the distribution of economic, political, and social opportunities. By definition, those who are poor or live in poverty have resource limitations and a resulting lack of access to social media; in many cases, the lack of social status brings many to feel politically disempowered, despite their equivalent right to vote, if they qualify.

Access to and Use of Social Media by the Poor

Social media and the Internet have become valuable sources of information about current events throughout the world. Informal social networks using blogging and social media sites as well as the traditional news media, both print and television, use the Internet to disseminate information. As might be expected, many of the extremely poor do not necessarily have access to these resources, which require the use of computer and media equipment and a service provider. Depending on their location, some individuals may have access through public facilities such as libraries, schools, and Internet cafes, which provide low-cost access.

Public and nongovernmental programs have been designed to provide low-cost Internet access

and equipment to low-income individuals. Certain municipalities have developed public Internet access, which is free. Comcast, an American Internet provider, offers low-cost Internet service and inexpensive computers to low-income households with children who qualify for and receive free or reduced-price school lunches through the National School Lunch Program. One Laptop per Child has developed rugged, low-cost, low-power connected laptops that are distributed in developing countries.

Internet access has increased for individuals with limited incomes via low-cost cell phones. Cell phone communication has been a powerful tool in mobilizing individuals in political protests such as the Arab Spring and Occupy Movements. Yet, in some developing countries where social media access is limited or nonexistent, even these tools are not available to those who wish to make change. This access and economic imbalance can result in global awareness of events of immediate concern to populations that do not have the technology and social media access with which to know what is happening that directly impacts their lives.

Poverty as Portrayed in Social Media

There are multiple ways of looking at the relationship between poverty and social media. One way is by determining how poverty is portrayed in social media. A brief search of Facebook for the word *poverty* produces many international groups and pages. Most of these are maintained by nongovernmental organizations focused on providing awareness education and dedicated to the eradication of poverty. Posted updates about their projects and activities inform viewers who are asked to "like" their pages and share them with Facebook friends. When an individual "likes" an organization's Facebook page, it will be displayed to everyone in their network, which costs nothing, and helps raise awareness about an issue like poverty.

Unfortunately, this may provide some individuals with a sense of contribution, when they have actually done very little. These tools allow one to say they care about the poor, but not to actually care for them. It has been suggested that this raised awareness may eventually lead to actual actions such as donations, volunteerism, participation in social protest activities, political activism, or influencing a career choice.

Using Social Media to Eradicate Poverty

Many traditional organizations maintain Web sites to advertise their activities and solicit funds and support. These sites now contain tools to allow viewers to easily post to social media sites including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Tumblr, and others.

Numerous nongovernmental organizations have developed social media campaigns to help in their missions to eradicate poverty and influence political processes. Many combine educational resources, social media, and appeals for donations to reach these goals. A few examples can illustrate their potential and demonstrated effectiveness.

The World Bank is an international development cooperative of 188 countries that works with governments in developing countries to reduce poverty by providing money and technical expertise. It maintains a large Web site with research papers, data, and educational resources. Its social media strategy includes offering multiple mobile applications, over 30 blogs (http://blogs.worldbank.org/blogs) and links to the major social media networks (http://live.worldbank.org/connect).

In 2011, the UN brought together social media experts to discuss strategies for fighting poverty. At the time, they estimated that a total of 5 billion mobile phones exist worldwide through which many in developing countries access social media. For the 2012 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, the UN established a one-day social media action to raise awareness about the progress made and the challenges that remain in the fight against poverty. Individuals were asked to donate their Facebook and Twitter profiles to send Poverty Day messages. The MyWorld Web site (http://www.endpoverty2015.org) was developed to maintain a social media presence to support citizen participation in achieving the UN's Millennium Development Goals.

Cofounded by Bono in 2002, ONE (http://www.one.org) is a grassroots organization committed to the eradication of extreme poverty and HIV/AIDS. Using bright graphics, videos, and colorful text, the Web site is linked to the major social media networks. Links to encourage participation in the political process are provided for petitions to elected officials in support of legislation and public policy. Funds are raised through

online store sales of the classic white silicone ONE bracelet.

Worldvision is a Christian organization that uses the adopt-a-child model to make changes in poor communities throughout the world. While its official Web page lacks the bells and whistles of social media, one of its educational projects, 30 Hour Famine, educates students about famine and provides a group simulation game that asks participants to fast for 30 hours. This project site (http://www.30hourfamine.org/learn-about-the-famine/) includes educational information and projects, social media links, blogs, and directions for collecting and sending funds.

Recognizing the limited availability of technology in many underdeveloped countries, Text to Change (TTC) (http://www.texttochange.org) operates using simple cell phones. Founded in 2008, this organization creates innovative mobile solutions for technology access. TTC was the first of its kind in Africa to use mobile phones on a large scale for social media purposes. This organization partners with other organizations (including the United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], and the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID]) to provide mobile phone–based communication social networks dealing with development, education, and health projects.

While many of these organizations provide technical assistance and public education, the intended result of their social media campaigns is to develop public awareness about poverty and facilitate mobilization for political action.

Poverty, Politics, and Social Media

In recent years, social media have played a growing role in social movements and political change. Poverty, or the disparity between the haves and have-nots, has been at the root of many of these social movements. Economic issues play an important role in the current political atmosphere. The concept of the political economy highlights the

Sopheap Chak (center) a fellow in the Internet Freedom Fellows program funded by the U.S. Department of State and managed by the U.S. mission to the United Nations in Geneva, speaking at a Webcast on Internet Freedom in Geneva, Switzerland. Human rights activists from around the world convened in June 2012 to share experiences and lessons learned on the importance of a free Internet to the promotion of freedom of expression and assembly as fundamental human rights.

intimate interrelation of economic forces and the political process.

In the United States' 2008 presidential debate, CNN and YouTube collaborated to allow individuals to send in videos asking questions of the candidates. Many of the individuals posed questions about unemployment, taxes, home mortgages, and the recession. If not for the access through YouTube, they would not have had the opportunity to ask questions since they were not members of the political elite. It has been suggested that this advance in election politics is as significant as the impact of television on the political process was during the Kennedy–Nixon debates in 1960.

Throughout the world, several countries have forced political leaders to leave office, resulting in changed political control of their governments and the promise of access to economic resources. Many of these movements have used social media within their organizations to provide information to global news networks. When thousands of protesters took to the streets in Moldava, Iran, and Egypt, political forces changed the face of governments. Political and economic issues were implicit in these movements. It was not the wealthy who were protesting, but mostly struggling middle-class and poor citizens who felt a lack of access to needed resources. During the uprising in Iran, the U.S. State Department asked Twitter to postpone a scheduled maintenance shutdown because of the importance of this communication tool.

The Occupy Movement has spread worldwide, and while not specifically focused on poverty, it has drawn attention to the economic disparity between the 1 percent of the population, which holds most of the wealth in the world, and the other 99 percent, which while lacking resources, holds more political power through voting numbers. The recent American elections show that the Super Political Action Committees (PACs), funded by the extremely wealthy, were not able to override the will of the voters in favor of their candidates.

Conclusion

Internet access, social media, and economic issues will continue to influence political processes. Increasingly, many poorer individuals are gaining access to social media and education. They become informed about the world and will continue to use the tools available to them to influence political processes and struggle for economic equality. The functionality and cost of smartphones allows more individuals to participate in social media campaigns. As costs come down and communication networks expand, those who are living in poverty and are currently disenfranchised will increasingly use social media to change political processes and alter their economic lives.

Adele Weiner
Metropolitan College of New York
Kim Lorber
Ramapo College of New Jersey

See Also: Arab Spring; Economic and Social Justice; Microfinance Initiatives; Nongovernmental Organizations; Occupy Movement; ONE Campaign; Robin Hood Foundation; sub-Saharan Africa; Water.org.

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Predictive Analytics

The term *predictive analytics* broadly refers to various data-mining techniques that examine patterns and relationships using large and complex datasets for the purpose of making predictions of future trends and behaviors. While the term is typically used in conjunction with business marketing, predictive analytics are applicable to other fields such as epidemiology, health insurance, resource management, and finance. They are also increasingly applied in the political arena to better understand and predict voting behavior. Discovering meaningful patterns and associations based on past events and occurrences allows practitioners and organizations to better formulate future courses of action, generate more optimized planning and investing, and more effectively allocate resources.

Predictive analytics are inductive in nature. They are data driven and use a variety of analytical tools such as statistics, neural computing, robotics, computational mathematics, and artificial intelligence. The necessary first step in predictive analytics is data mining. During this step, all relationships (or correlations) are analyzed in the data to produce a predictive model. Predictive models may be developed with regression techniques (e.g., ordinary least squares) using conventional desktop statistical computer applications such as SPSS and SAS. Yet, other more advanced techniques such as neural network modeling can be used with less common applications such as JavaNNS and Emergent.

Because predictive analytics quite often employ large and complex datasets, or big data, this necessitates the use of specific database management and processing systems that are equipped to deal with such large data. To manage and analyze big data, researchers may depend on massively parallel processing systems (MPP) that contain large numbers of processors.

In the context of social media research, users leave digital records in the form of comments, photos, or videos posted in blogs and various online social networking sites. These records contain metadata such as the date, time, and location of their creation. Indeed, the social media environment is appropriate for intelligence gathering in various disciplines, allowing researchers to acquire collective knowledge about current trends and events.

Predicting Election Outcomes

Predictive analytics have been used as a method for predicting the outcomes of elections in the United States. Most notably, these techniques have been used by Nate Silver, author of FiveThirtyEight.com, a blog created in 2008 that began publication as part of the *New York Times* in 2010. In his first attempt at applying predictive models in the arena of U.S. elections, Silver correctly predicted the outcome of the electoral college for 49 of the 50 states in the 2008 presidential election between Senators Barack Obama and John McCain. Silver went on to make predictions during the 2010 midterm election. However, he was less accurate in his predictions, with Republicans winning 65 seats in the House, 11 more seats than the mean gain of 54 seats that Silver's model projected. In the 2012 U.S. presidential election between President Obama and Governor Mitt Romney, Silver's predictive ability was reaffirmed. His model accurately predicted the electoral college for all 50 states. His model's accuracy in the 2012 election was further demonstrated when he predicted the popular vote to within half of a percentage point, and he predicted 31 of 33 Senate races.

Silver's development of predictive analytics is an outgrowth of the emphasis on the "horserace" in politics, a manner of framing the election in terms of which candidate is winning a particular race at a given point in time based upon who is ahead in political polls. Traditional political polling relies on research methods grounded in statistical sampling techniques in order to produce accurate samples of a specific voting population, such as at the state or national level. As Silver

has argued, the samples collected by polls are often inaccurate representations of the population. For example, pollsters often rely on landline telephones to gather data. Young adults, who tend to vote Democratic, use mobile phones and cannot be reached by pollsters. Taking a different approach, Silver has produced statistical models that analyze an array of data points to arrive at a probability prediction that a candidate will win. Silver's methods rely on a number of factors, including historical performance of polls, past election outcomes, and other factors known to impact the outcome of elections, such as job reports numbers, and stock market performance.

Silver has been the subject of scrutiny for his methods and projections. Historically, public opinion polls have been used to assess where candidates stand in a particular race. Polls are used to provide a snapshot of public opinion at a specific time. They are not predictors of future outcomes, despite popular tendency to extrapolate from their results. Silver has broken away from this traditional approach by using predictive analytics in an attempt to forecast the probability of election outcomes. As such, he has been criticized. Criticisms include accusations by supporters of both parties that Silver's methods have been biased in manners that disadvantaged their candidate. However, despite any political leanings Silver may have, his track record of successfully modeling the election outcomes in the 2008, 2010, and 2012 elections is evident of his reliance on a nonpartisan, data-driven approach devoid of personal bias. Silver's work has given validity to the use of predictive analytics as a tool for forecasting the outcome of democratic elections in the United States.

Campaigns and Advocacy Groups

Predictive analytics are not only used to predict election outcomes. They have become a strategy for campaigns and advocacy groups to increase their efficiency by enhancing the accuracy of audience targeting, thereby optimizing the allocation of limited financial and human resources. Predictive analytics as a tool for driving civic or political action rely on sourcing massive amounts of data that citizens share about themselves through such means as shopping activities, subscriptions, Internet traffic activities, campaign donations, and online social behaviors. Voter data are often purchased from data brokers such as Acxiom, or may be shared by businesses and organizations supporting a candidate. Powerful analytic software is used to structure the data into profile groupings of individuals with common characteristics. Models are constructed to predict which profiles will respond to particular messages.

Targeting is used to reach out to individuals who are not yet persuaded, but are likely to be persuaded by a message. This way, resources are not wasted on individuals who already support a cause or candidate. Resources are also not wasted on individuals who are not likely to be persuaded by a message because they already oppose the cause or candidate.

For example, *Frontline* (PBS) reported that in the 2012 presidential election, the Obama team used data mining and analytics in a coordinated effort to turn out the vote. The Obama campaign gathered unprecedented amounts of data about potential voters by piecing together an individual's information from a number of different sources into a voter profile. That voter profile could contain hundreds of data points about an individual. This coordinated data mining effort sourced data from voter records, consumer databases, donor lists, volunteer databases, data gathered during canvassing, smart phone applications, and social media such as Facebook profiles.

These voter profiles were then microtargeted based on their profile classification, derived from analysis of demographic data points such as gender, age, and marital status, feedback the individual may have given during canvassing, as well as consumer habits that were known predictors of political orientation such as entertainment preferences or type of car owned. Voters were targeted with messages highlighting issues important to them to increase the probability of activating their support.

Predictive analytics can also be effectively used by organizations with fewer resources than a presidential campaign. For example, the Sierra Club advocacy group has used predictive analytics to target potential supporters of the organization's environmental stances. As consumers share more information about themselves, and campaigns and advocacy groups build larger databases,

more detailed profiles can be produced, resulting in better message targeting and enhanced predictive ability.

Criticism

Despite its utility, predictive analytics are not free from criticism. Privacy advocates are concerned with the amount of data that is gathered about the public, and how that data is used. While campaigns have an increased ability to serve targeted campaign messages based on information voters voluntarily share, data gathering that occurs without their prior knowledge. This particularly concerns online data mining. Many Web sites track users' online behavior such as keywords they use in search engines, Web sites they visit, and items they put in a shopping cart by planting a cookie on visitors' browsers. This information is used to produce tailored campaign messages.

For example, a campaign in partnership with advertising networks, might serve an ad related to health care to users who frequent health Web sites. The main concern about this practice is that users are often not informed that their behavior is being tracked by sites, and thus are deprived of the opportunity to give informed consent for the use of their information. As campaigns gain more information about users, and users lose control over access to their information, this data mining practice could be used to manipulate voters, for example, by inordinately exposing them to a particular political viewpoint. To ensure user privacy and protect users from potential misuse of their information, it is essential to spell out user-friendly privacy policies such as opt-in policies asking for user affirmation prior to data gathering.

Conclusion

Altogether, it can be expected that the role of predictive analytics in the political arena will grow. While businesses, health care, and other arenas look to big data to understand and more effectively target audiences, so will campaigns and advocacy groups. Without changes to privacy laws and policies, access to large amounts of detailed consumer data will likely continue in the future. With continued advances in computing power for data storage and statistical modeling, organizations will be able to build increasingly advanced predictive models and more precisely understand audiences and forecast outcomes.

Matthew J. Kushin
Shepherd University
Francis Dalisay
University of Hawai'i–Manoa
Masahiro Yamamoto
University of Wisconsin–La Crosse

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Digital; Data Mining; Forecasting Elections; Microtargeting.

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Presidential Policy Directive 20

Presidential Policy Directive 20 was issued by President Barack Obama in October 2012 in an attempt to formulate a coherent strategy on cybersecurity with a particular focus on formulating a distinction between "offensive" and "defensive" policy responses. The full text of the directive is classified. Media and public information sources have provided information on some general provisions of the directive.

The directive represents a use of executive power in the field of national security and exhibits the broadening of conceptions of national security. Exploring the context and implementation of Presidential Policy Directive 20 provides an opportunity to learn more about national security policy and its potential impact on the media and civil liberties. As cybersecurity becomes a larger part of American national security policy, examining policy responses from a variety of angles becomes crucial.

Cybersecurity is an emerging threat to governments, private organizations, and individuals. Particularly, the United States–China relationship increasingly focuses on responding to cybersecurity threats. In October 2012, then Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta noted that the Department of Defense is able to conduct both pre-emptive and retaliatory cyberattacks. Panetta noted that cybersecurity was an area where the Department of Defense would respond. As of fall 2012, 13 units were formed by the U.S. military to respond to cyberattacks. In addition, President Obama has sought to build an alliance and coordinate cybersecurity with China, and has provided assistance to other nations throughout the world. A little understood, emerging policy area, much of the activity regarding cybersecurity has taken place through confidential directives that represent a broad exercise of executive power.

Presidential Policy Directive 20 was issued as a response to the threat of cybersecurity. While the full text has not been released, a fact sheet has been provided by the Obama administration. The fact sheet notes that as the directive is implemented, it will seek to follow the Constitution and existing law. The fact sheet, which offers very little substantive information, emphasizes the coordinating of activities across national and international boundaries. In addition, it is suggested that policy will be designed to respond to threats, rather than taking preemptive action. Differentiating between two distinct areas of cybersecurity, responding to threats on government networks as opposed to exploring potential threats on private networks is the key distinction made in the directive.

The *Washington Post* was one of the first major news outlets to report on presidential Directive 20 in a November 14, 2012, story. The *Washington Post* and other media outlets such as *The Hill* newspaper noted that the directive helped systematize and codify cybersecurity policy while also expanding the scope. The *Post* noted that differentiation between network defense and cyberoperations was established in the directive. Network defense primarily focuses on the government's systems, while cyberoperations involves monitoring potential threats. Cyberoperations specifically refers to what happens outside of the networks of the federal government. The implementation of cyberoperations is an area of contention. The extent of cybersecurity efforts on private networks raises questions regarding transparency and the impact of security initiatives on electronic media and dissent.

Presidential Policy Directive 20 was also created in part because of the failure of legislation authored by Senators Susan Collins and Joseph Lieberman to advance. Since Congress was unwilling or unable to enact legislation, the Obama administration made use of executive power. Use of executive power in the area of national security has been widespread, particularly since the events of September 11, 2001.

Precursors

Presidential Policy Directive 20 represents an excellent opportunity to observe how the Obama administration in many ways continues directions begun during the administration of George W. Bush. In January 2008, President Bush issued

Presidential Policy Directive 54. While, like Presidential Policy Directive 20, the text has not been released, but some information is available on the contents of the document. Presidential Policy Directive 54 included 12 initiatives, and established the Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative (CNCI). President Obama expanded on Presidential Policy Directive 54 in Presidential Policy Directive 20, making the distinction between the two areas of cybersecurity clearer, and expanding the authority of the military to respond to cybersecurity threats. One potential method of responding to cybersecurity threats beyond government networks is Einstein 3.

Einstein 3

One of the key facets focused on in the current CNCI is Einstein 3, a successor to earlier attempts to monitor government networks. Einstein 3 moves beyond monitoring activity on American government networks to explore federal government activity on private Web sites. Media accounts suggested that AT&T was the likely test case. Einstein 3 is in many ways an example of seeking to preempt threats before they achieve their goals of conducting cyberattacks. Some scholars have criticized the Einstein 3 program for poor design that makes implementation difficult.

Einstein 3 represents one of the first major initiatives taken beyond monitoring government networks. How and if cybersecurity extends into private networks is likely to provoke controversy in coming years. As scrutiny over government observation of personal data has become more known to the public, the difficulties of formulating policy that intrudes on the privacy of private businesses and citizens have become a large concern. One of the key challenges of cybersecurity is creating methods that identify threats while protecting privacy. Whether that goal can be achieved remains to be seen.

National Security and Cybersecurity

Presidential Policy Directive 20 represents a broadening of traditional conceptions of national security, beyond a traditional focus on military intervention, national security concerns, economic and trade issues, environmental issues, energy issues, and border security. Barack Obama's National Security Strategy is broad ranging, and he has invited a wide range of policymakers to National Security Council meetings to discuss emerging national security issues. Presidential Policy Directive 20 is a continuation of what the Obama administration identified as a broad definition of national security.

Presidential Policy Directive 20 uses executive power to coordinate a policy response to cyberattacks. It broadens the concept of national security to include new threats from both state and nonstate actors. Criticism of the directive shows the dangers in balancing national security and civil liberties. Social media and new forms of technology continue to be a forum for political discourse, and policymaking is made without full transparency due to national security concerns. The creation of tools such as Einstein 3 provide the capability for monitoring networks that has the potential to raise questions. With controversy emerging from practices sanctioned under the USA PATRIOT Act, questions will continue to arise on whether vigorous cybersecurity practices could have a chilling impact on dissent and debate in the United States. In the years since September 11, 2001, the U.S. government has sought to respond to technologically sophisticated threats while balancing national security with transparent governance and opportunities for freedom of expression. As a result, conflict and criticism have arisen against both the Bush and Obama administrations, and from political figures throughout the ideological spectrum.

Matthew Gritter
Angelo State University

See Also: Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security; Privacy; Terrorism; Transparency.

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Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security

Press freedom, but also freedom of press or freedom of media, is related to the concept of freedom of expression. It refers to journalists' right to communicate and express their opinions, without obstruction or coercive control. Press freedom is recognized as a fundamental human right, like the rights to freedom of opinion and expression by the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states that everyone has the right "to hold opinions without interference, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers."

Today, press freedom encompasses freedom not only of print media, but also of digital and other public media. The concept has a long history, dating back to the 17th century, with the emergence of free markets and economic liberalization. A press that is free from direct control was considered an important element for free trade. The evolution and development of press freedom is, however, not homogenous around the world. While the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and many Western countries defends freedom of speech, the modern free press only emerged in the 19th century in Europe, North America, and those countries experiencing liberalism and democratic reforms.

Despite important developments in legislation, todays journalists around the world are still facing discrimination, intimidation, and legal action, and sometimes must risk their lives to express their opinions on events. Reporters Without Borders, a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that studies the freedom of journalists every year, has developed a World Press Freedom Index to compare the status of journalism around the globe. The organization's findings depict a highly problematic situation for press freedom, showing that only 66 countries of 197 investigated can be considered free countries.

Social Media

With the advent of digital media, the concept of press freedom is extended to include the freedom of expression in shared online content. Due to the shrinking of the print media market and increasing public demand for online content, many media organizations have introduced online versions of their newspapers, and many journalists have blogs and social media pages in which they post their reflections, analyze events, and hold discussions with their followers.

Digital and social media allow for fast and prompt communication to large and differentiated groups of audiences. They create high visibility for news content. However, they also yield several risks. Online journalists may be accused of defamation, subversive behaviors, and even terrorism, and legal action over posting certain content online can occur. Unverified reporting and leaking confidential information are issues that have come to the forefront in the online environment. Since anyone can post anything in digital media, unless explicitly declared, individuals may be persecuted for content posted on their online pages, even if they were not the authors.

Online journalists are also less protected when posting content in social media. They are under more constraints because the content they post can reach audiences from countries with very different media regulations. In some countries, certain content may infringe on national laws. This means that journalists working online, such as news bloggers, are more exposed to legal issues than journalists working for traditional media that operates in a specific country or region with set rules.

Current regulations in most countries are short on guidelines or legislation for handling content in digital media, and often refer to regulations created for traditional mass media that are not suitable for the online environment. Under international treaties, online journalists who have posted sensitive content online can be extradited from their country to face trial and eventually be punished for serious publishing offences. One example is the case of Julian Assange, an Australian online journalist and activist, considered the

founder of WikiLeaks, who published sensitive U.S. diplomatic and military documents in 2010. Assange was accused of violating international standards of fairness ,and may face the court if he returns to Australia.

The case of WikiLeaks has also raised debate on the impact of disclosing and sharing information online and on freedom of expression in social media in general. The rise of citizen journalism and the development of newer and more integrated social media platforms may have two main effects for society: they may advance transparency if online reporting is practiced ethically and in a moral manner, but they may also push governments and authorities to make stricter regulations and thus increase different forms of censorship in the name of security. In authoritarian countries, government controls on online content may consist of information blackouts in the state media, sophisticated Internet and text-message filtering as in China, and even personal intimidation and coercion of journalists as in Nigeria.

Yet, supporters of the positive effect of social media for press freedom argue that citizen journalism and news discussions and sharing in social media have become important elements for keeping political and economic powers under scrutiny. One example is the case of the Arab Spring. In several countries in the north African region, freedom of expression, especially press freedom, is limited. In these areas, social media has played a key role in challenging political authorities, to the extent that international news coverage of the revolutions was mostly possible thanks to bloggers, along with Twitter and Facebook activists.

Online Security

An important element linked to press freedom and social media is security. Specifically, online security concerns the safety of a computer and/or online environment, and deals with rules and measures to protect against threats such as viruses, spam, and hackers, as well as to enforce firewall and parental controls. The concept of security has become increasingly important in the development of Internet and digital technologies because of their increasing use and sometimes misuse. Under the auspices of greater press freedom, many different types of content can be posted, shared, collected, and stored in the online environment. Yet, the availability of unrestricted content can undermine personal rights and national security.

Digital technologies have increased the possibility to create, post, and share content in the online environment; however, most Web 2.0 environments, including social media, require the creation of an account or profile to do so. When creating an online account, an individual releases some personal information. For some Web sites, the provision of a nickname and a valid e-mail account is sufficient but for others, more detailed information, such as gender, age, profession, and even the country of residence is requested. One of the problems of disclosing personal information online is that this information may be shared to third parties who are collecting information for specific purposes, for instance market research, but also in the name of state security. This creates a problem for online privacy, that is, the keeping of a person's information secret from others. In practice, monitoring social media can turn the online environment into a practice of public surveillance, of state control as the novelist George Orwell discussed back in 1949 in his novel *1984*. Indeed, special investigative units of states are constantly monitoring social media to find information on possible criminals and terrorists, raising public concerns on the extent of the state's intrusion into personal matters.

Online security problems can also occur when personal information is used by hackers for criminal purposes. Hackers may obtain personal data by, for example, deceiving people into providing their user names, passwords, and account numbers via deceptive e-mails, fake (spoofed) Web sites, or both—this is known as phishing. They may also do so by inserting malicious software, often referred to as "malware" or "spyware," into a user's system. Other times, private information is simply made available unconsciously to the public because of the configuration of the online social media provider. A case occurred in 2012 when Facebook was accused of leaking access to information pertaining to profiles, photographs, and chat material to advertisers through Facebook users' accounts.

Third-party organizations also had the possibility to post messages and extract personal information from Facebook accounts. In these situations, online privacy is undermined and the risks of misuse of personal information have grown. There are situations of limited or no press freedom, typically in authoritarian countries in which securing anonymity of the source of the content and online privacy are necessary in order to maintain a certain level of free discussion. When human rights, especially freedom of expression, are limited, the identification of online journalists, bloggers, and activists achieved through bypassing online security mechanisms can have serious consequences for the lives of these people, and may seriously impact freedom of expression in those countries.

Debate

Promoting freedom of opinion and expression on the Internet in the name of transparency and accountability for powerful entities has raised other questions concerning national security and what impact a free flow of information can have in terms of prevention of crime, international terrorism, competition, and more. Skeptics of the free flow of information on the Internet call for more content regulation. Greater online security, both for individuals and countries, is desirable under certain conditions, but it requires the development of Internet-specific laws and harmonization of Internet governances, two areas of concern that are particularly difficult to tackle due to difficulties in reaching shared international agreements.

The lack of harmonization means that online content is regulated as well as sanctioned differently in different regions of the world, with greater consequences for personal security and journalists' freedom. It also triggers exceptions to the right of access to information. In the name of national security, states in nondemocratic regimes seek to suppress the free flow of information, for instance by Internet service provider control, whereas states in democratic regimes encourage self-regulation by private parties in order to regulate potentially harmful content. These actions do not find justification for the sake of security because they simply restrict personal access to otherwise available information, and do not prevent the disclosure of information considered confidential because of national security.

Conclusion

Overall, the debate on the role of the Internet and social media for the free flow of information and promotion of press freedom is still open and it is hard to foresee a clear direction due to diverse political and economic interests around the world. Yet, clear guidelines are needed at least to tackle ethical concerns about the privacy of information when collecting and managing information on people in social media, including the dissemination of such information to third-party organizations.

Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University

See Also: Arab Spring; Blogger Rights and Responsibilities; Citizen Journalism; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Facebook; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Hacktivism; Internet Society, The; Privacy; Professional Bloggers; Reporters Without Borders; Transparency; WikiLeaks; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring; World Press Freedom Index.

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Pretty Good Privacy

Pretty Good Privacy, commonly known as PGP, is a user-friendly computer application used to encrypt e-mail correspondence. PGP can also be used to include an encrypted digital signature to an e-mail message without encrypting the message. PGP is the most widely used encryption software for e-mail correspondence worldwide.

Pretty Good Privacy was the creation of Phillip Zimmerman who, in 1984, first conceived of the idea of a widely available, cost-free, open source computer program that ordinary people could use to send and receive e-mail correspondence that could not be read by others. According to Zimmerman, his concept for PGP relied on a programming "breakthrough" that had occurred more than a decade before, involving the most essential (and most vulnerable) element in any secret communication scheme: turning plain text into coded text, and vice versa. Thus, if a user wished to send someone else an encrypted message, he or she had to give the recipient the necessary key to unlock the encryption code. The challenge was to develop a protocol to send the encryption key so that it could not be intercepted and thus make secret communications not so secret.

Zimmerman pondered the question of how to exchange encryption keys over a period of years, developing PGP's complex algorithms in the limited free time he had available between parenting and engaging in freelance work. It was not until a clause introduced by U.S. Congress in a proposed antiterrorism bill that Zimmerman threw himself into the task of completing PGP and making it available to anyone who wished to use it. Zimmerman first uploaded the source code to PGP into a USENET newsgroup in June 1991, and invited people to use it for free. Shortly thereafter, PGP was used by human rights activists in what, at the time, was the intensely conflict-ridden region of the Yugoslav successor states, most notably in Kosovo, Sarajevo, and Croatia. It was also used in the early 1990s in volatile states including, but certainly not limited to, Guatemala. There, in 1992, Dr. Patrick Ball collaborated with the International Center for Human Rights Research in Guatemala (CIIDH) to develop a database of more than 43,000 human rights violations that he protected from the authorities through PGP encryption.

The Impact of PGP

At the time of the release of PGP, Zimmerman argued the encryption software "dramatically changed the security landscape." Zimmerman noted, "Before PGP, there was no way for two ordinary people to communicate over long distances without the risk of interception. Not by phone, not by FedEx, not by fax." Users, ranging from human rights defenders to students, wrote to Zimmerman to report that the only thing standing between them and oppressive regimes was his technology.

Zimmermann was promptly "considered the godfather of encryption software," according to the *New York Times*. Such wide attention had a downside for Zimmerman; shortly after its release, PGP came to the attention of the U.S. National Security Administration (NSA), the government body that oversees all issues pertaining to encryption. The NSA informed Zimmerman in February 1993 that he was being investigated for violating U.S. export control laws. Because the U.S. government considered encryption software weaponry at the time, PGP was restricted for export under a munitions clause of import/export. Interestingly, while at the time, it was illegal to transport PGP on a (then commonly used) floppy disk or computer hard drive, it was possible to carry a printout of the million or so lines of Zimmerman's computer code that instructed the functionality of PGP.

The NSA eventually dropped the charges in January 1996, after which Zimmerman founded the commercial startup PGP Inc., which was purchased by Network Associates in 1997. Zimmerman's prediction in 2000, that "We'll be accessing

the Internet all the time, which means a dramatic increase in security requirements," eventually led him to a partnership with former U.S. Navy Seals security expert Mike Janke and their start-up, Silent Circle, a security firm that encrypts phone calls, texts, and video calls. Silent Circle reported a 400 percent increase in new customers after the 2013 disclosures about the National Security Agency's surveillance efforts.

Lara Lengel
Bowling Green State University

See Also: Activists and Activism; Anonymous; Arab Spring; Carnivore; Committee to Protect Journalists' Deep Packet Inspection; Department of Homeland Security Media Monitoring Initiative; Digital Activism; Echelon; Federal Privacy Act; Firewalling; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Search and Scrape Capability; Tor; Voter Privacy; WikiLeaks.

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Price, Tom

Tom Price is a Georgia Republican whose reputation for uncompromising conservatism, electoral performance, and legislative leadership in both the Georgia State Senate and U.S. House have given him the prominence to be a contender for the position of speaker of the House or the U.S. Senate. As a member of the U.S. House, he has been adept at using social media to promote his public policy positions and political ambitions.

Encompassing many of the relatively affluent, predominantly white, suburban municipalities in north metro Atlanta, including Alpharetta, Brookhaven, Doraville, Dunwoody, Johns Creek, Roswell, Sandy Springs, and Tucker, Price's 6th Congressional District was previously represented by current Republican U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson. Before that, the seat was held by former Republican Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich. North metro Atlanta was the scene of very rapid suburbanization in the 1990s and 2000s, with small mill towns and farm towns transformed into outer suburbs inhabited by commuters.

That the long commutes to work and residential racial isolation common in the outer suburbs that comprise most of the 6th District could brew up a toxic mix of frustration, social alienation, and political extremism is plausible. Certainly a reputation for denouncing political opponents and for refusing to compromise on the basis of principle would find such an angry audience receptive. Although the district is more racially and ethnically diverse after Georgia's congressional electoral map was redrawn to make way for a new 14th U.S. House district, it continues to be a safe seat for both the GOP and the incumbent. The fact that Barack Obama received a mere 35 percent of the vote in the 6th District in 2008 general election reveals its ideological complexion.

Price is a good fit for the demography of his district. A white, northern transplant like many of his constituents, he was born on October 8, 1954, in Lansing, Michigan, and earned both his undergraduate and medical degrees at the University of Michigan. Among the 50 wealthiest members of Congress, Price was reportedly worth $8.5 million in 2009. He is married to Elizabeth "Betty"

Clark Price, an anesthesiologist who is active in local politics in Roswell where the couple reside. Betty Price received her undergraduate education at Pomona College and her medical training at McGill University.

Political Career

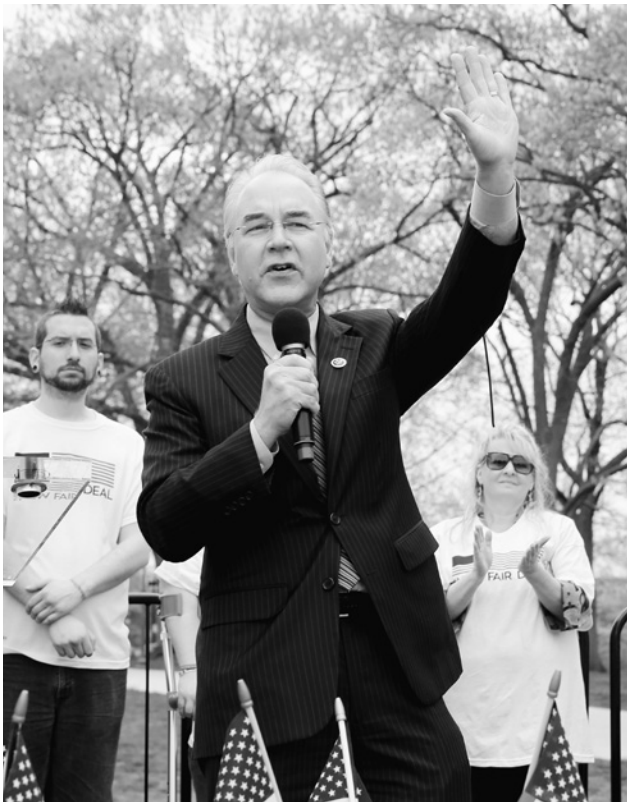
Ambition is evident in a political career launched by winning a seat in the Georgia State Senate in 1998, where Price would serve first as minority whip, and then as majority leader, until his successful 2004 run for a seat in the U.S. House. The 6th District was an open seat that year because of Johnny Isakson's decision to run for a seat in the U.S. Senate. Price won unopposed. In 2006, he defeated his Democratic challenger, Steve Sinton, by a margin of 44.8 percent. In 2008, he defeated his Democratic challenger, Bill Jones, by a margin of 37 percent. Running unopposed again in 2010 and in 2012, he defeated his Democratic challenger, Jeff Kazanow, by a margin of 29.02 percent. If the margins of victory have decreased over time, they do not suggest vulnerability.

As he had in the Georgia State Senate, Price climbed into the GOP leadership in the U.S. House, becoming chair of the Republican Study Committee, or the fourth-highest-ranking party leader. However, in tracking toward the center after the electoral defeats of 2012, Speaker John Boehner informally but effectively backed the more moderate Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers from Washington for that position and Price lost theleadership position. Together with the selection of a cohort of new, more moderate committee chairs, Boehner's support for McMorris was perceived by many conservatives as a purge by Boehner to move the legislative party, and with it the national party, closer to the ideological center.

High visibility led to Price being mentioned as a possible contender for speaker of the House , and more probably, a possible challenger to Republican Senator Saxby Chambliss in 2014. Populist conservatives like those who were active in the Tea Party Movement were unhappy with Chambliss for expressing willingness to compromise on restoring tax rates in budget negotiations after the 2012 general election. Refusal to compromise on taxes made Price popular among that same group. That, together with a campaign war chest larger than that of Chambliss, would make him a formidable opponent.

Price's legislative voting record appeals to both economic libertarians and social conservatives. In 2011, the American Conservative Union awarded him a lifetime score of 97.14, indicating that he is one of the most conservative and perhaps the most conservative member of the U.S. House of Representatives. With respect to economic regulation, he has voted to reduce capital gains taxes, implement the Central American Free Trade Agreement, schedule the permitting of new refineries, and open the Outer Continental Shelf to oil and gas drilling.

Enthusiasm for the corporations engaged in offshore drilling earned Price a measure of controversy in June 2010. During testimony by BP CEO Tony Hayward, Republican Representative Joe Barton of Texas echoed comments previously made by Price as chair of the House Republican



Tom Price, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Georgia's 6th district, speaking at the Freedomworks New Fair Deal Rally outside the U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C., on April 15, 2013. Price is known as an uncompromising conservative.

Study Committee that, by agreeing to create a $20 billion escrow account to pay for damage caused by the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, BP had been subjected to a "shakedown" by the Obama White House. The term connotes organized crime. Unlike Barton, Price did not apologize for using the inflammatory term.

Price has voted against modification of bankruptcy rules to avoid foreclosures, regulating the subprime mortgage industry, economic recovery/stimulus spending, increasing the debt limit, permitting corporate shareholders to vote on executive compensation, granting tax incentives for renewable energy, and regulating tobacco as a drug.

With respect to social policy, he has voted to award equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment to human fetuses, ban federal government health coverage for abortions, restrict interstate transport of minors for abortions, ban human embryonic stem cell research, prohibit federal funding for Planned Parenthood, and restrict the definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman in the U.S. Constitution. He voted against prohibiting employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and recognizing hate crimes targeting sexual minorities.

The Roswell Republican also predictably voted on a range of other issues that are important to conservative constituencies: against gun control, in favor of roving wiretaps in terrorism cases; against congressional oversight of CIA interrogations, in favor of ending gederal funding for National Public Radio, for marijuana prohibition, and for making English the official language of the United States. Finally, his votes have been consistently conservative on two issues about which he appears especially passionate: health care policy, and U.S. foreign policy toward Israel and Palestine.

These same issues feature prominently in messages conveyed in a manner originating in the era of print media, such as newspaper op-ed columns and press releases. However, they may gain wider circulation because they are reproduced online on Web sites controlled by the House GOP. Thus, a September 19, 2012, op-ed column posted on the Republican Study Committee Web site, "Rep. Price Op-ed: Where Leading From Behind Leads," expressed strong disapproval of President Obama's response to events in the Middle East. He ended the piece with a denunciation of the president for attending a fundraiser in Las Vegas on the evening following the attack on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi.

Social Media Use

Social media represents something different in the relationship between elected officials and their constituents because it permits interaction that is relatively inexpensive in both time and social risk for the constituent. While the delivery of speeches before groups and/or the issuing of op-ed columns and press releases also permit responses from constituents, these require more from the constituent because they must rise to ask questions during a town hall meeting or write a letter to the editor after reading an op-ed column.

The greater ease of responding to social media such as YouTube videos and tweets invites increased interaction. Online conversation may reinforce the abstract connection that develops when constituents recognize the elected official and approve of his or her public policy position and legislative voting when it is the subject of news coverage. However, it may also establish virtual personal relationships that are as much akin to that formed via case work as it is through recognition and approval of position taking and legislative voting. From the perspective of the elected official, a virtual personal relationship may be less costly than undertaking the problem solving required of legislative casework.

Although it obviates the possibility of developing a virtual personal relationship, the possibility that constituents or anyone else online may anonymously respond to social media content dramatically reduces the attendant social risk. As a consequence, conversation is all too frequently uncivil. That is evident in the commonplace discourtesy and practiced unpleasantness by participants on some message boards and chat rooms. Dogmatism, hyperbole, and vituperation are predictable features of unmonitored discussions of political topics. The reason for this is that some individuals succumb to the temptations of anonymity by presenting an alternative identity that psychiatrist Elias Aboujaoude has termed the "disinhibited e-personality." Grandiosity, narcissism, impulsivity, immaturity, and the illusion of knowledge are its symptoms.

Lack of inhibition characterizes comments posted in response to a July 16, 2009, YouTube video of a committee hearing in which Price states twice that the health care legislation proposed by Obama administration will "destroy health care in America." In addition to obscene language, one of the comments endorsed criminal punishment for political opponents:

> Obama/Emanuel/Pelosi/Reid—just for their criminal medical service takeover—should be in prison at least.

Elected officials willing to mobilize supporters with strong ideological views walk a fine line between rallying them at public gatherings and on election day on the one hand, and being associated with their most extreme sentiments and actions on the other. To date, he has walked that line flawlessly.

Price is a vigorous tweeter. Jennifer Golbeck, Justin Grimes, and Anthony Rogers identified 12 categories of tweets by congressmen in their content analysis of congressional posts, including two that characterize much of Price's tweeting: opinion and announcement/advertisement. Moreover, many of his opinions are about a small set of issues: health care, government spending, and support for Israel. Thus, in the weeks after the November 6, 2012, election, he offered multiple opinions critical of the health care and budget policies of the Obama administration and supportive of Israel. On December 4, he posted this message:

> We do not need a government #healthcare takeover & President Obama's higher taxes. We need patient-centered reforms.

On November 29, in an apparent response to the majority decision of the United Nations (UN) general assembly to grant the Palestinian Authority the status of a nonvoting state, he posted this message:

> Path to Palestinian statehood is between Ramallah and Jerusalem—UN [United Nations] scoring political points only makes things worse.

He also frequently announces or advertises his appearances on television talk shows and newspaper op-ed columns. On November 29, he also posted these messages:

> As I explained today on @TeamCavuto, I do not favor raising the tax rates. Watch to find out why—http://bit.ly?YvaEzt #fiscalcliff #tcot

> Check out my op-ed: Falling for Hamas's media manipulation http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/falling-for-hamass-media-manipulation/2012/11/28/4d7b9498-39a1-11e2-8a97-363b0f9a0ab3story.html…#gaza #palestinians

To generate and manage social media, Price hired a director of new media for both his personal and leadership offices, in addition to his regular press aide. He has also created multiple Web sites to post press releases and op-ed columns. Much of the content is innocuous. Examples include press releases informing readers that the Congressman had been named a "Defender of Liberty" by the American Conservative Union and a "Defender of Economic Liberty" by the Club for Growth. However, there are also messages like the denunciation of a reported "stealth survey" of physician's offices by the Obama administration that ends with the apocalyptic warning that "Big Brother is destroying health care in America."

John Hickman
Berry College

See Also: Boehner, John; Campaigns, Congressional (2006); Campaigns, Congressional (2008); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Cantor, Eric; Pelosi, Nancy.

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Primacy Effect

An important aspect of social media is their immediacy. Social media have been built on speed and instant communication. This is a shift in some ways from the previous view, like the moral in the fable of the tortoise and the hare, that slow and steady wins the race. The concept of primacy has invaded the world, and education is being forced to rethink content and pedagogy. The concept of primacy has a history in psychology, neuroscience, and education. In the early 1900s, psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus studied the effect of serial position on recall, and demonstrated that individuals are more likely to retain information presented at the beginning and end of a group or session. Later, Frederick Lund applied the concept to persuasion; others studied the impact of position on significance, or cognitive bias.

Rather than previous methods of communication, such as newspapers or television reporting, social media sites such as Twitter and Instagram have become popular based on the perceived value ascribed to instantaneous communication across boundaries. Two main aspects of social media that are examined in conjunction with primacy are the degree to which the idea or information spreads widely, and how it is memorable.

Spread of Information

Malcolm Gladwell, Henry Jenkins, and others have investigated why some units of information spread, and others do not. They have discussed how the spread of ideas is formed by a blend of the thing itself, and the process. In some ways, it is similar to what happens when a good product is joined with a brilliant advertising campaign: this is the essence of marketing. Jonah Berger has described six principles that contribute to the "contagiousness" of something. The first is social currency, or how the message is crafted to achieve the desired result. In social media, it is important to know something that will make others—especially those who count—think that one is smart and on the cutting edge. Individuals may become known as the person to go to for the latest information on a particular set of knowledge, giving them insider status.

Second, ideas spread when they are triggers, something that comes to mind when a related idea surfaces. This is a common phenomenon when people surf the Web and go from topic to topic as their minds form associations. Third, when strong emotion accompanies something, it is more likely to spread; this explains the plethora of videos of adorable cats and toddlers that find their way to everyone's e-mail or Facebook. Fourth, making something visible or public contributes to spread. Author M. Lindstrom discusses the concept of mirror neurons in the brain that seem to be responsible for the human tendency to imitate. Something that is public is seen, and more likely to be copied. Fifth, individuals are eager to pass on things that are useful and have practical value. If something may help another person, it will generally spread. Finally, presenting information via stories rather than explanations will lead to dispersal. Messages embedded in a narrative will not only spread, but be remembered. Within these stories, certain themes will resonate more than others. These themes often combine a number of the six factors, such as emotion, triggers, and practical value.

Some researchers have begun to examine the nature of identity and community in light of spreadable media. Word-of-mouth is still just that; despite the proliferation of gadgets and applications, most human interaction is face-to-face, verbal, and personal. One study found that of Facebook friends, only 7 percent were people that users have never met in person, and only 3 percent are people they only met one time. The remaining connections may not be active, such

as friends-of-friends and social ties that may be seen as potential sources of trusted information, thus contributing to spreadability. Author Douglas Rushkoff describes content as something to be stored for the next conversational opportunity; still spread, but in human terms as well as through social media. Primacy without these other factors does not appear to be enough to result in dispersal, but it is a potent force when combined with other attributes.

Retention

Within the incredible amounts of content continually changing on the Internet, some is retained, while most is forgotten. Not all information that is spreadable due to primacy will "stick"; stickiness is defined as ideas that are understood and remembered, and often have a lasting impact or cause someone to change his or her opinion or behavior. Primacy may be enough to gain attention, but something else is needed to command retention. Educators often need to balance these two factors and utilize both for the most critical knowledge and skills.

Primacy alone is not enough to ensure that a message will be noticed or retained. However, social media have increased the seeming importance of staying informed up to the second as to the latest nugget of information that no one else knows. Social status is often achieved by being the one to pass along something new. Rushkoff has coined the term *presentism* to describe the diminishment of everything that is not happening right now. From status updates to location check-ins on Foursquare to tweets and trending topics, there is a lure to the instantaneous. In education, questions remain regarding the balance of freshness with value. It is not always clear what may get lost in the excitement, or how others may manipulate based on "buzz."

Cathy Leogrande
Le Moyne College

See Also: Buzz Creation; Cognitive Surplus; Going Viral; Sleeper Effect; Trending Topic; Viral Marketing.

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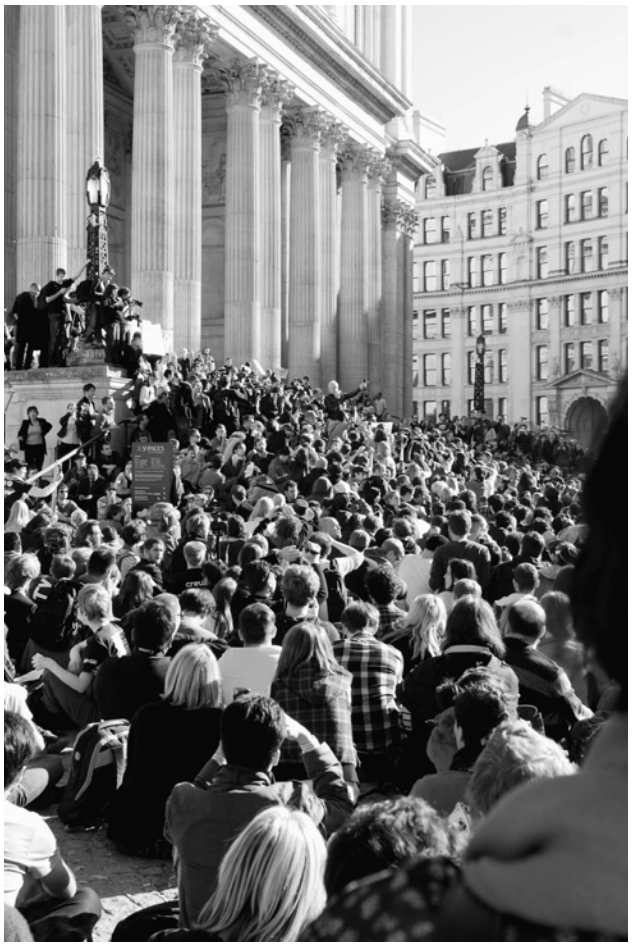
Privacy

The increased transparency, expression, and content sharing created by the proliferation of social media has been paralleled by significant global concern about a corresponding reduction in individual privacy. Although online privacy issues have existed since the onset of the Internet, they rose to the forefront of public consciousness in early 2012 due to well-publicized media coverage

of privacy stories, including Facebook privacy changes, the Obama administration's call for a Consumer Privacy Bill of Rights, and increased Federal Trade Commission scrutiny and fines for privacy failures. The Internet vastly increased the amount of personal information accessible and visible to the public, as well as the aggregation and tracking of that data by governments, private companies, and political campaigns. The lack of privacy in social media and the Internet is both a platform upon which politicians have campaigned, and a source of public embarrassment when online incidents expose their personal lives.

The modern conception of privacy refers to individuals' ability to control the context and extent to which their personal information is disclosed on the Internet. Privacy scholars like Professor Daniel Solove believe that today's definition of privacy, to which the notion of personal control is integral, has evolved from a narrower right to be let alone, and is culturally dependent. Solove posits that privacy's importance to society stems not from a desire to hide negative behavior, but rather because it fosters positive democratic traits like free speech and expression. The surveillance that causes a lack of privacy is often accompanied by censorship because individuals inhibit themselves when others are monitoring them.



Julian Assange, standing center, speaking at the Occupy London protest on October 16, 2011. Assange founded WikiLeaks, a nonprofit organization that published millions of classified government and corporate documents under the constitutional protection of freedom of the press.

The rise of social media was largely responsible for this definitional shift in privacy, as many individuals could share detailed personal information with greater ease in larger volumes. However, also saw drawbacks from failing to adjust their privacy settings, frequent privacy policy changes, increasingly common undisclosed tracking and the aggregation of data and metadata by commercial interests, and external use of their posted content in unexpected situations, including in hiring decisions and legal proceedings. Increasingly, private social media companies aid law enforcement investigations both proactively, such as Facebook scanning all uploaded photos to identify known images of child pornography and referring suspects to law enforcement, and reactively, by responding to subpoenas and administrative requests for the personal information of their members. The National Security Agency's large-scale surveillance of U.S. residents also includes social media sources.

Although social networks do not usually have authority to refuse such data requests, they can challenge the request's validity and notify the individual it concerns. The 2012 case of *Harris v. Twitter* was a notable example: after New York law enforcement officials sought three months' worth of tweets and other Twitter information about Malcolm Harris, a Twitter user who was involved in the Occupy Wall Street protests, Twitter fought the subpoena's grounds and argued on behalf of its users before having to turn over Harris's data.

WikiLeaks

Few privacy topics have been as contentious as WikiLeaks. Founded in 2006, the nonprofit

organization WikiLeaks crowdsourced whistleblowing and went on to publish millions of classified government and corporate documents. Julian Assange, WikiLeaks's founder, was both lauded and deplored for releasing previously private records on such subjects as the Guantanamo Bay prison camp, the tenets of Scientology, and the Iraq War. Controversy peaked in 2010 when WikiLeaks released material provided by U.S. Army Private Bradley Manning, including a video that showed U.S. helicopters firing on unarmed journalists.

Pseudonyms

Social media privacy also encompasses choices about personal identification, particularly pseudonymity as it relates to political speech online. The U.S. Supreme Court highlighted the value of anonymous and pseudonymous speech in *McIntyre v. Ohio Elections Commission* (1995), noting that "protections for anonymous speech are vital to democratic discourse." Individuals have embraced pseudonyms since the early days of the Internet, using them to sign petitions on crowd movement Web sites like Change.org, whistleblow about employers, review services, and freely express themselves. Many equate Internet pseudonymity with the online disinhibition effect and "trolling," where individuals behave aggressively and offensively behind a pseudonymous mask when they would not behave similarly in unmasked interactions. The Nymwars movement began in 2011 when Google launched Google+ with a real-name policy requiring members to have real or real-looking names to use the service, stating that the policy encouraged more genuine interactions. After widespread protest spearheaded by the Electronic Frontier Foundation, Google+ moved to support pseudonymous identities. Facebook maintains a real name policy, but Twitter does not.

Facebook

No social network has been as influential and controversial on privacy issues as Facebook. Facebook emerged and supplanted Myspace as the largest social network in 2008, a shift that many researchers attribute in part to Facebook's more robust privacy controls compared to Myspace's "public by default" settings. Starting out with membership limited to select universities and expanding throughout the United States, Facebook inspired millions of users to disclose their personal information under the protection of privacy by default and user-controlled privacy settings. Since then, Facebook has gradually eroded its members' ability to keep their information private, moving to a philosophy that people prefer to share than to limit their disclosures.

Facebook continues this trend of making more personal information public on the site after its March 2012 IPO, despite negative reactions, including a Federal Trade Commission settlement over deceptive privacy practices resulting in a 20-year series of privacy audits, a multimillion-dollar lawsuit settlement for using members' images in Sponsored Stories advertising, and protestation from members. The Europe v. Facebook movement started by Austrian student Max Schrems encouraged Facebook members in the European Union (EU) to request their stored information from the social network, overwhelming Facebook's staff and resulting in hundreds of pages of Facebook records on each individual. In July 2012, Senator Al Franken questioned Facebook representatives and other experts in a Senate hearing on Facebook's use and storage of biometric data through its facial recognition system, suggesting that widespread use of such technology could have chilling effects on political speech, among other concerns. After an investigation by Ireland's Data Protection Commissioner, Facebook disabled facial recognition for EU users.

Negative Effects

Both private individuals and politicians have dealt with the negative effects of unintentional or unwanted disclosure of their social media content. One notable example is high school teacher Ashley Paine's firing after a Facebook photo surfaced of her holding a beer while on vacation. Data aggregation companies like Social Intelligence record social media posts for up to several years, even if the individual deleted them, and sells the content to hiring managers who make employment decisions based on it, despite individuals believing it to be private or deleted. Republican vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin's Yahoo! e-mail was hacked after

a member of the hacktivist group Anonymous guessed the answers to her security questions based on publicly available online information about her, and Democratic Senator Anthony Weiner resigned after the sexually explicit photos he tweeted to a young woman became public. Because the Internet makes public gaffes much more visible and accessible than ever before, the EU is considering creating a "right to be forgotten" through regulation that would force social networks to remove users' submitted content if they later request to do so.

Advertising

The "pay with your personal information" business model of many social networks and other free Internet services that derive a majority of revenue from advertising has led to a rift between privacy advocates and advertisers. Online data collection and tracking of site visitors are significant factors powering monetization. Advertisers argue that the tracking data they collect is aggregated and not personally identifiable. Privacy advocates such as University of Stanford researcher Arvind Narayanan counter that tracking data is often identified or easily linked to individuals, thus posing privacy concerns. The debate often centers on tracking's possible value to Internet users, with advertisers saying that users prefer personalized advertising, and privacy advocates arguing that most consumers are unaware of the tradeoff they make with their personal data by using ad-funded free services.

Research suggests that consumers are largely ignorant of the existence of online tracking, which is typically invisible to the user, but that consumers who learn about the practice dislike having their online behavior tracked and analyzed. The chief Internet standards organization, the W3C, began standardizing a Do Not Track browser header in 2009 that many of the major Web browsers have included in their settings. Microsoft created controversy in 2012 when it enabled the Do Not Track request by default in Internet Explorer; major advertising groups stated that they would ignore these requests. The Do Not Track header does not specify how a receiving Web site or advertiser should react to it, and current cooperation is voluntary and virtually nonexistent. U.S. lawmakers have stated that they may enact regulation to make Do Not Track enforceable to limit personal data collection if the advertising industry's self-regulatory efforts fall short of protecting user privacy.

Political Campaigns

The use of both social media and personal data has become integral to modern political campaigns, allowing candidates to engage with and target eligible voters with previously unforeseen precision. Big data was a focus of both parties in the 2012 presidential elections, with the Obama and Romney campaigns collecting voter information through their official social media pages, Web sites, and apps. The campaigns combined online data with offline records from data brokers, including voting history and past political contributions, to build profiles on eligible voters for advertising purposes. The campaigns then targeted eligible voters with advertising and sought to enlist those with higher influence in their social circles to endorse a candidate, aiming to change the minds of undecided voters.

Legislation

Preceding the election, in February 2012, President Obama called for a Consumer Privacy Bill of Rights that, if codified, would grant Americans greater control over and access to their personal data online. Personal privacy remains a bipartisan issue in the United States, although the impact of privacy technology on industry has led Republicans to largely disfavor government enforcement of privacy rights, while Democrats tend to favor it.

In 2012, social media rose to protest proposed laws with privacy-infringing implications. In January 2012, Internet users across the globe united through social media and Web site content blackouts to protest and ultimately defeat the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA), with Web sites like Wikipedia and Reddit leading the movement. SOPA followed a similar bill, the PROTECT IP Act (PIPA). The EU Parliament rejected a multinational treaty to combat intellectual property piracy, the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), in July 2012. These bills were criticized for allowing overbroad surveillance to justify a reduction in online piracy and copyright infringement, which critics argued would violate

Internet users' privacy and promote censorship. The future of online privacy is uncertain while tracking-heavy legislation like the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act (CISPA) lingers in the U.S. legislature.

Sarah A. Downey
Abine, Inc.

See Also: Anonymous; Data Mining; Electronic Frontier Foundation; Electronic Privacy Information Center; Facebook; Franken, Al; Google+; Google AdSense; Information Aggregation; Myspace; Presidential Policy Directive 20; Transparency; Twitter.

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Pro-Choice and Pro-Life

Even before the existence of social media, the proponents of the pro-choice and pro-life perspectives on abortion have used print and television/film media to present their respective views. The opposed positions stem from the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case of *Roe v. Wade*, which removed abortion laws in all 50 states. This made abortion legal through all nine months of pregnancy. Forty years later, state legislators have worked to provide women and girls with legal protections. Aligned with legislation are the opinions of voters who tend to self-define as being pro-life, which prohibits abortions under almost any circumstance; or pro-choice, supporting a woman's right to choose.

A variety of advocacy groups promote the agendas of these polarized groups. While the terms *pro-life* and *pro-choice* seem to represent a clear dichotomy, many individuals fall on a continuum. While they might not choose an abortion for themselves, they do not think that they should make decisions for others. Some are willing to make exceptions in the case of rape, health risks to the mother, or severe genetic abnormalities.

Before *Roe v. Wade*

Abortions have been performed, in every society, for thousands of years. Some historians suggest that abortions were legal in the United States from the time of its first settlers. Abortions were available, openly advertised, and performed at the time that the U.S. Constitution was adopted.

State laws making abortions illegal passed in the mid-to-late 1800s. Specific state laws were implemented for a variety of reasons. Doctors were the strongest force behind the criminalization of abortion. No longer would "alternative" practitioners like midwives, homeopaths, or apothecaries compete with them for patients and fees.

Abortions were extremely risky and were often carried out by well-respected doctors armed only with outdated medical educations and absent hospitals (which were uncommon) and antiseptics (as of yet unknown). While medical practices improved due to scientific discoveries and improved methodologies, most women in need of abortions had to resort to "back alley" illegal practitioners who could not utilize the safer procedures that were available.

In order to ensure that others would not perform abortions, the American Medical Association (AMA), newly established, declared that abortions were dangerous and immoral. All but one state had criminalized abortion by 1910, except when a doctor determined that a woman's life was at risk. Abortion became the doctor's domain. The Comstock (anti-obscenity) laws prohibited both legal abortion, as well as the distribution of information regarding birth control from the 1880s through 1973. The criminalization of abortions did not reduce the numbers, which were estimated to be as high as 1.2 million per year and included medical harm to thousands of women and many

deaths. Some doctors performed safe illegal abortions for the first half of the 20th century, until scrutiny forced many to stop.

Roe v. Wade

One-third of the U.S. states repealed abortion laws or reduced criminalization between 1967 and 1973. Yet, it was not until the 1973 Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade* that remaining restrictive state laws were struck down. This decision allowed women to have legal and safe abortions performed by experienced medical professionals. The Supreme Court's decision supported the right to privacy of Americans regarding their bodies, including a woman's right to make personal choices regarding her pregnancy.

Reactions to the legalization of abortion resulted in a variety of responses. Supporters were confident that their battle had been won. Others found fault with the Court's decision. Opponents of legal abortions used a variety of approaches to undermine or limit the impact of the change in legal status. Some fought to prevent state and federal funding of abortions, whereas others disrupted clinics performing abortions, vandalized their properties, prevented access, and harassed anyone entering such establishments. Anti-abortion violence escalated over time. Clinics were bombed, individuals were physically attacked and some were murdered; these efforts created a hostile environment for women in need of services.

Over time, the Supreme Court has allowed some abortion restrictions. In 1992, in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey,* states were allowed to restrict previability first trimester abortions, as long as women seeking services were not faced with an undue burden. There are restrictions in many states, ranging from requiring parental participation, mandatory waiting periods, and anti-abortion counseling. One disallowed requirement was that a woman involve her spouse in her decision.

Current U.S. Abortion Rights Challenges

Most recently, legislation has been proposed, opposed, implemented, overturned, and reinterpreted in a variety of states. These decisions include forbidding abortion, except in the case of maternal death, or requiring invasive ultrasounds,. This topic has become increasingly volatile and politicized of late and has become part of the sociopolitical movement identified as the "War on Women."

North Dakota is facing legal challenges following the passage of three abortion laws. These are the strictest in the United States and are expected to take effect on August 1, 2013. Arkansas has the most restrictive abortion ban, the Human Heartbeat Protection Act, which sets a 12-week pregnancy limit and detection of a fetal heartbeat, typically by an abdominal ultrasound. This legislation will also face court challenges. Intrusive trans-vaginal ultrasounds are required in Virginia following its recent abortion legislation. Mississippi requires doctors to have local hospital visiting privileges, which will result in the closing of the only remaining abortion clinic and restrict traveling doctors (who do not have hospital privileges).

Ten states have reduced abortion time limits to 20 weeks, based on the premise that a fetus can feel pain, which is disputed by most medical experts. Arizona and Georgia are facing legal challenges and a federal judge found the Idaho fetal pain law unconstitutional. The Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act was debated in Congress and was passed by the Republican House but not by the Democratic Senate; President Obama stated that he would veto the legislation if it was ever passed. Originally, the legislation banned all abortions after 20 weeks; Democratic objections led to a revision permitting abortions in cases of rape and incest. However, this was still not found acceptable by, Democrats who felt that this would require all rapes to be legally reported in order to qualify.

While some states are restricting and challenging a women's choice, others, such as New York, are reviewing legislation that would protect that right. Governor Andrew Cuomo introduced the Women's Equality Act in 2013, which would write the provisions of *Roe v. Wade* into state legislation to protect women's rights should *Roe v. Wade* ever be overturned. It was under debate in the New York State Legislature and it appeared that the Republican members were not allowing a vote on legislation.

Politics, Social Media, and Abortion Rights

Before the current use of social media and the Internet, both sides used the media to advance

More than 5,000 protested anti-abortion bills at the Texas State Capitol in Austin on July 1, 2013. The large turnout for the march was credited to Senator Wendy Davis's 13-hour filibuster and her efforts to block abortion-restrictive bills proposed by Governor Rick Perry. Live updates were tweeted throughout Davis's filibuster, as many celebrities tweeted "Stand with Wendy." The bill was temporarily derailed.

their views. The famous photos of fetus's feet were used in pro-life campaigns, and continue to appear on pro-life awareness pins. Wire hangers have been used as a symbol, and continue to appear on pins and posters as a reminder of the days of back alley and illegal abortions. The recent legislation and ongoing pro-life and pro-choice groups have made abortion policies and attempts to overturn *Roe v. Wade* political issues. In recent elections, most candidates have been asked to express their views on abortion legislation. Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and YouTube have been used to present abortion legislation perspectives.

In some cases these sources have instantly highlighted some of the controversial views of candidates. Todd Akin of Missouri said, "If it's a legitimate rape, the female body has ways to try to shut that whole thing down," while Indiana's Richard Mourdock expressed his view that pregnancy from rape was "something that God intended." Both men lost their elections. Karl Rove, the Republican political strategist, wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* that these remarks allowed the media to focus on this social issue and were responsible for the Republican loss of two Senate seats. The "It's Not Just Akin" campaign (http://itsnotjustakin.com), funded by the American Bridge 21st Century PAC, highlights the abortion, rape, and women's health care views of other Republican politicians. It comes replete with Facebook and Twitter buttons to share with social networks.

Pro-Choice and Pro-Life Groups Using Social Media

Both pro-life and pro-choice organizations maintain Web sites and a presence on social media networks. A quick search on Facebook using the terms *pro-choice* or *pro-life* yielded multiple pages with numerous supporters on both sides.

The page with the greatest number of "likes" in the pro-life search was "I Am Pro-Life," which has nearly 700,000 "likes." While many other pro-life groups use Facebook, memberships are much lower.

NARAL Pro-Choice America has been described by *Fortune Magazine* as one of the top 10 advocacy groups in America. Its purpose is to politically engage to oppose abortion restrictions and to expand access to abortions. It has an official page on Facebook with almost 80,000 "likes." Many of their state chapters also have pages. I Am Pro-Life also runs a media campaign from its Facebook page called "Here's Why I'm Pro-Life," where participants upload pictures.

Other organizations also use social media campaigns to advance their views. Students for Life (studentsforlife.org/) has a social networking presence on all the major social media networks. In 2013, it launched a campaign called lifeBLAST: A Pro-life Social Media Project to promote the pro-life perspective on social media. Choice Out Loud (choiceoutloud.org), a pro-choice advocate, presents *40*, an online film and interactive experience, which explores the personal choices made by young women in the 40 years since *Roe v. Wade*. It also appears on major social networking sites, and has buttons to allow viewers to share the video. These are just some examples of how groups use social media, and many more can be found.

Susan B. Komen Foundation and Planned Parenthood on Social Media

The strength of social media in the ongoing pro-choice and pro-life debate was demonstrated in the Facebook campaign against the Susan B. Komen Foundation when it announced that it was pulling its funding for breast cancer screenings from Planned Parenthood.

On January 31, 2012, the Associated Press ran a story on the defunding of Planned Parenthood by the Komen Foundation, which was picked up on Facebook and Twitter. While the Komen funds had only been used for breast screening services, Planned Parenthood's role in providing birth control and abortion services clearly played a role in the decision. In many, Planned Parenthood is the only place that poor, uninsured, or underinsured women can receive these services.

Komen claimed that since Planned Parenthood was facing a congressional investigation by Rep. Cliff Stearns, its newly revised rules would not allow funding of such programs. Stearns, a Florida Republican, pro-life advocate, and chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, initiated an investigation to learn if Planned Parenthood was illegally using government money for abortions. A 12-term incumbent, Stearns lost his primary election in 2012.

Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood, credited Facebook and Twitter with drawing attention to the issue. The postings in support of Planned Parenthood far outnumbered those supporting the Komen decision. The social media campaign also resulted in increased funding for Planned Parenthood's breast screening programs. The organization received more than $400,000 from 6,000 donors. In addition, three large donors contributed: The Amy and Lee Fikes' Foundation, run by the head of Bonanza Oil Company in Dallas, pledged $250,000; New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg matched that $250,000; and Credo, the mobile-phone company, promised $200,000. Within four days, Komen's board of directors reversed the decision, and announced that it would amend the policy to "make clear that disqualifying investigations must be criminal and conclusive in nature and not political." Several top-level staff members resigned from Komen during the controversy. The foundation has suffered a decrease in donations, and had to cut back on some of its fundraising events.

Conclusion

The differences between those who favor a woman's right to choose and those who wish to outlaw abortion will continue. State legislatures will continue to pass restrictive legislation that will eventually be reviewed by the Supreme Court. Voters will continue to elect both pro-choice and pro-life candidates, and both groups will continue to use social media to advance their causes.

Kim Lorber
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Adele Weiner
Metropolitan College of New York

See Also: Christian Right and Social Media; Facebook; Gender; Health Care; MOMocrats; MomsRising.org; Polarization, Political; Social Issues Advocacy, Net-Roots Driven.

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Professional Bloggers

Blog activity took off during the late 1990s, almost on the eve of the 21st century. The term *blog* and its cognate word *Weblog* are generally credited as arising from an iterative coining process involving Web and Internet pioneers Peter Merholtz and John Barger in the late 1990s. A blog is an online, public, user-friendly publishing platform. Messages or "posts" are displayed in reverse chronological order, usually allowing comments. Hyperlinks are distinctive features of blogs ("It's the Link, Stupid" was the provocative title of a 2006 article about blogs published by the *Economist*), and they constitute the foundations of what is known as the "Blogosphere." The Blogosphere is not just the sum of all existing blogs, but is also a dense network of hypertextual interrelations.

The expression *professional bloggers* can be considered paradoxical. Blogs are, by definition, public disclosures of casual, subjective messages via the Internet, published by "amateurs" (in the sense that they are not necessarily professional public communicators), and backed by an accessible software that allows almost anyone to become a publisher. Blogs are much closer to longstanding Internet newsgroups than to the journalistic profession.

In any case, the combination of user-friendly software resources with subjective storytelling (even if it is performed by "experts" in any given field of knowledge) developed into networked structures of shared interests has given blogs their personality. Mainstream media at first sounded an apocalyptic note in their coverage of blogs ("The Attack of the Blogs" was the alarmist title of a *Forbes* cover story in 2005), but have since adopted blogging as a way of diversifying and "freeing" reporting by assigning journalists to run their own blogs under the umbrella of their legacy media.

Blogs brought these classical information outlets a more casual, compelling, and passionate style of reporting or commenting, the opportunity to deal with old or new issues in a new way, and a more personalized style of delivering information that could help bring journalists closer to their audiences and achieve a greater degree of engagement. Blogs boosted the development of hypertextuality in mainstream media, and fostered participatory and interactive practices (many of which did not go beyond the simulacra level), especially commenting. In recent years, the apocalyptic view, both in the case of blogs and Twitter, seems to have been overcome. Most journalists today praise blogs as "rewarding" software, and many have come to terms with Twitter and its 140-character format.

Professionalization

The professionalization of blogging is a complicated issue. A blogger can write about many of the same things that provide the subject of traditional journalistic attention, such as politics, science, religion, economics, and lightbulbs. Bloggers can even embark upon investigative activities about relevant public issues, and those who attract many readers can also become opinion leaders, can influence people, and can even earn some money. But the question of whether such

bloggers are fundamentally different from journalism professionals who use blogging as one of their many vehicles for distributing their work is still a live debate.

On one side of the argument lies blogging's genesis and significant history as a form of alternate and noninstitutional news and information, which professionalization would, by its very nature, impair or destroy. On the other hand, however, more legal apparatuses are being put into place to protect bloggers under the same shield laws and free speech protections enjoyed by information providers who work in commercial media organizations. Both the United Nations and the U.S. National Press Club, among others, have called for these protections to extend to bloggers who work to report political and social abuses in totalitarian states and emerging democracies alike, which would suggest that some versions of blogging have now morphed into a much more professionalized stature than previously experienced.

In a related debate, it is a substantive as well as a semantic challenge to distinguish between "real" bloggers, whom history insists are nonprofessionals, and those people who begin their professional journalistic career as bloggers and who never do anything else, even if they do that for legacy media like the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*.

Finally, the fact that there are people who make their living writing as bloggers for specifically online outlets calls into question the role of quantity as an indicator of professional status. How many bloggers have to blog for a living before blogging, itself, can be seen as an activity in which both professional and impassioned amateur status is possible? It is a tricky question, but an important one, and an issue that illustrates a common journey experienced by many new media technologies, in which they begin their public life as "rogue media" offering alternatives to mainstream structures, but eventually, either become subsumed by them or spawn institutionalized versions of their earlier selves.

Both traditional journalists and bloggers have defined identities, and presumably they are fully satisfied with them. Purposely theoretical confusion and progressive conceptual assimilation of "professional bloggers" and "journalists" are very likely to be driven, if one dives deeper, by forces that are not theoretical ones, even if they seem so. "Weblogs and Journalism: Do They Connect?" asked Rebeca Blood in a Nieman Foundation report published in 2003, in which the thorny issue of whether "Weblogs are a form of journalism" was raised. One possible answer, a decade later, is that perhaps they have been rhetorically pushed to connect too much.

Platforms traditionally associated with "professional bloggers" like ProBlogger, Mediabistro, or JournalismJobs, list job postings for "media professionals" and offer a mix of news and "virtual training" tips and tools. JournalismJobs is now part of AOL, and MediaBistro is owned by WebMediaBrands. Those are just some examples of the widespread institutionalization of the blogosphere. Out of the blogs with top ranking in the Technorati Top 100, most are owned by big media companies like AOL, Condé Nast, and CNN.One of the main arguments used by advocates of the "professionalization" of blogging is that, in fact, blogs do not often offer new information, but instead recreate, gloss, or directly plagiarize information from the mainstream media—that they are "echo chambers" of traditional media.

The blogger-as-amateur argument would maintain that bloggers, as individuals, have every right in the world to embark on this kind of activity, precisely because they are not journalists—they are bloggers. The blogger-as-professional side might respond with the observation that there are now so many different types of bloggers, all of whom blog for different reasons and under different conditions, that one can no longer legitimately use the word *blogger* in such a universalist and undifferentiated way. Of course, everything changes when recycling and remixing news media stories becomes part of the core business of institutionalized blog networks conceived as high-scale aggregators and much of the time owned by media conglomerates. It is sometimes the case that those same big media companies are the owners of some of the news media whose content is being remixed.

Conclusion

In the original sense of the word, bloggers communicate not as journalists but as people, citizens,

individuals, fathers, movie lovers, mothers, music fans, gourmets,as scientists, economists, politicians, pilots, teachers, origami enthusiasts, and participants in the entire range of human experience in a way that precludes or ignores the professionalization of any of those specific roles or activities.

That is the purist understanding of "blogger" as a type of performed identity, and may be their unique and ongoing contribution to the digital age. Blogging as an activity, however, has undeniably multiplied into many different things, some of which are antithetical to the original concept of the "Blogosphere" as a noninstitutionalized, unranked outburst of interventions performed in the global scenario of the Internet by impassioned and very often expert amateurs.

It may be that blogging, per se, continues its trajectory into the realm of career journalism; it may also be that the act of blogging calves into two—or several—contrasting functions in the larger Web-universe. It is too late to say that there is no such thing as a "professional blogger," but the jury is still out on the degree to which this must be an all-or-nothing transition.

Pilar Carrera
Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

See Also: Alpha Blogger; Blogger Rights and Responsibilities: Blogosphere; Blogs, Role in Politics; Blogs; Blog Syndication; Writers and Social Media in Politics.

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Project Vote Smart

Project Vote Smart is a nonprofit voter education organization. It aims to provide voters with independent, unbiased information about candidates and officials at all levels and in all branches of American government. Started by Richard Kimball in 1988, the organization compiles both original research and candidate-provided statements into a useful database of easily compared information. The organization delivers this data primarily through the Web site http://www.votesmart.org, although it also offers some traditional-format publications. The Vote Smart database includes candidates' and officials' voting records, biographical and employment background, ratings from a variety of interest groups, public statements, and campaign finance sources. In addition to directly transmitting information to voters, Vote Smart frequently provides data for journalism and political research.

To gather data, Project Vote Smart asks every candidate for national office and many candidates for state-level office to respond to its Political Courage Test, a list of questions that seeks to establish the candidate's position on 13 significant issue areas. Candidate response to the Political Courage Test has declined over the years that the test has been issued. The *New York Times* reported that when the organization first issued its test in 1996, 72 percent of candidates for national office answered the test. In 2008, only 41 percent of congressional candidates answered

the questions, and an organization spokeswoman confirmed that candidates are being told by their staff not to provide answers to Project Vote Smart because the information could be used by opposing candidates. As a result of declining response rates, the organization began determining candidates' likely positions on the Political Courage Test issue areas based on public statements made by the candidates. Project Vote Smart publishes these "inferred" positions, along with the statements researchers used to infer the candidates' positions.

Project Vote Smart demonstrates an issue-oriented approach to politics, which the organization identifies as a counterbalance to an overly partisan political process. While profiles for candidates and officials include partisan affiliations, the information system emphasizes candidates' stated positions on specific political issues. The Vote Smart database provides identical displays for all registered candidates, not distinguishing between major and minor party candidates. Similarly, the Vote Smart Web site folds the Democratic and Republican parties into its listing of 56 national political parties, a list ranging from the American Beer Drinker's Party to the Thermodynamic Law Party. The Web site explicitly targets partisanship as a problem. While many former political officeholders are on the Project Vote Smart board, the organization requires that no board member join "without being balanced by a political enemy." The organization also has a policy of not accepting money from any corporation or organization that lobbies, supports, or opposes candidates.

While Project Vote Smart provides voters with information directly through its Web site, it also provides this information indirectly by providing local news outlets with an important source of state and local candidate information. Dozens of local newspapers have used the organization's information in their profiles of candidates; many newspapers have also endorsed the organization's database to their readers as a good source of objective information. The Vote Smart database has also frequently been used by political scientists, who have found that it provides a uniquely consistent source of information about state and local political actors on biographical data, key votes, and issue positions. Studies that have sought to determine the impact of additional public information on democratic participation have also made use of Project Vote Smart.

Project Vote Smart uses volunteers and interns to gather information on the over 40,000 political actors in its database. Most interns and volunteers work at the organization's headquarters in Philipsburg, Montana, although interns also work at the Project Vote Smart satellite office at the University of Texas at Austin. In addition to the information available on its Web site, the organization continues to develop new information products and outreach methods, including a national bus tour from 2007 to 2008 that was intended to help raise awareness of its database, and an interactive Web tool created in 2010 called VoteEasy.

Using the same data that is presented in static form in the database, the VoteEasy tool allows users to select electoral races and then select their preferences on political issues in order to identify candidates whose stated positions are closest to their own. The Project Vote Smart founding board includes a number of influential political actors, including former U.S. presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, and current and former members of Congress.

Emily Shaw
Thomas College

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2008); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Democracy for America; Momocrat; Political Information Opportunity Structures; Voter Turnout.

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Proxy Measurements

In the United States, televised political advertising is the main way that modern campaigns communicate with voters. Although viewers may learn facts while watching news programs, during which many political ads air, advertising appears during many types of shows, including those unlikely to convey political information. More to the point, such information has even less to do with the content of most political advertising; political knowledge, then, is a tenuous proxy for campaign and exposure. Proxy measurement is any attempt to measure something that cannot be measured exactly when one wants or needs to, and instead looking at what can be measured.

Using proxy measures in weight construction leads to a larger shift in survey estimates than when they are not included. An ideal proxy variable for a successful adjustment variable for a point estimate does not necessarily translate to the ideal variable when interest is in estimated regression coefficients or subgroup analyses.

Social Media Metrics

Appropriate social media aims should be measurable, and it is essential to understand the business process that a social media program will address or drive, because each business process drives specific metrics. For instance, metrics related to program objectives allow direct measurement of program success; fundamentally, the measure is about evaluating performance against objectives. To evaluate the robustness and effectiveness of every approach to social media measurement, one may ask three fundamental questions:

- Does the approach measure the right things in order to show the business impact of the programs and initiatives?
- Will stakeholders of the report receive the data and actionable insights required to make strategic decisions?
- Are the data and insights presented in a clear and concise manner that tells a story and makes it easy to understand and proceed?

Social media metrics are derived from three primary sources: program goals, with specific metrics directly tied to program or campaign objectives; business outcomes, with metrics designed to measure the business impact of the campaign, program, or objective; and channel-specific, with metrics that are unique to social channels, such as tweets and retweets. Ideally, a robust social media measurement program will have a well-rounded set of metrics from all three dimensions.

Metrics tied to program objectives allow for direct measurement of program success. Fundamentally, measurement is about assessing performance against goals. Business outcome metrics are used to connect social media programs and the business results they are designed to drive.

It is surprising how often social program objectives are biased toward channel-specific metrics (e.g., "likes" or followers), and not the specific outcomes desired for the program. Also, relying too seriously on channel metrics limits one to what one can measure rather than what one should measure. Understanding the social media objectives will suggest general parameters of a measuring program, and finally, the decision tool must operate within them. A good measurement strategy should be to take a holistic, integrated approach using methodologies, tools, and data from all dimensions, being able to track behavior of individuals, understanding how online behavior impacts offline behavior and vice versa. Metrics for all dimensions can be any of the following:

- *Exposure*: Opportunities to see, branded mentions, search rank, message inclusion, net positive impressions, change in responsiveness, number of flowers, "likes"
- *Engagement*: Branded search, replicate visitors, duration, subscriptions and

acquaintances, URL visits, comments/post shares, communication evoke and maintenance, links, bookmarks/votes/likes
- *Influence*: Purchase consideration, changes in opinion or attitudes, association with the branding or attributes, notify a friend, likelihood to recommend to a friend or colleague (net follower index)
- *Action*: Visit the store, attend the event, buy the product, contact a politician, vote for/against, visit Web site, request more info

In the early days, efforts to measure digital and social media almost exclusively focused on Web analytics; today it is developing toward measuring the conversations and behavior patterns occurring within networking. The great rise in the popularity of social networks in the last few years presented new challenges in digital research and measurement: researchers were faced with measuring both the conversations and behavior patterns occurring within social networks, and understanding and connecting the underlying influences and motivations for the online behavior; finally, there are also the real-world, offline interactions and transactions.

- *Web sites*: Web analytics software provided an explosion of data and new metrics like: unique visitors, page views, click-through rates, duration, referring sites and conversions.
- *Social networks*: It becomes important to measure conversations and engagement: How often is the brand mentioned in conversation? What is the sentiment of the comments? How often is the brand recommended and by whom? Content and behavior analysis, including tracking technologies, are the primary measurement tools.
- *Offline*: Audience research, representing all the real-world offline transactions that may be of interest: Did someone visit the store or attend the event? Did they buy a product? Did they recommend the brand or product to a friend over coffee? Scan and other digital sales data are important.

Conclusion

When trying to measure political participation, questions that might be asked include: Have you ever contacted any elected official? Attended a campaign event? Joined an organization in support of a particular cause? Contributed money to a candidate running for public office? How much do you enjoy keeping up with political news about campaigns and elections? How closely have you been following news about the race for the Democratic presidential nomination?

Jaime Raúl Seixas Fonseca
Technical University of Lisbon

See Also: Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Click-Through Rate; Data Mining; Evolution of Social Media; Innovation and Technology; Media and Communications Policy; News Media.

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Psychographics

Demographics are the external, often visible characteristics of a person such as age, gender, nationality, or educational level. Grouping and describing individuals by way of the demographic categories into which they fit can facilitate analysis and description of groups and communities for public policy or organizational purposes.

Demographic analysis also provides a powerful marketing tool that enables audience segmentation and targeting.

Psychographics (or psychological demographics) provides an additional dimension for analysis, providing a framework for identifying and categorizing the internal characteristics of that person. While demographics can provide some insight into what will motivate a person's behavior, using psychographics to understand that person's values, attitudes, and beliefs can elicit a much more nuanced and reliable path to motivating that person.

These audience analysis methods have long been the standard tools by which marketing and advertising campaigns are constructed and deployed. As the complexity and power of mass marketing technology has become more sophisticated, so have the instruments by which the receivers of these campaigns are defined and targeted. The proliferation of interactive social media technology in the 21st century adds a great deal of depth and richness to the amount of psychographic information available, as well as offering more sensitive and immediate tools to measure message effectiveness. The constant reciprocal flow of information from policymakers through campaign managers and through millions of users back through policymakers and managers is especially potent in the pursuit of political outcomes.

The Evolution of Psychographic Research and Its Application

Trying to understand what motivates a person's buying decisions originally, though now applied much more broadly, became a core focus of marketing professionals and scholars shortly after the end of World War II. Understanding of the interrelationship of audience demographics, public opinion, and economic choices was a useful lens into consumer motivation and behavior. Then, beginning in the 1960s, marketers began to explore and map the consumer's "inner landscape" by way of a psychological profile.

In 1960, Arthur Koponen conducted well-designed quantitative studies designed to link consumer behavior with findings from standardized personality inventories. But results were found unreliable, "equivocal," and too abstract to be useful. Ernest Dichter's qualitative investigations of subjects' motivations, while criticized as lacking sound ethical and scholarly foundation, produced better results. A blending of qualitative and quantitative approaches has been the norm since the mid-1960s. An early study of airplane travelers' patterns and preferences by Stanley Plog in 1967 produced one of the first psychographic models.

Since then, researchers have focused on fine-tuning their methodologies to produce higher construct reliability and validity, stronger predictive validity, and thus greater usefulness in achieving marketing goals. In developing increasingly dense and detailed psychographic profiles of potential consumers, it is possible to go well beyond the surface characteristics of demographic groups and to understand the attitudes, needs, and drives of complex individuals.

Using data from user-generated social networks such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, researchers can develop multidimensional social profiles that provide highly accurate and useful behavioral, lifecycle, and lifestyle data. Researchers can track an individual's online behavior to gain insights into the mental and emotional realms where that behavior emerged. For example, as a user travels from Web site to Web site, a "click set stream" of "cookies" is produced. Data-aggregators might then map a mental model consisting of psychographic-derived motivations that could define certain logical connections among the sites. When the user updates his or her Facebook page, social profile data management tools such as GraphEffect, which does a linguistic analysis of status updates, can produce insights into his or her personality or measure purchase intent. Other forms of data-mining can link the user's purchase of baby furniture or other product key-indicators to his or her position in lifecycle and lifestyle dimensions.

Marketers' and social researchers' evolving ability to develop this level of understanding of individual consumers is closely linked to the ability to develop and deliver messages tailored to that specific consumer, in a specific realm of selection of action, at a specific time and place. Such disaggregation of huge markets into specialized clusters of consumers facilitates "variable data messaging," which has a much higher return on investment than mass-marketing techniques. Thus,

political campaigns are coming to rely upon voter segmentation strategies since the emergence of the communication systems produced by Web 2.0.

Political Communication

Insofar as political parties, their platforms, and their candidates can achieve their goals only by gaining consumer/voter "buy-in," strategic applications of psychographic analysis and segmentation are crucial. The use of these psychographic profiles in segmenting and microtargeting political consumers is central to a 21st-century political communication model that harnesses the power of the networks and systems generated by social media.

The goal of 20th-century market research was to develop demographics-based approaches through which like-minded potential consumers could be aggregated into large groups of receivers for persuasive messages delivered through the mass media of radio, television, and print sources. In contrast, the major goals of 21st-century marketers are to develop tools for construction of accurate, detailed user profiles, to isolate and track trend data, and to trigger consumer engagement in issues using psychographic segmentation. In short, 21st-century market research is built on a foundation of segmentation, fragmentation, and microtargeting. Internet-based technologies and Internet-based user networks produced by the proliferation of social media facilitate progress toward these goals.

An integration of political science theory and practice with that of marketing specialists, which some have characterized as "e-democracy," has evolved. This "new paradigm," according to global marketing experts Patrick Butler and Phil Harris, requires that political parties refigure their focus from an essentially economic bottom line to one that recognizes the importance of "leadership based on citizen value and need" and the use-value of such "intangible resources" as interpersonal relationships, loyalties, and the power of social networks generated by bottom-up information flows.

Since Democrat Howard Dean's pioneering use of Internet resources from 2004 forward, integration of psychographic data and social networks are increasingly vital in national campaigns. In the 2010 U.S. election cycle, a number of studies focused on the online political campaign and candidates' adoption of Web-based messaging resources. One such study by Jeff Gulati and Christine Williams found that major party candidates for the House of Representatives were likely to have a Facebook page, Twitter account, and YouTube channel, with Republicans more likely than Democrats to be on YouTube. In the 2012 election cycle, microtargeting of potential voters with variable political messages based on data mined from social networks and other Internet sources was highly effective. Some strategists suggest that the ability to identify and tap into demographic and psychographic dimensions of the electorate were deciding factors in the outcome of several key elections.

Leslie Reynard
Washburn University

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Cause-Marketing Campaigns; Data Mining; Microtargeting; Voter Demographics.

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Public Affairs Council

The Public Affairs Council is one of the largest associations for public affairs professionals worldwide. It seeks to advance the field of public

affairs and promote ethical standards by educating public affairs professionals. Public affairs, which includes the practice of lobbying, refers to organizational activities concerning the sociopolitical environment, and specifically to the management function of helping an organization generate political power and influence public opinion.

Public affairs activities can involve lobbying; monitoring and predicting political, legal, economic and social developments; providing political intelligence and strategic advice; and assisting media relations specialists. Public affairs professionals work for consultancies, industry, trade bodies or associations, civil society, unions, regions, or municipalities. As more political activity moves into the online and social media sphere, the Public Affairs Council is playing an increasingly important role in self-monitoring activities for social media–based campaign and e-governance activities.

Structure

The Public Affairs Council is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and is made up of a volunteer board of directors and an executive committee, which runs the day-to-day functions. The board of directors comprises about 170 senior public affairs executives from leading corporations, associations, and consultancies. Board members are typically business leaders who commit to contributing to the different activities of the council, including speaking at conferences, serving as information resources, participating in council networks, and promoting membership. Board members are elected every two years. The Executive committee includes 16 board members elected for a term. The committee is in charge of overseeing networks, developing budgets, recommending new programs, setting staff performance goals, planning board meetings, and conducting other council business. Along with this, the Public Affairs Council has a foundation—the Foundation for Public Affairs—that conducts studies and produces benchmarking analyses on emerging public policy issues and trends that affect the practice of public affairs. The foundation is sustained by donations made by Public Affairs Council's members and supporters, mainly consisting of corporations.

Role of the Public Affairs Council

The role of the Public Affairs Council has extended over the years as a result of the increasing influence and relevance of the profession in the United States and in developed countries. The growth of public affairs in society is directly linked to political culture. Political systems that are generally supportive of business participation in the policymaking process promote the use and the diffusion of public affairs. Liberal and democratic political systems typically recognize the profession of public affairs, but regulations concerning the practice of public affairs vary across countries.

In the United States, professional recognition of public affairs has a long history. The practice of lobbying goes back at least as far as the late 18th century, beginning in the earliest days of Congress. Yet, professional recognition did not arise until President Dwight D. Eisenhower provided a national institutional framework to support the participation of the business sector in political processes. Eisenhower decided to establish the Public Affairs Council in 1954, originally called the Effective Citizens Organization.

For the first decade of its existence, the Effective Citizens Organization focused on training about half a million managers and executives on politics and government relations. Because of U.S. social unrest in the 1960s, community relations assumed greater importance among corporations to tackle social issues in the communities where companies operated. The Public Affairs Council created a dedicated post in 1968, the Urban Affair Function, and engaged in annual training seminars on community relations by hiring specialists in urban affairs to serve member companies' needs.

During the 1970s, public distrust of big business and concerns about transparency in government increased, calling for stricter government regulation. Since then, the public affairs practice has been highly regulated, and the U.S. legislation requires extensive disclosure of which organizations use public affairs, how and where they use them, and what their budgets are. With the introduction of the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA) in 1995, public affairs professionals that are paid for lobbying at the federal level have to register with the secretary of the Senate and the clerk of the House.

Relevancy Today

The Public Affairs Council works to support corporate members that face greater challenges because of the globalization phenomenon and the fact that U.S. corporations increasingly operate in international environments with diverse legislations, regulations, and cultures in practicing public affairs. Working at the global level also means that substantial differences in public acceptance of corporate involvement in sociopolitical matters exist. Because of the nature of public affairs activities, that is, influencing public opinion and politicians, public affairs is one of the professions that receives frequent criticism in terms of legitimacy, representativeness, transparency, accountability, and ethics.

While public affairs professionals can be highly influential in legislation formulation and decision making processes, they are not elected officials, thus they do not represent the interests of society. Consequently, they are not accountable to citizens or publics for the legislation formulation they promote. These concerns call for a greater role of the Public Affairs Council in training and preparing business leaders in handling societal pressures, and acting ethically and in a transparent manner.

Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University

See Also: Advocacy Groups, Political Branding of; Lobbyists; Networks, Political; Social Issues Advocacy, Net-Roots Driven; Special Interest Campaigns; Transparency.

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Public Intellectual

Throughout history, academics and other highly educated citizens of democracies have contributed to public discussions about issues of broad concern. During the 20th century, the traditional media—books, newspapers, magazines, radio, and television—were the forums through which so-called public intellectuals contributed to their societies' dialogues, however, the specific outlets in which their ideas were published or broadcast tended to reach relatively narrow audiences. The explosion of social and other digital media in the 21st century offers the promise of the democratization of the reach and access of public intellectuals and their ideas. At the same time, scholars and social critics question the quality of certain online outlets, and therefore fear that the reputation of public intellectualism is in danger of being cheapened.

PIs and Politics

A public intellectual (PI) is a person deeply committed to the life of the mind and its impact on society. A PI draws on his or her intellectual resources and depth of knowledge in order to address a broad,

though educated public about serious national or transnational issues. While many PIs work as college professors, being on a college faculty is not a requirement for being a PI.

Indeed, many PIs work as journalists, media personalities, and/or as members of "think tanks"; for such people, the term *public intellectual* is not merely an informal social role, but is, in effect, their job description. The "day job" of academic PIs, by contrast, is typically that of professor: the majority of their time is spent teaching and publishing scholarly work, meaning their "public" general-audience-focused contributions, publications, and media appearances are a sideline, if often more lucrative than their university positions.

The origins of the term *public intellectual* are disputed, although it appears that the idea gained currency in late 19th-century France, when many of that country's leading scholars and writers offered public criticisms of the government's handling of the Dreyfus Affair, a political scandal involving accusations of treason and a military cover-up of evidence. In the United States, the idea that members of the academy should share their ideas with the public became popular in the 1930s, inspired largely by John Dewey, a university professor and educational reformer. Intellectuals' contributions to public life—and public awareness of those contributions—became increasingly visible throughout the subsequent decades of the 20th century, fueled largely by the explosion of traditional mass media.

The relationship of PIs to politics is somewhat controversial. While most scholars see the role of PI as providing insight into, and solutions for, pressing political problems, others argue that PIs can be successful or respected only if they are nonpartisan and nonideological, or are at least open to opinions other than their own. In any case, most PIs' public content—whether delivered in the form of magazine or newspaper articles, television appearances, blog posts, or Twitter feeds—is intended to shape public opinion. It tends to consist of political analysis and critique, calls for political and social change, and often offers specific recommendations for the execution of public policy, typically on issues such as war, education, the environment, the economy, and human rights.

PIs and (Social) Media

By definition, a "public" intellectual disseminates his or her ideas to the population at large; thus, to be a PI, one must find and cultivate a broad audience. Throughout the latter half of the 20th century, radio and television were the dominant media through which PIs disseminated their ideas, typically using outlets such as National Public Radio, C-SPAN, and public television. While even these outlets can be somewhat exclusive, PIs speaking about issues of political importance in such venues have had to find ways of translating often dense academic jargon into accessible, plain language. Magazines such as *The Nation, Harper's,* the *New Yorker,* and *The New Republic*, and newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* have also provided platforms for PIs to address pressing concerns at greater length, albeit to relatively narrow audiences. More recently, political/entertainment shows on cable television—chief among them *Real Time with Bill Maher, The Daily Show With Jon Stewart*, and *The Colbert Report*—have offered PIs opportunities to speak (usually while promoting a recently published book) on issues of importance to the nation. One scholar has even argued that Jon Stewart is the greatest public intellectual of this age.

The explosion of new forms of media—online-only publications, podcasts, and especially blogs and microblogs—have allowed PIs to greatly expand the dissemination of their ideas and work. Indeed, several scholars have argued that social media have made the early 21st century the best time in history for public intellectuals because the growth in digital publication has exponentially increased the quality, diversity, and accessibility of PIs and their ideas.

While some critics have expressed reservations about the darker sides of the blogosphere and its potential to tarnish the reputation of PIs who use them, others have cheered social media's interactivity and ability to break down the barriers to PIs that are often erected by the formal, exclusive nature of the academy, where so many PIs make their homes.

The work of PIs can be found in a variety of social-media spaces. A citizen searching for a public intellectual's thoughts about the important issues of the day can find them in PIs' blogs and

tweets, on PIs' Web sites, on Web sites such as "The Public Intellectual Project" (run by Canada's McMaster University), in podcasts featuring lectures by and interviews with PIs, in videotaped lectures posted to YouTube by organizations such as RSA and TED Talks, and on Facebook pages hosted by members such as "The Public Intellectual: Guru, Gadfly, and Gunrunner." PIs using these various social and other digital media to contribute to public discussion and enlightenment include academicians, journalists, social critics, political consultants, and media personalities as varied as Cornel West, Barbara Ehrenreich, Naomi Klein, David Frum, Fareed Zakaria, and Andrew Sullivan, among many others.

PIs Who Publish About Social Media

Not only do PIs use social media as forums for their ideas, in many cases, PIs blog, tweet, post, write, and/or speak publicly about social media and, notably, about the roles increasingly played by social media in political movements. The Arab Spring of 2011, for example, brought to the fore widely accessible arguments by PIs about the centrality of Twitter and Facebook in the processes of political organization and revolution in countries such as Tunisia and Egypt. Among the most prominent of these was "The Political Power of Social Media," an article published in *Foreign Affairs* by New York University Professor Clay Shirky. Shirky, the director of NYU's interactive-telecommunications program, as well as a frequent contributor to publications such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *Wired*, and the *New York Times*, might well be considered an exemplar of the 21st-century public intellectual.

Perhaps even more noteworthy is Nicholas Negroponte, author of the 1995 book *Being Digital,* and founder of both the Media Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and *Wired* magazine, who speaks and writes extensively in scholarly and popular outlets about the power of social and digital media to change the world. Negroponte may be unique among PIs because he puts his money (and that of his supporters) where his mouth is.

As the developer of the One Laptop Per Child project, a philanthropic initiative that provides computers to children in the world's poorest nations, Negroponte is the driving force behind an effort that has distributed laptops to over 2 million children in more than 40 countries—a public dissemination of not merely ideas but also the very tools necessary in the digital age to stimulate the development of and appreciation for intellectualism, public as well as private, around the globe.

David Weiss
University of New Mexico

See Also: Blogosphere; Blogs; *Daily Show, The*; Facebook; News Media; Twitter.

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Push Polling

Push polls are political polls through which the pollster attempts to impact the views and attitudes of respondents by pretending to ask survey questions. Unlike regular polls, which aim for randomization and are deeply concerned with

recording respondent data, push polls reach out to a large number of possible respondents, and are more concerned with spreading information than in gathering information. The subject of push polls may rely on innuendos, small bits of information from opposition research conducted by the campaign, or in its worst form, pure rumors. In any case, the information presented is misleading, and tends to work against the traditional democratic process. It is viewed negatively enough that both the American Association for Public Opinion Research and the American Association of Political Consultants have written policies barring members from partaking in the practice, regardless of the strategic advantages it may give them.

Push polling has been conducted since the advent of polling in one form or another. Yet in recent years, the practice has garnered significant negative attention and campaigns have veered away from the tactic. However, the development of social media has made push polling easier to pull off, with fewer reputational risks. No longer does one have to be as concerned with leading polls being tracked back to a campaign when they can be posted by anyone on any number of social media sites that are decidedly more difficult to definitively link back to a candidate or campaign.

In their most mild form, push polls simply remind voters of a particular issue that may have a negative connotation. For example, polls conducted by Republicans in West Virginia would often ask if individuals were aware that Robert Byrd had been a member of the Ku Klux Klan. While the information was factual, it was only included in polls in an effort to discredit Byrd and attempt to convince voters to not support him. More serious push polls will involve direct negative attacks on opponents, and rely on nonfactual information. For example, a poll may ask: "If you knew that Governor Miller committed adultery, how would that impact your view of him?" There may be no proof of an affair, and the offending campaign can claim that they were just trying to anticipate how a scandal could impact the race, but it is clear what the motives actually are.

Sample size and poll length are two telling factors to distinguish push polls from traditional polls. Real polls tend to use small, representative samples that allow for valid results, while push polls instead behave like traditional marketing efforts, casting as wide a net as possible. Since they are not concerned about the data returned, there is no need for push polls to be concerned with samples or respondents. Further, push polls are very short. They do not see the need to gather any type of background information, as they are only worried about pushing out a message to as many people as they can. Regular polls can go on for up to 30 minutes, and typically ask positive and negative questions about a plethora of candidates and issues. Most conclude with questions related to demographic information of the polled individual.

2000 Republican Presidential Primary

While push polls had been used for a long time in campaigns, they became the center of national attention during the 2000 Republican presidential primary in South Carolina. While not proven, it was strongly alleged that the Bush campaign had used push polling in an effort to discredit Senator John McCain.

Given the history of race relations in the southern state, it is of little surprise that the push poll had strong racial undertones. Voters were asked whether their likelihood of voting for McCain would change if they knew he had fathered an illegitimate black child. Thousands of voters received the call, and it was aided by the fact that McCain had previously adopted a Bengali girl. While it has never been definitively traced back to Bush, he had a history of push polling. In 1994, his gubernatorial campaign was accused of asking voters if they would be less likely to vote for Texas Governor Ann Richards if they knew her staff was dominated by lesbians.

On face value, the tactic of push polling is ethically questionable. Insinuating information as factual when it is not undermines democratic values and the processes of the country. At the same time, candidates play to win, and if push polling can help them do so, it is difficult to dissuade. With social media gaining more and more traction as a vehicle for politics, push polling has become easier to conduct. Given the lack of filters or control on what individuals post in a blog or on Facebook, candidates and campaigns can

present information by any number of means, and then permit it to spread like wildfire across the Internet. With no real way of tracing back to the initial information, campaigns are less likely to face the blowback that Bush did in 2000 in South Carolina.

While professional consultants and public opinion researchers are strongly urged by their professional associations to not partake in push polls, new media have allowed candidates and campaigns to stealthily utilize these tactics, without the need for consultant help. Even more concerning, however, is that average citizens can present push polls through online means without any affiliation to a candidate or campaign. This can adversely affect how the campaign is viewed by voters.

Conclusion

While push polling is not deemed legitimate or acceptable, studies show that it works. As a result, it is likely to continue plaguing American elections for the foreseeable future. States—especially New Hampshire—have begun taking legislative action to attempt to limit the influence of push polling within their state's borders. Other states will likely follow. Push polls do not just mislead the public, they also misguide political system.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Campaign Strategy; Decoy Campaign Web Sites; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Polling; Special Interest Campaigns.

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Volume 3

Kerric Harvey
George Washington University
EDITOR

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Quebec, Canada, 2012 Student Protests

From February to September 2012, postsecondary students in Quebec, Canada, went on strike. Students opposed the provincial government's plan to raise tuition over five years, from 2012 to 2017. The urban centers of Montreal and Quebec City saw the largest protests. On September 5, 2012, the government abandoned its planned increases, ending the strike. Social media played a central role in the protests as it was used for organizing and following marches, debating issues, critiquing the media, disseminating messages, and both making and breaking political careers.

On February 14, 2012, 11,000 students from Université du Québec à Montréal and Université Laval voted to strike against the provincial government's tuition increases. Parti Quebecois Education Minister Line Beauchamp sought to raise tuition by $325 each year from 2012 to 2017. Average Quebec undergraduate tuition fees were less than half the Canadian average of $5,366 in 2012. As a result, Quebec has higher postgraduate enrollment (9 percent) than other Canadian provinces, and delivers high school's senior year and college's first year via inexpensive CÉGEP's (general/vocational colleges). This system, though praised for resembling European models of postsecondary education, has caused Quebec to accumulate greater education debt. Attempts to cut $103 million from postsecondary education in 2005 prompted students to strike for five weeks.

The University Student Federation of Quebec (FEUQ) and Broad Coalition of the Association for Student Union Solidarity (FEUQ) are the two largest Quebec student associations. The first weekend of the strike, FEUQ trained its delegates in strike workshops, including using social media. The original 11,000 students became an estimated 180,000 by late April. Participation ballooned to 400,000–500,000 people at a protest in Montreal on May 22, the 100th day of protest. Organizers proclaimed it the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history as people marched in violation of Bill 78, a law that banned protest within 50 meters (164 feet) of a campus and required police approval for public protest routes involving 50 people or more.

In February, student strikers shut down Montreal's Jacques Cartier Bridge during an afternoon rush hour. They also shut down the Montreal-bound ramp of the Champlain Bridge during a morning rush hour in March, leading to 100 arrests. On March 22, 200,000 protesters assembled in downtown Montreal. Spectators could follow the protests through Facebook, blogs, online videos, Concordia University Television (streaming online), and an Android application.

The protests resulted in occasional violence, with injuries suffered by both students and police, and thousands of arrests. In late April, protesters broke windows, vandalized artworks, and triggered fire alarms at Université de Montréal in an attempt to disrupt exams. In response to the growing violence, FEUQ asked the Broad Coalition of the Association for Student Union Solidarity (CLASSE), representing about half of the student strikers, to publicly condemn recent acts of vandalism so that student organizations could be included in government talks. CLASSE spokesperson and protest leader Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois stopped short of completely condemning violence by reiterating that students had the right to self-defense against acts of police violence.

On May 10, 2012, during morning rush hour, the Montreal Métro was shut down when protesters targeted three subway lines with smoke bombs. The resulting confusion essentially crippled parts of the métro and left thousands of commuters stranded. Four suspects, three women and one man, were subsequently arrested for the smoke bombings. The four were identified through camera footage, and they turned themselves in. In addition to the May 22 protests of Bill 78, it was also during this month that talks between student groups and the government broke down when two different government proposals to increase tuition 70 percent by 2020 were rejected.

By late May, casseroles (French for "pans") protests, where people march while banging on pots and pans, were occurring in Montreal regularly at 8:00 P.M. During this time, three Twitter hashtags (#ggi, #manifencours, and

Members of the student organization the Broad Coalition of the Association for Student Union Solidarity (CLASSE), which represented around half of the student strikers during the Quebec students protests of 2012, marching during the massive May 22, 2012, demonstration marking the 100th day of the protests in Montreal. Crowds of 400,000 to 500,000 people gathered that day, which some called the largest act of civil disobedience in Canadian history.

#casserolesencours) produced 700,000 posts in just a month. Social media prompted students around the world to march in solidarity, publicizing the time, place, and location of demonstrations and debated tuition increases, as well as discussing Bill 78, Premier Jean Charest, the police, and journalistic coverage of the events. Also in May, five university newspaper reporters (from Concordia University's *The Link* and McGill University's *McGill Daily*) posted on the Montreal Police Department's Twitter account (@SPVM) to secure their release when they were mistakenly arrested as protesters, despite holding press credentials.

In June a Montreal blogger known only as Anna argued that the English Canadian media were less critical of Bill 78 and were less sympathetic to the plight of the students than their French counterparts. Anna believed that limited access to French-language media was to blame. She in turn used Tumblr to create the site called Translating the Printemps Érable. A dozen volunteers or so, including professional translators, posted translated French-language reporting, first-person accounts, videos, and editorials to the site in English. That month, the site registered 60,000 page views from 35,000 unique visitors. A Montreal Web designer bought the domain QuebecProtest.com and donated it to the project. "Maple Spring" (*printemps érable*) sounds like Arab Spring (*printemps arabe*) in French, plus both are activist movements fueled by social media.

Early on, protesters argued that Education Minister Line Beauchamp fueled the protests by dismissing them with a February directive for classes to continue, even as additional students voted to strike. Beauchamp's office was subsequently vandalized, and she received death threats. On May 14, Beauchamp resigned as deputy premier and education minister. Beauchamp stated that her failure to recognize the power of social media was her downfall, and that she resigned not because of violence, but because she was no longer part of the solution. Similarly, the Quebec government was criticized for overlooking social media. It took the government four days after Bill 78's passing to call a press conference to defend it, while student protesters immediately critiqued the law and organized protests on social media.

FEUQ president and protest leader Léo Bureau-Blouin, however, became the youngest person (20 years old) ever to be elected to the Quebec provincial government under the ruling Parti Quebecois in the fall 2012 election. He subsequently received threats and harassment on the Facebook page he used to communicate with his constituents from individuals upset that he had switched sides from protester to politician. Also, CLASSE spokesperson and protest leader Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois became a media celebrity during the protests. He became sought after as a protest advisor, conducting an Ontario university tour following the Maple Spring.

Even before September 5, the official end of the strike when the government abandoned its originally planned tuition increases, several post-secondary institutions had already returned to class, some meeting during August and on weekends to make up lost time. Despite calls for solidarity during the strike, roughly two-thirds of Quebec students, including many from McGill University, remained in class and completed their final exams. In spring 2013, Premier Pauline Marois participated in an education summit before introducing plans to increase tuition 3 percent each year until 2018, prompting students to return to the streets in protest.

Gordon Alley-Young
City University of New York

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Facebook; Piccadilly Riots, London; Seattle 1999 WTO Protests; Tumblr; Twitter.

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Race/Ethnicity and Social Media

Early notions around the Internet were to create a digital utopian society absent of race; however, race and ethnicity are ever present in online communities, and in particular within social media. Since social media centers around interactivity and the exchange of information, the interests, and the identification of its users have become integral parts of engagement. With more than half of Internet users employing some type of social media, preference and practices differ between racial and ethnic groups. Race and ethnicity in social media is a rapidly growing field, looking at how specific groups utilize, choose, and appropriate social networking sites (SNS). Currently, Facebook is the dominating social media in the United States, but Twitter and Myspace have the most diverse users.

While Twitter is the second-largest social media employed, Myspace is considered a dwindling SNS; nonetheless, both provide a platform where an aggregate articulation of voices can interact online. Pinterest, Instagram, and Tumblr are noted as additional popular social media applications, but there are other social networking sites that garner millions of users that represent an array of racial and ethnic groupings such as online forums, blogs, YouTube, virtual gaming, and virtual social worlds.

Social media engagement in politics, entertainment, and issues concerning specific groups has seen a surge of activity by nonwhites, establishing even more variety of online information and exchange. For instance, the 2008 presidential elections witnessed an increase in communities of color exercising various social media platforms to engage in political discourse, and the presence of black, Latino, and Asian bloggers is becoming more visible in the blogosphere. Whereas sites like Myspace saw a departure of white users, other racial and ethnic groups continue to use the site to articulate complex and overlapping interests that include identity and group belonging. At the same time, Myspace still serves as a vehicle to network through music via a diverse cultural exchange. Furthermore, blacks, Asians, Native Americans, and Latinos use social media to stay current on issues in their neighborhoods more than whites. In sum, social networking illuminates a burgeoning diversity.

Identity, self-presentation, and mobilization are salient themes in race/ethnicity discourse around social media. The United States is comprised of a large white population and principally operates from a white hegemonic cultural, political, and economic thrust. Although nonwhite populations outnumber whites when combined, and

Hispanics alone come close to being the most populous racial group, these groups are constructed and approached as minorities in every major institution. Social media allow racial and ethnic groups to establish an online identity prescribed by them; they also furnish a space where groups can connect and mobilize interests in ways that were previously difficult, especially for marginalized populations. Through social media, racial and ethnic groups have an opportunity to initiate agency while cultivating community and connecting with group members within relevant cultural frameworks.

African Americans

With more than half of black Internet users visiting a social media site at least once a day, African Americans are shifting the media landscape. Although African American households are less likely to own a computer or have Internet access at home, and possess fewer chances in accessing public broadband sites in their communities as compared to whites, their active participation on SNSs contributes to complicating ideas around online agency, accepted forms of communication, civic engagement, and public presentation. Blacks tend to use Twitter more than any other racial group. Research suggests that Twitter is a popular medium for African Americans because of its user-friendly and mobile-friendly capabilities. Twitter does not need access to the Internet to work; it is accessed via a phone with a text messaging function. On a cell phone, Twitter messages are designed in a style similar to that of texting.

Also, African American Twitter users favor entertainment and celebrity news, and often engage in public discourse with notable figures. In some ways, the practice of being involved in public discourse regarding famous personalities generates a status that appears intertwined with celebrity lifestyle; in other ways, it appears to position members of a marginalized group within a circle of power brokers. Additionally, African American interests are situated within national and sometimes international dialogue through the use of hashtags. Currently, African American topics are ranked as some of the top issues, obligating users to notice the critical interests and aspects of cultural perspectives in the black community. Twitter use by African Americans has opened public discourse and a growing acceptance around the usage of African American communication and language. There has been an increase of cultural rhetoric found in the oral traditions of African Americans in Twitter text. Also, there are frequent occurrences of text that defies established grammar and vocabulary rules that is seen in African American communication, and is now captured in Twitter posts; it is being adopted into general communication habits.

Self-presentation centers black participation in social media. On sites such as Facebook, there are high volumes of self-portraits and pictures documenting the everyday life of black users. In the case of Instagram, an SNS that is employed by African Americans more than any other group, the picture presents the personal profile. Photographic agency is an important method to connect to friends and to establish an image that is user-generated, rather than a mainstream media representation. Belonging and community are recurring themes illustrated among black social media users. A study by Bun Lee showed that African American college students who had Facebook accounts mainly interacted with other African American friends, with a greater emphasis on staying connected to family and associates than meeting new friends, promoting a business, or using it as a source of entertainment. In addition, blacks use online forums catering to their issues and interests, specifically around being black. In terms of black bloggers, they disproportionately focus on political issues, along with an emphasis on encouraging racial group members to mimic their online civic engagement offline. However, relationships are the most popular topic for black online forums, followed by a focus on identity, heritage, politics, religion/spirituality, and women, all subsets of collective acceptance and community building.

Black SNS users have carved out a niche community on YouTube focusing on aesthetics, in particular, cosmetics and hair care. Black YouTube communities design cultural and relevant topics around the unique composition of skin and textured hair, especially around grooming hair that is not chemically processed. Tutorials and videos that cater to various aspects of beauty from the perspective of black people, especially black

African American girls at Holmes Elementary School in Liberty City, Miami, work with a laptop computer in January 2012. While there are lower rates of computer ownership and home Internet access for African American households as compared to whites, African American Internet users are extremely active on social networking sites, with over half using such sites once a day or more.

women, has led to the creation of an alternative forum addressing issues that mainstream fashion and beauty overlook, and that African American communities are attempting to resolve.

Perhaps the biggest misperception of black social media participants is the assumption that black people are a monolithic group. Although African Americans are the largest group of the black demographic in the United States, ethnic assemblages use social media to carve out alternative customized black identities. Black ethnic identity in the United States is an oft-ignored facet of black social media users that can explain how online identities overlap and sometimes clash. For instance, the Cape Verdean community employs Myspace to create online communities that are focused on connecting other Cape Verdeans within discourse around identity, especially in a hegemonic culture that clumps them into African American and Latino racial categories.

Hispanics/Latinos

Hispanics use social media more than any other group, and have started to close the gap in the digital divide by becoming increasingly engaged in social media. The average Latino using social media is between the ages of 18 and 29, English-dominant but bilingual, has some college experience or more, and was born in the United States. Though their participation shows visible generational gaps, Latinos use social media to integrate into American society while preserving ethnic heritage and establishing a distinct voice recognizing multiple ethnic groups. Microblogging and blogging are avenues that give voice to a population that exist in physical mass, but still push for more media visibility, political power, and agency. The celebration of heritage is a critical aspect of Hispanic people. At the same time, employing tools that strengthen the voices of Hispanics is important. Latinos are the second-largest users

of traditional online blogs, and edge out blacks and whites in Tumblr, a hybrid genre of blogging. Tumblr is a social media site allowing users to share all forms of content, thus making available a platform where the exchange of information is multitextured and provides different layers of experience and understanding.

Blogs provide an arena to articulate the various perspectives of Latinos and serve as an extension of Hispanic-centered news. English-speaking or bilingual Hispanics learn more by blogging or following blogs, and Hispanic bloggers are likely to focus on issues of immigration more than any other group. Additionally, blogging is a social media that captures the nuances of ethnicity in Latino culture. For example, black Latinos or Afro-Latinos dialogue around race, identity, and discrimination in their homeland and host country. These forums concentrate on the experiences of black Hispanics in South America while making efforts in fill the gap of Afro-Latino history by sharing historical and current information regarding African countries of which members are descendants. Activist and 2008 vice-presidential candidate Rosa Clemente frequently examines her black Puerto Rican identity through blogging. The blogs provide discourse, looking at how individuals can obtain multiple group memberships, but it also gives outsiders a purview into ignored populations in the United States.

Hispanics are the second-largest users of Twitter and Instagram, and are more likely to use Twitter, Myspace, and Facebook for individual recreational purposes. However, political activism and awareness is intertwined in their daily lives; therefore, these SNSs are used to mobilize around critical community health problems and political issues. Unlike African Americans, most Latinos are connected to other countries; therefore, they participate in transnational engagements through social media that help maintain family ties and friendships across borders. Spanish-language media play a critical role in the lives of Latinos; however, the young Hispanic population in the United States is beginning to rely on wireless devices for Internet, radio, film, and television content. Consequently, traditional media such as magazines, print news, radio, and television make use of interactive sites to establish a multimedia platform, plus recruit and retain consumers.

Asian Americans

Unlike other minority groups, Asian Americans have the highest adaptation of technology and have gained entry into the digital world. Since a significant number of Asian immigrants migrate from countries with sophisticated technology infrastructures, most already participate in an SNS that is indigenous to their country and meets the needs of staying connected to language, culture, and the people. Asian Americans are the most active in daily social networking, and spend more time on Facebook than the average American. A number of members of this demographic belong to another SNS similar to Facebook that is from their homeland; nonetheless, Asian American females are recorded as spending the most time on Facebook. While the self-presentation of other ethnic groups like Indians and Latinos tend to highlight their faces on profile pages, southeast Asians and east Asians who live in the United States de-emphasize their features and present limited or reserved emotional expressions.

Also, Asian Americans have been identified as visiting and spending more time than any other group on YouTube. Efforts to obtain celebrity-like status are best seen in musical performances. YouTube is also used as a site where east Asian communities around beauty are explored, especially in the area of cosmetics, fashion, and cosmetic surgery. On the other hand, Indian women use YouTube for hair care; much like African American women, it is SNS fusing ethnic-specific information around body imaging.

Navigating and negotiating identity and belonging in the United States is one of the main topics of online forums for Asian migrants. These niche SNSs are used as support systems. Indian diasporas create virtual communities that operate like online families, providing kinship and reinforcement. Also, there are numerous social media support groups for Korean and Chinese wives who migrate with their spouses to new terrain, and work through daily life challenges of cultural and language barriers. However, there are segments of the Asian American population that do not fit into the template of tech fitness. Overall, the heterogeneous demographic is homogenized in America, making negotiation even more difficult, but at the same time validating the necessity of social media.

Native Americans

Native Americans are among one of the last demographics in the United States to garner Internet access, yet native nations work for inclusion in the digital world and actively engage in social media by using it as a tool to strengthen tribal community, preserve and disseminate First Nation cultures, and ultimately develop native nations. Social networking activity among Native Americans focuses on tribal communication, community engagement, and the ability to maintain inter- and intra-tribal connections. Additionally, social media is used to provide Native American representation to mainstream America that is both favorable and contemporary. There are over 500 tribes living on sovereign territories that make up a population of three million native people in the United States. On most tribal lands, it is difficult and costly to acquire access to broadband, resulting in less than 10 percent of the population accessing the Internet.

Since the beginning of the new millennium, there have been concerted efforts to build a tribal-centric technology infrastructure. Once the Internet was put into place, Native Americans immediately became engaged in the digital world and social media. Native Americans blog, podcast, and employ social media sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, but most usage is seen on radio-streaming and video sharing.

Tribal Web sites are used to keep Native Americans informed of tribe-specific activities, festivals, trade shows, and Native American news. They operate as social network portals, serving as a resource and site to gather and exchange information. These sites are used to disseminate information such as event postings and coverage, job announcements, and health and safety advisories. Some tribal sites blog, podcast, or provide music streaming, though it is not common. There are only two online radio stations that provide radio streaming on an interactive platform, but they have limited broadcasting capabilities. Also, Facebook is an avenue used by tribal councils and Native American organizations. Pages that have been established by various tribes connect members and supporters around current news and issues. In addition, Facebook is used as a site to announce political activities and advocate for the protection of native peoples and their lands. The native gaming industry also galvanizes Indian casino owners through its Facebook organizational pages, while individual casinos advertise to non-natives about casino activities such as concerts and gaming promotions.

Video-sharing and radio streaming have been the most salient social media used by First Nation communities. Over half of Native American Internet users watch videos on video-sharing sites such as YouTube or Google Share. Streaming music is used as a way to exchange music while educating and preserving native cultures that are in some cases vulnerable to becoming extinct. Rez-Kast is a popular video-sharing media known as the Native YouTube. On one hand, traditional music and cultural videos are shared; while on the other, modern images, music, and videos provide outside communities representations of current native peoples in efforts to minimize an American hegemonic imagination that depicts Native American people in outdated and racist frames. Native Americans use YouTube as a format to provide alternative depictions of native people. Often, there is a focus on traditional images of Native Americans in tribal clothes and participating in traditional ceremonies; however, the use of YouTube puts Native Americans in a contemporary setting, and allows YouTube users to engage in discourse around current issues that are important to tribal nations.

Kaia Shivers
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Diaspora/Migration; Identity Politics; Immigration; Social Media, Adoption of.

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Radical Decentralization

In keeping with its roots in pluralism, radical decentralization is not defined by a single historical moment, political movement, or author. Frequently linked to different, often incompatible aspects of current political, social, and technological context, radical decentralization has been put to use by a remarkably broad spectrum of movements and theories. From leftist political organizations in South America and the Occupy Movement to charter school reform and the Tea Party, and even extending into business and marketing strategies, there are few contemporary movements that fail to make reference to the notion of decentralized, community-based strategies of organization. As a political term, *decentralization* is most often understood in opposition to the standardization and hierarchical organization that has been increasingly associated with multinational corporations and the global market. All of the recent uses of decentralization are rooted in the new ecology of social media and its potential to replace such top-down political and social structures with a mass-based local framework.

MoveOn is one of the most important contemporary illustrations of this integration of politics and social media into an effective decentralized collectivity based on the widening latitude of technological communication. In an operational statement ("The Way We Work") credited to cofounder Wes Boyd, MoveOn claims that it is an "experiment in radical decentralization." As a key tenet of its organizational model, decentralization extends to every part of MoveOn's process, encompassing the social, political, and business dimensions of its operations. The "radical" element of decentralization in this model expresses the extension of this concept into every aspect of the organization, rather than a claim to radical social critique that has characterized earlier leftist movements, from Marxian to anarchist and agrarian collectives. This willingness to integrate business models and work within a state-oriented politics (as opposed to models based on social revolution) is one of the reasons for the wide appeal of MoveOn and its ability to use social media to integrate members from across the United States for concentrated and delimited projects aiming to shift state policy.

In *The MoveOn Effect* (2012), David Karpf calls MoveOn a "networked hybrid of organizational practices" that uses a variety of Internet-based strategies to bring disparate and nonparticipatory citizens into effective political movements. The decentralized structure of MoveOn keeps its operational costs low, allowing participants who rarely donate to larger, more centralized political organizations to become involved through small, sporadic donations. The consistency between these fundraising practices and MoveOn's Internet outreach has brought radical decentralization to the fore as a key concept in discussions of political policy and activism. As a hybrid network, MoveOn exemplifies one of the most potent aspects of media-based politics because it illustrates some of the most effective strategies for changing the criteria of participation while multiplying avenues for self-empowerment.

Beyond MoveOn

The concept of radical decentralization has roots in Euro-American culture, extending back to a period before MoveOn and what Victoria Carty has called "cyberactivism." The broader context of MoveOn's commitment to decentralization comes out of series of debates in the late 20th century by influential social theorists such as Jurgen Habermas, Chantal Mouffe, and Ernesto Laclau. These debates centered on the role of the social sphere, in contrast to the political or private spheres. Various elements of radical decentralization come into play in these discussions as part of a larger set of strategies concerned with the waning of "communicative action." As Habermas argues,

the contemporary period is characterized by the loss of action-oriented communication in a social milieu that would allow groups to form around issues and effectively act according to those responses. Social media have had a direct impact on the creation of a commons in which communicative action might be possible again, but it is not yet clear how the very notion of the commons will in turn change as a result. MoveOn signals one possible route, and other unpredictable realizations of new social community, like the radical movements connected to the Arab Spring and the Occupy Movement, will also likely continue to emerge. Part of this unpredictability comes from the other sense of "radical" implicit in the decentralizing process, which denotes a shift in what community is, and how it is shaped, in the new media ecology. Within the context of these new political movements, assumptions about leadership, intention, and organization are undergoing a notable metamorphosis, as self-generating communities and spontaneous action develop in ways that depend on communication technologies to an unprecedented degree. This shift has led to a renewed focus on the underlying principles, or the "micropolitics" of social interaction that extend beyond considerations of official political policy.

In *Turtles, Termites and Traffic Jams* (1994), Mitchel Resnick gives one of the first accounts of the uses of complexity theory for understanding how political and social decentralization might work. Stemming from the mathematical work of Ilya Prigogine, complexity theory in Resnick's account argues that decentralization is not only possible, but is already operative in many facets of human culture, including politics. Today, there is complexity in typical elements of daily life such as voting patterns, shopping habits (like Black Friday), and traffic jams, and these randomized developments now fluidly extend into Internet trends on YouTube and Twitter. In the many subcultures of social networking, these patterns are not coordinated, but they nonetheless can emerge into fully formed positions with a tremendous potential for influence, such as the viral YouTube series *Vote Different*. Today, these social media play an important role in shaping political and social community that is "radical" in the sense of pre-existing and extending beyond official political culture. As a social strategy, radical decentralization can thus be understood as a set of tactics that try to harness some of these elements of complexity for focused political ends.

Political Action

Faced with a growing symmetry between governmental organizations and global corporate interests, many activists have turned to local and autonomous strategies based on radical decentralization and the strategies of complexity theory. In the Americas, movements such as the Zapatistas and Abya Yala have redefined radicalism as an attachment to the land and the local community while embracing the use of social media to communicate and coordinate action, both locally and globally. In a very different way, the global hacking group Anonymous uses radical decentralization to maintain anonymity while launching coordinated attacks on targeted Web sites. Each of these groups shows an unprecedented willingness to allow elements of complexity to be integrated into their policies and practices through their use of social media. Outreach programs, fundraising, and catching the attention of global news media, for example, often depend on local videos and documents "going viral," rather than moving through official channels. While the Zapatistas and Anonymous would define their forms of radicalism differently, today they are linked through common strategies rooted in a new context of communication and technology that allows for an unparalleled degree of decentralization within their radical programs.

New social media make decentralization a real possibility for a number of groups and movements at both a local and a global level. On the other hand, the uses made of social media and the strategic purposes of decentralization are widely divergent, and often depend on the way that groups define their form of radicalism. As a key example, MoveOn demonstrates the close relationship between emergent communications technologies and new social and political paradigms of participation, while interpreting radical decentralization in relation to corporate business models of nonhierarchical organization and a commitment to shifting official state policy. MoveOn's commitment to influencing politics at the state level stands in marked contrast to other forms of decentralized social organization that

preexist the turn to social media, but which are now using these media to achieve a different form of radical decentralization that challenges the, state-oriented model. In the future, it is likely that radical decentralization and the growth of social media will continue to play a central role in both of these models of political and social change. At the same time, the parallels in their methods could also lead to a more fluid exchange and hybridization between these divergent interpretations of radicalism, generating new modes of social and political action.

Wilson Kaiser
Jacksonville University

See Also: Anonymous; MoveOn Effect; MoveOn.org; Occupy Movement; Tea Party Movement; *Vote Different*.

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Real-Time Communication Nodes

It is often noted that the speed of communication has greatly accelerated since the turn of the 21st century. It is less widely understood that the most temporally significant shift in this period is not acceleration but instantaneous, "real-time" communication (RTC). Whereas previous modes of periodic/delayed communication (PDC) featured broadcast nodes monopolized by mass media conglomerates, RTC differs from these in almost every respect. Most importantly, it is distinguished by live temporality and peer-to-peer interactivity.

Political Effects

Certainly, pure, instantaneous, real-time communication never literally occurs. Similarly, the ownership of social media is no less conglomerated than mass media. But the experience of RTC as though it were financially unmediated, and the negligible degree to which it is temporally impeded, produces effects on political life that are worth considering.

One of the main reasons for these effects is that the commonly recognized governing institutions today derive from PDC, rather than RTC nodes, even if the former is increasingly defined by the latter. The modern state was founded, consolidated, and expanded through mass media nodes such as the newspaper, radio, and television over the course of the past five centuries. The 21st-century globalized economy and its institutional attendants, in contrast, derive from the Internet. To the extent that transnational capitalism recontextualizes and competes with the modern state system, it is largely the instantaneity and interactivity of RTC nodes that enable its success in doing so.

Economic Crisis Example

The 2007 to 2008 economic crisis is one example through which this can be understood. Beginning in the early 21st century, transnational firms sought real-time trading opportunities within the borderless, instantaneous rhythms of digital transactions. These efforts were buttressed by the enforcement power of transnational institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and International Monetary Fund (IMF). In contrast, the democratic mechanisms of representative states that might have regulated such flows continued to operate within the much slower rhythms established by PDC nodes. As a result, by the early 21st century, the upper reaches of

many nation states conformed to the temporal urgency of supranational decision-making bodies such as the IMF. While they otherwise might have restrained real-time trading beyond borders, now temporally subordinated states "could not effectively process the slower rhythms of the representative assembly, the election cycle, public policy formation and mediated public debate."

This meant that the most important decision-making practices occurred at a supranational level in both political and economic domains, with significant local effects. For instance, the deregulation of global finance capital enabled the transnationalization and securitization of subprime mortgage loans within the United States. The result was that the originating lender was no longer at risk in case of default, while the lendee's risk remained. The loans were then bundled, purchased, and traded through human-powered or algorithmic, automated RTC nodes on a global level. As such, the slower, controlled rhythms of democratic decision-making in PDC-based states were unable to regulate the real-time rhythms of global economic forces.

Shortly after the crisis brought forth by securitized lending, numerous American financial giants collapsed, resulting in an extended recession, followed by the state-supported restabilization of global firms engaged in real-time accumulation. In contrast, for citizens governed by states internally, the consequences of risk were generalized in the form of the "jobless recovery."

Social Media Mobilization

As the employment crisis overtook the economic crisis in 2010–11, civil society actors began to mobilize RTC nodes in their own right to circumvent the slower, increasingly impotent rhythms of representative democracy in PDC-based states. Facebook, Twitter, and other social media users outpaced newspaper, radio, and television representations, mobilizing hundreds of thousands in the United States and worldwide.

As such, heads of state who had previously ruled through the control of PDC nodes were circumvented with livestreamed video and other instantaneous text and imagery from cellphones, laptops, and tablets, which relayed scenes of street battles, occupations, and other conflicts to the populace, even when the slower mass media refused to cover the events. This intensified social media mobilization while at the same time suggesting an unmediated, directly democratic alternative to dictatorial and representative democratic states alike.

Because RTC nodes are experienced as both financially unmediated and temporally unimpeded, they tend to bring forth conflict with PDC-based states as well as the RTC-based supra-state entities that subordinate them. But politically speaking, social media is actually a form of mediation that, like any other, harbors potentially detrimental effects. If the real-time temporality and profit-based orientation of RTC remains unconsidered, reflex may replace reflection, and fragmentation may undermine consolidation. Civil society attempts to recast the tension of PDC-state and RTC-supra-state entities through a reassertion of the withering public sphere may flounder as infighting and unstrategic action takes over.

In the wake of the events of 2011, the decline of the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street movements raises this question, as do the reconsolidation of both PDC-state and RTC-supra-state modes of control. Mark Poster and Gary Hall are two analysts who have addressed this question, albeit in a different context.

For Poster, the destabilization of public/private distinctions brought forth by interactive RTC nodes disrupts prior notions of a public sphere through which the populace might redirect state policy. For Poster, the Internet is not a public sphere, but is a medium that might facilitate a new form of it under conditions that may not have emerged yet. Insofar as it contradicts the continuing profit orientation of most RTC nodes, Poster argues that peer-to-peer filesharing is one domain in which the emergent form of such a public sphere might be seen.

For Hall, the public sphere is a dead end: not only has it been outmoded by RTC, but it was always a fiction in the first place. Whereas the public sphere requires universality, Hall asserts that the internal pluralism revealed by social media demonstrates the deep contingency and plurality of society. As such, RTC necessitates a break with consensus and democracy. Because actors are always embedded within a specific media environment, which defines their capacities

and self-understandings, the conventional image of the autonomous, individual citizen is as much a fiction as the public sphere. The real contribution of RTC then, is to make visible what has always been the case. Only once this occurs, argues Hall, might we bring forth a new mode of "hypercyberdemocracy."

Jason Adams
Grand Valley State University

See Also: Activists and Activism; American Debt Crisis and Twitter; Arab Spring; Digital Revolution; Economic and Social Justice; Egypt; International Social Media and Politics; *Myth of Digital Democracy*; Occupy Movement; Streaming Media; Unemployment.

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Recency Effect

When given a list of items to recall, the recency effect reveals that people tend to remember the final few items of that list most reliably. The term *recency effect* was first coined by German psychologist Hermann Ebbinghaus, following a series of experiments that he performed on himself. It is complemented by the primacy effect; together, the recency and primacy effects constitute the serial position effect. Recency effect has since been expanded by several notable psychologists, and offers a number of implications for contemporary advertising, Web design, and political campaigns.

In 1885, Hermann Ebbinghaus published *Über das Gedächtnis*, which was later translated into English as *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology*. The book describes Ebbinghaus's memory experiments and subsequent findings. Ebbinghaus was convinced that higher cognitive processes could be studied via human experimentation. This view stood in contrast to popular scientific opinion of the 19th century, prompting Ebbinghaus to conduct his memory experiments on himself. Realizing that his memory processes would be linked to previous knowledge and understanding, Ebbinghaus sought to delineate an easily memorized set of words that possessed no prior associations.

His solution was "nonsense syllables": consonant-vowel-consonant combinations with no repeating consonants or prior meaning (e.g., YAT, PED, and KOJ). Ebbinghaus delineated 2,300 such syllables, which he drew at random from a box. After recording each nonsense syllable in a journal, he would attempt to recall them aloud. The results of Ebbinghaus's experiments were limited by his decision to use himself as the only test subject, thus reducing the generalizability of his work to a universal population. Despite this limitation, Ebbinghaus's experiments resulted in a number of influential findings regarding the cognitive processes of human memory.

One of Ebbinghaus's most significant contributions to memory research was the serial position effect. The serial position effect states that recall accuracy considerably varies depending on the order in which material is presented to a test subject. The serial position effect is subdivided into two cognitive biases: primacy effect and recency effect. According to primacy effect, when asked to recall items from a list, people tend to remember the earliest items with more accuracy than middle-of-list items. According to recency effect, when asked to recall items from a list, people tend

to remember the final items with the most accuracy of all. The reason for each of these effects has been highly postulated since their introduction by Ebbinghaus in the late 1800s. One prominent theory for primacy effect is that test subjects have more time to devote to the initial items in a list: the first list item is rehearsed, the second item is rehearsed along with the first item, the third item is rehearsed along with the first and second items, and so on. Consistent with this argument, the primacy effect has been shown to reduce when items are presented to a test subject more quickly; it increases when items are presented more slowly.

Several theories also exist to explain the reason for recency effect. One prominent theory for recency effect is that final items of a given list are still present in the participant's working memory, or short-term store (STS), at time of recall. This theory, however, fails to account for the long-term recency effect that has been observed during delayed recall. A second theory for recency effect is based on temporal distinctiveness. It is believed that a shorter delay between hearing and recalling a list item results in a more distinct memory trace to that item; thus, end-of-list items are more easily retrieved. Yet another potential theory for the recency effect is contextually based. According this theory, the retrieval of items from memory is accompanied by, or encoded with, the physical and emotional context in which it was first committed to memory. For this reason, the most recent items of a given list will have a more similarly encoded context to that of the present moment. The most recent items of a list are therefore more easily retrieved from memory.

Since the time of Ebbinghaus's memory experiments, a range of notable psychologists have continued to study and expand upon his original findings, including William Crano, a distinguished professor of psychology at the School of Behavioral and Organizational Sciences; Bennet Murdock, an emeritus professor of psychology at Yale University; and George Miller, a founder of cognitive psychology. As a result, the recency effect has been shown to offer a number of implications for the fields of advertising, Web design, and political campaigns. Within the field of advertising, the order in which consumers are exposed to advertising messages has not only been shown to affect their purchasing tendencies, but also brand recognition and brand loyalty. Thus, consumers are more likely to buy, identify, and display constancy toward items to which they have most recently been exposed. Recency effect also has implications for Web site design, with visitors showing an increased tendency to click on links at the end of a given list. Finally, voter appeals delivered closer to Election Day have shown to impact voting preferences more than those delivered further from Election Day. Such a reality highlights the import of political advertising in the final weeks, days, and even hours of an election cycle.

J. Jacob Jenkins
California State University

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Campaign Strategy; Influence on Elections; Primacy Effect; Voter Turnout.

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Recombinant Media

See Remix, Political

Redalert.com

Today, billions of people are using the Internet as an information and communication tool. The Internet has become a living organism, with

its online Web sites accessible from all parts of the world. Each day, numerous Web sites are dying or announcing they are ceasing to provide services, and numerous Web sites are born with the hope that they will be visited by many people. A Web site can be a search engine such as Google, Yahoo!, and Bing, an e-mail client, a social networking site such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, or a newspaper. To operate a Web site, one should have a domain name, a Web site designed around a purpose, a Web server, and an Internet connection with feasible data speed that minimizes the congestion present in Web site traffic. Furthermore, this environment should be secured from hackers, denial of service attacks, trojans, worms, and other kinds of malicious software. In this respect, operating a 24/7 accessible Web site is not easy. Most Web site providers use Web monitoring services in order to maintain the continuity of their applications and services. The Red Alert Web monitoring service of the Keynote Company is one such service.

Functions

The easiest way of understanding whether a Web site is currently working or not is to conduct a "ping" test. If a URL address of the Web page that is pinged does not return a "destination host unreachable" message, this means that that Web page is currently working and accessible to users. Furthermore, one can see how fast the speed of the network connection established between a computer and a Web site is with a ping test. This simple Web site monitoring method can be done upon the user's request, and needs to be run at periodic intervals in order to check a Web site's availability. However, the Red Alert Web monitoring application offers more than just a simple ping test.

Red Alert automatically checks a Web site's accessibility four times or more each hour (either in 5- or 15-minute intervals) over the course of a day and informs its customers about their Web site's performance, accessibility, and connection speed via e-mail or cell phone whenever any alarm defined by the user is triggered. In order to minimize false positive responses, these alarms are triple checked by Red Alert, which means that the system attempts to reach a Web site or a network device connected to the Internet on three different Internet connections, which are fully independent from each other in terms of Internet backbone network, local Internet service provider, and local Internet connection equipment. If the users of Red Alert have a firewall (traffic filtering system), they need to be sure about whether their firewall allows traffic from the Internet connections that Red Alert uses.

Unless Red Alert detects an error for a certain Web site or a device connected to the Internet using all three paths, it does not notify the owner of the Web site or the device about the error. A network device that is monitored by Red Alert can be a domain name server, a Web server, a secure Web server (serving Web sites starting with https://), a mail server, such as SMTP, POP3 and IMAP, an FTP server, and other kinds of devices accepting TCP/IP connections over the Internet. Red Alert can also detect network-related problems with its auto trace function. It stores trace routes for the Web site or the device that is monitored via each of the three fully independent network connections, both when an error occurs and after the error is resolved, so that a user may compare the trace route results during and after the error. Furthermore, its network gateway monitoring function allows users to understand at which point of the network connection the problem occurred.

File size checking is another useful function of Red Alert that checks the size of files retrieved from a Web server at certain intervals (four or 12 times per her hour). Thus, it notifies users whenever the content of a Web page, for example, has been changed or modified. On one hand, a change or modification in a file may mean an error for a Web page. On the other hand, an unchanging file size may indicate that there is a problem with the page. Red Alert can also be used to notify users when the size of a file is not changed, or to help them understand whether a Web page is working properly or not. The size of a file usually requires frequent input changes over time. For example, the size of a database file that stores user's information for a specified Web site frequently changes. In this respect, if Red Alert notifies users that the size of the file has remained the same since its last retrieval, this indicates that the Web page is not properly working.

Furthermore, Red Alert logs daily statistics about the site's performance, as well as errors

it detects for the monitored devices. These daily logs can be accessed online by logging into Red Alert's Web site, or they are automatically sent to the e-mails of the list of people defined by Red Alert users. As such, it offers an important, on-the-ground type monitoring and management tool for social media political strategists and scholars.

Hakan Aydogan
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

See Also: Deep Packet Inspection; FinFisher; Firewalling; Great Firewall of China.

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Reddit

Reddit cofounder Alexis Ohanian speaking about the growth of the site on October 16, 2009. Nearly 2 million users follow Reddit's politics subreddit, and politicians including Barack Obama have conducted popular "Ask Me Anything" sessions.

Reddit is a social news and bookmarking site that allows users to submit links to stories, pictures, videos, or any other Web content, and have other users either vote them up or down. When a link is upvoted enough, it reaches the front page of the site, and has the potential for a worldwide audience. Like other social news sites such as Digg, the structure of Reddit allows for the crowdsourcing of news and information by having users, not an editorial board, decide what will be the leading stories for readers. This can, and does, lead to highlighting news stories and events that might initially have a low profile but have the ability to resonate with readers.

Reddit was founded in 2005 by Steve Huffman and Alexis Ohanian, following on the heels of the Digg and Slashdot sites. Rather than focusing only on technology stories, as those sites tended toward, Reddit went for a broader audience. As Digg began to lose its user base with version upgrades and was eventually sold off, Reddit took the top spot for social news and bookmarking sites in terms of monthly Web traffic. Its motto is "The Front Page of the Internet," and it aims to work like a newspaper full of links to stories, videos, and pictures on the Web. Like other social news and bookmarking sites, niche audiences tend to congregate around particular topics. While a great deal of Reddit's content is made up of funny images and memes, robust conversation (via comments) can happen on particular "subreddits" or topic threads related to an individual topic.

Many of the most popular threads are political in nature, with the politics subreddit drawing almost 2 million subscribers. Not only are political stories routinely shared and elevated to the homepage through upvotes, but the user base has been known to engage in fundraising for specific causes, such as humanitarian relief after the Haiti

earthquake in 2010, and over $500,000 in donations to DonorsChoose in response to a petition from comedian Stephen Colbert. Additionally, the entire site "went dark" and took itself offline for a day (along with Wikipedia and several other major Web sites) in protest over the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) in 2012.

Like the Digg Dialogg series, Reddit has been host to "Ask Me Anything" (AMA) threads. Celebrities and politicians have been known to engage in a question-and-answer session with Reddit users. Ron Paul took part in a video-recorded AMA in 2009, and President Barack Obama famously spent time in an AMA session in August 2012 right in the middle of the Republican Convention. These events are designed to allow users to ask questions that might not be routinely asked in mainstream media interviews. Unfortunately, despite the democratic and crowdsourced structure of these events, the questions are still chosen by the individual answering, and a fair amount of cherry-picking inevitably occurs.

With the apparent demise of Digg, it appears that Reddit will now be the most heavily used social news and bookmarking site on the Web. The idea of socially curating news has spread across much of the Internet, just as collaborative knowledge production via sites like Wikipedia has generated a tremendous amount of informative content. There have been many changes to the Internet since the rise of Web 2.0 sites like Reddit, Digg, and Del.icio.us, the biggest of which is the emphasis on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. While social networking sites rely on a user's social graph and the incorporation of particular brands and news outlets via "follows" and "likes," the structure of social news sites like Reddit provide the possibility of a user encountering much more information from outside one's social circle. Time will tell whether these structures will converge.

Shayne Pepper
Northeastern Illinois University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Content Communities; Delicious.com; Demand Progress; Digg; Going Viral; Social Bookmarking; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; StumbleUpon; Web 2.0.

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Remix, Political

Political remixes are a specific form of user generated content (UGC), usually published and shared via social media platforms such as YouTube and Vimeo. Such videos often remix different forms of political content with popular culture, and as such are regarded as a form of political and/or social protest that provides citizens with a tool for political advocacy while facilitating a platform for interaction and discussion. The convergence of popular culture and politics is a key element in this. The accessible content that is created by these particular forms of UGC is enabling citizens to produce as well as consume critical readings of their political and social environment. This in turn encourages and facilitates political and civic engagement.

Music

There are many different forms of political remixes. Autotuned clips, for example, are remixes that take original political video material, for example from a news source or a political speech, and transforms the original message of the main character via audio remixing or manipulation by autotuning (i.e., lipsyncing the main character to a different audio message). On February 2, 2008, for example, the remix "Yes, We Can" was widely circulated and became hugely popular (more than 24 million views). Distributed by voters (the Obama campaign had no part

in the creation of the video), this clip transformed Obama's Iowa primary victory speech into a song in which many artists participated, such as hip-hop artist will.i.am, actress Scarlett Johansson, and singer-songwriter John Legend. This remix inspired other remixes, such as "john.he.is" and "No, You Can't," in which 2008 American Republican presidential candidate John McCain is ridiculed. The political remix of George Bush singing to the lyrics of U2's popular song "Sunday, Bloody Sunday," published in 2006 by rx2008, is another example.

More recently, Obama can be seen rapping in "99 Problems." This political remix, released on September 28, 2012, by Diran Lyons, builds on rapper Jay-Z's original 2004 song "99 Problems," and shows Obama singing an adapted version of the song in which he talks about various issues relevant to his presidency and the 2012 election (the economy, protests, and the companies that helped him win the election in 2008) by stating that he "has 99 problems but Mitt's not one" of them (an alteration of Jay-Z's original lyrics). The video won first prize in the Pirate Flix Video Remix contest (curated by Cory Doctorow). Obama is known to be fan of Jay-Z, who had already performed an adapted version of the song in January 2009 as part of the Staff Ball, the last official event of Obama's inauguration, in which the singer tweaked the lyrics to "I got 99 problems but a Bush ain't one."

Video

Another popular format is videos that explicitly use and remix news and journalistic footage with images from popular culture. Elisa Kreisinger, who coedits politicalremixvideos.com, has created several political remixes that gained national attention in the United States. One of her best known remixes, *Buffy vs. Edward*, has been nominated for the prestigious 2010 Webby Award in the Best Remix/Mash-Up Category. By re-editing and recombining clips to create a new critical reading with material that is already familiar to her viewers (in this case from the popular television series *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer* and the successful *Twilight* vampire saga), Kreisinger aimed to create an alternative reading in which a "pro-feminist visual critique of Edward's character and generally creepy behavior" is given through the eyes of Buffy the Vampire Slayer. In doing so, she exposes sexist gender roles and patriarchal Hollywood themes in a fun and accessible manner. This accessibility is achieved because, according to Kreisinger, she uses a visual language with which viewers are very familiar. In this way, popular culture is used to talk back to society, and can therefore be regarded as more than just entertainment.

The political remix video becomes a voice, showing the expressive power of this particular medium, which offers an instant political commentary and disseminates alternative messages to the mainstream media. The form of these messages, audiovisual material, is of special importance to younger generations who experience visual language almost as a native tongue, making interpretation more intuitive.

Jonathan McIntosh, from RebelliousPixels.com, created the much debated *Donald Duck Meets Glenn Beck* in October 2010. This political remix took him roughly three months to make. Most of the time went into researching which parts of the radio shows of Glenn Beck he could use as well as the Donald Duck episodes. He has said that he could not have done it without the extensive help of hardcore fans on either side as there is so much material available.

Donald Duck Meets Glenn Beck remixes the radio rants of the popular American radio host Glenn Beck with Donald Duck in the 1950s. Using Donald Duck as a proxy for Main Street USA, McIntosh aimed to reframe and recontextualize fragments of the pre-existing animation with pre-existing pop-culture meaning. His choices of both Donald Duck and Glenn Beck were not accidental. Next to being icons in popular culture, both portray institutional power structures. Furthermore, McIntosh chose this particular content remix to show how dominant ideologies are upheld within society by both the media and the public.

Similarly to Kreisinger, political remixes give him the voice to express his concerns and to urge others to have a critical eye when interacting with the media. It is therefore important to acknowledge the responsibility that comes with being a pop-cultural hacker and video remix artist to stay true and faithful to the original content while creating new and original media content that

offers alternative political, social, and cultural narratives.

McIntosh's remix caused some upheaval in the mainstream media because Glenn Beck reacted to the remix by accusing McIntosh of propaganda and of being funded by the very institutions he was attacking (which was not the case). *Vote Different* is another example of a political remix.

Conclusion

Creating a political remix can be a powerful way of participating in the political domain. Furthermore, it constitutes a political act: The creator is engaged in the topic, and is required to have at least some factual knowledge about the topic at hand. Furthermore, since digital video makes it easy to cut and paste, the skills needed to perform these actions have a rather low threshold (at least for people who are familiar with digital technology).

In this way, these acts of participation in the political arena signify how ordinary citizens can become active participants in political discussion by deliberating, reiterating, and remixing their daily supply of offline and online information. This critical re-use of media texts can then be seen as empowering citizens because it offers an alternative option for political participation.

Joyce Neys
Erasmus University Rotterdam

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; User Generated Content; Vlogging; *Vote Different;* YouTube.

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Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press

The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press is dedicated to preserving First Amendment and freedom of information rights for U.S. journalists across all forms of media, providing advocacy, free legal advice, support, and resources. Formed at the beginning of the 1970s—a time when U.S. media faced several government subpoenas requesting journalists to identify confidential sources—the organization advocates for media professionals and lawyers, in addition to the thousands who use its Web site. In fact, since its inception, the committee has been involved in almost every major case involving freedom of the press presented before the U.S. Supreme Court, including the *Nebraska Press Association v. Stuart* and *U.S. v. Moussaoui,* in addition to hundreds of cases at the state and federal levels. Even as the nature and forms of media continue to evolve, recognition and protection of basic press freedoms remain central to democracy.

The committee serves as the leading advocate for media organizations' cyberspace concerns, with a central objective of serving not only journalists, but also Congress, state and federal agencies, and academics. Among its many services are amicus briefs and statements of support for the right to freely gather and disseminate information across media; regional training seminars on the legal aspects of electronic reporting; fellowships and internships for media reporters and lawyers; free online publications and information on freedom-of-the-press topics such as reporters' shield laws, open government, and other issues; rapid responses to journalists' questions about media-law stories; a 24-hour legal-defense hotline for journalists and media lawyers; and a special events reporters hotline for journalists who experience trouble covering major news events like political party conventions, presidential inaugurations, and similar happenings.

The Web site includes press releases on freedom-of-the-press issues; information on media law topics such as libel, reporter's privilege, content regulation, prior restraint, privacy, freedom

of information, secret courts, and newsgathering; a *First Amendment Handbook* sponsored by the Gannett Foundation and the Scheide Fund; *A Digital Journalist's Legal Guide* to help educate media professionals and bloggers on basic media rights; *Open Government* and *Reporter's Privilege* guides, both broken down by state; a *Federal Open Government Guide*; and a magazine, *News Media and the Law*. Additionally, a "Press Room" page on the committee's Web site includes information for journalists on deadline or "in a jam." When law enforcement tries to block press coverage, journalists are advised to bring their government-issued photo identification, cash to post bond, and to clearly display press credentials.

These resources are freely available online, and/or are available for purchase at nominal cost. According to the Web site's "History" section, the 1970 case of *New York Times* reporter Earl Caldwell, who was ordered by a federal grand jury to identify his sources in the Black Panther organization, was the catalyst for the formation of the committee. Caldwell's situation quickly prompted a meeting at Georgetown University to discuss the need for reporters to receive help when their First Amendment rights are threatened. Included among the journalists who were pivotal in the organization's formation were Murray Fromson (then of CBS News and the committee's cofounder), Mike Wallace, Ben Bradlee of the *Washington Post*, Tom Wicker, Robert Maynard of the *Washington Post*, Gene Roberts, Eileen Shanahan, Anthony Lukas (then of the *New York Times,* and another cofounder), and Fred Graham of the *New York Times*. Fromson, in his reflections on the committee at its 35th anniversary, stated that he and Lukas also contacted Barry Kalb and Jim Doyle of the *Washington Star*, as well as Jack Nelson of the *Los Angeles Times*.

Also, according to Fromson, the committee officially organized on March 8, 1970, although according to Jules Witcover in a story about the committee for the *Columbia Journalism Review*, its origins can be traced to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968. It began part time with limited funds, but was later able to recruit staff and attorneys as funding came in from news organizations and foundations. During its early years, the committee was a plaintiff in several test-case lawsuits, including a suit to access 41 million tapes and White House documents held by President Nixon.

Jane E. Kirtley succeeded Landau as executive director in 1985. Under her leadership, the committee began producing such comprehensive guides for reporters as *The First Amendment Handbook* and *The Open Government Guide*. Kirtley also started a legal fellowship program for attorneys interested in media law. During this time, the committee began an endowment that now amounts to more than $2.5 million. Lucy A. Dalglish was the committee's executive director at the time of the September 11, 2001, terror attacks. During Dalglish's tenure, the committee became the country's top authority on efforts at news suppression. Publications begun during this time—Homefront Confidential reports and the Behind the Homefront Web log—are seminal documents on freedom-of-information issues post-9/11.

More recently, the committee has teamed with other media-related groups to protect source confidentiality for journalists and to monitor legislation affecting the public's right to know. Its amicus curiae briefs filed on behalf of journalists provide a forum for the committee to remain vocal about issues involving press freedom. Fromson, now a professor of journalism at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism, also noted in 2005, on the occasion of the committee's 35th anniversary, that the American public's right to know was just as threatened as it was at the committee's inception. The committee states that no journalist has ever had to pay for its assistance in helping to defend their First Amendment rights. It identifies this fact as encapsulating the founders' vision, and as the organization's proudest achievement.

Chandra D. Clark
Florida A&M University

See Also: Digital Media Law Project; Freedom of the Press and National Security; National Freedom of Information Coalition; National Press Club; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security.

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Reporters Without Borders

Reporters Without Borders (RWB) (*Reporters sans frontières*) is an international organization that promotes freedom of the press and freedom of information. Founded by four journalists (Robert Ménard, Rémy Loury, Jacques Molénat, and Émilien Jubineau) in France (Montpellier) in 1995, and registered as a nonprofit organization, it soon took on an international dimension and gained consultant status at the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). According to its online mission, Reporters Without Borders:

> Monitors attacks on freedom of information worldwide, denounces attacks in the media, fights censorship and laws aimed at restricting freedom of information, morally and financially assists persecuted journalists, as well as their families, and offers material assistance to war correspondents in order to enhance their safety.

The association currently has 10 offices and sections worldwide, supports a global network of 150 correspondents, and implements activities on five continents through its national sections and through close collaboration with local and regional press-freedom groups. Reporters Without Borders' primary means of direct action are appeals to government authorities through protest letters or petitions, as well as frequent press releases. The organization has gradually developed two specialized spheres of activity. The first is focused on Internet censorship and new media, and the other is devoted to providing material, financial, and psychological assistance to journalists. Through members of its international network, RWB collects data and investigates issues of press freedom by region (in Europe, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, north Africa, and the Americas). When violations become especially alarming, the association sends a team of activists to assess working conditions for journalists in a specific country. Based on its investigations, it releases annual reports on countries, as well as the Press Freedom Index.

The Press Freedom Index is an annual ranking of countries compiled and published by Reporters Without Borders, based on assessment of the countries' press freedom records in the previous year. It reflects the degree of freedom that journalists, news organizations, and netizens (cybercitizens) enjoy in each country, and the efforts made by authorities to respect and ensure this freedom. Reporters Without Borders also provides assistance for journalists and media personnel who are in danger. It provides money to assist exiled or imprisoned journalists and their families and the unsupported families of journalists who have been killed; to enable journalists to leave their home countries if they are in danger there; to repair the effects of vandalism on media outlets; to cover the legal fees of journalists who have been prosecuted for their writings or the medical bills of those who have been physically attacked; and on occasion, to provide bullet-proof vests for use by journalists.

Besides these activities, the association also launches advertising campaigns with the pro bono assistance of advertising firms to raise public awareness of threats to freedom of information and the press, to undermine the image of countries that it considers enemies of freedom of expression, and to discourage political support by the international community for governments that attack, rather than protect, freedom of information. For instance, in 2011, Ogilvy and Mather Dubai created a series of print ads for Reporters Without Borders as part of its annual campaign, Censorship Tells the Wrong Story. Each photo was altered using strategic pixelization to change perception and add new meaning. The campaign helped spark a worldwide discussion about the issue. It also generated more than 25 million hits, and won several awards, including the Bronze Press for Magazine Product and

Besides such work as its annual Press Freedom Index and its direct assistance to journalists, Reporters Without Borders conducts public campaigns to raise awareness of censorship and attacks on freedom of the press. The nonprofit created this outdoor display to bring attention to the plight of two reporters who had been held hostage in Afghanistan for over a year.

Service at Cannes Lion International Festival of Creativity 2011.

Over the years, Reporters without Borders has published several handbooks to provide assistance to journalists and bloggers, and to raise public awareness, including *Handbook for Journalists During Elections* (July 2012), *Guide for Journalists Who Are Forced to Flee Into Exile* (June 2012), *Handbook for Journalists* (April 2007, updated February 2013), and *Handbook for Bloggers and Cyber-Dissidents* (September 2005, updated in March 2008). For example, the *Handbook for Journalists During Elections* aims at helping journalists assume their responsibilities and successfully cover elections. It claims that for journalists working for media of every category (radio, television, print, and online), scale (local, national, or international) and form of ownership (state-owned, privately owned, or community), journalists have to be able to give citizens the tools they need to understand their country, what is at stake in the vote, and to help them make electoral decisions.

In 2008, Reporters Without Borders launched its World Day Against Cybercensorship to pay tribute to all netizens who continue to express themselves freely, despite repression. On this occasion, the association issues a report on freedom of information in cyberspace and an "Enemies of the Internet" list that identifies countries that are censoring the Web and harassing Internet users. The list classifies a country as an enemy of the Internet because "all of these countries mark themselves out not just for their capacity to censor news and information

online but also for their almost systematic repression of Internet users." In 2007, a second list of countries Under Surveillance (originally Under Watch) was added. Both lists are updated annually.

On March 12, 2013, Reporters Without Borders published a Special Report on Internet Surveillance. This report includes two new lists: a list of "State Enemies of the Internet," countries whose governments are involved in active, intrusive surveillance of news providers, resulting in grave violations of freedom of information and human rights; and a list of "Corporate Enemies of the Internet," companies that sell products that are liable to be used by governments to violate human rights and freedom of information. The five State Enemies of the Internet named in March 2013 were: Bahrain, China, Iran, Syria, and Vietnam. The five Corporate Enemies of the Internet named in March 2013 were: Amesys (France), Blue Coat Systems (United States), Gamma (UK and Germany), Hacking Team (Italy), and Trovicor (Germany).

Anastasiia Grynko
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

See Also: Committee to Protect Journalists; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Nongovernmental Organizations; Nonprofit Organizations; World Press Freedom Index.

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Return on Investment

Governments and politicians are becoming fast learners of strategies for using social media to secure a significant return on investment. Governments tend to determine whether or not an action yields a return on investment by measuring the effectiveness of that action. A return on investment in this case may be judged not necessarily by the increase in dollars based on an initial investment, but rather in an increase in the results that, taken collectively, represent a decrease in allocated dollars over time. Governments are increasingly delivering more effective actions through social media, and are achieving a great return on innovation and investment. E-government initiatives such as Government 2.0 (both a book and a description of governments' digital efforts) are immediately recognized by citizens around the world who have come to trust the content of their local government Web sites.

In recent years, when private sector giant Amazon added e-books to its collection of texts, its total sales increased, and devices used to support the new texts became widely available and more sophisticated. This move increased its market return on investment by lessening the need for warehouse space for books, as well as by decreasing shipping costs for both Amazon and its customers. Although governments have not taken to writing whole novels for public consumption, the use of social media to inform citizens, highlight achievements, and warn of disaster or emergency is on a steady rise. The invention of social media options and methodologies from Twitter to Facebook and from text messages to discussion forums hold the promise of quick content related to investments and potential investments in social media by government. Social media users have managed to transfer social options for communication to even the virtual environment in an effort to stay well connected. Governments have paid attention. A visit to almost any Web site will reveal icons indicating the site's connections to social media applications such as Twitter, Facebook, blogs, YouTube, Flickr, Foursquare, and in some cases applications like YouCut, which allows real-time public debate on issues related to government spending.

It would be a challenge to find a person, agency, entity, or government that would reject a positive return on an initial investment. In fact, the goal of investing is the hope that returns will yield a comfortable profit for the investor. The profits can be used as savings or as income to spend as

the investor would like. In a business, profits may also be a savings or may also be used as capital for reinvestment or as operational cash for buying equipment or performing equipment maintenance. Where some may not see a connection with social media and the notion of a return on investment, others see them as complex and interwoven. With the proper organizational intent, social media may be another tool for providing "virtual profit" for a city, state, country, or group of countries.

For governments, reallocation of resources can be human or monetary efforts to meet needs, and in the best of circumstances to obtain a significant return on investment. New efforts to devise strategic plans for information dissemination as well as the dissemination of public goods have become standard elements for government planners. Since 2000 one can see the addition of government Web sites and, with each new tweak of technology, the addition of more efficient ways of delivering content on those Web sites. The notions and approaches for accomplishing more is a major goal for adopting information and communication technology (ICT). ICT has been integrated in long-term plans by governments around the world. Adding social media to ICT creates the foundations of a network that can assist in informing citizens of important events or for use in disaster situations. Scholars, academicians, reporters, and the average citizen are target audiences for determining whether or not government ICT strategies that include social media for improving governing are working. From the executive branch to part-time city council members, innovation is part of the strategy for improving citizen delivery of public goods. Citizens can see these changes in the current environment, and visit a Web site to see the income dissemination of the latest stimulus package, as Americans were able to do in the first Obama administration.

In the early 1990s, conducting any type of business that involved government payments was done either in-person or by phone, mail, fax, or bank transfer. Today, it is common for citizens to go to a particular Web site to pay taxes or tickets, or renew car tags and registration. California manages the potential for long lines at its Department of Motor Vehicles by encouraging citizens to make an appointment online or by phone for driver's licenses. Future innovations may include "live tiles," whereby government Web sites would pull live information from social networks, the Internet, and government Web sites, and report them live on their Web sites.

Twitter Town Halls

A social media innovation that has shown huge returns on investment in time is the 140-character-limit Twitter Town Hall. Local politicians and government officials from various entities employ the use of Twitter to broadcast ideas, bounce off notions for government improvement, or respond to citizen questions. The use of Twitter Town Halls has become more prevalent in the past few years by U.S. Congress members, local officials, and even President Barack Obama, who conducted a Facebook Town Hall in his first term. What this demonstrates is the kind of environment social media needs for it to thrive. By its nature, social media expands in a decentralized environment. A decentralized environment is one in which central authority is spread over a number of regions, each specific to a particular need. In this case social media's decentralization lies in its expanse of smaller collectives or groups. Governments that recognize this can find similar ways to reach citizens through social media's decentralized structures that naturally form based on the "likes" of individual members. From the success that is immediately measured in social media, governments can assess the degree of the return on its investment based on the social media infrastructure. From these results, governments can adjust, add, or detract innovative and collaborative methods to maintain a healthy return on investment.

Security

Although governments have made substantial progress in the use of social media to effect a positive return on investment, still more is needed. If the current environment and past lessons are any indication of the role of technology, government needs to lead or develop in-time strategies for meeting the needs of the fast growing sector of social media changes. The network techniques that gather friends and family around an event, photo, update, or concert must be harnessed by governments in an effort to reach citizens and offer relevant services in the arena citizens have increasingly come to use. The most

important progress that government can deliver in association with developments in social media is the security element that many users in social media find at some level comforting and acceptable. The October 2012 theft of 3.6 million social security numbers from a South Carolina Department of Revenue database by a computer hacker may deter interested citizens invited to a Facebook or Twitter Town Hall sponsored by the state. Investment energies and resources used to secure a Web site that uses social media for a variety of reasons is a return on investment that will continue to give the state and its citizens' positive returns.

For any indicator related to measurement certain elements or components of that indicator are needed for a full understanding of its impact. Some components are more essential than others and some are more quantitative than others. What has become clear is that a positive return on investment as it relates to the use of social media hinges on issues of security. For governments to fully utilize the advantages of a decentralized social media of citizens using mobile applications (apps), security has to be one of the first concerns prior to implementation. Writings on the subject of security of this nature represent a majority of the narrative when discussing governments' use of social media. Additionally, calls from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) have been consistently made to the federal government to ensure Internet privacy. Secure sites and platforms help to inspire greater citizen participation.

Transparency and Participation

Besides security, a description of the components of a return of investment include a few more formula elements. Taken in isolation they generate a measure that when placed on a continuum identifies the degree of return on the investment with the use of social media in politics and government. For example, greater transparency is achieved when using social media. Add to that the opportunity for communication with agencies, increased collaboration within agencies and with private entities, and the advantage of providing quick information to the public thereby saving time and money. What social media does easily within groups is something that governments can use for an increased return of investment. The updates on information within disasters to a variety of social media users would produce a significant return on responses and help to identify public needs and disaster caution sites.

An essential return on investment of social media used by the government is the probability that citizen participation could increase. Public trust in government officials and institutions has remarkably diminished in the past three decades. Social media may not resolve this decline completely, but it has been shown to increase participation in virtual group settings, and may do likewise for government. The advantages and uses of Twitter and Facebook change each day. Already noted is the use of Twitter and Facebook Town Halls; additionally, Twitter and Facebook feeds can mobilize cities to deliver public services today when they are needed, and provide a concise platform for faster research.

The elements mentioned as part of a formula for measuring a return on the investment of ICT innovation are by no means all inclusive. If anything, technology will either eliminate, redefine, or combine components examined in this discussion. For solid change each entity will have to determine the extent and amount of social media essential for its citizens that will produce a positive return on investment. For this to occur, governments may have to abandon slower incremental change models and adopt the speed and application that social media provide their users worldwide.

Lisa Saye
Independent Scholar

See Also: Campaigns, Organizing; Digital Revolution; Facebook; Foursquare; Networks, Political; Twitter.

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Rich Media Ad

A rich media ad is an online advertisement that contains a combination of video, audio, text, and interactive features to reach an online audience. Rich media ads can contain video ads, video games, polls, music, text, images, and dynamically driven content that changes based upon the actions of each user.

Rich media ads enable users to click and interact with changing content present within the advertisement. In order to understand the functionality of a rich media ad, it is helpful to compare rich media advertising with more traditional forms of online advertising. In the example provided below, the differences between a rich media ad and a medium rectangle advertisement are outlined in order to provide a concrete understanding of how rich media ads include additional media types and interactivity.

The Client

Say a politician running for office in a major city wants to create an advertisement that encourages users to donate a small-to-medium amount of money to his campaign. He has purchased a medium rectangle 300 x 250 ad that runs on the side of a Web page, and has also purchased a rich media ad medium rectangle 300 x 250. The politician's objective is to show the audience his position on several items on the ballot and encourage campaign donations. Next, the concepts for each medium rectangle ad are outlined below in order to demonstrate the difference between the ad type capabilities to tell and show the users about the candidate's platform.

In a traditional medium rectangle advertisement, whether built with flash-based technology or HTML and JavaScript, a combination of text, images, and motion would be placed within the ad space in order to tell users about the candidate. For the medium rectangle ad, a picture of the candidate might be displayed within the ad, along with text and images related to the candidate's stance on particular local issues. The medium rectangle ad could include a "click to donate" button that encourages users to donate to the campaign. By clicking the "click to donate" button, users would be taken to another site to make a contribution to the campaign.

Rich Media Ad

In the rich media ad, the candidate can show the users more about his or her stance on political issues with a combination of video and audio embedded within the rich media ad. In addition to the text on the page that shares more information, users can click on a video to see and hear more about the candidate's position and policies. Additionally, rich media ads can be configured to expand out of the 300 x 250 space and create an overlay over the content on the page in order to use even more of the screen space to display additional information.

Rich media ads respond to the actions of the users, allowing the ad to expand to display a larger video or game that can be clicked by the user to learn more about the candidate. Similar to the medium rectangle, the rich media ad would also contain a "quick donate" button to allow the user to donate to the campaign at any time during the advertisement. However, instead of taking the user to another page, it is possible to embed the "quick donate" feature securely within the ad so that the user is not taken to another location or page. The rich media ad could also contain a poll or survey that asks the user to click on the issues that are most important to him or her and the appropriate responses or videos related to the issues could then be loaded into the medium rectangle.

Rich media ads provide additional user interactivity options, and also enable clients to embed videos, audio, polls, and games into the advertisement. Additionally, multiple videos and playlists of content can be embedded within the rich media ad, bringing a stream of dynamically driven content to the user, depending upon whether or not the user clicks on the ad to interact with it. Rich media ads take advantage of the content interactivity that online advertising affords, and include ways for users to click and interact with traditional advertising in new and unexpected ways.

Jennifer Ware
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Digital; Engagement Advertising; Streaming Media.

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RightOnline.com

RightOnline is a nonprofit organization that operates under the management of the Americans for Prosperity Foundation (AFPF). The purpose of this project is advancing prosperity and liberty by encouraging and promoting greater online citizen participation. It hopes to provide leadership, train volunteers in grassroots organizations, and impact public policy. RightOnline favors and supports the notion of free enterprise and limited government. It hopes to utilize continually advancing technologies in order to impact government at the local, state, and federal levels. RightOnline encourages supporters and volunteers to use blogs, videos, and other social media Web sites to help promote conservative interests and candidates.

RightOnline was first established during the summer of 2008, when more than 600 people, many of whom were activists and bloggers, attended the first RightOnline Conference in Austin, Texas. Every year since then, hundreds of citizens, along with media experts, technology experts, and messaging experts come together at RightOnline's annual conference. Speakers, presentations, workshops, training sessions, and breakout sessions are part of each RightOnline conference. Since 2008, many notable individuals have attended these conferences, and have even served as keynote speakers, including former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin, author Scott Rasmussen, writer S. E. Cupp, and economic consultant Arthur C. Brooks. Besides Governor Palin, numerous other members of Congress and/or well-known individuals with presidential ambitions have attended and spoken at RightOnline conferences throughout the years.

RightOnline's reputation and connections can provide politicians (normally Republicans) a base of conservative support with those who favor limited and open government. Its annual conference has been held in a different location each year in an attempt to draw more supporters and volunteers; so far, conferences have been held in Austin, Texas; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Las Vegas, Nevada; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Orlando, Florida.

RightOnline has grown in both size and influence since its inception in 2008. In 2011, more than 1,000 people attended the annual conference, and RightOnline conferences are now covered by national media outlets including the *Wall Street Journal,* the *Washington Post,* the *New York Times,* C-SPAN, National Public Radio, and other local and national news organizations. RightOnline has connections to state and local-based grassroots organizations; many of these organizations share RightOnline's goal of an educated electorate that will participate in their government using new technologies and online capabilities, presumably with a conservative edge.

RightOnline works closely with its parent organization, Americans for Prosperity Foundation (AFP). The AFP was established in 2004, four years before it initiated the RightOnline project. The AFP works in two main capacities: education and advocacy. While it is in favor of free enterprise and limited government, one of its main concerns is economic policy. The AFP fights for an individual's right to economic freedom by battling potential tax increases and by encouraging policymakers to "eliminate waste, fraud, red tape, and governmental abuse." The AFP hopes that these conservative practices will encourage a free market economy, allow individuals more economic freedom, and promote an environment conducive for new businesses to be started and expanded. Besides economic freedom, the AFP also advocates for judicial fairness.

The AFP relies on active citizen evolvement and monetary tax-deductible donations in order to operate on a day-to-day basis and to fund and organize larger-scale projects, such as the annual RightOnline Conference. The AFP has a total of 1.8 million members across the country, with state-level organizations in 34 of 50 states.

Over 90,000 individuals have contributed to the AFP since its inception, with about $14.5 million donated in 2008 during the presidential election. Besides simply contributing to the AFP, donors also have the option to direct their funds to help RightOnline and its annual conference.

R. Bruce Anderson
Matthew Geras
Florida Southern College

See Also: Digital Due Process Coalition; National Freedom of Information Coalition; Nonprofit Organizations.

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Robin Hood Foundation

For over 20 years, the Robin Hood Foundation, a charitable organization, has assisted New Yorkers in their fight against problems associated with poverty. The foundation is based upon the notion of venture philanthropy or free-market charity, combining investment principles with philanthropy. Founded in 1988 by hedge fund manager Paul Tudor Jones, the Robin Hood Foundation works with more than 200 nonprofit, poverty-fighting, charitable organizations located in New York City. In addition to the Robin Hood Foundation assisting poverty-fighting organizations monetarily, it also works closely with grantees to help make their programs more effective. Through the use of social media, donors and grantees can instantaneously follow the organization. The Robin Hood Foundation uses Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Google+, Tumblr, Foursquare, and newsfeeds to attract donors and potential grantees.

There are over 1.8 million people in New York City living below the poverty level, in one of the world's richest cities. The Robin Hood Foundation finds and funds programs that help alleviate poverty, making a positive impact on the lives of those in need. The foundation's board pays for all fundraising and administrative costs, making the donations amount 100 percent. The foundation says that poverty comes in many forms, affecting the body, the mind, and life opportunities. For instance, approximately one in six New Yorkers rely on emergency food daily, over 40 percent of New York's public school students will not graduate on time, and 350,000 people look for work daily. The chair of the board of directors, Lee S. Ainslie, says that the Robin Hood Foundation's goal is to deliver the highest return on every dollar.

According to the foundation's Web site, the advisory board is comprised of experts, industry leaders, and inspiring thinkers who assist with defining goals and objectives for the foundation. The foundation has granted more than $146 million to fight poverty, identifying the most effective organizations that combat poverty. The foundation also invented a metrics system used to evaluate where its grant money should be spent, evaluating programs to compare benefit–cost ratios. The Robin Hood Foundation's Web site states that their innovative methodology compares the poverty-fighting values of any two grants, regardless of their purpose. The foundation monetizes the immediate outcome, estimating the benefit to poor people in each dollar it gives. The methodology allows the foundation's staff to evaluate every dollar that is distributed to its grantees in the following program types: job training and economic security, early childhood and youth, education, and survival.

The metrics translate the outcome of a program, aggregating its benefits into a single number. Additionally, the metrics provide a diagnostic tool to assist with identifying and evaluating potential problems and common attributes among the most successful grantees. The Robin Hood Foundation

Comedian Seth Meyers from Saturday Night Live *greets donors at the annual Robin Hood Foundation Gala in New York on May 9, 2011. The foundation boasts a 15:1 return on investment dollars.*

acknowledges the imprecision and incompleteness of current estimates, stating that estimates are not final and metrics are constantly under revision. Numerical calculations and the program officers' detailed expertise are used to make the final grant-making decisions. Third-party evaluation of these programs also guarantees the foundation's accountability.

The foundation's success is attributed to its metrics and sound business principles. Its Web site states that like a financial manager, the foundation chooses investments to maximize profits—a 15:1 return on the investment dollar. Executive Chairman of Google Eric Schmidt states that there is no foundation that is more effective than the Robin Hood Foundation. It is among the largest private funders of food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, job programs, and public charter schools.

Through the use of social media, the foundation is able to spread its message, connecting potential donors and grantees to its online platform. The various media tools allow the foundation to instantaneously keep donors informed while sharing information to potential donors and grantees about its charitable contributions. Founder Paul Tudor Jones changed the face of philanthropy by making nonprofit organizations answer to their donors. Recently, the foundation announced on May 15, 2012, that it is partnering with the X PRIZE Foundation.

The partnership is launching a series of incentivized prize competitions, engaging people globally to find solutions to problems of poverty in New York City and around the world. The X PRIZE Foundation seeks innovators from various disciplines globally to create and inspire "radical breakthroughs" to benefit humanity, competing for a prize of nearly $1 million. The Robin Hood Foundation is the largest private poverty fighting organization in New York City, raising $19 million for its Robin Hood X PRIZE, along with $38 million for its day-to-day programs.

Jennifer Summary
Southeast Missouri State University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Campaigns, 2012; Economic and Social Justice; International Online Communities; Nongovernmental Organizations; ONE Campaign; Poverty; Water.org.

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Rock the Vote

Now in its third decade, Rock the Vote was the first organization to try to leverage the power of celebrity and social marketing to increase youth participation in electoral politics. Rock the Vote and similar programs incorporate youth culture as a central part of their communication strategy in the belief that by changing how young people think about voting—building positive associations and depicting it as a necessary rite of adulthood and citizenship—they can also transform how people act.

This strategy builds on insights from social psychology, in particular the idea that perceived norms influence behavior, and that by changing perceptions about political engagement, one may significantly change the numbers of youth participating in the political process. The effectiveness of this strategy has often been called into question, however, as the proportion of votes cast by young voters has not substantially increased over time, and the effects of exposure to youth-oriented campaign communications are difficult to quantify.

Nonetheless, Rock the Vote has made other contributions to political culture. Though Rock the Vote made its debut in 1992 in the early days of the Internet, the MTV-funded initiative pioneered several of the social and peer-to-peer marketing practices that are now common practice in the age of Facebook, Twitter, and other online networks. The significance of the organization should also include its contributions to a broader trend in American politics, as new communication technologies have become integral parts of campaigning.

History

Recognizing that declining voter participation rates have been driven in large part by shifting demographics and a growing young adult population, Rock the Vote debuted during the 1992 U.S. presidential election season, when voter turnout rates were approaching an all-time low. Unlike traditional civic engagement initiatives, the program's sole purpose was to target the growing, but disengaged 18-to-24-year-old portion of the electorate. Rock the Vote is perhaps best known for its celebrity involvement. However, its program has always included targeted voter registration drives employing person-to-person contact and direct marketing, as well as an awareness campaign anchored by television spots. At launch, during the Bush–Clinton presidential election, the public service announcements featured an intentionally diverse group of prominent musicians working in a variety of popular musical styles. These performers included R.E.M., En Vogue, Aerosmith, Queen Latifah, Eddie Vedder and many others. In keeping with its demographic focus, the ads appeared on national cable and broadcast networks with high youth viewership, including MTV, VH-1, and Fox.

Outcomes

Although Rock the Vote has always enjoyed high visibility and name recognition, its effectiveness in achieving its primary aim of increasing youth voter turnout is less clear. From its inception, the initiative faced several barriers. The most significant limitation is that voter interest and turnout are driven primarily by both individual-level and societal circumstances that cannot be controlled by a communication campaign. For individuals, attributes like partisanship, generation, and life stage (whether one is in school, raising children, or in retirement, for example) matter most. At a societal level, it is the perceived state of the nation—the health of the economy and whether the country is at war or at peace—that determines political interest and participation. Compared to these considerations, the influence of communication campaigns is relatively weak.

The Vietnam War, for example, was influential on both levels. It helped to shape a baby boomer generation that would remain politically active throughout their lifetimes, and created an issue that polarized the country and drove people to the polls. Similarly, in 2004, dissatisfaction with the Iraq War also increased activism and participation among citizens of all ages. As political scientist Thomas Patterson and other scholars has noted,

2004 turnout was the highest that the country had experienced since the 1968 presidential election. Consistent with this tide of enthusiasm, voting among those less than 30 years old increased by 4.6 million, the largest gain since 1972, when citizens aged 18 to 21 were first allowed to vote. Nonetheless, since interest was also higher with older voters, the share of the votes cast by citizens less than 30 years old did not substantially change. Conversely, in 1996, four years after the inaugural Rock the Vote campaign, an unprecedented 60 percent of college-aged voters stayed home on Election Day. This lack of interest among young voters was consistent with larger patterns as a recovering economy boosted the incumbent and a third-party candidate weakened the opposition. The result was little interest in the election across the board. Despite the context, however, when youth voter participation reached a new low, many analysts declared Rock the Vote to be a failure.

Another challenge that Rock the Vote faces is that research on voter turnout shows that interpersonal interaction is far more influential than the mass forms of communication that are Rock the Vote's most prominent components. Face-to-face contact has been found to increase participation by as much as 8.5 percent and telephone contact has raised voter participation by 5 percent. Rock the Vote is unlikely to have impact of that magnitude.

A number of scholarly studies have measured Rock the Votes' effectiveness. Research conducted during the 1996 presidential campaign showed that television viewers who lived in areas in which Rock the Vote television commercials ran and who received Rock the Vote mailings were more likely to vote in the election. Voter participation rates increased by the greatest percentage when accompanied by direct mailers encouraging recipients to pledge to vote. In addition, the percentage of 18-to-24-year-old voters in presidential elections has substantially increased from the low of 40 percent in 1996 to a high of 48.5 percent in 2008. Other studies, including the work of public opinion researcher Carroll Glynn, have shown that when opinions about the importance of voting and civic responsibility are communicated by close family, friends, and peers, these can become internalized as norms, and those internalized norms may lead to increased rates of voting. As a result, despite the inherent challenges, there is evidence that Rock the Vote has been influential. The organization may succeed in helping to shape the communication environment in which youth are more open to the idea that voting is an important responsibility.

Carole V. Bell
Northeastern University

See Also: Actors and Social Media in Politics; Artists and Social Media in Politics; Musicians and Social Media in Politics; Voter Apathy; Voter Demographics; Voter Turnout.

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RSS Feeds

RSS feeds is the abbreviation for rich site summary feeds, also commonly known as really simple syndication feeds, and refers to documents of a specific format (RSS) that are consistent, machine-readable, and are shared by Web sites through different applications. These documents are made of blog entries, news headlines, audio, and video, and include full or summarized texts, links to the sources of contents, plus metadata such as publishing dates and authorships.

The purpose of RSS feeds is to deliver frequently updated content to people who subscribe to this service. RSS feeds are distributed in a standardized format, typically HTML (Web page content) and include links to Web pages or other digital media. The process of transforming different types of content in the same data format and licensing contents of a Web site to other sites is known as syndication. Content is classified and aggregated by topics in one place and then sent to subscribers who requested to receive updated information on the chosen topic by their chosen Web sites. The process of sending selected contents directly to a specific subscriber is known as "feeding," and the aggregated content is called an RSS feed.

In order to receive RSS feeds, Web users need to register by clicking a feed icon in a Web browser or in an organization's Web site, or by entering into the reader the feed's uniform resource identifier (URI), which is a string of characters used to identify a name or a resource. RSS feeds can be read using specific software called an RSS reader, feed reader, or aggregator. RSS readers can be Web-based, desktop-based, or mobile-device-based. The most popular Web-based aggregators are My Yahoo!, Bloglines, and Google Reader; and desk-based aggregators are Amphetadesk (for Windows, Linux, and Mac), FeedReader (only for Windows), and NewsGator (for Windows, but integrated with Outlook).

One of the advantages of RSS feeds is that they allow subscribers to stay easily informed because they receive new content from the Web sites they are interested in once these become available. Another advantage is that RSS feeds ensure subscribers' privacy. Subscribers are not asked to disclose their personal information or e-mail addresses when subscribing to a feed, nor when they want to unregister; this avoids potential threats such as spam, viruses, phishing, and identity theft associated with sharing e-mail addresses. To unregister, RSS feed subscribers need simply to remove the feed from their aggregator.

Because the main purpose of RSS feeds is to aggregate news, the most common feed providers have been news sites such as the BBC, the *New York Times*, Reuters, *USA Today*, and many others, but today, content providers for RSS feeds are more often commercial and nonprofit organizations, bloggers, and even people who use Twitter. Lately, RSS feed services have been developed to provide feeds without relying on a Web site.

History

The inventor of RSS feeds is considered to be Ramanathan V. Guha, a computer scientist at Apple Computer, who in 1995 developed a structure description language called meta content framework (MCF). Its main function was to structure and represent the content of Web sites in a much more sophisticated manner than using metatags. The creation of MCF was very important for the development of RSS feeds because the MCF system was the foundation for later experimental projects in news syndication. In 1997, the first model of an RSS feed was developed. At that time, the creator of MCF, Guha, had left Apple Computer for Netscape, a U.S. computer-services company, and together with Tim Brey worked to improve the MCF system by moving it to an XLM-based format. The XLM-based format became the system employed by Guha and Dan Libby to develop the resource description framework (RDF) site summary, which is considered the first version of RSS feeds. RDF site summary was released for use in the portal My.Netscape.Com in March 1999. A few months later, a new version of RDF site summary with a simplified format was produced by Dan Libby for Netscape.

Libby also changed the name of the service to RSS. Despite the success, Netscape decided to remove RSS support from its portal My.Netscape.Com in 2001.

RSS service continues to exist with the contribution of the RSS-DEV Working Group, a private, noncommercial syndication working group, and UserLand Software, a U.S.-based software company. In June 2003, a competing syndication format called Atom was created with the intent to overcome some of the limitations of RSS format. In the following years, subsequent updates and new versions of RSS software were released. Despite the emergence of Atom, most major companies are still using RSS format for news syndication.

Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University

See Also: Aggregation; Blog Syndication; Information Aggregation; Privacy; Twitter.

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Rumors

Rumors are an old communication phenomenon that has taken a new form in the digital era. Social media, with its quick transmission speed, dramatically escalates the spread of rumors. Social media have also been used to tackle rumors in crisis communications.

Rumors happen in all cultures and societies. Although there is no real consensus on the definition of a rumor, most researchers agree that rumors are information released from unofficial sources with little evidence or verification. Rumors' communication consequences are sometimes positive, sometimes harmless, and are probably harmful to society or some individuals or organizations most of the time. During the fall of a senior official in China, Bo Xilai, in 2011, rumors were prevalent on the Internet in China, as well as in media and Web sites outside of China that were targeted to audiences interested in China. Those rumors sustained pressure on the Chinese government, which had traditionally held an authoritative political belief that critical information should be kept confidential. It was then forced to provide information about the issue to the public.

Some rumors can be vitally harmful to particular individuals or organizations. In 2008, one of South Korea's most famous actresses committed suicide in her apartment after bitterly critical, malicious Internet rumors surfaced about her. She had been accused of driving another actor to kill himself by pressing him to repay money she lent to him while he was in debt. This high-profile case motivated the South Korean government to more strictly enforce its real-name law passed in 2007, which required more than one million visitors to use their real identification information to register with about 150 popular Web sites. The law was struck down in August 2012, by a South Korean constitutional court, with support from free-speech advocates.

Rumors are also significant political phenomena in the United States. Most political rumors, such as the allegation that President Barack Obama has no U.S. birth certificate, and that his health care plan included a "death panel," were mainly passed around via the Internet. Social media hoaxes about politics, such as Bill Cosby running for president in 2012, and presidential IQ scores, are also popular.

Research

Although rumors may have thousands of years of history, formal research on the phenomenon only began at the start of the past century. Bernard Hart conducted an early psychological analysis of rumor in 1916, in which he studied rumors as they were transmitted through several rumormongers. He found that rumors were generated due to the inability of human beings to accurately observe and retain what happened.

Robert Knapp published a classic study of rumor psychology in 1944. He found that rumors could satisfy certain emotional needs

of a rumormongering community. Knapp classified rumors into three types: pipe-downs (or wish rumors) talked about things rumormongers wished to happen. Bogie rumors talked about pessimistic things that the rumormongers were afraid of happening. Edge-driving (or aggression rumors) were normally based on hatred of a certain group of individuals within a community.

Seminal research on rumor came in 1946 to 1947, and was conducted by Harvard scholars Gordon Allport and Leo Postman. In their article and book, they proposed a formula that is now well known: $R = i \times a$, where R means the spreading of the rumor, i means the importance of the topic of the rumor, and a means the ambiguity of the available information about the rumor issue. They also called attention to the motivations that backed rumormongering such as sex, anxiety, hope, desire, and hatred.

Ralph Rosnow and Gary Fine, in their book *Rumor and Gossip* (1977), found that rumor was a valuable information commodity in workplaces and personal lives. In 2007, Daniel Solove published the book *The Future of Reputation*, which discussed the spreading of rumor and gossip on the Internet from the perspective of legal studies. The author argued that, in addition to letting the law step in to protect people from the harm of Internet gossip, the setting of the Internet and social networking Web sites need to be changed so that people can easily avoid exposing their personal information to the world.

Creation and Spread

How are rumors created? They are created in two ways: accidentally or intentionally. Most rumors are accidentally created from misunderstanding of the information source in the previous step of the communication process. Communication research has confirmed that people tend to be selectively exposed to, understand, and retain information that is consistent with their pre-existing values and beliefs. Classic experimental research on rumor conducted by Allport and Postman, as well as Rosnow and Gary, has found that original information is inevitably distorted when it is passed to five or six pairs of ears. The missing information and distortion also occur in written and digital communications, or sometimes even in mainstream media outlets. Regarding China's bullet train crash in 2011, a popular and respected newspaper, the *Beijing News*, initiated a rumor that the bullet train drivers were only trained for 10 days before they drove the trains. The rumor was generated because a reporter misread a story issued by the government.

Some rumors are intentionally created to help or hurt a certain individual or organization. Rumors have also been used as an ideological weapon in political movements. Researchers have found that almost all political rebellions or revolutions in Chinese history were led by rumors against the regime then in position. The Boxer Rebellion, a violent anti-West movement that took place between 1898 and 1901 in China, for instance, was found to use a variety of rumors to deify its members and demonize Western and Chinese Christians, maintaining people's trust, support, and loyalty to its political goal of driving foreigners and Christianity out of China. In every election in the United States, rumors thrive. While most of them are generated from misunderstanding and/or selective understanding in the communication process, some of them are created on purpose to serve certain political agendas.

What determines whether a rumor spreads? Allport and Postman have pointed out that the importance of the topic and the ambiguity of the available information on the topic are two factors determining how fast and how far rumors will be spread. Rumors can go faster and farther if the topic is important for most people, and if there is not enough information for people to understand or assess the situation. This basic law of rumor explains why rumors spread quickly after disasters, when people are shocked and anxious to know what happened, but no one can provide satisfactory answers.

The formula, however, may not be powerful enough to explain some phenomena of rumors. Examples include the case of the South Korea actress, where the topic is interesting, rather than important, as much celebrity gossip is, and cases in which the individuals or the organizations involved in the rumors provide refutation (leaving little ambiguity), but cannot kill the rumor. A revised formula is therefore proposed:

$$R = (F + S) \times (A/(I \times C)) \times P$$

The revised formula has three factors. The first factor contains *F* and *S*. *F* stands for the fun components contained in the topic. *S* means significance, which is close to the concept of importance in Allport and Postman's original formula. Most celebrity stories are fun topics; most of the things people talk about during or after a disaster are certainly significant. The fall of the senior official in China is both fun and significant for talkers. The second factor contains *A*, *I*, and *C*. The ambiguity factor in the original formula, *A*, is adopted but weighted by refutational information available (*I*) and the credibility of the source for such refutational information (*C*). After the Japanese nuclear crisis in 2011, people in China rushed to buy table salt because rumors arose that salt could help protect against nuclear radiation, and that because of the nuclear crisis, no clean salt would be available after the stock in the grocery stores had sold.

Scientists and government agencies made statements to stop the rumors but to little avail. People in China tend not to trust the government and experts during crises, as there is a long tradition of covering up crises and fooling the masses. Refutational information from a credible source, however, can immediately kill a rumor. A rumor that one of the most famous Chinese authors had died spread virally on Weibo, a Chinese version of Twitter, but stopped immediately when a popular journalist who was also a friend of that author wrote on Weibo that she had just seen the author. The third factor, *P*, stands for plausibility. The more the rumor fits people's stereotype about the individual or organization involved, or fits what people can see in their daily life, the more likely the rumor will be accepted and passed on. In the salt radiation rumor in China, many people reported ignoring official statements because they saw people in their communities frantically shopping for salt, and there were signs reading "no salt" outside of grocery stores.

Social Media

The Internet, and particularly social media, fuels the creation and spreading of rumors. Social media also dramatically change the traditional definition of rumor. In classic rumor research, rumor is normally defined as unverified information from unofficial sources communicated via word of mouth. In the digital era, rumors are most conspicuously transmitted through social media, at a much faster speed and with a much further reach. Traditional word-of-mouth transmission may take a rumormonger a day to reach 10 people; social media enables people to write a message in only a minute or retweet one in a second, which can immediately reach about 100 people, the average number of fans for a social media account.

Traditionally, people join the process of rumormongering for three purposes: to express their anxiety about the uncertain situation, to exchange information, and for fun. The architecture and design of social media emphasizes the second function, and perhaps adds one more: to gain social status and power. In the social media world, having more fans bring more influence and power, as well as higher social status. A key to gaining more fans is to regularly update social media, perhaps multiple times a day, with interesting content. Rumors most often fall into this type of content. If appropriately tackled, research has shown that social media rumors also tend to disappear much quicker compared to rumors spread through traditional word of mouth.

Crisis Management and Disaster Relief

While social media has its negative effects in facilitating rumormongering, its role in tackling rumors in crisis communication, however, has also been noticed. In May 2011, the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs organized an ad hoc subcommittee on disaster recovery and intergovernmental affairs and published a document, "Understanding the Power of Social Media as a Communication Tool in the Aftermath of Disasters," based on a hearing. The document discusses the significance for people involved in crises and organizations coordinating crisis relief to use social media to provide necessary, timely information and reduce rumors. People may also use social media to seek help in a crisis. Research has shown that more than half of people would want to offer help, if they received such requests from social media.

After the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security launched the Haiti Social Media Disaster Monitoring Initiative to more effectively reach people involved in the recovery. The American Red Cross, Centers

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) staff conducting social media monitoring by responding to Twitter posts about Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts at the FEMA Joint Field Office in Forest Hills, New York, on January 9, 2013. A number of federal agencies have developed social media efforts to improve communication and combat unhelpful rumors during disaster situations.

for Disease Control and Prevention, and Federal Emergency Management Agency all launched social media to communicate more effectively during crises. When dealing with the aftermath of a tornado in its community, the *Tuscaloosa News* in Alabama used Twitter and Facebook to disseminate information, and used a Google docs spreadsheet to invite people to post information about themselves or missing loved ones. The newspaper also created a blog exclusively devoted to debunking rumors, with comments from witnesses as supporting evidence. A crime blog on the Web site of the newspaper that updated people with the latest reports of criminal activity was also widely read during the crisis.

Conclusion

How should one handle rumors on social networks? Research has provided suggestions that are consistent with the rumor formula proposed above. Recommendations include constantly monitoring social media discussions, as rumors can happen at any time and move quickly on social media. The earlier rumors are noticed, the better their damage can be controlled. Establish credibility of the information source on social media long before rumors take place, and provide a large volume of correct information immediately and across many social media platforms when rumors appear.

Qingjiang Yao
Fort Hays State University

See Also: Anti-Bullying Campaigns; Buzz Creation; Echo Chamber Phenomenon; FightTheSmears.com; Going Viral; Sentiment Analysis; Snowball Effect; Truth Team; Wikipedia Misuse.

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Russia

The Internet and social media in Russia are quickly growing, but access varies by age, locality, and income. Russia is unusual in its ability to compete as a resource provider. Although online news is growing in importance, television remains dominant. Russians are very active social networkers, and this has facilitated protest and civic activism. However, state elites and their allies have also used new media to their advantage.

Estimates of Russia's online community vary because of rapid change and contrasting methodologies, so the data presented here is only suggestive. In December 2011, there were 61,472,011 Internet users in Russia, comprising 44.3 percent of the population. An estimated 50 percent use the Internet at least monthly, 47 percent at least weekly, and 38 percent on a daily basis. By 2012, Russia was Europe's largest Internet population, and sixth globally. Between 2005 and 2010, users who logged in at least monthly grew 266 percent, while daily users increased 469 percent. A 2011 Open Society Foundations study attributed this expansion to economic growth prior to the 2008 economic crisis, economic difficulties associated with the crisis, and the emergence in 2008 of the "tandem," with Dmitri Medvedev replacing Vladimir Putin as president, and the latter becoming prime minister.

Demographics

Younger Russians access the Web in significantly greater numbers than their older counterparts. A second cleavage segregates urban inhabitants who have high-quality access to new media from small town and rural dwellers who do not. Although recent growth in Internet access is fastest outside of cities, Internet penetration in Moscow and St. Petersburg is greater than elsewhere. Infrastructure quality is another important factor. Broadband connections are rare, and are concentrated in cities. Despite high growth rates for digital media in other areas, it is not clear how soon the digital divide will disappear. Income also plays a significant role in limiting media consumption choices. Finally, locality and wealth shape new media literacy, so "unwired" communities have limited knowledge about new technologies and the opportunities/challenges they afford.

Global Presence

Russia's global positioning is novel in that Runet, the colloquial term for the Russian language Internet, is dominated by Russian, rather than American companies. In December 2010, the three largest Runet sites, Yandex.ru, Mail.ru, and Vkontakte.ru, were Russian. Yandex is the only comprehensive global search index, other than Google and Bing. Its 2011 Wall Street IPO raised $1.3 billion. Russian companies have also made a mark internationally. The Russian blog provider LiveJournal.com has an important presence in the United States, while the social networking site Vkontake.ru has 110 million users throughout eastern Europe. Finally, it is important to keep in mind (particularly when interpreting data) that Runet includes millions of Russian speakers who live outside of Russia.

News Consumption

National television, which the state influences directly and through self-censorship, continues to be Russia's most important news source.

While television viewership is falling, television news audiences remain stable. Large majorities consider television trustworthy.

Though trusting overall, young people aged 18 to 24 are less so (67 percent) than the population overall (74 percent). Print media is in decline, particularly with postcrisis cost-cutting measures. Audiences for broadsheets have dramatically shrunk, whereas tabloid readership remains stable. However, traditional media outlets, including those that follow state ideology, have established an online presence.

Online news is growing in importance. Audiences at the top Internet news sites and portals (e.g., Mail.ru/novosti.ru and Yandex/novosti.ru) rival those of the leading broadsheet dailies. Russian language social networks are the main news source for nearly 20 percent of 18 to 24 year olds. Also, 52 percent of adults use the Web to look for information on politics. In 2011, 31 percent of adults believed that the Internet is an "important source of political information" compared to 13 percent in 2007. The corresponding 2011 figure for TV was 80 percent, and 36 percent for radio. Among the total monthly Runet audience, 48 percent regularly read online news. For 12 to 24 year olds, the corresponding figure is 92 percent.

Social Networking

Russia's social networking boom began in 2008. In 2012, Russia was estimated to have the fifth-largest social networking population globally (57.9 million). A full 92 percent of Runet users have at least one profile. In terms of time per user, Russians are the heaviest social networkers worldwide. In August 2010, 34.5 million visited at least one social networking site, spending on average 9.8 hours per month, versus the global average of 4.5 hours per month. Social networking occupies 40 percent of Russians' online time. The average participant is young (75 percent between the ages of 18 and 24), educated (57 percent are university graduates), and enjoys a stable income.

Vkontakte.ru is Russia's most popular social networking site and the top European site in terms of engagement, with a typical user spending 7.1 hours on it during September 2011. Facebook launched its Russian site in mid-2010, and was fourth in terms of popularity by the end of the year.

In 2010, Runet had 15 million blogs and time on blogs doubled over the previous year. The most popular blog host is LiveJournal.com, with 14.4 million unique visitors in December 2010. Approximately 22 percent of Runet users communicate in forums and chat rooms, 17 percent read blogs and forums, and 3 percent have a personal blog. Although the number of blogs is expanding, in 2010, the proportion of blogs with more than five posts and at least one update during the previous three months began falling.

Microblogging is also booming. The leader is Twitter, which was the fifth largest social networking site in December 2010, with 4.4 million unique visitors. Runet has more than 50 million videos. YouTube is the most popular video site, and is far ahead of its closest Russian rival, Rutube.ru. The average Russian user consumes 140 videos a month. Photo and video content is accessed regularly by 38 percent and 34 percent of Runet users, respectively.

Protest and Civic Activism

Social media plays an important role in facilitating protest and civic activism in Russia. These sites are a venue for expression and organization for marginalized groups such as migrant workers, sexual minorities, and the disabled. The Internet was the main vehicle for disseminating the video *Virgin Mother of God, Banish Putin*, a profane public prayer performed by the feminist punk collective Pussy Riot on the altar of Moscow's largest church in 2011. By August 2012, one YouTube version had been viewed 1,162,007 times, receiving 7,774 comments, 8,100 "likes" and 2,322 dislikes. After members were sentenced to two years in a penal colony, Internet activism helped mobilize international public opinion to show support. The pornographic photo series "How to Snatch a Chicken" by the related political group War was also publicized through the Internet. Although edited from TV broadcasts, a video of Putin being booed by a boxing crowd in 2011 went viral, demonstrating his falling prestige.

The most well-known figure in Russia's opposition movement, former Yale University World Fellow Alexei Navalny, rose to prominence by blogging about corruption and corporate malfeasance among Russia's state elite. Navalny also

used traditional media, famously dubbing United Russia as the party of "crooks and thieves" on radio Finam FM.

In the wake of the fraudulent 2011 parliamentary elections, new media supported communication and coordination to organize public protest, most notably in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Despite frigid temperatures, crowds numbered in the upper tens of thousands. Survey data from Moscow's Prospekt Sakharov demonstration showed that 56 percent of participants were 18–39 years old, 62 percent had university degrees, 46 percent identified as specialized workers, and 38 percent and 31 percent identified as "democrats" and "liberals" (in the European sense), respectively. Also, 37 percent and 31 percent discussed the elections through social networks and blogs "regularly" and "from time to time," respectively; 56 percent and 33 percent had learned about the protests through "Internet publications" and "other Internet sources," respectively.

Online news and short message service (SMS) contributed to mobilization during the winter 2009–10 rallies in Kaliningrad. In response, the presidential liaison for the region was fired. Later, Moscow did not renominate the governor to his post. Nevertheless, the free weekly newspaper *Dvornik*, with readership equaling 25 percent of the city's population, played the leading informational role, and in-person grassroots activism was also important.

Not all protest using social media aims for systemic political change. In 2009, Novorossiysk police major Alexei Dymovsky addressed an online video concerning corruption and inefficiency in his department to Prime Minister Putin. In one day, the video received 300,000 hits and had nearly one million hits a year later. Dymovsky's action was followed by immediate changes, resignations, and nationwide police reform. He was also fired and faced criminal charges for fraud. Although the latter were eventually dropped, he was detained over a month awaiting trial.

Although success has varied, social media have facilitated grassroots financing. In 2010, activists used Facebook and e-mail to raise $6,000 to pay the fines of two curators accused of "inciting religious hatred" during the controversial art exhibit "Forbidden Art 2006." Contributions were collected in person however, and participation fell short of organizers' expectations.

Social media have also supported charitable work. In 2009, popular blogger Natalya Radulova used her LiveJournal blog to raise $7,000 in three days to pay for a Tajik girl's cancer treatment. During the 2010 wildfires, activist Elizaveta Glinka used the online Ushahidi platform and SMS to help victims and volunteers coordinate relief efforts.

The Authorities

State elites are ambivalent about social media. They recognize their value for Russia's development and international integration. Nick-named the "blogger-in-chief," former President Medvedev demonstrated special enthusiasm for new media, creating a video blog, LiveJournal blog, Facebook account, and a Twitter account that boasts 1,421,663 followers. In 2010, Profi Online Research recognized him as Runet's most popular blogger.

Medvdev has used the Internet to unveil domestic and foreign policy, and to promote policy discussions. Other officials have followed suit by creating blogs and Twitter accounts, and hiring content writers. In connection with police reforms, a dedicated Web site was created for public consultations concerning the draft bill "On Police," receiving over 1.5 million visitors and 21,000 comments in five weeks' time.

Yet, the leadership is apprehensive that new media could produce conflict and instability, threatening the political regime. To minimize foreign influence, the state-owned Sberbank has a golden share to block sales that exceed 25 percent of shares in Yandex, which is considered "strategically important." Prominent Internet entrepreneurs also include regime loyalists. Since Putin's re-election, more intrusive measures have been deployed. A new law allows officials to block Web sites without a court order. Russian Internet providers are also acquiring deep packet inspection technology, which facilitates Web site blocking and monitoring of chat spaces.

Finally, state authorities and their allies use new media to their advantage. During the elections, the Kremlin and its allies used the Internet to promote their perspective. Tweets from the U.S. embassy were countered with tweets from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. When

prominent opposition figures came to meet American Ambassador Michael McFaul, a camera crew from NTV greeted them. The video *Getting Instructions from the New Ambassador* very quickly received over a million hits on YouTube, reinforcing the regime's preferred narrative that foreign powers were instigating protests to destabilize Russia. Compromising information was also publicized after Navalny's e-mail account was hacked. Finally, Ambassador McFaul has suggested that his private information had also been hacked.

Boris Barkanov
Harvard University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Artists and Social Media in Politics; Blogs, Role in Politics; Demonstrations, Organizing; Hacktivism; Social Authority; Television and Social Media; Transparency; Ushahidi.

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Ryan, Paul

Paul Ryan is an American congressman and former Republican vice presidential nominee. Ryan was first elected to Congress in 1998. He is currently the Representative for Wisconsin's 1st Congressional District in southeastern Wisconsin, which lies on the border with Illinois to the south and Lake Michigan to the east. After redistricting in 2012, his district includes all of Kenosha County and Racine County, a large part of Walworth County, and portions of Rock County, Waukesha County, and Milwaukee County. Ryan was re-elected to his seat in the House of Representatives in 2012 with 55 percent of the district vote against Democratic challenger Rob Zerban.

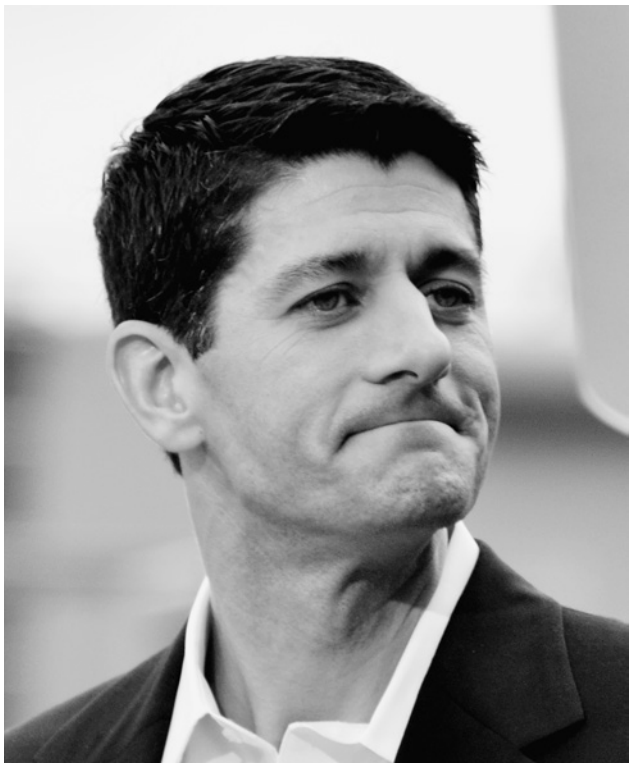
Born January 29, 1970, and raised in Janesville, Wisconsin, Ryan attended college at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. He double-majored in economics and political science, graduating with a bachelor of arts degree in 1992. During his studies, he developed a deep interest in the writings of economists Milton Friedman, Friedrich Hayek, and Ludwig von Mises. He was also influenced by the philosophy of novelist and philosopher Ayn Rand. At the urging of faculty members at Georgetown University in April 2011, he would ultimately reject Rand's philosophy on grounds of its atheistic underpinnings. Ryan, a devout Roman Catholic, cites medieval philosopher Saint Thomas Aquinas as a significant inspiration in his life.

Congressional Career

Currently an eight-term member of the House of Representatives, upon winning his seat in 1998, he became the second-youngest member in the House of Representatives at the time. A rising star among House Republicans for his conservative fiscal policy approach, in 2007, Ryan became the ranking Republican member of the House Budget Committee. When Republicans recaptured majority control of the House in the midterm elections of 2010, Ryan became chairman in the 112th Congress. He is also a member of the House Committee on Ways and Means, and is assigned to its Subcommittee on Health.

Ryan has openly embraced social media in his political and personal life during his congressional tenure. In the 111th (2009–10) and 112th

(2011–12) congresses, he used Twitter hashtags such as #FullRepeal and the handles of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Speaker of the House John Boehner to debate contentious issues. His personal account on YouTube, the Paul Ryan Channel, had 4,614 subscribers, 245 videos, and 2,259,378 video views in November 2012. He has embraced social media not only to debate congressional legislation and policy issues, but also in his daily life at home. For instance, he has posted personal pictures on Facebook of turkey hunting and other activities from his family life in rural southeastern Wisconsin.



Congressman Paul Ryan at the press conference on August 11, 2012, during which Governor Mitt Romney announced his choice of Ryan as running mate in the 2012 U.S. presidential election.

National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform

In January 2010, President Barack Obama created a bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform to address fiscal challenges in the United States. The national commission was created so that appointed members could identify, draft, and propose policies to address trillions in federal deficits and debt accrued over the last decade, and bring a consensus on fiscal sustainability. Ryan was appointed to the commission by the House of Representatives in early 2010.

The national commission was cochaired by former senator from Wyoming Alan Simpson, a Republican, and former Clinton administration Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles, a Democrat. The working group became known as the Simpson-Bowles Commission. Democrat Alice Rivlin, a former White House budget director in the Clinton administration and founding director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), was appointed to the commission by President Obama. Ryan developed a working relationship with her on the commission that became known in 2010 and 2011 as the Ryan-Rivlin plan.

The Ryan-Rivlin plan addressed health care, specifically Medicare, in the broader context of the fiscal reform intended to be tackled by the commission. Ryan and Rivlin developed a plan that proposed modifying certain aspects of the Medicare system in order to achieve fiscal stability in the United States over the long run. The plan fell apart on April 5, 2011. Rivlin was interviewed by *Politico* on that day, and a story ran online in which she was quoted as saying that she did not support that version of the Ryan-Rivlin plan that Ryan had been promoting to the press and on social media at the time. Almost instantaneously the *Politico* interview was shared by its readers across prominent social media including Twitter and Facebook.

Washington Post blogger and columnist Ezra Klein also interviewed Rivlin about Ryan's budget proposals on that day, and the interview was publicized by his social media outlets, with the interview running on his *Washington Post* "Wonkblog" on the morning of April 6, 2011. The *Washington Post*'s page for Klein's interview with Rivlin concerning Ryan's fiscal proposals was enabled for online readers to share on social media venues, ranging from Facebook to Twitter and LinkedIn to StumbleUpon. Ryan ultimately voted against the final recommendations of the commission.

The Path to Prosperity

Ryan has utilized YouTube and Twitter, as well as other social media, to promote his Path to

Prosperity budget proposals from the House of Representatives. After the activities of the 2012 election, he had a following of 4 million on Facebook and 800,000 on Twitter. The House of Representatives Committee on the Budget that Representative Ryan chairs keeps Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube pages. The proposals are generally called the Ryan plan, Ryan budget, or Ryan proposals by social media as well as traditional media.

The official page of the CBO is enabled for online readers of Ryan's House Budget Committee reports to Tweet links to its proposals, such as on Facebook, as well as bookmark and share on Facebook, Tumblr, StumbleUpon, Google, LinkedIn, Myspace, Delicious.com, Digg, and Reddit. Ryan used his "Path to Prosperity" platform in the 2012 presidential election. He began tweeting again about his budget proposals in the House of Representative from the 112th Congress. The Path to Prosperity official page on the House Budget Committee's Web site featured Ryan's tweets embedded with a link above the tweets allowing readers to follow him on Twitter.

2012 Presidential Election

On August 11, 2012, Mitt Romney officially announced that his running mate in the 2012 presidential election was Ryan. This was announced to his supporters via an iPhone application, which while unique, caused some chaos. The application was known as "Mitt's VP," and a notification was pushed out to users of the application. Romney's campaign hawked the Mitt's VP smartphone application, promising to deliver the identity of his running mate first. In the end, some downloaders received the notification at about 7:00 A.M. Eastern time, more than eight hours after the news media had confirmed it was Ryan. Not all the application downloaders received the notice, and an hour after Romney issued a press release naming Ryan as his running mate, the application still had not been updated.

Ryan stopped tweeting on his personal Twitter account on August 5, six days before the official announcement from the Romney campaign. The organization that ran Romney's operation was Targeted Victory, with significant overlap with Ryan's social media apparatus early after the announcement. However, in principle, and as is generally the case, lawmakers are careful not to use their official Twitter and Facebook accounts to campaign on a presidential ticket. According to Fox News, Ryan's Twitter followers almost immediately rose by 170,000 after the announcement by Romney. Conversation about Ryan peaked at 3,749 tweets per minute. Before the announcement, he had an average of 675. The event accounted for five out of 10 of Twitter's top trending topics in the United States. During the 16-minute announcement speech by Romney, Ryan's Facebook page added 6,000 followers.

A new Romney-Ryan Twitter account was revealed almost as soon as the announcement had been made. Ryan's vice presidential nominee handle, @PaulRyanVP, was unleashed by campaign officials. It gained 60,000 followers in less than eight hours. Ryan's campaign tweeting was done on the new handle. Similarly, on Facebook the PaulRyanVP page received the action. The Romney team also rolled out the page the morning of the announcement. Ryan's personal Twitter account gained more than 44,000 followers in its first three hours. His original Facebook page was adding more than 300 new fans a minute by noon on that day. Just over two days later, it had more than 100,000 followers. Ryan's original Twitter account gained over 10,000 followers in that time.

In comparison to other prominent lawmakers in the House of Representatives, he soon developed more followers on Twitter than Republican House leader Eric Cantor, and was rivaled only by House Speaker John Boehner and former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

A Romney-Ryan smartphone application was made available for both iPhone and Android users. Supporters were able to download the Romney-Ryan campaign application throughout the course of the presidential election period, with between 50,000 and 100,000 installs accounted for by the Android version of the application alone. It was designed by the Romney-Ryan social media team to make it easy for smartphone users to become involved with the campaign. The Romney-Ryan application allowed users to learn about the campaign, receive the latest news and updates, donate, and share campaign information with friends and family. It featured a biography part, which allowed users to learn about Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan. The news part of

the application allowed its users to stay up-to-date with the latest campaign blogs, videos, and breaking stories available on social media. The events feature allowed users to explore and find campaign events near them.

On the evening of October 11, 2012, at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, Ryan debated incumbent Vice President Joe Biden in the only vice presidential debate of the 2012 election. The collective press announced that Ryan was the winner on social media. Voters' opinions of the debate were tweeted instantaneously that evening, as well as broadcasted in Facebook, LinkedIn, and Myspace status updates. The event was also broadcasted on social media, with the YouTube Political Channel allowing viewers to watch the debate live on its stream of the event.

During the event, some have claimed that Vice President Biden played the aggressor and repeatedly refused to allow Ryan to talk. An analysis of the evening's event could adequately be characterized as contrasting styles from the two politicians involved. Ryan supporters and some others have argued that Ryan mainly focused on substance, and Biden for the most part presented talk of innuendo. These contrasting styles over the course of the debate were shown by Ryan's retort to a Biden accusation about Romney's campaign's theme of "we are the 47 percent," with the response that, "sometimes the words don't come out of your mouth the right way."

A CNN survey of registered voters who watched the vice presidential debate found Paul Ryan the winner 48 to 44 percent. The registered voters interviewed also voted that Ryan communicated more clearly, by a margin of 50 to 41 percent. Additionally, Ryan was voted more likeable by a margin of 53 to 43 percent.

That month Ryan was given the cover story of conservative magazine *Townhall*, with prominent coverage on its Web site Townhall.com. The Web site continues to keep a Paul Ryan news page as one of its trending topics, with videos of his election and postelection speeches embedded in the page, in addition to a Twitter feed about him.

Days after the 2012 election, Ryan's personal Facebook page had 312,000 "likes." Over 323,000 were following him on his personal Twitter account. He had compiled a record of 1,177 Tweets on the account by that time.

Ryan's social media presence was not significant enough to bring victory to Romney's campaign. The 2012 presidential election was one of the few times in history that the candidates did not both win their home states. The loss of Wisconsin proved detrimental to the Romney campaign. And Ryan did not manage to convince all counties in his district to vote for Romney. Obama won Kenosha County, Racine County, and Milwaukee County. Romney took Walworth County, Rook County, and Waukesha County.

Throughout the 2012 presidential election, social media characterized Romney and Ryan as having two different budget plans. Some speculated that if the Romney campaign were victorious, the vice president of the United States would be more of an expert on the federal budget than the White House budget director. After the election, and with Ryan's elevated profile, there was speculation that if the GOP retains the House in the future, he may step up to majority leader, or perhaps speaker.

Dustin Bradley Garlitz
Richard S. Conley
University of Florida

See Also: Campaigns, E-Mail; Campaigns, 2012; Cantor, Eric; Medicare; *Politico*; Spending and Debt, Government; Social Security.

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Sanders, Bernie

Bernard Sanders (1941–), more commonly known as Bernie Sanders, is currently the junior U.S. senator from Vermont. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2006 as an Independent. Sanders previously served as the U.S. Representative from Vermont's at-large district from 1990 to 2006, and as Mayor of Burlington from 1981 to 1989.

The son of Polish immigrants, Sanders was raised in Brooklyn, New York. He first attended Brooklyn College, but later transferred to the University of Chicago, where he earned a B.A. in political science in 1964. At the University of Chicago, Sanders became a critic of economic liberalism and a proponent of social democracy. He subsequently spent time on a kibbutz in Israel, which solidified his worldview and lifelong identity as a democratic socialist. Although he has proudly called himself a socialist ever since, Sanders distinguishes his understanding of socialism from communism proper. At its heart, Sanders's political platform is devoted to working and middle-class families, children, the elderly, and the poor. As a result, he has been a proponent of universal health care, public education, environmental protection, immigration reform, and withdrawing American troops from Iraq.

Sanders was the third socialist to be elected to the House of Representatives, and the first ever to be elected to the Senate. He was the only Independent during his time in the House, and is today one of two Independent members of the Senate. As a longstanding critic of both Republicans and Democrats, Sanders has known few political allies in the course of his career. Even the more progressive members of the Democratic Party, who would otherwise make natural allies, have been critical of his abrasive speaking style and unwillingness to compromise on almost every political issue. However, Sanders has happily embraced his marginal status, which enables him to speak freely and directly both in Congress and to the media.

This status sets him apart from his colleagues in both parties, who are more often than not limited by their respective platforms in what they can publicly say. Sanders's blunt and charismatic style not only endears him to his constituents, but also makes him a natural social media phenomenon. He is known for clear, powerful, and memorable lines that can be easily disseminated and shared on Facebook and Twitter. Although he lacks political alliances in the American legislature, he nonetheless commands a vast social-media following that most Republican and Democratic politicians would envy.

The Sanders administration officially makes use of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Google+. These tools enable to him to share news and

updates, educate his followers about the strengths and drawbacks of proposed bills in the House and the Senate, and to bolster his political campaigns. They also enable him to share pictures and video clips, announcements for upcoming media appearances, as well as words of thanks to his supporters. Although Sanders maintains a staff to manage his social media presence, he often posts comments, adding a personal touch to an otherwise formal affair, further endearing him to his already loyal followers.

Facebook

Like most politicians, Sanders's primary social media platform is Facebook. To date, his official Facebook page has over 162,000 fans. Visitors are greeted by a photo of Sanders, along with a seasonal background image of Vermont, the latter routinely updated to reflect the time of year. The "About" page provides Sanders's biographical data, educational background, employment history, contact information, and select political achievements.

The main page features an extensive history of posts, which are made almost daily. Typically, these posts include a summary or excerpt of an official press statement by Sanders regarding a current political issue, followed by a link to the official Web site of the Sanders administration providing further information. Sanders's Facebook posts also commonly include images featuring a photo of Sanders alongside a catchy quote. Other posts feature videos of Sanders's media appearances on television, often from the progressive cable news channel MSNBC. Regardless of the type, all posts are designed to be shared and distributed by Facebook users. The conciseness, pithiness, and rhetorical power of these posts make them easy to consume on Facebook's unique user interface.

For example, in November 2012, during the negotiations between Democrats and Republicans in the U.S. Congress concerning deficit reduction in the federal budget, Sanders posted the following quote:

> Just think of the arrogance of these CEOs who were bailed out by the American people when their greed and recklessness nearly destroyed the international financial system, and now they come to Congress to lecture the public about the need to cut programs for working families who are struggling from the recession that they caused.

This quote was juxtaposed alongside a photo of Sanders looking intensely at his audience and speaking passionately with an index finger pointing in the air. The remarkably forthright nature of the quote, which is highly unusual for a Washington politician, along with the charismatic image of Sanders delivering his signature fiery oratory, is a common feature of Sanders's Facebook activity. It is also the reason that his followers hold him in such high esteem.

The sharing tool allows those who are not official fans of Sanders's Facebook page to receive posts in their news feed, and should they choose, to share those posts in turn. This enables Sanders to widely disseminate his talking points and to gain new followers in the process. The provocative nature of his Facebook posts are also known to generate lengthy, if somewhat disordered, discussions. These discussions follow below each post, and below each sharing of each post. Facebook users are thereby able to express their opinions about a particular issue on both Sanders's page, as well as on their personal pages. These opinions often take the form of routine praise for Sanders's viewpoints and criticism for those he opposes. It also takes the form of reasoned exchange. It is not uncommon for a typical post on Sanders's Facebook page to receive thousands of "likes," to be shared thousands of times, and to generate thousands of comments. These comments can themselves receive "likes," and enable followers to network with each other, further strengthening Sanders's support base.

Twitter

Sanders's second-largest social media following can be found on Twitter, where he draws over 127,000 followers. His Twitter account, @SenSanders, features the same background image as that found on his Facebook page, along with an official photo of Sanders against a second, smaller background image. To date, Sanders and his staff have made over 5,000 tweets. Although the overwhelming majority of tweets are made by his staff, many are made by Sanders, and end with a

simple "-B". Sanders also follows over 900 other accounts, keeping him and his staff up-to-date with key players on Twitter.

Following standard Twitter syntax by politicians, Sanders offers his followers daily news updates and announcements in brief form. When appearing on television, Sanders uses the "@" symbol to acknowledge his host (e.g., @WolfBlitzer), which attracts the attention of those who happen to follow or search for that host's Twitter account. Typical tweets are followed by links in the form of shortened URLs that fit within Twitter's 140-character limit. They are also followed by hashtags (e.g., #Budget and #FiscalCliff) designed to promote or "trend" those tweets. Often, these hashtags will be included in a sentence, which economizes on space. Even within Twitter's extreme character limit, Sanders and his team manage to convey the same sense of passion, outrage, and wit characteristic of his Facebook posts. An example of such a tweet is the following from late November 2012:

> Lloyd Blankfein, CEO of @GoldmanSachs, is paid more in two hours than the average #SocialSecurity recipient earns in a year.

Just as Facebook's user interface permits unique forms of communication and expansion of user support, Twitter has enabled Sanders to increase his following because of the rapid-fire nature of tweets. The most famous example of this phenomenon occurred in late 2010, when Sanders strongly objected to the Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010, which extended the so-called Bush tax cuts to preserve historic low rates for the wealthiest Americans. Sanders argued that extending these tax cuts would place even greater burdens on social programs and result in further harm to working- and middle-class families, the poor, the elderly, and children. He took to the Senate floor and spoke for no less than eight and a half hours, attacking the compromise in his characteristic style. As news of the speech spread, large numbers of "tweeters" began following, discussing, and supporting his effort. The discussion famously generated a unique hashtag, #FiliBernie, although the speech was not technically a filibuster. Virtually overnight, Sanders gained 4,000 Twitter followers. The story was listed by social media news Web site Mashable.com as one of the top Twitter trends of December, even outranking those by pop music giants Taylor Swift and Miley Cyrus.

YouTube

Compared to Facebook and Twitter, Sanders has few followers on YouTube. To date, he has managed to accumulate nearly 8,000 subscribers. However, this comparatively low number of subscribers is not a reflection of the efficacy of Sanders's YouTube content, but rather of the nature of YouTube. Unlike Facebook and Twitter, it is simply less common for users to become subscribers to an official YouTube channel. Despite the low number of subscribers, Sanders's YouTube videos have managed to receive well over 2 million views.

Because YouTube's user interface is not amenable to the kind of colorful background images characteristic of Facebook or Twitter, Sanders's YouTube channel is fairly modest in appearance. However, what it lacks in colorful appearance it more than compensates with lively visual content, for it is through YouTube that Sanders often provides video clips and links to such clips on Twitter.

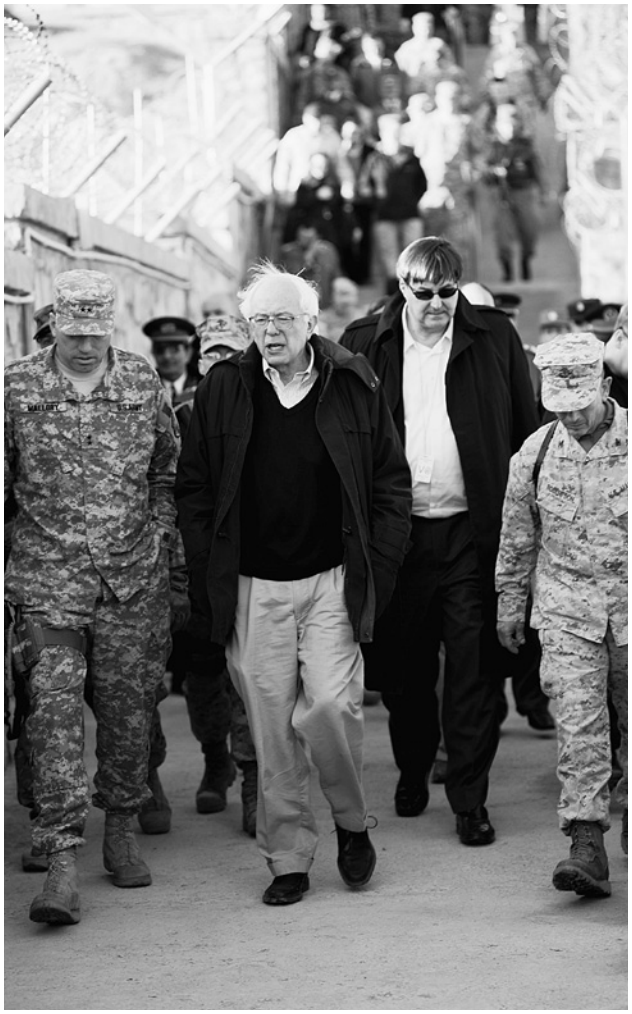
Google+

Despite being one of the more recent social media platforms, Google+ has proven surprisingly popular with Sanders's followers. To date, over one million users have added Sanders to their "circles," demonstrating the unique power of Google+ to reach new public audiences.

Sanders uses the same official photo, along with the same background image, as those found on Facebook. The updates and announcements are also very similar in style and format, and in fact share much of the same content. User participation also mirrors Facebook, with followers making comments, endorsing each other's comments with a "+1," and sharing Sanders's posts on their accounts.

Sanders was one of the first American politicians to start a Google+ account. While Google+ is very similar to Facebook in its user interface, it offers different tools that the Sanders team has utilized to communicate with supporters. For example, in

November 2011, just two months after Google+ was made available to the public without the need for an invitation, the Sanders team polled its followers on whether they supported or opposed a constitutional amendment to reverse the U.S. Supreme Court decision on *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, which permitted unrestricted expenditures by independent entities (e.g., corporations and unions) in politics. Despite being an early and not altogether reliable use of the polling tool, Sanders nonetheless established himself as a pioneer on Google+, once again earning the recognition of Mashable.com.



Senator Bernie Sanders in Kabul, Afghanistan, on February 20, 2011, as part of a congressional delegation visiting the Afghan National Police Academy. Sanders is active on social media, and in March 2012, he won the social media equivalent of an Academy Award for the Best Member of Congress on Social Media.

Recognition

Sanders has received widespread recognition for his social media efforts. In late 2011, Mashable.com nominated Sanders for the category of "Must-Follow Politician on Social Media," along with Barack Obama, Cory Booker, and Ron Paul. In March 2012, Sanders won a prestigious Shorty Award, the social media equivalent of an Academy Award, for the category of Best Member of Congress on Social Media for his use of Facebook, Twitter, and Google+. The award was presented by *The Daily Show* correspondents Samantha Bee and Jason Jones. Sanders took the occasion to acknowledge the power and importance of social media to directly connect with the public, and to have a debate about issues that are rarely discussed in mainstream media. He highlighted in particular the possibility of having meaningful conversations on social media about the disappearance of the middle class, increasing inequality in income and wealth, rising levels of poverty, and the need for better healthcare. Sanders's belief in the democratic power of social media is in part a reflection of his disenchantment with traditional corporate media.

In March 2012, Edelmen Digital, a division of the public relations giant Edelmen, issued a report concerning the most influential U.S. politicians on Twitter. Partnering with Simply Measured, a prominent social media analytics tool, Edelmen measured Twitter "success" through a newly devised set of metrics, which included engagement, Twitter mentions, amplification, growth in the number of followers, and "tweetlevel" influence, or the number of times a politician's tweets have been retweeted. Studying a time period ranging from September to December 2011, the study observed 456 Twitter accounts and nearly 60,000 tweets. Edelmen revealed that Sanders ranked first in influence, first in engagement, third in trust, and fourth in popularity. Sanders's success came as a surprise to commentators, as Republicans far outnumbered Democrats both in terms of Twitter accounts and efficacy of tweets.

Jason Hannan
Northwestern University

See Also: Facebook; Google+; Pelosi, Nancy; Twitter; YouTube.

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Saturday Night Live

Saturday Night Live (SNL), a comedy variety program broadcast live on NBC has been an essential contributor to America's political culture since its debut in 1975. Through its parody news segment, "Weekend Update," and its extended comedic sketches in which cast members play presidents, candidates, and other members of world politics, SNL has been and continues to be at the forefront of mainstream political critique. The show's prominence in social media peaked during the 2008 election season, a result of the confluence of a cast member's uncanny portrayal of the Republican vice-presidential nominee, the ascendance of YouTube and other video-sharing Web sites, and the launch of the TV archive site Hulu.com.

SNL and Politics: A Brief History

Saturday Night Live first aired on October 11, 1975. Developed by Lorne Michaels, who still serves as the show's executive producer, SNL was intended to attract a new generation of TV watchers: members of a young (18–34), disillusioned, cynical generation reeling from the Watergate scandal and the resignation of President Richard Nixon, and facing the prospect of an election cycle featuring an incumbent who had neither been elected president nor vice president. SNL offered an unpredictable and irreverent mix of sketch comedy, popular music, spoofs of TV shows and movies, and most prominently, political satire. From its first episode, the presidency was the main target of its satirical barbs, with cast member Chevy Chase portraying a version of then-President Gerald Ford as a bumbling fool. While the show has undergone many changes of cast and format in its 38 years on the air, its most constant and most remarked upon feature has been its comedic skewering of politics and politicians.

Political satire and jokes about (and at the expense of) politicians have always been staples of SNL. On SNL, such comedy takes two forms: its regular "Weekend Update" segment featuring mock news reports about politics, and longer sketches in which cast members portray politicians (especially presidents and presidential candidates). Along with Chevy Chase's groundbreaking spoof of Gerald Ford, memorable SNL portrayals of politicians include Dan Aykroyd's takes on Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter; Dana Carvey as George H. W. Bush and Ross Perot; Darrell Hammond as Bill Clinton and Al Gore; and Tina Fey as Sarah Palin.

Additionally, politicians regularly make appearances on the show, particularly during election years. President Gerald Ford was not only the first target of SNL's political spoofs, but, also the first president to make a cameo appearance. Other politicians playing themselves on SNL have included both Bush presidents, Vice President Al Gore, Senator Daniel Moynihan, New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, and presidential candidates Ross Perot, Ralph Nader, John McCain, Hillary Clinton, and John McCain.

SNL, Sarah Palin, and Tina Fey

In terms of use of and impact upon social media—and possibly, impact upon voters—nothing to date has compared to the 2008 series of portrayals of Sarah Palin by Tina Fey. The 2008 season premiere featured a skit starring Fey, a former SNL

cast member and head writer, as the newly nominated Republican vice-presidential candidate, Alaska governor Sarah Palin, and Amy Poehler as Hillary Clinton. While Poehler's portrayal captured little of Clinton's essence, Fey's visual and vocal resemblance to the real Palin were uncanny. The episode received the highest Nielsen ratings for a premiere since 2002, and attracted so much media attention that over 14 million people watched the sketch on NBC.com and Hulu.com, making it the most-viewed clip ever on the network's Web site, as well as the most-watched viral video overall to that point.

The unprecedented reach and popularity of the initial Fey/Palin sketch led to five subsequent Palin portrayals by Fey, each attracting large broadcast and online audiences. In one sketch, the real Sarah Palin appeared side-by-side with her impersonator; in another, Fey and Poehler parodied a Palin interview that had been conducted by *CBS Evening News* anchor Katie Couric. While the original CBS news broadcast reached 6.2 million viewers, the SNL skit was watched by 7.9 million viewers on television and 11.1 million viewers on Hulu.com and NBC.com. The impact of SNL's Fey/Palin sketches was also felt by Hulu, a video archive site launched by NBC Universal and News Corp. in March 2008. By November of that year, Hulu had become a top-10 Web site, thanks in large part to viewers of Fey's Palin impersonations.

SNL's Effects on Politics: An Ongoing Debate

The centrality of political satire has been a constant throughout SNL's 38 years on the air. Whether SNL's treatments of politics and politicians have had any measurable effects, however, has been debated. There appears to be agreement that SNL, like other political comedy shows, raises viewers' awareness of politicians and political issues and may contribute to the formation or reinforcement of political views and attitudes; may affect how political campaigns are run; and may have some influence on how political reporters cover elections. Less clear is whether SNL affects voting behavior or results. Several studies conducted during and after the 2008 campaign found evidence for a variety of so-called Fey effects: scholars and political journalists found that Tina Fey's name popped up unbidden during voter interviews about the election; voters exhibited increasingly negative attitudes toward Palin; Fey's impressions caused viewers to pay more attention to the traits of the real Palin; and SNL contributed to a broader journalistic narrative that Fey was hurting the GOP's electoral prospects. However, even those reporting on these various Fey effects acknowledged that the comedian most likely did not affect the election's outcome.

Moreover, as several critics have noted, the satiric focus of the cast members' portrayals of politicians is on their physical traits, both visual and verbal, not on their actual politics or policies. (Tina Fey appears to be the exception to this rule: Fey's impression brilliantly captured Palin's look, voice, and mannerisms while also commenting on her qualifications for the vice presidency.) Indeed, the fact that so many of the targets of SNL's jabs willingly make appearances on the show suggests that they cannot have been too badly skewered by the program.

Conclusion

While critics agree that SNL has permanently changed the face, nature, and scope of American political humor and political coverage by "real" news sources, at the same time, they acknowledge that SNL's barbs are much less sharp than those offered by Comedy Central's *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart* and *The Colbert Report*. This may not be surprising given that SNL, as a broadcast offering, must entertain a mass network audience and is therefore less free to offer the more pointed and probing critique of politics that fans of Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert have come to expect. Still, the political skits and the largely politics-focused "Weekend Update" segment remain the most popular, prominent, and digitally shared elements of *Saturday Night Live* and it appears they will remain so for the foreseeable future.

David Weiss
University of New Mexico

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Candidate Image; *Colbert Report, The*; *Daily Show, The*; News Media; *Onion, The*; Palin Phenomenon.

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Schools4All

Schools4All is an education fundraising project by Pencils of Promise, with the highly visible support of Canadian pop idol Justin Bieber. The project's Web site uses a custom platform provided by StayClassy.org that allows users to create personal fundraising pages, with funds going to efforts to build schools in developing nations. Users are given the ability to customize these pages, add multimedia files, share via social networks, and create widgets. The user who raises the most money receives a school visit by Bieber as an incentive. Fundraising pages are open to all U.S. residents over 12, so technically the prize is the ability to choose which school Bieber visits. The expectation is that the user base will skew young, and that the winner will choose his or her own school. In its first months, Schools4All raised enough money to build seven new schools. Upcoming schools identified in 2012 included Xepocxuc Preschool and Primary School in Guatemala, Houay Yen Preschool and Primary School in Laos, and Lizarco Preschool in Nicaragua.

Pencils of Promise was founded in 2008 to raise money to build schools in developing countries. Pencils of Promise has funded the construction of more than 50 schools in Ghana, Guatemala, Laos, and Nicaragua, as well as distributing school supplies in more than 50 countries. As of the end of 2012, 32 schools were under construction, and 76 had been completed, in addition to the upcoming schools being funded. The charity was inspired by founder Adam Braun's experiences backpacking through developing nations as a college student, and his perception of a need for an international nonprofit group that partnered with local staff and participating villages to enact educational change. Internationally recognized and receiving praise from Barbara Walters and Desmond Tutu, Pencils of Promise has distinguished itself as a leader in social media engagement, having been founded by a member of the millennial social media generation. A Brown University alumnus, Braun was listed on *Wired Magazine*'s 2012 "Smart List of 50 People Changing the World," and he was honored by the United Nations and the Clinton Global Initiative.

Pencils of Promise discloses its financials on its Web page, specifically drawing attention to them and making them easy to find. Doing so underscores the fact that a full 84 percent of its 2011 expenses were spent on program services—an admirable portion, larger than that of many charities tracked by watchdogs like Charity Navigator. Only 9 percent of the charity's expenses were spent on fundraising; the use of social media, in particular, can help keep fundraising expenses low without lowering the profile of the charity's

brand, and initiatives like School4All generate free publicity thanks in no small part to the popularity of Bieber. The financial highlights section also draws attention to the fact that 75 percent of donations are under $100, emphasizing the role of grassroots fundraising over corporate sponsorship and patronage. Corporate partners include Post Foods, Pizza Hut, JPMorgan Chase, Google, Dolce and Gabbana, 1-800 Flowers, Activision, Pearson Education, Pop Chips, Viacom (the parent company of MTV), and Faber-Castell.

The Schools4All contest has been run twice. In its first year, the winning fundraising page, raising $51,738.50, was that of the Fiocchiaro family. Over 20,000 different fundraising pages were created, each representing at least one participant (with many more donors). The contest's first year raised $305,975, enough to fund 15 new schools. After the initial fundraising year ended in June 2011, Schools4All changed the terms of the prize. Instead of the prize automatically going to the user raising the most money, virtual raffle tickets were generated. Each $25 raised generated one ticket. (The choice of $25 likely is not random; it is the amount that Pencils of Promise first started with.) The winner of the Bieber visit was selected randomly from these virtual tickets. On top of that, the top three fundraising schools would receive plane tickets (10 to the first-place school, five to the second, two to the third, as well as a chaperone plane ticket for each) for fundraising students to visit the school Bieber would be visiting. The change created an incentive for fundraisers to raise as much money as possible, without disincentivizing fundraisers nowhere near the leader as the end of the contest period drew close. Other prizes provided by corporate sponsors included gift certificates for shopping sprees and Nook e-readers.

Bill Kte'pi
Independent Scholar

See Also: Cause-Marketing Campaigns; Education, Issues In; Fund-Raising; Nongovernmental Organizations.

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Schumer, Charles

Charles Schumer is the current and most senior senator from New York. Currently, he is the third-highest-ranking Democrat in the U.S. Senate. The gregarious Schumer is known for his love of the spotlight (Washington insiders joke that the most dangerous place to be is between Schumer and a camera) and his outspoken and articulate defense of liberal issues. He is known as a policy wonk and brilliant strategist who has been given credit for the Democrats retaking control of Congress in 2006. Many Washington insiders believe that he will one day be the leader of the Democrats in the Senate.

Schumer was born in Brooklyn, New York, to Jewish parents. From the beginning, Schumer was an ambitious overachiever. He graduated as valedictorian of his high school class, and had a perfect score on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Schumer graduated from Harvard and Harvard Law School. At the age of 25, in 1974, he was elected to the New York State Legislature, becoming the youngest member since Theodore Roosevelt. He served in the New York State Legislature until 1981.

In 1980, Schumer was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives when Elizabeth Holtzman retired. Schumer served in the House of Representatives from 1981 to 1999. While serving as a congressman, Schumer compiled a liberal voting record. He voted in favor of gun control and consumer protection laws. Schumer voted for the Brady Bill in 1990, which established a seven-day waiting period in order to buy handguns. He also was one of the sponsors of the Assault Weapons Ban in 1994.

In 1998, Schumer was elected to the U.S. Senate. Supporters note that he quickly became a rising star in the Senate known for his skillful use of

media (he is still a frequent guest on the Sunday morning news shows) while also citing his knowledge of issues and skills as a political strategist. After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Schumer successfully fought for aid to New York City. Schumer was easily re-elected to the Senate in 2004 and 2010. Like his Republican colleague Charles Grassley (who frequently visited all of Iowa's 99 counties), Schumer boasted about visiting all of New York's 62 counties.

In the Senate, Schumer serves on a variety of committees, including the Finance, Judiciary, and the Rules Committee (he became chairman in 2006). Schumer quickly moved up the ranks of the Democratic Party in the Senate. In 2004, he became the chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC), a position he held until 2008. As leader of the DSCC, Schumer recruited candidates to run for the Senate. Although an outspoken liberal with an extensive liberal voting record, Schumer proved to be a pragmatist as DSCC chairman. He recruited candidates who could compete in Republican states. For example, Schumer recruited Jon Testor to run for the Senate in Montana. Testor opposed gun control and gay marriage. He proved to be a much better fit for Montana than previous Democratic candidates, and was elected to the Senate in 2006. In 2006, Democrats regained control of Congress for the first time since 1994. Schumer's decision to recruit moderate to conservative Democrats to run in Republican states was cited as one of the reasons Democrats regained control of Congress.

In addition, Schumer became vice chair of the Democratic Conference in 2006. He is currently the number-three-ranking Democrat in the Senate. Many political experts believe that he may one day become the leader of the Senate Democrats if Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid either retires or is defeated in his re-election bid.

Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta shares a word with Senator Charles E. Schumer (left) before boarding his plane at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, August 9, 2012. In March 2012, Schumer and Senator Richard Blumenthal urged the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Department of Justice to investigate whether employer demands for private information like Facebook and e-mail passwords as a precondition for job interviews was a violation of federal law.

During the George W. Bush administration, Schumer was accused by conservative critics of filibustering and blocking Bush's efforts. Critics noted that he regularly filibustered many of Bush's judicial nominees. On the other hand, Schumer voted for Michael Mukasey, Bush's nominee for attorney general in 2007. During the last four years, he enthusiastically supported the policies of President Barack Obama. He voted for the stimulus plan, the Affordable Care Act, and the Dodd-Frank Act. Schumer played an active role in negotiations over the fiscal cliff. He urged Democrats and President Barack Obama to stand firm on renewing tax cuts for the middle class and on raising taxes on the wealthy. Schumer also actively campaigned for aid for the victims of Hurricane Sandy, which included his constituents in New York City.

Critics have claimed over the years that Schumer is too cozy with Wall Street and financial firms, contradicting his image as a liberal reformer. Schumer was also criticized a few years ago for refusing to turn off his cell phone on a flight when requested by a stewardess. Nonetheless, Schumer has been free of any scandal or allegations of wrongdoing. Charles Schumer has proven to be a major player in the Senate, despite his love of the spotlight and his outspoken liberal record, which, it has been noted, can often overshadow his sophisticated grasp of public policy issues and his skills as a master political strategist.

Jason Roberts
Quincy College

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2004); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Gillibrand, Kirsten; Hagan, Kay; Pelosi, Nancy.

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Search and Scrape Capability

On January 19, 2012, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) posted a request for information asking software vendors for an application that can "search and scrape" social media Web sites for information about potential global and domestic threats. The desired software would need to be able to search social media Web sites like Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr, "scrape" the relevant information from those Web sites, and analyze the findings. While the request for information states that the search and scrape software would only access messages that the user has made publicly available, the request raises important civil liberties questions.

The FBI notes a number of important requirements in the search and scrape software it is requesting. First, its search and scrape capabilities must be automated, and users need to have the freedom to create and define keyword parameters. Second, the software must be able to filter data based on the search criteria. Third, the software must be capable of providing instant alerts about

breaking events and emerging threats, and display those events on geospatial maps. These maps need to be able to incorporate U.S. domestic terror data, worldwide terror data, U.S. embassies, consulates, and military instillations throughout the world, weather conditions, and traffic video. Finally, the software needs to be able to search and monitor all publicly available postings from social networking Web sites, as well as translate postings in foreign languages into English.

Along with the specifications for the software's technological capabilities, the request outlines the purposes of the software. On one hand, the search and scrape program will assist the FBI in intelligence-gathering operations. The monitoring of social media will assist law enforcement in identifying potential threats and developing threat profiles. Based on the data gathered, the software will assist in helping to frame appropriate responses to potential threats and developing effective countermeasures. The FBI believes that the monitoring of social media sites represents a critical component in national law enforcement and security policy.

The search and scrape software will also assist in other important governmental functions. The software will allow the FBI to respond more effectively to crises because social media often reports problems faster than formal channels of emergency communications. Search and scrape will also assist law enforcement in planned operations and special events where gauging security risks and the required security responses is often quite difficult.

In total, the search and scrape application requested by the FBI would enable the organization to accomplish a host of important tasks. From counter intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance to terrorism and cybercrime, fast and efficient monitoring of social networks represents a necessary step in the evolution of law enforcement's efforts to stay informed about changing events and potential threats to public order and safety. Moreover, the FBI insists that the software will not have access to private information that a social network user has not made public. Its search and reporting features will be limited only to information that is publicly accessible and placed in the public domain voluntarily by the user.

Concerns

Despite the FBI's assurances that the data mining performed by the search and scrape software will be limited to public information, the software request raises a number of important civil liberties concerns, and has drawn the attention of civil rights groups. These groups raise a number of important objections to the proposed software requested by the FBI. First, the Supreme Court has consistently ruled that government may not engage in acts of "prior restraint" when it comes to freedom of speech. This means that the government may not preemptively rule speech by individuals as impermissible, except in very narrowly defined situations (such as yelling "fire" in a crowded theater). While the search and scrape software certainly does not constitute prior restraint on the part of the government, critics worry that the knowledge that the government is monitoring what is posted on social media Web sites will have a chilling effect on free speech. The constant monitoring means that everything an individual posts will be reviewed by a government computer, and this may lead to a general reluctance to post anything publicly that could attract unwanted attention.

Second, the collection and warehousing of information scraped from social media sites is troubling to many people. It may be one thing for government to watch what is being said, but it is quite another for the government to maintain databases of postings by individuals. For some critics, this is tantamount to the government keeping secret files on citizens, a behavior these critics see as incompatible with living in a free society. In addition, the software's constant monitoring creates a kind of surveillance culture on the Internet, where every citizen is treated as a potential criminal. This condition is seen as inimical to a legal culture that presumes the innocence, rather than the guilt, of citizens.

Finally, critics observe that the very nature of social networking makes even a targeted search and scrape system impossible. If the government were to limit the use of the program to target individuals already suspected of criminal or potential criminal activity, the problem is that such a person is connected to dozens if not hundreds of other people through social networking. Separating suspect individuals from the people they are

networked with is impossible, which means that everyone falls under the government monitoring.

Conclusion

Clearly, search and scrape programs offer tremendous advantages to law enforcement by improving the capacity of law enforcement agencies to maintain situational awareness and monitor and prevent illegal behavior. There is also no question that law enforcement must be able to adapt to the changing conditions of technological communications. At the same time, search and scrape programs in the hands of the government raise important civil rights concerns that must be adequately addressed. Balancing civil rights with the need for greater security in the digital age continues to be one of the great challenges of the 21st century.

Eric C. Sands
Kaitlyn Pettet
Berry College

See Also: Data Mining; Facebook; Findability; Information Aggregation; Myspace; Privacy; Twitter.

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Search and Seizure Law and Policy

Generally, police do not need a warrant to search in a public forum such as the street or a park. Anything that is in plain sight, plain smell, or plain hearing can be used by police officers to gain probable cause for an arrest. So, if a person is soliciting prostitutes on the street (plain sight), smoking marijuana in a park (plain smell), or discussing the exploits of a crime in a city square (plain hearing), then the officer can act. This seems like common knowledge, but what most people do not realize (or refuse to believe) is that social media sites are also public forums. They are online (which is open to public), and a person is invited to join the community (and will sign terms of agreement). Even though people may access these sites from their smartphones or a laptop in their privately owned home, once an individual is online, he or she is in public. Thus, what a person says, writes, or posts is open to the public, including the police. Going online is akin to going into the middle of a park or a crowded restaurant and screaming at the top of one's lungs.

Government agencies are taking advantage of people's ease with social media. As many as 80 percent of police agencies are now using social media as a tool for criminal investigation, and the number continues to rise. For example, the New York Police Department (NYPD) uses facial recognition technology to scan Facebook pages to look for wanted criminals or those with outstanding warrants. The NYPD has an entire unit dedicated to mining Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites. Most federal investigatory agencies also have members who mine social media sites for evidence of criminal activity. For example, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has a private Twitter account, and uses TweetDeck to scan millions of tweets for suspected terrorist activity (although the DHS claims that it does not follow specific individuals).

Any information left public on social media is open to investigation by police. Information that directly implicates a person can be used to arrest the person. Furthermore, social media sites such as Foursquare can be used to locate individuals. There are many examples of police agencies making arrests based upon information found on social media sites. A Kentucky man was jailed for posting a photo of himself siphoning gas. A Washington, D.C., man was arrested after he used a laptop that he stole to post a picture on the victim's Facebook page. The picture showed him wearing a fur coat that he had also stolen from the victim. In California, authorities brought down an Al Qaeda terrorist cell by using an undercover agent to create

a virtual relationship with the defendants through Facebook and Skype. In another case, a defendant was convicted of murder based on evidence found on Myspace. Police also create fake accounts to access a suspect's page through the assistance of a cooperating witness who is a Facebook friend with the suspect. Furthermore, many people will accept friend requests from people they do not know in order to increase their number of friends, thus making the police's job very easy.

Criminal Investigations, Social Media, and Privacy

Social media sites are updated daily with billions of pieces of data, including pictures, videos, locations, addresses, and unwitting confessions. It is a valuable source for investigative agencies, one that requires little work or effort. This is an innovative way for police agencies to do their jobs, but it raises some privacy concerns. The Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects "against unreasonable searches and seizures." People have the highest level of protection in their homes and on their persons. Therefore, in order to search a person or the home, police must obtain a valid warrant from a magistrate, or have articulable probable cause (the same level needed to obtain a warrant).

The Fourth Amendment also protects people from warrantless searches obtained with new technology, such as GPS tracking and infrared cameras, even if the police are in a public forum. For example, a police officer could not use an infrared camera from the street to peek into a home, unless the officer had a valid warrant. Any evidence obtained from a warrantless search or one proceeded upon without probable cause will not be admissible in court. However, this only applies to evidence gained in areas where citizens have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Thus, information made available in a public forum will most likely not have protection. Since Facebook and Twitter are public forums, there is almost no reasonable expectation of privacy, thus police can search and seize information without a warrant or probable cause.

The government can gain access to social media information through several traditional court orders, such as warrants and subpoenas. In some instances, the government can compel disclosure without a warrant (which requires probable cause). The Electronic Communication Privacy Act (ECPA), which governs the protection of online information, was passed in 1986. At that time, Congress only foresaw cell phone and e-mail communication. Thus, the ECPA was created under the belief that people would download e-mails, open and read them, and then delete them. Congress did not foresee a permanent record of social media sites.

British officers from the West Midlands police department seize a laptop during a national child abuse operation targeting known and suspected child sex offenders in June 2012. Three people were arrested as a result of the search. In the United States, a warrant is needed to seize a document on a computer.

As a result, under the current law, if information has been posted for less than 180 days, the government needs a warrant to gain access. If the information has been posted for more than 180 days, then it is assumed to be abandoned (like a letter thrown in the trash). Thus, the government can compel the service provider to disclose the information with a warrant, or an administrative subpoena, or a court order (which does not require probable cause).

The law has created a confusing contradiction. A document on a computer can only be obtained through a warrant, but if it is stored in the cloud or through an e-mail service provider, then the government is only required to obtain (a less strict) subpoena in order to access it. Moreover, the ECPA does not speak to location tracking,

thus no court order is needed for police to use social media or cell phone information to track individuals.

Defendants do not have the same legal abilities to access social media information in mounting their defense, as the rules of evidence require them to obtain a subpoena to access social media sites. Furthermore, any subpoena obtained can be challenged by the user or the social media site (this would not include information that is publically available). Finally, even if the evidence is obtained, this does not mean that it will be admissible in court because it may be dismissed for several reasons, including hearsay, inability to authenticate, and prejudicial history.

Social Media Sites: Pushing Back

After several years of customer complaints, social networking sites have begun to allow consumers to make information private, but only 25 percent of users take the additional step of making their pages private. The question is whether the ability to make that information private now creates a reasonable expectation of privacy; however, private information may not be as private as one thinks. For example, Facebook will often let information that one sets as private to be posted on a friend's page, which may not be private. Furthermore, lists of friends allow police officers to track known accomplices or other persons of interest who may have information that can lead to an arrest.

Additionally, the U.S. government frequently contacts social media sites for assistance in criminal investigations, and the sites often comply. At the end of 2012, Google reported receiving approximately 8,400 requests for information from government agencies in the United States over the last five years. Of that total, approximately 5,800 were based on subpoenas, 1,900 were based on warrants, and the rest were other types of requests under the ECPA. Google reported that it complied with approximately 90 percent of all government requests. Twitter also reported approximately 700 such requests in 2011, with 75 percent compliance. Facebook does not provide such information.

In response to criticism from civil liberty groups, social media companies are starting to add policies that they will notify a user when a request for information has been made, prior to handing the information over to authorities. Social media companies have also begun to fight against government requests for user information. Accordingly, some courts have drawn a line between protecting the privacy of some information (e.g., private posts, private messaging, and private pages), while not protecting others (e.g., information that is open to the public or shared with others).

The Fourth Amendment's protection against government search and seizure is based upon "reasonable expectation of privacy." This expectation is based upon whether or not society wants to protect a specific realm as private. For example, the United States has decided to protect a person's home as a realm of privacy. However, as media technology has advanced, what society considers private has narrowed. Recent cases in U.S. courts have shown that the nation is not ready to allow for all aspects of life to be intruded upon, just because technology can do so. Similarly, as social media becomes more ingrained as a part of everyday life, society may decide to protect that realm as a forum with a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Jason Zenor
State University of New York, Oswego

See Also: Department of Homeland Security Media Monitoring Initiative; Digital Due Process Coalition; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Facial Recognition Technology.

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Search Engine Bias/"Google Bias"

Media scholars are increasingly problematizing the idea that search engines are neutral technologies or tools. In 2004, Helen Nissenbaum and Lucas Introna carefully traced the way in which bias occurs in search engines, and paved the way for a host of studies on the social and civic impact of monopoly search engine power on businesses and the public. The term *Google bias* has come to be known as a way of characterizing the how Web site ranking through Google's algorithm has the effect of prioritizing its commerical interests over its competitors. This bias is attributed to a host of factors that are a part of algorithmic or computational decision-making processes. In 2003, John Battelle and Alex Salkever introduced the term *Googlization* to characterize the search engine's dominance on the Internet. Siva Vaidhyanathan extended this definition to reflect the expansion of Google's control over public information, books, media, and information and communication technologies (ICTs). Alex Halavais argues that the emergent search engine society has dire consequences for the future of democracy and the public.

Technologies are designed to bias and discriminate among types of information, in that they sort and categorize as part of their inherent logic. Oscar Gandy, Jr., discusses how technology discrimination, which can include search engines causes disproportionate harm to certain segments of the population that are already on the social, political, or economic margins. Corroborating this idea, two separate studies by LaTonya Sweeney and Safiya Umoja Noble brought attention to the ways that search engine bias in Google misrepresents African Americans by biasing advertising and content. In 2012, Sweeney showed how Web searches on African American–sounding names were more likely to produce advertising and Web sites for criminal background checks than white-sounding names. That same year, Noble showed how searches on women and girls of color, particulary black girls, Latina girls, and Asian girls were likely to favor pornographic, adult-themed, and hypersexualized Web sites and advertising.

Search Engines and Elections

In the realm of politics, Robert Epstein and Ronald Robertson conducted a study for the American Institute for Behavioral Research and Technology on the effect of search engines in election results. In 2013, they discovered that more than 50 percent of democratic elections could be biased toward one candidate or another through search ranking of favorable and unfavorable Web sites for political candidates. They argue that the public would not be aware of the process of search bias because it is embedded in the structural placement of positive results on the first page of search. Esptein argues that search engines hold such power and prominence in control of information that they are a threat to democracy with their undue influence on politics. Results of their study show how a search-engine company could influence the outcome of elections with no challenge and with no public knowledge of its practices. As a result, they argue that search engine companies must be closely regulated because of the monumental impact they can have on controlling politics.

Criticism of Google

Recent reports like ConsumerWatchdog.org's Inside Google report, "Traffic Report: How Google is Squeezing out Competitors and Muscling Into New Markets," of June 2010, details how Google effectively blocks sites that it competes with and prioritizes its properties to the top of the search pile (YouTube over other video sites, Google Maps over MapQuest, and Google Images over Photobucket and Flickr). The report highlights the process by which "universal search" is not neutral, and therefore it is not a universal process, but rather a commercial one that moves results for Web sites that buy paid advertising to the top of the list.

Many critics of Google have been enhancing efforts to provide data about Google's commercial practices to the public, and the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) investigated everything from its Wi-Fi data harvesting of consumer data to its horizontal ownership and dominance of Web-based services like YouTube, AdSense, GoogleMaps, Blogger, Picasa, Android, and Feedburner. Ultimately, in 2012, the FTC determined that no consumer harm was at play in Google's

biasing of search results. Nevertheless, critics of Google and the changes implemented on its algorithm named Panda persist. These challenges include concern over Google's decision to target "low quality sites" that allegedly deprioritizes original content creators' sites in its ranking. As a result, complaints have been lodged with search engine public interest groups about the loss of placement status and Web traffic, while news and social networking platforms, along with Google's companies, have significantly moved up in Web site ranking. Google's search enhancements are designed to penalize Web sites that overoptimize in an effort to game the system and move up in rankings, particularly sites that are duplicative of others or are too general and nonspecific to be a meaningful content contribution to the Web.

Search engine bias is leading to discussions about regulation, which has already begun in the European Union. Several conditions, such as clear labeling of Web sites and ads promoted, as well as inclusion of competitive sites, are under discussion between the EU and Google. Competitors and other interested parties and scholars are proposing regulation of search engine bias in Google, among a host of other conditions, that will limit the search engine giant's monopoly control over ad placement and Web indexing practices, and include rival search engines in search result displays.

Safiya Umoja Noble
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

See Also: Google AdWords/AdSense in Campaign Strategy; Googlearchy and Politics; Search Neutrality; YouTube Politics Channel.

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Search Engine Data (Use in Social Media Campaigning)

Social media have begun to contribute to political campaigning. They are useful tools for politicians to share opinions with the general public. Politicians can also use social media to spread their messages in an effective way. Social media is used as a launching pad for election campaigning by parties through their Web sites or profiles in different social networks. Help from technological experts is the fastest and targeted way to reach many people in the right way. At the same time, they can provide simultaneous feedback from people and improve communication. A social media campaign in politics uses search engine optimization (SEO) as a strategy, looking at public opinion about the candidate, influencing people's opinions, communicating points of views about candidates, and making sure that people looking for information on issues and elections find the candidate's site.

In addition, canny media strategists have developed techniques for co-opting the seemingly neutral search engine function through the purchase of paid ads that contain significant words or phrases pertaining to their candidate or issue—"keywords" in the nontechnical sense of that

expression. The presence of these planted key words eventually improves the likelihood of that candidate or issue making it to the all-important first page of organic Google searches by the unsuspecting public, thus increasing overall awareness of the candidate or issue, and creating the perception that it/they occupy a more prominent place in public affairs or the political arena than may actually be the case. Finally, an especially troubling vulnerability of SEO "neutrality" is illustrated by the ease with which it can be subverted by a small but determined set of users who lard the Web with malicious and sometimes false information that has been linked to a person or issue who they would like to damage or destroy.

Because keyword searching has no relationship to fact checking, it is surprisingly easy to distort public image through creative SEO manipulation, as illustrated by the case in which Rick Santorum, a Republican presidential candidate, found that his name had been deliberately recast as the description of a socially provocative sexual act by a gay rights activist who he had offended through his disparaging public remarks about the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community. The ersatz word *santorum* was then pushed to the top of the Google SEO list by the sheer volume of material posted on the Internet, primarily through a dedicated Web site and blog devoted to the exercise. Although Santorum's predicament was labeled as his "Google Problem," many writers report similar things happening to him on other search engines. Social networks are a new way of communicating, where the old communication paradigm is obsolete, where the unidirectional model is replaced by a multidirectional one. Everybody can communicate and build the message, not just listen, interacting in a free way and deciding who to interact with. In 2008, Barack Obama's campaign started the networked era in political campaigning. Social networks were used as a participatory place, interacting with citizens and considering them part of the campaign.

Search Engines

Search engines are programs that search documents for specific keywords and return a list of documents where the keywords were found. When the term is used in relation to the Web, it refers to the form that searches through databases of HTML documents. A search engine is also software that uses applications to collect information about Web pages. The information collected is usually keywords or phrases that are possible indicators, including URLs, codes, and links. That information is then indexed and stored in a database. Search engines are always adjusting their algorithms, and practitioners are constantly trying new strategies and modifying their approach. The value of the site is not just the site's content, but also social media signals and site traffic patterns. Not every search engine uses the same algorithm to search. The algorithm is how the search engine evaluates the relevance of the information.

When one queries a search engine to locate information, one searches through the index that the search engine has created, not the Web. These indices are giant databases of information that is collected and stored, and subsequently searched. Different search engines produce different results because not all the indices are exactly the same. It depends on what the "spiders" find or what humans submit. It is necessary to have an SEO plan in order to reach SEO goals; these goals are constantly changing. These days, a few search engines focus on a single aspect of SEO. This means that candidates must improve their strategies more than with simple keywords or links: The strategy must be dynamic.

Social Media Campaigning

Many citizens just use social networking sites for entertainment. Even if they visit online political content, they most likely have an initial interest in politics, a party, or a certain politician, according to J. Brundidge and R. E. Rice. People use social networks in a social way, and that is a good reason to connect people with parties. Social networks do not work alone, and other media are still very important. However, since the mid-1990s, the Internet has become an important means of political campaigning, and was first extensively used in the United States. Also, these online resources have changed the way that fundraising takes place. Obama's Twitter account reports over 14 million followers. These social networks close the gap between politicians and citizens. Another example was the Internet Roh Campaign in 2002 in South Korea. Web 2.0 is a community resource. The Web is built for user-generated content. Also,

smartphones and other devices connect with these platforms and can share content and make social networking easier.

The use of social networking for campaigns requires technical expertise and specialized design knowledge. Users express their likes or dislikes to others through a debate or exchanging points of view. Social media is also useful to create political awareness among the masses. Campaigning through social media is cheap and cost effective. Recent developments in Web campaigning in the United States have confirmed the importance of social networking use to reach a core target or specific goals. The Web campaign provides insight into the wider campaign logic and future developments. It provides an unmediated and representative portrait of campaigns, and it is useful to improve marketing strategy in a more individual way, changing the approach in a dynamic way in order to build a better relationship with the people. This way of making political strategy allows increased visibility and interactivity and answers citizens quickly. It can also help people to understand political messages in an appropriate way and to perceive politicians as more concerned about their personal lives. New technologies allow a microtargeted approach to voter contact, called micromessaging. Adaptation to the online environment, rather than further centralizing parties, opens them to a more networked model of organization, and can better connect parties with social movements. Barack Obama used it to improve his grassroots strategy through volunteer participation. Volunteers were trained and monitored the campaign. Obama's strategy was also redirected by a digital hub developed created by Facebook in 2007; the site allows supporters to join the campaign using only an e-mail address.

The total signed by Election Day was over two million, with 200,000 events organized offline, and 35,000 groups created. A new era in political campaigning broke with the traditional model. This was effective because it worked as a net, in a decentralized way, and volunteers at local places connected better with citizens in ways that were not possible before the digital age. They worked autonomously. It also meant that more people could be involved to collaborate and connect in a more intimate way. Obama connected with cyberactivist movements. People felt involved with the projects and wanted to collaborate, forming groups through different interests and lifestyles, but joined by the candidate.

The report on politics and social networks affirms that 94 percent of politicians ranked the utility of social networks as "outstanding," and that 78 percent believed that the networks were an excellent way to reach citizens. However, the use of social networks as a central axis of their campaigns was ranked as "outstanding" by only 17 percent of participants, whereas 79 percent ranked them as "remarkable," according to M. Túñez. Consumers have changed, they are more critical, demand more information, and expect to have it at every hour of the day. Consumers have more expertise and know if the communication is real or false. The link is based on trust. All users are interconnected and create messages. They decide what they want to see and when, so candidates must take part in the conversation, knowing these particular aspects.

Politicians must listen to the people to build a better reputation, not just with a discourse or a program, but also to build a long relationship based in the truth and for the future, creating a real brand and valuing their comments. The way of doing that is also important, not just by creating blogs, but also with profiles and a real multidirectional model, communicating collaboratively, sharing the effort with all who take part in the campaign.

Patricia Núñez
Complutense University, Madrid

See Also: Political Parties; Search Engine Optimization; Social Networking Web Sites.

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Search Engine Optimization

Search engine optimization (SEO) is a common procedure that involves designing or modifying a Web site in order make it appear in search engine results more frequently, more prominently (i.e., closer to the top), and in response to a wider range of potential search terms. Like many Web-related phenomena, SEO techniques are constantly changing to accommodate the Web's developing technologies and exigencies. Today, according to the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project, a 10-year survey following Web use practices from 2002 to 2012, most Web users access online content by first using a search engine. Their study found that search has remained one of the most popular of all Internet activities. Accordingly, a Web site that optimizes for search ranking can draw many more visitors than one that does not. Scholars such as Laura Granka; Victor Asal and Paul Harwood; and Lucas D. Introna and Helen Nissenbaum have argued that the powers of search engines and their optimization have political stakes that Web users ignore at their peril.

As more people rely upon the Web for information, communication, entertainment, and commerce, search engines are becoming increasingly influential gatekeepers to the resources that millions of users seek online. Search engines use complex search algorithms that can grant or deny access to resources that users may not otherwise be aware exist. In this capacity, they are primary access points to the treasured resources accessible to those who use the Web; moreover, their incredible power to delimit access also influences the capital advantage that individuals, organizations, and companies with Web sites stand to gain when their sites are visited by more people.

Laura Granka has argued for more transparency on behalf of search engines and their algorithms to make the political playing field more level. For instance, Web users and designers alike might want greater exposure to information and content that search engine optimization could conceivably grant if search algorithms were made more transparent. Victor Asal and Paul Harwood have similarly called attention to the political ramifications of search engines' growing power, and the resultant higher stakes of their optimization: "Any feeling of virtual sovereignty, or perception that the Internet is an egalitarian space, is quashed when the mechanics of search engine algorithms are unraveled. Search engines are not egalitarian." From this perspective, SEO (though legal) has the capacity to privilege some Web sites over others. The process of optimizing a Web site for a search engine, therefore, can be seen as a political act.

Search Algorithms

Though specifics of search algorithms are not always made public, they generally take as input a sequence of words (search terms) and return as output links to Web pages that evaluative criteria (algorithms) indicate contain the best encapsulation of the information the user sought. Because search terms can be ambiguous, applicable to multiple subjects, or because two people looking for the same information might enter substantially different search terms to find it, search engines need to develop very particular sets of rules whereby they translate inputted search terms into proper directions to locate the requested information. Search engines operate by

first creating a database, or archive, that associates Web pages on the Internet with information. This process involves "crawling" the Web with computer programs sometimes referred to as "spiders" that visit Web pages and index the information in a database. Search engine algorithms must then identify, from a search's textual input, what exactly it should select from its archive of the Web to return as output. These algorithms must decide, from the multitude of Web pages that contain some or all of the search terms, which to rank higher and which to rank relatively lower in the output. The decisions a search engine makes in this process inevitably privilege some information at the exclusion of other information, making the effort of SEO a political struggle for inclusion.

Even slight differentiation in these choices can lead to significant differences in search results. It is not uncommon, then, for one search engine to return different results from another search engine given the same search terms. This phenomenon reflects not only a search engine's different restrictions and algorithms, but also the SEO techniques that a given Web site employs in relation to a particular search engine's parameters. Optimization techniques, therefore, often involve targeting a specific search engine's known rules for finding and ranking online content.

Commonalities

Though different search engines follow variable criteria to help them crawl the Web and identify relevant information, common elements exist across search engines, giving practitioners of SEO a basis for better optimization strategies. In particular, SEO commonly involves a variety of techniques and procedures associated with strategically changing or influencing the user-accessible content of a Web site or the parts of a Web site that a search engine sees, but users do not. As search algorithms evolve, the meaningful SEO techniques also evolve. Though it was once thought optimal to modify metatags contained in a Web site's code in order to enable a search engine to classify and categorize the site in particular ways, such as according to its keywords, title, and description, this process proved susceptible to manipulation by "spamming," so many search engine algorithms no longer privilege metatags as much as they once did. Though title and description metatags tell a search engine how a site characterizes itself (therefore these titles and descriptions still appear next to a link in actual search results), other more substantial factors are now thought to be more integral to SEO. In particular, search algorithms are thought to value, among other factors, the following properties of a Web site: freshness of content, apparent authority and trustworthiness, number and quality of inbound and outbound links (i.e., links going to and leading out from a Web site), and both connectivity with, and popularity among social networks

Web sites such as the *Huffington Post*, well known for appearing widely in search results, rose to prominence in the latter half of the 2000s by aggressively pursing these and other SEO techniques. The phenomenon of "Google bombing" is another example of how aggressive pursuit of SEO techniques can powerfully influence the results of a given search. The political ramifications of such enterprises are made especially evident in the Google bombing of former Republican U.S. Senator Rick Santorum. Angered by Santorum's public comparison of homosexuality with bestiality, gay-rights advocate Dan Savage easily used available SEO strategies to alter what results came up first in a Google search of "Santorum." Instead of calling up the conservative politician's Web site, the top-ranked Google search results offered a lewd definition of "santorum" related to a sex act.

Chris Ingraham
University of Colorado at Boulder
David Spiegel
Institute for Advanced Study

See Also: Algorithmic Authority; Findability; Googlearchy and Politics; *Huffington Post*; Search Engine Bias.

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Seattle 1999 WTO Protests

The Battle of Seattle refers to the protests that took place in Seattle against the third World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference from November 29 to December 3, 1999. Considered the first global protests between the hegemonic globalized order and the alter-globalization social movement, as well as a relevant episode on the configuration of the latter, the Seattle anti-WTO protests are also an example of a social movement's appropriation of information and communication technology for activism. From the first call for the protests, information and communication technologies were widely used by participating organizations for planning, organizing, articulating, and making it visible.

The wide repertoire of cyber-activist strategies and Web-based actions put in practice by organizers and protesters included the broadened use of e-mail, alternative and counterinformative Web sites, discussion boards, virtual sit-ins, and shadow/fake/spoof sites. The articulation of offline and online actions during the Battle of Seattle explains why it is highlighted as a foundational event when analyzing how the Internet has influenced social movements' tactics and actions.

According to different sources, between 50,000 and 100,000 people participated in the protests. On the opening day of the meeting, tens of thousands of protesters took over downtown Seattle, occupying the streets. They intended to shut down the conference by surrounding the WTO conference site, forming human barricades to block traffic, and controlling street intersections so that delegates could not cross from their hotels to the convention center. Participants displayed a wide variety of artistic practices, including dancing, playing music, drumming, creating giant puppets, costumes, street theater, huge balloons, and large banners with anti-WTO messages.

The Internet was used as a permanent source of information about the situation on the streets and police tactics, updated by protesters who were onsite and connected to the Web, and shared through e-mail, networks, or alternative Web sites. At the same time, specifically Web-based actions were developed. Thousands of e-mails requesting information were sent by activists to the WTO site, causing the crash of its server, and a virtual sit-in was organized. A virtual sit-in consists of simultaneous, continuous access to a specific Web site by many users, aiming to generate a huge amount of traffic on the site, and discouraging people from accessing it because of its slow connection response. From November 30 to December 3, it is estimated that more than 450,000 people inundated the WTO site, making the WTO's server unavailable for certain periods and the conference server intermittently very slow.

Although nonviolent action predominated, some individuals, in a formation known as Black Bloc, engaged in property destruction and acts of vandalism, breaking corporate chain-store windows, vandalizing storefronts, and painting graffiti at targeted businesses. This produced confrontations between protesters and the police, who charged against the protesters, shooting rubber bullets and pepper spray at the crowd and driving people out with volleys of tear gas. Hundreds of people were arrested, the city declared a state of emergency in downtown Seattle, and it set up a restricted access zone that protesters called a "no protest" zone, in what they considered a suspension of the basic rights of free speech and assembly. Publicized by worldwide media coverage, city

Police use pepper spray on the crowd during the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference protests in Seattle, Washington, on November 30, 1999. The Seattle anti-WTO protests were an early example of a social movement using information and communication technologies by employing e-mails, alternative and counterinformative Web sites, discussion boards, virtual sit-ins, and shadow/fake/spoof sites to organize their activism.

officials and police were criticized for mishandling the protests and for being unprepared for it.

Despite the declaration of the state of emergency, activists continued to engage in manifestations throughout the week, defying the restrictions until December 3, when the WTO meeting ended in failure because of the disagreement of representatives from undeveloped countries and small economies, who refused to be marginalized from the decision-making processes. Some activists and analysts have underlined the role of the protests in bolstering third-world representatives, who were also under pressure from social movements in their home countries.

Alternative and Shadow/Fake Sites

Contesting the corporate media coverage, which was criticized because of its emphasis on the violent acts of the Black Bloc, protesters created alternative Web sites, or what some authors have named the "shadow media." Particularly important sites included WTOWatch.org and the Independent Media Center (IMC), or Indymedia, created during the Seattle protests. Indymedia became a large global alternative network, with almost 200 local sites today. Based in a grassroots "be the media" model of journalism and an open publishing system, the IMC broadcast real-time and multimedia coverage (with video, audio, text, and photos).

The cyberactivist repertoire also included the creation of shadow or fake Web sites. Techniques such as "culture jamming," the alteration or parody of corporate advertisements through the use of artistic techniques such as collage, appropriation, humor, or irony, were used to spoof or cloak sites. The imitation of original Web sites was created by using a URL so close to the site's real address that it could be confused with the original one, or by producing a graphically identical copy of it, but with different content. Usually used for imitating financial institutions or commercial sites, these false Web sites are considered a very effective practice in order to generate confusion or uncertainty among Internet users looking for the official Web site.

When used by fraudsters, a fake Web site can obtain a victim's password or other personal data; if adopted for political or activist purposes—cloning, for instance, the sites of institutions,

multinational corporations, or politicians—then its aim would be to parody, disqualify, or provoke the original site's owners. There is a continuity among the use of costumes and puppets in street protests and the creation of fake or spoof Web sites on the Internet because in both cases, there is a particularly ironic and creative dimension.

During the Battle of Seattle, a shadow site was created on the basis of the official WTO Web site design. Named after the organization's predecessor, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the site (http://www.gatt.org) was set up by the group ®™ark (pronounced "artmark") in collaboration with other activists known as The Yes Men. Its content was completely different from that of the original site, and it included the announcement of the cancellation of the opening ceremony of the conference. Whereas the WTO official site used the logo of the conference as a hyperlink to the official conference Web site, the fake one linked it to anti-WTO material. On its homepage, the spoof site included imitation stories and quotations from WTO official, with ironic or cynical "helpful" commentaries. It even warned about a "fake WTO Web site" that was misleading the public, linking to the original WTO site.

Cyberactivists created another spoof site, replying to the official one (http://www.wtoseattle.org) launched by the Seattle WTO official host committee for offering live casts of the sessions and trade symposiums held as part of the meeting. Using an identical, but inverted URL (http://www.seattlewto.org), the fake site featured information on protests and the negative consequences of trade globalization. The WTO reacted angrily, releasing a press statement that deplored these practices, qualifying it as illegal and unfair, and denouncing that it interfered with the public's right to gain access to WTO information.

Anti-WTO fake sites created during the Seattle protests became a real challenge to the Web visibility of the official site: Not only Internet users widely accessed the fake Web site, but even some search engines directed users to it, rather than to the official one, because of its numerous references to the WTO. Besides this, some approaches underlined that WTO's supposed transparency was put into question, and its reaction produced great attention from media coverage to the groups behind the fake site.

Generally, the effectiveness of a fake site is associated with its appearance and quality because it will increase a user's trust, but when used as a cyberactivist tactic, its successfulness is difficult to evaluate. Colonization of domain names (of institutions, companies, or politicians), the irritation produced targeted institutions or politicians, the cost in time and money of prosecuting the site's maker, the global visibility of the action, and the use of satire and irony to advertise claims and denouncements are pointed out as some relevant effects of shadow sites as a cyberactivist tactic. At the same time, this practice sets some legal challenges. Property laws are questioned, and its unclear points are exploited through the appropriation of domain names, which are purchased by activist groups to launch spoof sites.

The use of irony and playing with the ambiguity between authenticity and simulacrum that characterize fake Web sites are also coherent with postmodern principles and symbolic forms of resistance, as well as with the global and virtual scenario of the World Wide Web. While mainstream opinions emphasize a negative vision of this, referring to it as a "hoax" or "fraud," an alternative perspective argues that this ironic visibility and ambiguous effect become central for the political message that motivates this cyberactivist action and the production of the cultural profit it aims to cause, which depends on reaching the widest potential audience, as well as on computer skills and the creative techniques used. In this sense, shadow or fake sites created during the Battle of Seattle are considered part of the relevant contribution made by the significant use of information communication technology during the protests.

Lázaro M. Bacallao-Pino
CH-CIALC, National Autonomous University of Mexico

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Demonstrations, Organizing; Internet Gathering; Social Media, Alternatives to Commercial.

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Second Life

Second Life is an online virtual world created by Linden Lab and launched in June 2003. It was intended as a space of limitless possibility enabled by virtual reality, informed by the libertarian "Californian" ideology that imagines cyberspace as a place of stateless personal freedom. User avatars (or "alts") can be remade in ways that are only restricted by the imagination of users and the technical limitations of Second Life. The environments and objects that populate Second Life are created not by Linden Lab, but by Second Life's users. Second Life has an economy and a currency. Users are allowed to produce and sell commodities in a basic market economy.

The libertarian ideology and free-market economy of Second Life, combined with its massive increase in global popularity in the mid-2000s, consequentially led to a number of political issues regarding identity, economy, and governance in virtual worlds as "real world" laws and economies increasingly intertwined with the regulation of online media. While Second Life is no longer as prominent as it once was, the debates that it inspired are still essential for understanding the political and legal challenges confronting social media and virtual worlds.

Identity Politics and Sex in Second Life

Because Second Life is based around avatars, users possess some level of anonymity, permitting experimentation with the possibilities of identity. Users who may be disabled, for instance, can perform selves that may escape the prejudices they encounter in real life. The possibilities for identity in Second Life include the creation of genitalia for avatars and scripted animations that represent sex. These enable users to explore their sexuality in a way that may be otherwise prohibited in their lives beyond the virtual, engaging in bondage, domination, and sado-masochism (BDSM), prostitution, and virtual pedophilia (or "age play"). Sexual experimentation in Second Life is one of its most controversial aspects.

What may be legal to view in one country may be a criminal offense in another. Just who is engaging in sexual activity online, and the legality of their behavior, is unclear given the anonymous nature of avatars and the "virtuality" of online interaction. As Linden Lab has acquiesced to a number of governmental requests to regulate sex, users have often found identities and behaviors stigmatized through governmental, legal, and cultural norms likewise stigmatized online.

Economics of Second Life

Second Life, unlike many other virtual worlds, has actively encouraged economic activity from its inception, instituting a currency, the "linden dollar," that is easily exchanged with U.S. dollars. Capitalism is integrated into Second Life through the licensing of land and the exchange of digital objects and services. While access to Second Life is free, virtual labor, production, and consumption are often essential parts of the Second Life experience. Users regularly find employment online in occupations such as fashion design, land speculation, or sex work.

As with sex, there are legal and political implications that arise from Second Life's economy. In 2006, over $1 million was reportedly exchanged in Second Life each day. One user claimed to possess the equivalent of $1 million in digital assets. At least 58 users were making more than $60,000 per year. The ability to work full-time online leads to concerns about taxation and regulation. Because users of Second Life are geographically dispersed, it becomes difficult to identify how and where this economic activity should be regulated. While Second Life collects Value Added Tax from its users who live in the European Union, there are also methods that users employ to avoid regulation from governments beyond the virtual world.

These questions of economic regulation are made even more complex considering how Linden Lab, through its terms of service, effectively claims ownership of everything that exists within Second Life. While personal liberty and private property are often assumed by Second Life's users, any violation of the terms of service can result in one being banned without any way to access digital assets. Likewise, there are no technical limitations to theft or unauthorized copying in Second Life because of the nature of digital commodities. This point was exemplified by the "CopyBot Affair," in which a program produced endless copies of objects. While users assume ownership of their intellectual property, they have found that they are powerless to defend their private property from digital theft.

Campaigns, Protest, and Second Life

At the height of its popularity, Second Life attracted the attention of political campaigns, with candidates establishing official or unofficial campaign centers there. Consequentially, Second Life has also been a space for conflict between politically engaged digital citizens. Notably, Second Life was home to a riot between supporters of French politician Jean-Marie Le Pen and others in Second Life who organized to protest the racist policies of Le Pen's party.

Other forms of protest in Second Life have met with resistance from Linden Lab, especially users' criticism of Linden Lab and their management of the virtual world. As Second Life ostensibly has no government, dispute resolution and "law enforcement" are often assumed by ad hoc groups of particularly engaged users. However, Linden Lab still serves as a governing body that resolves disputes through an often arbitrary application of rules. Because of the libertarian beliefs of users and the supposed libertarian mission of Second Life in general, this haphazard form of online governance, combined with the sporadic incorporation of regulations from national governments, opens up questions about the relationship between national governments, Internet corporate governance, and the rights and regulation of users and avatars.

Grant David Bollmer
Massey University

See Also: Avatars; Cloud Protesting; Cyberculture; Digital Citizen; Identity Politics; Social Networking Web Sites.

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Secondhand Political Engagement

In the last decade, there have been important shifts in the way that the component agencies of many national political systems go about the business of producing political publicity. Scholars L. H. Hoffman and T. L. Thomson have posited that political efficacy would positively mediate the relationship between TV viewing and civic participation, while political cynicism would negatively mediate this relationship, and internal political efficacy did indeed mediate the relationship between late-night television comedy viewing and civic participation, as well as local television news viewing and civic participation.

Traditional and social media are also good examples of firsthand and secondhand information: Rather than secondhand narratives, television provides a moving visual panorama of political events, and newspapers primarily work through the written reports of political events produced by journalists, with politicians' words featured at points, but necessarily secondhand. Thus, one can say that the majority of our information is secondhand, and is written with a very

specific ideological bias. For example, the fact that a large proportion of Latin Americans have never traveled to the United States suggests that most of their opinions may be based upon the secondhand information they get from the news about the United States, and not from firsthand information from having spent time in the United States.

People in markets with more political ads and candidate appearances are more likely to discuss election-relevant topics with other people and build their knowledge base. They are more likely to gain political knowledge from exchanging secondhand campaign information with other people. The relationship between political discussion and knowledge is strengthened in a market with more televised ads and candidate visits than in places with fewer ads and visits: Visual evidence reaches audiences faster than verbal information. Instead of secondhand narratives, television offers visuals of political events; while radio removed the prerequisite of literacy, television reduced the importance of language. While addressing audience members as individuals in their own homes, and achieving a new level of intimacy and individuality in the political relationship, contemporary television systems have added visual performance to this development, making television, in some respects, a theater of political performance, which is simultaneously a theatre of voices, faces, bodies, and actions.

Scholar T. M. Holbrook proposes that although campaigns influence public opinion, the process that underlies this influence remains somewhat a mystery, and the most reasonable explanation for campaign effects is that campaigns influence public opinion by generating persuasive information—information that, once acquired, has the potential to move the electorate in one direction or the other. It is reasonable to believe that candidates are consistent across different venues in the themes they stress, but there is no guarantee that they are. In general, to examine the effects of a campaign, one needs a more comprehensive view.

One may gather estimates of the nature of the campaign from newspaper accounts, such as descriptions of political advertisements broadcast by different candidates, and reports of a wide variety of other campaign activities. All of that is secondhand, relying on the judgments of political reporters. Because the majority of people are not personally involved in politics, most of what individuals know about the political environment comes via the mass media; in this way, the political world comes to people as a secondhand reality, helping to form not only individuals' first political cognitions, but changing them over time, Hoffman and Thomson note. People relate more profoundly to, and are more apt to remember, vivid images rather than human speech, no matter how eloquent or accessible.

Perhaps more importantly, even though political socialization begins in preschool years, understanding of abstract political issues is not likely to occur until adolescence, when young people are more cognitively developed. Because adolescents are able to think more abstractly and less egocentrically, their potential for understanding politics and news programming is greatly increased over that of younger children.

Citizens' responses to satisfaction surveys are disproportionately influenced by a small number of "visible" services, perhaps supplemented by secondhand evidence from media reports; however, insofar as making sense of service improvement requires people to interpret and negotiate a secondhand range of information—expert, social, and mass media, as well as personal experience—different patterns of response between social groups are to be expected, with some feeling better informed and others feeling further alienated, both by the difficulties of understanding the information, and ambiguity or powerlessness in knowing what to do with it, Hoffman and Thomson note.

They also state that social scientists in the last half century have become increasingly interested in what motivates and socializes people into becoming active citizens of a democracy, and that much of this interest stems from observations about the decline in key indicators of an active citizenry, including behaviors such as voting and other forms of political participation, as well as affective dimensions such as confidence in government and trust. For instance, while social trust belongs to the private sphere, reserved for attitudes toward individuals, and is a feature of personal relations based upon firsthand experience and knowledge, confidence belongs to the public,

political sphere and is built upon secondhand sources, particularly the mass media.

Informed Voters

Access to truthful and valuable information can be limited by lack of accuracy in the media. Sensationalism and shock value are also common components of newspaper front pages or evening news reports; for this reason, it is easy for people to draw conclusions about others when their information about others is secondhand or incomplete. While there is a tendency to assume that social and political trust are different sides of the same coin, they are logically different, and because the former is built on personal knowledge, political trust is built on secondhand sources, for example, the mass media. Social trust belongs to the private sphere and is a feature of personal relations based upon firsthand experience and knowledge; political trust belongs to the public, political sphere and is built upon secondhand sources, particularly the mass media.

While voters can certainly pick up information about political debates via the mass media and from interpersonal communications, it should be expected that debates are more useful sources of information to those who actually watch them than to those who pick up the information secondhand, Holbrook notes. He also states that those who are most directly exposed to political information are the most likely to benefit from the information, highlighting the importance of political engagement and the problem inherent in efforts to share political information with the masses; simply put, even for high-visibility events such as debates, the learning benefits accrue most directly to those who are already politically engaged.

Uninformed and disengaged voters—those who could potentially benefit the most from campaign information—are not sufficiently exposed to the political messages, and therefore do not gain as much information from the campaign as the politically engaged. Democracy assumes that its citizens have enthusiasm and organization to have an effect on society through established political processes. Hoffman and Thomson propose that democracy is not exactly a natural state of being; instead, it consists of habits and competencies that require skills that must be acquired, and these skills are obtained (or, arguably, not obtained in many cases) through the primary socializing agents of school, family, and the media.

Jaime Raúl Seixas Fonseca
Technical University of Lisbon

See Also: Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Communication; Constituencies, Social Media Influence on; Digerati; Information Abundance; News Media; Social Computing and Social Information Processing.

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Selective Exposure

The study of selective exposure to information—defined as a media choice behavior, whereby individuals tend to favor information that confirms pre-existing attitudes and beliefs while avoiding contradictory information—is an important area of study in media and communication research. Historically, the idea that individuals choose to attend to information that resonates with their pre-existing attitudes and beliefs, or avoid inconsistent information, has been explained primarily in terms of Leon Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory. According to this theory, cognitive discomfort or dissonance arises when an individual experiences cognitions that conflict with each other. By extension, in order to preempt or alleviate cognitive dissonance, individuals are

motivated to seek out agreeable information and avoid information that is incongruent with established attitudes and beliefs. When applied to a political information context, this means that individuals are motivated to seek out information that is congruent with or confirms their political and/or ideological attitudes and beliefs while avoiding conflicting information. This pattern is what has led some communication scholars to conclude that the media often serve to reinforce, rather than change one's beliefs.

Trends in Selective Exposure in Online Environments

While the study of selective exposure has been a staple of mass communication research for decades, it has recently seen renewed interest because of the ever-growing trend in online news consumption. The Pew Research Center reports that more Americans now turn to the Internet for regular news consumption than newspapers and radio. This new pattern of news consumption raises some important questions concerning the kinds of content that users are exposed to. Not only has the Internet fostered the proliferation of information sources, but by many accounts, it has further spurred the rise of increasingly partisan sources. In order to navigate vast bodies of information encountered on the Internet, online users are forced to select specific content and sift out unwanted information. Online news consumption depends on users' self-directed content selection.

For these reasons, some scholars argue that the Internet fosters environments conducive to the pursuit of content that suits users' informational needs, and many fear, their pre-existing political attitudes and beliefs. These environments, scholars argue, are facilitated by the filtering affordances embedded in a wide array of Web interfaces (from search engines to portals to blogs), and serve to exacerbate the well-documented human tendency toward selective exposure to political information.

Several studies have empirically documented evidence of selective exposure or ideological filtering in media use: Conservatives and liberals alike have been shown to favor information sources and content that resonate with their pre-existing ideological attitudes and beliefs. This preference is manifest in either selecting partisan news sources when the source is salient, or in choosing to attend to attitude-consistent political messages when the news source is not salient. For example, in a study examining users' selective exposure to online news sources, findings indicated that users' political orientation was an important driver of news selection and avoidance. Specifically, Republicans showed a strong tendency toward selecting traditionally conservative news sources (e.g., Fox News), while Democrats showed a propensity toward avoiding such sources. Likewise, a study examining users' exposure patterns to attitude-consistent or counter-attitudinal news stories found that users preferred attitude-consistent over counter-attitudinal stories, which ultimately reinforced their political self-concept (i.e., personal allegiance to a political ideology).

In contrast, another body of research paints a more complex and nuanced picture of selective exposure and avoidance patterns. Most notably, a study conducted by Pew Internet Research as part of the American Life Project found evidence that, at least in an electoral context, Internet users appear to exhibit greater exposure to political information, and do not appear to discriminate between agreeable information and content that is in conflict with their pre-existing attitudes and beliefs. Research has further shown that while Internet users might actually favor opinion-reinforcing political information, they do not necessarily avoid conflicting information. This particular trend was recently corroborated in the context of Twitter interactions, with some studies suggesting that while Twitter users are more likely to engage in information exchanges with others who share their political views, they are also actively engaged with users whose views are at odds with their views.

These inconsistent findings may be at least partly because of factors like individual differences and type of online environments, which are not always taken into account. First, users who feel strongly about a particular issue show generally high levels of political interest, or have strong affiliations to a political party/ideology appear to in fact welcome exposure to information that challenges their perspective. These individuals see value in attending to opposing viewpoints, likely because they see it as an opportunity to become more grounded in their position, or to develop

more effective counterarguments. Next, research suggests that while selective exposure and avoidance may be the norm in political forums, where discussing politics is a central focus, they are not commonly observed in online environments where political topics are incidental (e.g., forums and discussion groups on more general topics). This particular trend is apparent in early CMC research, showing evidence for political conversation involving diverse viewpoints and perspectives among Usenet, real-time chat, and message board users, in particular, and by more recent findings indicating that online users have been shown to be more likely to engage in selective exposure, particularly when it comes to highly partisan information sources like blogs and niche political Web sites.

Last, the picture becomes even more complex in the context of exposure to political news via social media. Recent selective exposure theorizing posits that social endorsements—a distinct feature of many social media outlets—are poised to fundamentally reshape the way that news is consumed and shared on the Internet. For example, a recent study showed that social endorsements were a much stronger predictor of news selection than partisan sources, such that the mere presence of social endorsements reduced partisan selectivity to insignificant levels. To the extent that individual online social networks display a certain degree of political heterogeneity, social media shows notable promise in diversifying individuals' exposure to political news and information.

Effects of Selective Exposure

While the vast majority of selective exposure research has sought to document exposure and avoidance patterns, a less extensive but important body of research has focused on examining the effects that selective exposure and avoidance might have on the political system. An early, dire warning in this arena was issued by Sunstein in his seminal book *Republic.com,* where he argued that the greater opportunity for selective exposure to information on the Internet would likely result in the emergence of "echo chambers," and ultimately extremism and polarization. Sunstein's echo chamber phenomenon refers to online environments where people congregate with others whose political attitudes and opinions mirror their own. These environments, he further suggests, are a breeding ground for group polarization and extremism. Specifically, as a result of within-group discussion, individuals are likely to hold even stronger views than the ones they started with, and when these views are problematic, they are likely to manifest increasing hatred toward those espousing contrary beliefs.

Unlike the debate over the prevalence of selective exposure and avoidance, where the jury is still out, there is more definitive consensus regarding the outcomes of partisan selectivity. There is little disagreement that selective exposure and avoidance have undesirable consequences for a well-functioning democratic political system. Healthy democracies thrive on political talk and discussion—not only of the within-group, homogenous kind, but of the cross-ideological and heterogeneous sort as well.

Available empirical support confirms that selective exposure to information in online and social media environments encourages within-group political discussion, ultimately leading to increased attitude polarization and extremity. However, despite the robust pattern attributing polarization and extremity to selective exposure and avoidance in this research, the direction of this pattern is not always clear. There is at least one study showing evidence that political polarization drives selective exposure as much as the reverse.

Carmen Stavrositu
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

See Also: Echo Chamber Effect; Hate Speech, Online and Social Media; Homophily; Polarization, Political.

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Sentiment Analysis

Customers today have to choose commodities that meet both their current needs and possible needs among a plethora of products and services available on the market. Customer preference, which can be defined as the customer's choice of products or services, covers all activities related to the selection of one offer over another. Data on customer preference is important for organizations because possessing information on these preferences may help in predicting the likelihood of forming long-term relationships between companies and customers, and consequently, the chance that customers may select the company's product when a specific need arises.

There are various factors determining customer preference. They can be divided into ones strictly related to the product or service characteristics, and ones connected with the broadly understood product or service environment. When the product or service is taken into account, such issues as its physical characteristics (e.g., dimensions, colors, or shape), country of origin, functions, and price can be enumerated as the key factors shaping customer preference. It should be also mentioned that these qualities are not fixed, and their salience and strength depend on other issues. For example, price is often not the most important determinant in the case of selecting luxury products.

As far as the country of origin is concerned, the type of good determines the positive and negative associations regarding national producers. For example, some geographical places and their factories are associated with expertise in tailoring clothes, whereas other countries are said to create and manufacture the most reliable vehicles. It should be stated, however, that positive connotations can be quickly destroyed by some negative instances, both natural and man-made types, such as nuclear catastrophes, violation of human rights, negligence in production, and so on. In this case, proper crisis communication with stakeholders may stimulate the decreasing interest of customers in some offers. Informal communicative exchanges, especially those including such elements as rumor and gossip, can lead to the immediate fall of customers' interest in the product or service.

In a commodity setting, the determinants can be divided into micro (customer), meso (organization), and macro (business environment) factors. As far as the buyer dimension is concerned, such issues as income, personal needs, family status, ethnic origin, and national culture, among others, may determine the selection of products and services.

Organizational Aspect

In the organizational sphere, customer preference depends on one's satisfaction regarding the commodity offered by the company. It entails both the immediate content, connected with the postpurchase experience, as well as overall satisfaction. Customers may be satisfied with an organization's employees and its processes, as well as its products or services. The other important notion is trust because clients are likely to choose the companies that they have confidence in. The other factor is a customer's commitment to the organization. This can be revealed through personal identification with the organization, psychological attachment, and a feeling of belonging to a loyal and proud clientele. The level of trust and its influence on the choice of products or services are related to the domain or business that the organization represents. Thus, the role of trust will be higher in such industries as food or health because users ascribe more importance to a company's image and its past behaviors prior to their decision to buy a food product or health service than in the case of selecting many other types of products. Thus, companies operating in industries dealing with safety are more likely to be selected by taking the trust factor into account.

Analyzing the physical sphere of organizational life, such issues as office décor and artifacts determine customer preference. When the interior of an organizational space enhances positive emotions among potential customers, they are more likely to opt for the commodities or services offered by this organization.

Moreover, being recognized on the market is related to branding, and such issues as brand awareness and brand loyalty determine the selection of products or services. Customers do not only select brands they know well, but they are also likely to pay more for branded products and services. One of the reasons is that they have positive

expectations regarding several characteristics of the branded product or service, and consequently, they select the well-known commodity, even if it costs more than the competitive, unknown product. In the macro sphere, economic, political, and social situations on the national and international level shape customer preferences. For example, in times of crisis, some people do not purchase luxurious products or services, or they limit the consumption of other goods.

Customer Preference

Customer preference can also be studied by dividing one's choices into homophilous and heterophilous preferences. Homophilous preferences are related to the need to purchase similar articles to the ones selected and used by those people one lives or works with. On the other hand, some purchases are driven by heterophilous choices, since customers opt for products or services that can make them different, outstanding, or unique.

Customer preference can be examined by taking the notion of relationship into account. In the case of transactional exchanges, they involve small investment on both sides, and the relations are mainly economic. Thus, the relations may conflict because each side wants to achieve their aims. On the contrary, relational exchanges determine long-term and noneconomic exchanges between buyers and sellers.

The type of relations is determined by several factors. One is industry structure, since the attitude to contacts depends on customer and supplier concentration. Thus, the industries characterized by highly concentrated customer industries and fragmented supplier industries favor relational exchanges. Second, the approach to decision making in the organization depends on the type of department involved in decision processes. For example, if specifications are top priority, then the technological and engineering departments are dominant in the purchasing activities conducted by customers. Third, organizational structure, power relations, attitude to risk, and the cooperation between departments also determine the type of created relations. Moreover, the characteristics of purchases determine the type of established relationships. The goods that require postsale purchase are likely to create relational exchanges. The type of exchange selected is also connected with transaction costs. Thus, both buyers and sellers opt for the exchanges that create rather low costs and relatively high returns.

In the methodological aspect, customer's selection often follows the facets of self-congruity theory. Thus, customers select products or services that are congruent with their system of values and their personal characteristics. The customer's attitude, and involvement in family and work, will determine his or her selection of products. Customer preferences can also be studied through the network perspective. Thus, the way customers choose and buy is determined by various grids and lattices, such as communication, innovation, or knowledge networks, present both on the side of the buyer and the customer. Thus, the role and strength of corporate networks and their influence on customer service determine the prospect's selection and purchase.

Obtaining Data

In the practice of obtaining data on customer preference, at least two methods can be enumerated. In the two-factors-at-a-time (or tradeoff) approach, customers are asked to display their preferences by taking a pair of attributes into account, for example by selecting the most and the least preferred alternative. In the full-profile approach, customers are requested to order their choices by ranking all the provided options. The method is selected depending on, among others, which parameters are interesting for market researchers, how many alternatives are compared, and which market sector is investigated.

Sentiment analysis offers the possibility to study attitude, by judging it as positive, negative, or neutral. Sentiment analysis is also important in modern social media, since people use blogs, discussion forums, and tweets to express their emotions, preferences, opinions, and feelings.

Magdalena Bielenia-Grajewska
University of Gdansk

See Also: Data Mining; Forecasting Elections; Inferring Sentiment; Proxy Measurement.

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Sexting

In American politics, there has not been much of a divergence between public and private affairs for elected officials since the mid-1970s, when Watergate and Vietnam combined to erode public trust while spurring investigative journalism. Yet, there is a long history of American fascination with the sex lives of politicians. Presidentially, there are volumes examining, alleged love letters from George Washington to his mistress, Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings, Franklin Roosevelt dying in the arms of another woman, John Kennedy's stable of affairs, Jimmy Carter's lusting in his heart, and Bill Clinton's cigar exploits with Monica Lewinsky. Outside of the White House, congressional leaders have drawn national attention for many of the same exploits. Consider cases like that of Wilbur Mills (who chased the Argentinian Firecracker into the Tidal Basin), or Wayne Hays (whose lover Elizabeth Ray publicly claimed to be unable to type, file, or answer the phone, despite remaining on the congressional payroll). Yet, today there is a new era of sex scandal wreaking havoc on the public sphere because of the advent and development of social media. The most widely known violator has been New York Congressman Anthony Weiner.

Anthony Weiner

While new technology brings with it vast potential for altering lifestyles for the better, it still produces negative externalities. While cell phones, Twitter, Facebook, and other sites have opened the doors for increased communication within society, they have also led to the Craigslist killer, the birth of *To Catch a Predator,* and pre-teens charged as sex offenders for distributing child pornography . . . of themselves. Without cell phones and social media, the world would not know what sexting is. One-quarter of American adults admit to sexting. This activity, which centers on the exchange of sexually explicit photographs and/or messages via social networks, text messages, and e-mail, has begun to have political ramifications in recent years.

Anthony Weiner became a prominent elected official in 2011, when he utilized Twitter to send a sexual photograph to a young woman from Seattle. When claims were first made that the photograph was sent by Weiner, he said that his account had been hacked and that he had not taken or sent the picture. However, after a few days of denial, he came clean and admitted to the error in judgment. Further, he acknowledged that this was not the first time that he had distributed explicit messages or photographs (including numerous times after his marriage). He stated that there was never a physical relationship with any of the online women. While he initially fought off calls seeking his resignation, he ultimately resigned on June 23, 2011.

Weiner's Mayoral Candidacy

After resigning from Congress, Weiner still had the itch for politics. As a result, in May 2013, he threw his hat into the ring to replace term-limited New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. In the beginning, Weiner was the odds-on-favorite to win the Democratic nomination over the likes of Bill de Blasio and Christine Quinn. But

then America learned about Carlos Danger. Since leaving Congress, Weiner had continued sexting relationships with three women using the alias Carlos Danger. Once the information became public, Weiner suffered immediate drops in the polls (topping out at well over a 20 point swing). In the end, Weiner's inability to control his urges cost him his political future as he finished fifth in the Democratic primary.

Even worse was the fact that his final vote count showed less than 5 percent of the Democratic electorate supporting him. This should not have been particularly surprising to Weiner, however, since there had been frequent calls for him to withdraw during the lead-up to election day in the city.

Weiner's legacy will not be for any positive political influence. Instead, he will be forever remembered for utilizing poor judgment and not correctly navigating social media when he made the photograph retrievable by individuals other than the intended recipient. The Weiner scandal has opened the doors to new questions about what constitutes sex (after all, Weiner did more than Carter's lusting in one's heart, but less than the activities of Clinton), and further questions sthe blurring line between public and private life for politicians.

Other Examples

Weiner is not alone in his transgressions. State and local officials across the country have experienced similar incidents. In some cases, a misunderstanding of the technology posed the problem. In others, jilted lovers ran to the press when denied access. Examples of public officials finding themselves in trouble because of poor decision making related to sexually explicit photographs or messages include a high school principal and a student, an elected judge and his subordinate, a high school English teacher and a student, and Senator John Ensign (although in his case, sexting was not the most severe of the moral transgressions).

There are common threads that help to categorize the different types of sexting incidents. The first thread focuses on a lack of understanding of how the technology works. On Twitter, for example, there is a difference between a direct message and a tweet. Pictures sent via cell phone can be saved and redistributed. The second thread is the arrogance held by public officials. Personalities like that of Anthony Weiner seem to be unwilling to accept that their actions could negatively affect their careers. It may be that they view themselves as made of Teflon. The third thread is an understanding of the damage that sex scandals can have on political reputations. There is an acute awareness that affairs can ruin reputations, but prior to Anthony Weiner, sexting seemed a safe alternative.

Conclusion

Given the political fallout for Anthony Weiner, there are some general guidelines that elected officials should know before choosing to partake in any form of sexting. Information placed on the Internet will be discovered. As with any other sexual activity, sexting will be viewed far more negatively if the public official is married. Sexting is viewed just as negatively as having an actual affair. It is best to not discuss or share any sexts or photographs. In terms of security, locking the phone, along with taking extra care in assuring that it never gets misplaced, is key.

Technology is beginning to catch up with sexting in a way that could protect politicians. Safe Sexting is an app by MountainDev that allows the sender to place boxes over explicit portions of photographs. However, this would not necessarily protect elected officials. It makes the action less explicit, but does not remove the underlying offense, which is most problematic within the American public. IDelete and SnapChat are two apps that permit the sender of photographs to determine how long the picture sent can be viewed. Further, iDelete actually prevents the receiver from taking a screenshot of the image on their device. Such tools could protect officials who continue to partake in sexting.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Social Media Career Wreckers; Twitter; Weiner, Anthony.

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Shadow Site

See Flog

Shirky Principle, The

In an April 2010 blog post, the founding executive editor of *Wired* magazine, Kevin Kelly, coined the "Shirky principle." Kelly highlighted the following quote from media scholar Clay Shirky: "Institutions will try to preserve the problem to which they are the solution." This principle is embedded within Shirky's wider arguments related to social media and politics, which promote the potential of social media tools for positive social and political change by emphasizing the opportunities that designers can offer to users who are increasingly willing to experiment, innovate, and participate as amateurs. The Shirky principle offers explanatory power for the reaction by traditional institutions to new social media ventures, as well as a cautionary note: By refusing to acknowledge and adapt to the new social and technological dynamics of the current era, institutions risk restricting the potential for social experimentation and innovation that can be enabled through new social media tools.

The Shirky principle has many implications for the world of 21st-century politics, in which both new and old communications and organizational structures must exist side-by-side and sometimes compete with each other. Shirky himself has applied this principle to a wide variety of "institutions," including television organizations, bus companies, and governments.

The "solutions" relate to the product or service that an institution provides and tends to be the basis upon which their existence and continued survival rests. In the case of the institutions just mentioned, solutions can include videos as a form of entertainment, transportation that aids commuting, and regulations that seek to regain social order, particularly during a time of social change. Shirky's principle draws attention to the fact that institutions end up exacerbating (or at least sustaining) the problems that they aim to solve as a result of a misunderstanding of the underlying problem or desire to defend their market share by squashing competitive institutions that have developed new solutions. While this principle can be applied to a variety of contexts and time periods, Shirky is mainly interested in technology (and social media in particular), which is reflected in the allegation that many institutions have not adapted to shifting social and technological contexts. Instead, they rely on flawed assumptions that are embedded in traditional or "old" ways of thinking and operating, and therefore they cannot even conceptualize new approaches to solving problems. Shirky believes that this inflexibility is extremely problematic and impedes the integration of technology into society.

Examples

Shirky offers the example of the British Gin Craze of the early to mid-1700s that came about in conjunction with increased industrialization and the reorganization of urban centers due to the influx of many new workers. The British Parliament sought to solve the problem of dramatic social change by focusing on the production and consumption of gin. "Gin consumption was treated as the problem to be solved, when in fact it was a reaction to the real problem—dramatic social change and the inability of older civic models to adapt." Thirty years of legislative attempts to solve the problem of gin consumption were ultimately unsuccessful, since they targeted the wrong problem and were based on assumptions that were out of touch with

changing social realities. Eventually, the integration of new social structures that accommodated the density of the population (e.g., aid societies, coffeehouses, and restaurants) helped mitigate the problems associated with this dramatic social change, and in doing so helped mitigate the underlying desires for excessive gin consumption. New ways of thinking were required in order to reimagine the problem of increased population density, to the point of conceiving of it as an opportunity.

Another example Shirky draws on is the social media response to the problem of organizing carpooling between strangers. The wider, underlying problem in this situation is commuting. Individual-based solutions (each person owning and driving a car) are not viable, and instead merely exacerbate the overall problem. Shirky argues that the key is to reconceptualize the problem. Too many cars can be seen as an opportunity if the goal is to offer an aggregate solution involving cooperation and coordination. A site like PickupPal.com offers a service that matches drivers with passengers, considering complementary routes, dates, and times while allowing users to negotiate prices and maintain privacy.

Despite this successful venture, a traditional institution—in this case, an Ontario bus company called Trentway-Wagar—stepped in, taking action that effectively sought to preserve the very same problem that it seeks to offer a solution to: commuting. Trentway-Wagar managed to have PickupPal shut down by authorities, citing an infringement of the Ontario Public Vehicles Act that related to archaic stipulations surrounding carpooling (e.g., limiting carpooling to within municipal boundaries and between home and work only). Public outcry over this decision contributed to speedy political maneuvering that resulted in changes to the act, adapting the legislation to better reflect modern social and technological contexts, allowing PickupPal to legally operate.

Conclusion

The wider context within which the Skirky principle was developed highlights the ways in which human behaviors shift over time in conjunction with the opportunities enabled by technologies. Along with these shifts, Shirky argues that society must reconfigure old assumptions about the value of amateur production and the social motivations (connectedness/membership and sharing/generosity) that lead to social media use. Shirky privileges sharing as an important resource in the new media economy that has been increasing as a result of new opportunities facilitated by social media and shifting cultures. Yet, traditional institutions remain attached to old ways of thinking and cannot embrace new solutions, such as open source models of development, which are based on sharing and generosity.

Shirky believes that scholars are often asking the wrong questions about the role of social media, and should instead focus on how they can harness the opportunities that social media and shifting human behaviors present. However, the tension between traditional institutions and new social media remains, and traditional logic will continue to be thwarted by unexpected uses of social media. The Shirky principle aims to improve understanding of this tension.

Rena Bivens
Carleton University

See Also: Cognitive Surplus; Hard Place Theater; Innovation and Technology.

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Shot@Life Campaign

The United Nations (UN) Foundation's Shot@Life campaign educates, connects, and empowers Americans to join its cause to save the lives of children in developing countries. By expanding

access to vaccines, a child's life is saved every 20 seconds. According to its Web site, each year, 1.5 million children will die from diseases simply because they do not have access to lifesaving vaccinations. Shot@Life campaign encourages the American public, members of Congress, and civil society partners to learn about, advocate for, and donate to vaccine programs that decrease preventable childhood deaths. Through the use of new and older forms of media, Shot@Life is able to reach millions of people, encouraging their involvement in its charitable campaign. This campaign urges people to take political action in its cause, connecting advocates through Web sites, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Pinterest, YouTube, blogs, and e-mail.

The Shot@Life campaign builds on a 13-year global vaccination initiative started by the UN Foundation. The UN Foundation is a leading partner in the Measles Initiative and Global Polio Eradication Initiative. The UN Foundation's Shot@Life campaign is a charitable organization, expanding on the fundamental mission of the UN. The mission of the UN is to aid in the prevention of warfare and to improve the quality of life globally. In 1998, entrepreneur and philanthropist Ted Turner created the UN Foundation as a U.S. public charity. The foundation broadens the support of the UN through advocacy and public outreach, addressing the world's problems while building public-private partnerships. The Shot@Life campaign posits that vaccines are the solution, saving more lives than any other medical intervention in the last 50 years. The Shot@Life campaign promotes the dissemination of vaccinations for the following diseases: measles, polio, pneumococcal disease, and rotavirus.

Posing for a photo at a Shot@Life event in March 2013. The campaign is successful in part from its use of social media to post photos and videos of children who have been helped by the cause and are now healthy as a result.

Every year, children are disabled or die from vaccine-preventable diseases such as diarrhea, measles, pneumonia, and polio. In fact, the rising death rates for children under the age of 5 are primarily the result of pneumonia and diarrhea. There is a re-emergence of polio in once polio-free areas; in addition, measles causes 450 deaths per day. The majority of the victims are young children. The Shot@Life campaign seeks to solve these health disparities globally, advocating for young children who do not have access to lifesaving vaccines. There are 10 countries that comprise 75 percent of the unvaccinated children in the world.

The Shot@Life campaign seeks to rally support through donations and volunteers. The campaign travels throughout the United States, hosting events to raise money and awareness of its cause. Individuals, small businesses, and corporations are all encouraged to become involved, whether it is through fundraising events and/or donations to the UN Foundation. Shot@Life encourages people to contact Congress, urging members to allot funding to critical foreign aid programs that promote global health and vaccines. On its Web site, people can make a donation and/or recurring gifts to the Shot@Life campaign. Furthermore, there are several ways that people can become a champion for the Shot@Life campaign, such as promoting the campaign, holding fundraisers, and writing letters to members of Congress. Shot@Life's Web site, along with other forms of

media, provides valuable resources to assist those who would like to advocate for its cause, such as samples of press releases, an op-ed page example, and letters to the editor.

New forms of social media provide an opportunity for the campaign to share stories of children who are in need of assistance. Additionally, there are pictures and videos posted of children who are healthy as a result of the Shot@Life campaign. The success stories shared through social media are a testament to the success of this campaign, rallying people to become advocates for its cause. Social media raise public awareness, spreading Shot@Life's campaign slogan, "A movement to protect children worldwide by providing vaccines where they are most needed." The success of this national call to action can be attributed to the number of people it can reach through several forms of social media. The Internet is a valuable tool for this campaign, providing the public with opportunities to learn how to become effective champions for the Shot@Life campaign. Social media is a valuable asset in the fight to help children globally, sharing their plight with millions of people who can make a difference.

Jennifer Summary
Southeast Missouri State University

See Also: Activists and Activism; Cause-Marketing Campaigns; ONE Campaign; Robin Hood Foundation; Schools4All; Water.org.

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Siri

Speech interaction and recognition interface (Siri) is a computerized personal assistant that operates by recognizing users' natural speech. Siri is a mobile communications technology application available on Apple products including the iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch. It was first released on the iPhone 4S in its iOS 5 (Apple's fifth mobile operating system) in October 2011. Siri was created by Siri Inc., established in 2007, and subsequently purchased by Apple in 2010. Siri has a wide commercial and popular appeal, but its presumed social and cultural politics have been criticized. Dag Kittalaus, one of Siri's cocreators, stated that Siri was the name of a former coworker, and he had previously considered this name for his future daughter.

More often cited reasons for the name choice are that it is easy to spell and speak in many languages, though Apple cofounder Steve Jobs was initially unconvinced of the name's suitability. Siri, likely because of the popularity of the application, was touted as a popular baby name in 2012. Apple has never confirmed how much it paid for Siri Inc. Estimates place the figure between $150 and $250 million for a company that was started with an initial investment of $24 million.

Siri's responses aim to resemble the human interaction that one might have with a live personal assistant. Siri's delivery style demonstrates an eagerness to assist the user by synthesizing extensive Web information in a personable, even witty fashion. Siri is claimed to be able to personalize itself to its user's information preferences over time. The popularity of Siri has led to similar applications such as Cluzee by Android, Jelly Bean by Google Search, and the multi-platform compatible Evi.

Criticism

Despite its user-friendly features, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) criticized Siri for

failing to provide complete information on politically sensitive issues. In 2011, when the ACLU asked Siri to provide the location of local abortion clinics, Siri responded that no information was available. Other users reported that Siri responded to the same question by directing users to pro-life organizations. Journalists and technology bloggers reported that Siri was alternately able to assist users in purchasing condoms, the erectile dysfunction drug Viagra, and personal escorts, but was challenged to provide any useful information about where to find emergency contraception such as Plan B, the "morning after pill." When asked for the location of a Planned Parenthood clinic, Siri was able to provide information.

In 2011, the ACLU started an online petition calling for Apple to fix Siri. This challenge, paired with the journalists' and bloggers' highlighting of Siri's apparent shortcomings, led Apple to respond. Apple publicly denied that the cited incidents were intentional attempts to exclude or offend any of its users. When asked to endorse a political candidate or party, Siri responds by refusing to choose, demonstrating an apolitical stance. When asked about gay marriage, some users reported that Siri claimed not to understand the question. It is popular for users of both sexes to ask Siri to marry them, and Siri typically responds by instead offering friendship, or by claiming to be in love with another device. Alternate explanations for Siri's responses point more to the technology's ability to field general versus specific questions, and its reliance on Internet search engine-based information that may be biased, rather than to Apple's desire to privilege any political perspective.

Siri was initially released in English, French, and German, with international versions subsequently released. New criticism arose as Siri was released in China in Mandarin and Cantonese versions, but appeared to censor all information about the Tiananmen Square protest and the date of the conflict (June 4, 1989). This apparent censorship is claimed to also apply to directions to Tiananmen Square. Previous to Apple's introduction of Siri, search engine Google chose to leave mainland China for Hong Kong to escape government pressure to censor its information. Google's example demonstrates China's censorship of the Internet, which would by consequence of Siri drawing its information from Internet sources, mean that the answers provided by the online assistant would be influenced by this restriction of information.

Language and Voice

The U.S. English Siri has a female voice, whereas the UK English Siri has a male voice. The voice actor behind Siri's female persona has never officially been stated publicly, while former journalist and voiceover actor Jon Briggs voices the male persona. Briggs is said to have recorded the voice for a product initially named Daniel over several weeks in 2005 for a technology company named Scansoft, which merged with a company named Nuance that subsequently worked with Apple on Siri. Apple is said to have contacted Briggs and asked him not to speak publically for fear that it would shift attention away from the product and onto an individual. Similarly, Apple does not refer to Siri publicly with pronouns, but instead uses its name, and Siri does not respond to user's requests for the application to describe what it looks like in human form, likely in part to avoid appearing racially or culturally biased.

Critics have questioned why Siri's U.S. English voice is female, and have also posited several reasons for this choice. Some posit that female voices are more socially appealing to listeners and/or perceived to be more empathetic. Feminist criticism argues that Siri's descriptions of itself as a humble personal assistant, deference to its users' needs, and difficulty with answering women's reproductive health questions are indications that Siri perpetuates stereotypes of passive femininity. Yet, it is also argued that Siri reflects how many early communications workers (e.g., telephone operators) were women in North America, and how women are often employed in the customer support field. It is argued that many of the computerized voices for devices like global positioning systems (GPS) are female in the U.S. market, and Siri follows this pre-established pattern.

Siri provides male and female sounding voices, depending on the language and region that users choose. Some consumers have the option of choosing a male voice by switching to a version of their language that supports this option. For example, English-speaking consumers can opt to use the UK English voice for Siri that presents as male. In France, like the UK, Siri is a male voice, while in

Canadian French Siri presents as female, as do the voices for Siri in Australian English and German.

Cultural critics have questioned Siri's ability to recognize accents and dialects. English language users of Siri complained that the device does not correctly recognize language spoken in specific Southern American, Scottish, Australian, and Irish accents that deviate from mainstream forms of language. Apple claims that Siri is designed to detect the accents and dialects for languages supported on its devices, though with a higher rate of accuracy for users who are native speakers of the languages in which they operate Siri. As of April 2013 Siri operates in the following regions (and languages): United States (English, Spanish), United Kingdom (English), Australia (English), France (French), Germany (German), Japan (Japanese), Canada (English, Canadian French), China (Mandarin), Hong Kong (Cantonese), Italy (Italian), Korea (Korean), Mexico (Spanish), Spain (Spanish), Switzerland (Italian, French, and German) and Taiwan (Mandarin). Users of languages not supported by Siri (e.g., Portuguese) are critical with the speed of progress or lack of progress made in this area. Additionally, critics charge that Siri was culturally biased because it initially could only provide locations and directions in the United States. This was changed in iOS 6 (Apple's sixth mobile operating system), though there were also several publicly cited instances of Siri providing faulty directions or incorrect maps.

In 2013, Apple acknowledged that the Siri and dictation applications on its devices stored users' voice data for as long as two years. Civil liberties groups argue that Apple is not adequately informing consumers about their privacy rights. Apple counters that the voice data is sent to Apple's servers in a way that leaves the user anonymous and that the data is used to improve Siri, dictation, and other voice recognition products and services. Siri's capacity to study its user's voice and preferences have led some to compare Siri to the supercomputer HAL, who turns against his human creators in Stanley Kubrick's film *2001 A Space Odyssey.* Others claim that Siri will eventually overshadow the devices and technology on which it appears.

Gordon Alley-Young
Kingsborough Community College, City University of New York

See Also: Google+; Personalization; Pro-Choice and Pro-Life; Race/Ethnicity; Search Engine Bias/"Google Bias."

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Skype

Skype is a voice-over Internet protocol application (VoIP) that allows telephone calls, audio- and video-conferencing, instant messaging, and live voice chat, via the Internet. VoIP technology converts analog voice signals to digital signals. The digital signals are then transmitted over a computer network. The cost is significantly lower than over traditional telephone lines, but the quality of the reception is not guaranteed.

Skype has exponentially grown and represents a large part of the telephony market. It is free for those who have Skype accounts. The software can be downloaded from the Skype Web site, and can be used with desktop computers, Symbian, Android, iPhone, and the Kindle. Instant messaging is free on all devices, but text messaging costs money. To make a call to a non-Skype user, there is also a charge. Three types of payment plans exist. The first is a pay-per-minute or pay-as-you-go plan, the second is to charge the Skype

account, while the third is a monthly plan. All three plans apply globally. Also, for a fee, one can establish an online telephone number and pick up calls on Skype.

There are numerous ways of communicating with Skype. One can communicate with just the audio, which is similar to a traditional telephone conversation. One can communicate audio-visually or have a video-conference through the use of a Webcam. One can also communicate asynchronously through the use of the Skype chat function. Skype can also be used with a television screen or on a mobile phone. The same Skype services exist for businesses.

Social Media and Politics

Social media such as Skype, Facebook, and Twitter are increasingly used to create and disseminate messages to constituents. Further, constituents use the sites to discuss politics.

Along with traditional media, political candidates are using digital media to sway voters. They are using online streaming ads, interactive Web pages, YouTube channels, text messaging, chats, candidate blogs, microsites, fundraising sites, and grassroots organizing platforms as a means of reaching constitutents. These forms of digital media complement, rather than replace traditional media forms, and highlight the shifting norms of campaign strategies. Skype, in particular, is a face-to-face technology that is very persuasive in advocating an argument in, for example, a conference call or Webinar with supporters. With this being the case, researchers question whether the political use of Skype and other social media sites will be helpful or harmful for the purposes of democracy.

Skype and Protests

Social media was used to organize protests in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya during the Arab Spring in 2011. For example, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube were used to share information about street actions. Skype was not used as much, but it was an option. Some governments censored the Internet or even cut off access completely at times, and restricted telephone use. Even though this was the case, citizens found ways to gain access to the telephone and to the Internet. In regimes where the mass media was controlled, the Internet became a major source of alternative media.

Shirley M. Crawley
Western Connecticut State University

See Also: Instant Messengers; Mobile Apps; Mobile/Smartphone Messaging; Peer to Peer; Political Base.

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Sleeper Effect

The *sleeper effect* is the term given to the counterintuitive phenomenon that occurs when a persuasive message with a "discounting cue" (something that would undermine the believability of the message, such as a disclaimer or a source that would commonly be perceived as having little to no credibility) is disregarded or disbelieved at first, but then over time, that message comes to grow in persuasiveness. The sleeper effect becomes even more striking when the same message from a high-credibility source loses its believability or persuasiveness over that same period of time.

This anomaly first came to the attention of researchers in 1949, and since then has been the subject of much study, debate, and fruitless efforts to reproduce. Researchers have often been able to document situations where messages from low-credibility sources became more persuasive over time, whereas the same message from

a high-credibility source lost its persuasiveness: Sleeper effects have also been produced in experimental settings within a specific framework of conditions, but there has been little success in producing a sleeper effect in actual practice. The ability to create a persuasive message that would gain in persuasiveness over time, even when delivered from an extremely unreliable source, would have usefulness in advertising or political campaigns. Thus, the efforts of cognitive and behavioral scientists since the mid-20th century to understand the operations by which a sleeper effect comes about, and to produce one at will.

Researchers have determined that a sleeper effect may be absolute or relative. With an absolute sleeper effect, the message from the low-credibility source gains in persuasiveness over time, whereas the message from the high-credibility source loses persuasiveness over the same period of time. Situations where an absolute sleeper effect can be seen to have occurred are rare; more often, relative sleeper effects are obtained. With a relative sleeper effect, the messages from both high-credibility and low-credibility sources lose persuasiveness over time, but that of the high-credibility source loses more persuasiveness than that coming from the low-credibility source.

The phenomenon was first noticed in 1949, when Yale social psychologist Carl Hovland and his colleagues were studying attitude change among World War II soldiers who were shown a U.S. Army training film, *The Battle of Britain*. In an outcome that surprised the researchers, receivers' opinion of the prowess of British soldiers was stronger nine weeks after the initial assessment of the attitudes. Hovland and his colleagues hypothesized that the "discounting cue" (that which made the source unreliable or low in credibility, or a disclaimer that undermined the credibility of the message) became detached or disassociated from the message content over time. They then reasoned that the recall of the element that was unreliable (source or disclaimer) decays over time, leaving the message content unattached to the discounting cue, and therefore able to stand alone in terms of believability.

However, repeated failures by researchers to obtain a sleeper effect over the next several decades led some to think that the findings were either incorrect, or were simply reports of anomalies without practical application. Some scientists found the sleeper effect to be an unreliable phenomenon, and called for acceptance of the null hypothesis (that the sleeper effect doesn't exist) to "lay the sleeper effect to rest." This suggestion was countered by other researchers who believed that it did exist, and that conditions whereby it could be produced could be understood. They determined that a better course would be to try to identify the conditions and factors that would produce it.

Thomas Cook and his associates isolated four factors that must be present in order to produce a sleeper effect: the message must be persuasive, the discounting cue presented with the message must also be strong enough to counter the persuasiveness of the message, there must be sufficient time elapse between the initial test and the post-tests, and the message content must still, at the time of post-tests, carry persuasive force. There has been some support for this theory. Subsequent research has examined the sequence of discounting cue and persuasive message, strength of the persuasive message alone, hypotheses relating to "forgetting" and/or "dissociation," the context of message presentation, relationship of delayed attitude change to aspect of dual processing models such as the heuristic-systematic model and the elaboration-likelihood model, and the type of discounting cue offered.

Recent research related to the sleeper effect has found that fictional narratives affect readers' real-world beliefs. Other research focusing on the impact of negative political advertising on opinion change finds a sleeper effect produced by the general distrust of politicians by voters. Finally, related to public health campaigns that feature a myth versus fact structure, people tend to conflate myths and facts over time when presented with both in the original message. The myth actually becomes memorable as fact.

When imported to the digital environment, this suggests that social media users may remember messages and information they received via social media, but not recall the source where that information originated, which impinges on their ability to decide the level of credibility that should be assigned to it. It may well be in this contiguous area of information processing that the sleeper

effect's real significance regarding political information in the social media sphere will emerge.

Leslie Reynard
Washburn University

See Also: Buzz Creation; Candidate Image; Klout Score; Meme Mapping; Online Smear Campaigns; Psychographics.

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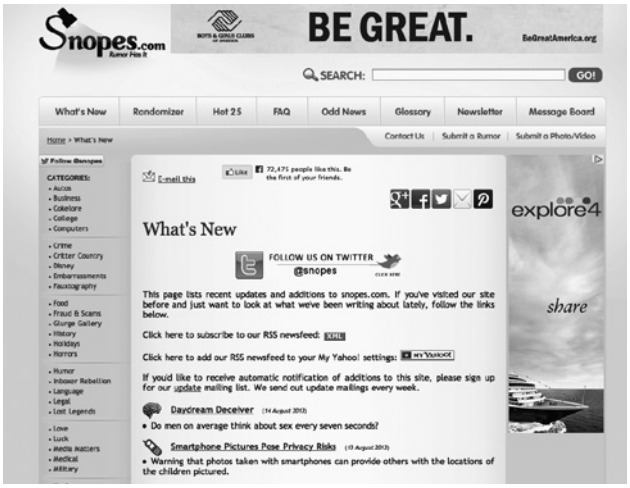
Snopes.com

Snopes.com describes itself as a Web site that debunks urban legends, including "common fallacies, misinformation, old wives' tales, strange news stories, rumors, celebrity gossip, and similar items." Founded in 1995, it is owned and run by David and Barbara Mikkelson of California; they avow no political preference or affiliation, and they do not accept funding from any outside group. There is a diverse set of advertisements that rotate through the site; some are supplied by Google's AdSense program, which displays ads related to keywords located on pages. Snopes was the Internet nickname that David Mikkelson chose in the Internet's early days in the late 1980s, when that was the norm. He selected it in honor of author William Faulkner's Snopes family, who weave throughout many of his works. Mikkelson's reputation as a researcher who debunked Internet falsehoods eventually led to the domain name. As the strategic deployment of socially salient and culturally politicized "facts" via social media continues to escalate in the campaign environment, organizations such as Snopes.com are playing an increasingly important role in the governance process, especially as it relates to candidate claims about deeds done or conditions addressed in the material world.

An urban legend is a story or statement that people tell to confirm their worldview (the world is a scary place), or present a cautionary parable (beware of the government). Such legends are often related, using some type of credible authority (the story was witnessed by someone known), were local and recent, and offer details that seem possible. Examples include the tale that green cars are unlucky, an electric fan that is left running overnight can kill you with its breezes, or alligators are running amuck in sewers. Such legends have long been passed by word of mouth, but the advent of the Internet and various social media have accelerated their exposure. As a result, the Web site is a popular destination for fact checkers. According to Quantcast, in April 2013, an estimated 4,800,000 people visited the site, and an April 2013 search of Google Books noted that Barbara Mikkelson has over 6,300 citations in others' works.

Simple ratings extend from true to unclassifiable veracity, using a color-coded bullet point. True entries are indicated by a green bullet point. These claims may be demonstrably true (meaning there is a significant amount of reliable evidence) or they may be based on some actual occurrence. A green bullet surrounded by red identifies a statement that has some truth and some error in it, or it references a claim that may once have been true, but has changed status. A yellow bullet (undetermined) is used to describe a claim that is under dispute because there is insufficient evidence to support it. For example, there may be a small piece of data that exists, but the



The "What's New" section of Snopes.com in August 2013 explored, among other stories spreading around the Internet, whether or not photos taken with smartphones would provide others with the location of images taken of children.

cause-effect relationship between that data and the claim cannot be established. A statement might be undetermined if the research cannot determine which came first: a real life incident, or the legend. False statements are highlighted by a red bullet; in this case, there is either a significant lack of evidence, the statements are implausible, or they are so imaginative that no media have reported on them. A hollow yellow bullet identifies what most think of urban legends: stories or statements that might have happened to someone somewhere and are plausible, but they are not verifiable through proof.

Web site tabs lead the viewer to sections on "What's New" (recent updates and additions) and a "randomizer" that sorts through the archives to present researched legends. The "Hot 25 Urban Legends" tab presents the top current statements widely circulating, determined by number of searches and hits, reader e-mail, and media coverage. The "Odd News" tab on "Daily Snopes" consists of links to news articles and Web sites that appear to be chosen on the basis of reader appeal. These statements are not researched. Readers can also access "FAQs" about Snopes, a glossary of some terms (such as the difference between a myth and a legend), and a message board for Snopes community conversations. Readers can also submit a rumor or a photo or videos through other locations on the site. RSS and Twitter feeds, Facebook, and Pinterest links also appear. In this way, the constant flow of rumors and legends makes its way to Snopes.

Icons ranging from "autos" to "weddings" lead readers to pages that provide details on specific urban legends. A visit to the "food" page shows links to rumors about food contamination, cultures, odd ingredients, food origins, preparation, dining rituals, and warnings. Among the legends debunked is the "five second rule," which claims that food is germ free if one picks it up within five seconds (false), and that green potatoes are poisonous (true). In many cases, a detailed explanation of the statement and its research findings supplies the reader with source material on origins, reports of further "sightings" or versions of the statement, and media responses. The "Soapbox" icon is used for political statements that are editorial or opinion, and any research presented concerns only attribution. If a political statement asserts a fact, it is placed within the appropriate category (such as politics, legal affairs, or the military).

The site explains its research veracity with a simple and direct tone, saying that the Mikkelsons do not expect anyone to accept them as the ultimate authorities. However, all research materials they use are given in a bibliography at the end of each entry, and no entry is anonymously written. At the same time, the Web site's tone occasionally takes a turn toward the humorous or whimsy. For instance, the word "glurge" (coined by a Snopes community member) describes inspirational tales that seem uplifting, but have a darker meaning. As the Web site notes, glurge may be stories of strange things found in food, or dying children saved by prayer, and are meant to be modern parables.

Beth M. Waggenspack
Virginia Tech

See Also: FactCheck.org; Internet Forums; Politifact.com; Trending Topic.

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Snowball Effect

In social science research, the term *snowball* is used with regard to a specific method of selection of respondents. A researcher asks a subject to identify others to whom the subject is connected, and then asks each of those identified at one step's distance from the subject for their ties to others, who are then two steps from the original subject. With each step, the size of the network increases, until all members of the community have been included in the sample. Another way of snowballing is when a researcher designs an initial sample of cases, and then collects information on all contacts of the sample members. These contacts are added to the sample, and then their contacts are discovered in the same way. By extending this process through more steps, more indirect contacts of the members of the initial sample will be discovered. Thus, there is always the question of how far to continue snowballing. According to some authors who work within the network analysis perspective, snowball sampling allows for estimating the distribution of contacts and the numbers of dyads and triads in the community, and can also be used for estimation of the size of the hidden population.

The snowball effect serves as a basic principle for social media platforms such as Facebook or LinkedIn, in which users are prompted to connect with other people depending on his or her initial connections or one-step ties. In other words, friends of friends have a higher probability of becoming friends versus individuals with no bridging actors, or those who are linked through two or more steps. The advantage for analysis of social media communities is that a researcher can see the overall size of the population (members of a group or community, visitors to a Web page, or followers of a blog) and define sample size and method of selection of respondents based on that. Thus, social media have changed the way that people communicate and become interconnected in virtual space.

The notion of six degrees of separation, which emerged in the 1960s, says that there are six or fewer links between any two human beings on the planet, on average. With the development of social media and the growing number of users of various social media platforms, this average distance between people has been reduced. Recent research on Facebook conducted by scholars from the University of Milan in Italy looked at about 721 million active Facebook users with approximately 69 billion friendship links and discovered that, with the increasing number of users along with growing number of interconnections between them, the average distance between two registered individuals has been reduced from 5.28 immediate links in 2008 to 4.74 in 2011. This distance of almost 5 steps corresponds to 3.74 intermediaries or "degrees of separation"—as shown through Facebook, one needs about four people on average instead of five to connect to any other person in the world. This also means that if the number of users and links between them grow further, the average distance between two users will get shorter, and the snowball effect in information distribution will speed up.

The number of direct ties, as well as individual network structure, should be considered when studying snowball effects in large communities. For instance, mobilization through social media during mass public actions, such as protests or riots, would be more effective through "brokering" actors who link many smaller and densely connected groups together because a message from a broker can reach more groups in a shorter period of time, passing one or two steps from one actor to the other. In this sense, locally central actors who have numerous direct connections with those inside a group are less efficient for information distribution if they have few or no ties outside the group. However, in the case of research of less accessible communities (e.g., people with specific health problems or followers of a local music band) local leaders can be treated as gatekeepers to the other respondents in the analyzed community. In social network analysis, this approach is called respondent-driven sampling.

The snowball effect in social media is leveraged by social media marketers, public relations

managers, and public activists, especially during political campaigns. A number of studies have shown that people tend to trust direct communication over information from traditional advertising channels. The power of word of mouth can be seen in more personalized social media channels, where gossips may be perceived as trustworthy sources of information. Additionally, one can observe the snowball effect when reading the same message from different people regarding a wide range of subjects—from voting in a singing contest to fundraising activities for charity purposes, or crowdfunding.

Another important area in which the snowball effect can be crucial is civic activism and political engagement. Distributing notice of the time and place of a strike or demonstration via social media can be one of the most efficient ways to mobilize hundreds or even thousands of people. Results of elections can also be significantly influenced by social media content, such as messages distributed through blogs, forums, and social networking sites. Distribution of a provocative photo, for example, can rapidly change public perception of a candidate.

Conclusion

Social media and the snowball effect have a considerable impact on the way that people find and spread information. People and communities are now participating in social and political life and expressing their thoughts and opinions through very particular flows of information based on network structures formed in social media platforms.

Tetiana Kostiuchenko
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy

See Also: Buzz Creation; Crowdfunding; Demonstrations, Organizing; Facebook; Fund-Raising; Going Viral; Network Influentials; News Media; Polling; Rumors; Social Network Analysis; Viral Marketing.

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Social Authority

Social authority refers to the process of using social media to build Web site authority. When comparing one site to another, social authority determines how well a site ranks among competitive search engines. In fact, the quality of the site is also determined by other search engines. Several variables contribute to building social authority, including whether the site is trustworthy, whether the content is relevant, whether the site is endorsed by other authoritative sites (the site needs to ranked by other search engines as authoritative, Google.com in particular), how long the domain has existed, length of visit (how long visitors spend on the site, which is dependent upon whether the visitor's needs are met or not), page visit (the number of pages viewed during a visit, indicating the degree of interest and popularity of a Web site), and bounce rate (when a visitor exits the site immediately upon entering).

These variables are determined by conducting a Web site analysis. Google Analytics is commonly used to analyze the behavior of visitors while on a Web site. Noting the trends of visitors is important in planning the overall design of a site. In general, Google determines the authority of a site through page rank. Page rank is assigning a numerical rating to an entire document, or elements within a document, technically referred to as link analysis algorithms. If readers consistently conduct searches on the pages, this action can establish the site as relevant. Fresh content introduced every few months will keep the site relevant. Within three to six months, one has created a Web site that ranks thousands of terms. As visitors type in the keywords associated with the Web site's topics, traffic will be driven to the site based on those keywords. A rise in search

engine rankings will result. With an authoritative site, the specific mention of a keyword can propel the site into the top-10 ranking. If visitors to the Web site perceive the content as relevant, then any word on the site can become a keyword.

If the page ranks among the top 10, search engine algorithms pay attention to the number of clicks received on the page, as well as the number of visitors who have used the keywords. An attention-getting title helps elevate a page into the top 10. Site authority can be built using specific keywords. One can perform a keyword search, obtain a series of competitive keywords that the site could target, and supplement the content with back links to elevate the site's relevance among search engines. One can write articles and posts about the keywords, and start the articles with a specific focus. Each title could incorporate a keyword, and the key word can be placed strategically in the beginning, middle, and end of the article, with links to an authoritative site and links to those links.

The page will rise among search engines as a result of Google's search algorithm. Social media listening monitors aggregate data from the Internet to determine the traits of a population, including age, income, employment status, educational level, and homeownership data. Such information helps to define the target market. Social media listening research determines how much the site is discussed compared to that of the competitor's, whether that talk is positive or negative, and gives the business a chance to counteract negative talk. Also, social media listening monitors the Internet for hotly debated topics. A topic generating much discussion can be the impetus for developing a new initiative.

Twitter and Facebook

Concurrently, social media listening plays a role in evaluating efforts to market a product and determining which efforts are the most productive. Forums, blogs, portals, discussion boards, and social sites will cater to a certain demographic market; they can be used to refine a target market. Facebook and Twitter can be incorporated into the search engine results; currently, this method is used by the Bing search engine. The results of a search show clickable items from Facebook and Twitter. In fact, Twitter and Facebook can also be used to develop the first tier of links to a site. Linking to high-ranking media sites can increase traffic to the Web site. Social media incorporates a means of starting or continuing a conversation with the general public by using social media channels. In a sense, it is listening to what is said on social media channels and responding to the sentiment.

In order for media to be social, the bulk of the content must be online, should allow users to communicate without fear of reprisal, and should allow for an exchange of dialogue between user and sender. Forms of social media include social networks sites such as: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube LinkedIn, online communities and discussion groups, wiki's, forums, books, really simple syndication (RSS) feeds, blogs, and microblogs. It is not necessary to utilize all of the forms of social media, but use depends upon one's social media goals. Demographics show that Twitter users tend to be between the ages of 25 and 44, with a sharp decline in users over 55 years of age. Users from 12 to 17 years of age use the site primarily for social networking and microblogging.

Depending on which segment of the market they are trying to reach, companies can use the microblogging tool to their advantage. Further, because of its retweeting capability, Twitter is a social networking powerhouse. Retweets can cause a subject to go viral in a short length of time. Retweets occur when an original message is sent to friends, who in turn send the message to their friends. Users often use a tweet to pass along a link to an article or a Web site.

Companies can strategically plan how to use the retweeting and linking capabilities of the site. Also, because of the sheer number of tweets amassed on a daily basis, raw data from the tweets are often used by sociologists to inform their opinions about the public's use of a brand and to gauge the mood of community during a popular event. Companies can actively use tweets to gather raw data about the public's perception of their product, and during a major event to sensor the public's reaction to it.

In addition to Twitter, Facebook is a popular social networking site. For online marketing, it has become an indispensable tool. A specific advantage of Facebook is that when marketing a product, one can choose a target audience based on demographic data. Another feature of

Facebook is that it incorporates an e-mail messaging feature on the site, which if strategically planned, could be used to a business' advantage. Instead of a traditional advertising campaign, one could facilitate an advertising campaign on Facebook, thereby capitalizing on the popularity of the site. Such a strategy would generate more traffic and build relationships.

In summary, social authority is determined by a number of factors, including analyzing the trends of visitors, developing useful content, initiating quality links, and receiving exposure on social media sites like Twitter and Facebook. Political Web sites also gain social authority through sites such as YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook. These sites allow campaigns at the district, state, and municipal levels to create interactive candidate Web pages; write blogs about candidates; write the candidate's biography; disseminate information through e-mails, text messaging, and blogs; create a YouTube channel; establish Twitter accounts for each public; establish Twitter feeds; establish RSS feeds; advertise online; create Facebook pages; write on Facebook walls; establish campaign microsites; and establish a candidate Web page.

Further, Facebook allows users to post content such as videos, links to campaign Web sites, and news stories. Facebook becomes particularly valuable in targeting a demographic market. In fact, a demographic market can be targeted based on data gathered from Facebook profiles. Utilizing Facebook, in general, affects how messages are created, received, and circulated. Social media sites have changed the norms for targeting demographic markets, campaign messaging, and fundraising, making campaigns more efficient when paired with traditional media.

Shirley M. Crawley
Western Connecticut State University

See Also: Social Bookmarking; Social Listening; Social Media, Definition and Classes of.

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Social Bookmarking

Social bookmarking is the access to resources found online. One can manage, organize, store, and search for online resources. Resources include Web sites, news, videos, music, recipes, and photographs. These resources can be transferred online via the Internet, blogs, and social networking Web sites. Instead of bookmarking the sites to one's PC, the sites are saved to an online account. This is the difference between "social bookmarking" and "bookmarking" a site. Because resources are shared, the data can also be accessed and used by commercial and political organizations. Many voters use social media and bookmarking sites to become engaged with the political process. Organizations can use this data to find groups with similar interests. Once this information is gathered, it can be used to profile groups that are prone to conservatism, liberalism, or against the political candidate, within a defined geographic area. Moreover, from the data, one might determine possible donors, volunteers, or others that might want to be involved in the campaign.

Tagging is characteristic of social bookmarking. It allows users to develop their categories and to share vocabularies with others, who in turn start using and changing the same vocabulary. This process has been extended to multimedia files and e-mail. These shared vocabularies are known as "folksonomies." Folksonomy and tag networks are used by political organizations to find voters with similar interests. The tags can be organized into a graph that shows the semantic correlation between tags with different forms. Based on the tags, one is able to determine voters who may have similar views. The campaign message can be targeted to these voters online. The Delicious bookmarking Web site was founded in 2003 and originated the terms *tagging* and *social bookmarking*. Tagging is a term for labeling

bookmarks. On the Delicious Web site, one can search, store, and peruse online sites. Further, these sites may be made public to others. Delicious is also considered a social news site. Social news sites collect the most talked about news stories from across the Internet. They are useful to magazine publishers, journalists, and bloggers.

Other social news Web sites include Digg, Reddit, and Stumbled Upon. Digg publishes the latest news stories abounding on the Internet. Stories can be directly read from the company's site by subscribing to a daily e-mail or downloading the iPhone app. Subscribers may also submit a link. Similarly, with the Reddit site, the content is user generated. Users vote as to which stories are prominent, and which ones fade to the background. Subscribers are allowed to form online communities, called "subreddits." The groups are moderated by volunteers. Comments can be posted on any of the news stories. Finally, Stumbled Upon is a collection of sites submitted by users. The categories include humor, special deals, best places to shop, and games. Relevant sites can be saved online and sent to a network of people. Further, the sites are saved in one location, granting everyone in the network access to the sites. One can browse through the sites based on the most popular, those that have been recently added, the sites that belong to a specific category, and the sites that other people have bookmarked by typing in a keyword. One can also look at what other people have tagged. Social bookmarking may be used to facilitate domestic political campaigns and to organize protests. Organizers usually open an account online with Delicious.

Although social bookmarking is phenomenal in the sense that taxonomies are user generated, several criticisms of social bookmarking have emerged. One includes the problem of varied user differences. A heterogeneous population contributes to tagging, folksonomies, and social bookmarking systems, so the purpose and quality of social bookmarking systems vary. The question becomes: How does one achieve a quality social bookmarking system that is homogenous? A second problem includes the fact that the tags are not coordinated with other users, resulting in an aggregate number of tags applied by different users. Researchers are not sure whether such a system provides overarching meaning or not. A third problem occurs with the fact that the current tags may not represent the interests of users that have changed. A fourth problem exists with the fact that the use of tags and folksonomies has exploded. How does one leverage a system that continues to grow and expand? Along these lines, a number of research efforts have ensued to improve tag-based clustering and browsing of Web-based content.

Shirley Crawley
Western Connecticut State University

See Also: Bookmarking; Digg; Reddit; Social Media, Definition and Classes of.

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Social Capital

With the proliferation of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google+, social media have become the dominant Internet services around the world. The increasing popularity of social media has spawned numerous studies on the social and political impact of social media use. One major domain of research is on the role of social media in social capital and civic engagement.

Social capital is an interdisciplinary concept that can be broadly defined as individuals' connections to others in their community and social

networks. More representative conceptions of social capital are provided by sociologist James Coleman and popularized by political scientist Robert Putnam. Coleman considers social capital to be social resources existing in multiple dimensions of a social structure to facilitate social action to produce various benefits. It includes social relations of all sorts, such as networks, obligations and expectations, and norms and sanctions. Building on Coleman's work, Putnam has a narrower focus in his notion of social capital. His conception emphasizes specific dimensions of social interactions that are crucial for the well-being of democratic governance, such as norms of generalized reciprocity, trust for mutual collective benefit, and voluntary group memberships and networks of civic engagement. In summary, social capital may be understood and defined in terms of (1) norms and values, (2) social networks, and/or (3) consequences—voluntarily produced collective facilities and resources, civic engagement, and/or political participation.

Social capital, given its focus on relationships, can also be categorized based on the strength of ties and social structures. This understanding of social capital distinguishes between various conceptions of social capital based on the types of relationships they represent. For example, the terms *bridging social capital* and *bonding social capital* are used to describe different forms of relationships. Bridging social capital reflects connections that are mostly weak ties or casual acquaintances. It is best suited for the distribution of novel information from heterogeneous networks. Bonding social capital, on the other hand, represents the strong ties one has with family and close friends. It is best suited for creating group solidarity among connected others and providing social and emotional support.

More recently, scholars also differentiated between offline social capital and online—or sociotechnical—capital. For example, the concept of sociotechnical capital has been proposed as a component of social capital that emphasizes how social and technological affordances of the Internet affect people's ability to work together.

Social Media and Social Capital

Scholars have actively examined social media's impact on social and political life. One principal area of research is the role of social media in generating and maintaining social capital. Some overarching questions include the following: First, what are the possible effects of social media use on social capital processes? Are social media enhancing or decreasing social capital? Second, are users using social media primarily to reinforce their existing offline relationships in social media, or are they using them to interact with strangers?

Social media, especially social network sites such as Facebook, provide special affordances to facilitate user interactions and articulate their social networks. The ability to maintain social connections via social media is inherently related to social capital because individuals seek to both maintain and expand their social networks through their use. Therefore, scholars typically propose positive effects of social media in social capital, and empirical studies generally find such positive effects. For example, researchers have focused on the influence of Facebook use on social capital among college students. This is not surprising because social media, especially Facebook, is the most popular social networking site (SNS) among undergraduate students in the United States.

It is argued that social capital is important to college students because they are often removed from their old social networks when they enter college. Therefore, the third form of social capital, maintained social capital, refers to one's ability to stay linked to old social networks that one is no longer physically connected to. College students' use of Facebook has been found to be positively associated with the formation and maintenance of all three types of social capital: bridging, bonding, and maintained social capital. The strongest relationship was found to exist between Facebook use and bridging social capital. Additionally, there is also evidence that Facebook usage can provide the greatest social capital gains for users with low self-esteem. These results were replicated in subsequent investigations of the relationship between social capital and Facebook use.

Extant research has also looked at the social capital outcomes that result from specific uses of Facebook. That is, how Facebook is used to connect with other people by its users. It was found that individuals who used the site to learn more

about people with whom they have some offline connection have enhanced social capital. However, those who use Facebook to connect with strangers or close friends did not have the same effect. Similar investigations have examined relationships between Facebook use among college students and various aspects of social capital. The intensity of Facebook use has been found to be positively associated with life satisfaction, interpersonal trust, and civic participation, but not political participation. The use of "Facebook Groups," which are user groups based on common interests, has been found to be positively associated with both civic participation and political participation. These findings suggest that using certain features of social media may enhance feature-specific participation.

The majority of studies in social media and social capital to date tend to use undergraduate student samples. However, research using a general population sample has found similar connections between civic participation and social media use. For example, an investigation of citizens' political and civic participation during the 2008 presidential campaign found that reliance on social media use was related to increased civic participation, but not political participation. This suggests that social media users are oriented toward maintaining social relationships with their friends, which may be a catalyst for community and civic engagement. Similar research using a U.S. national sample has found that using social media for information purposes generated more social capital and boosted both political and civic participation.

International Research

The relationship between online social capital and political participation has also been investigated outside of the United States. For example, research on the relationship between online social capital and online and offline political participation has been explored in Singapore. Results found significant relationships between online bridging social capital and online political participation and between online bonding social capital and offline political participation. The findings seem to suggest that online bridging social capital plays a crucial role in mobilizing Singaporeans in an online setting and that online bonding social capital is vital to reviving offline political participation by boosting strong ties that already exist in an offline setting. These findings provide some indications of the potential of social media use in similar countries that have significant constraints on offline political expression and where traditional settings for political and civic participation are quite limited.

Another major question revolves around the extent to which users utilize social media to connect with their close friends, latent ties, and strangers. Research studies indicate that social media are primarily used to seek additional information about people with whom users have some offline connection. This means that users are not likely to use social media to maintain existing ties with close friends or to initiate connections or friendships with strangers. As such, there may be great potential for individuals to enhance their social capital by using social media to convert weak ties into strong ties.

There is great potential for social media in the democratic process. However, the potential depends on whether people use social media for information and relationship-building purposes. If so, social media use strengthens social capital and enhances political and civic participation.

Weiwu Zhang
Texas Tech University
Sherice Gearhart
University of Nebraska at Omaha

See Also: Digital Activism; Digital Citizen; Facebook; Google +; Hacktivism; Social Networking Web Sites; Twitter; Voter Apathy; Web 2.0.

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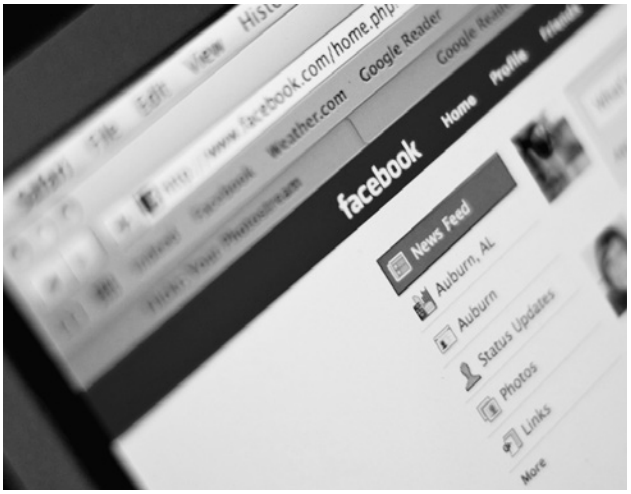
Social Computing and Social Information Processing

Social computing is one of the most widespread trends of the last decade. From friendships and families to politics and presidencies, new communication technologies are embraced by individuals and organizations alike in order to develop, nurture, and sustain social capital. Concomitant with the prominence of new technology in the social realm is the prominence of research on the processes and practices inherent to social computing. There is a growing body of research that helps build a bridge of understanding between the communicative processes that exist in people's personal lives and their political worlds.

Social Computing

Cyberspace has become a widely utilized milieu for social interaction. An ever-increasing number of technologies (e.g., applications, services, and products) facilitate social interaction and collective action on the Internet and beyond. Blogs, e-mail, wikis, instant messaging, peer-to-peer networks, social networking sites (SNSs), and open source communities, among others, are commonly referred to by researchers as agents of social computing. Whether taking part in a single online community or living a multifaceted life on Web 2.0, research indicates that increasingly people are turning to social computing to meet their individual or collective needs.

What undoubtedly makes social computing attractive to so many is the interaction and collaboration among users. Research indicates that people not only use online social spaces to develop and maintain relationships as well as



Environments like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter may be "channel lean" in that they cannot provide nonverbal social cues, but they can be a quick source of social information that one would not likely obtain during a brief face-to-face exchange.

enact relational routines, but also to disseminate information, share expertise, and build collective identities and power. Studies indicate that many individuals utilize instant messaging and SNSs to engage in "everyday talk," and that these simple interactions create a sense of belonging to the world, and often lead to a deep sense of interconnectedness to others.

Research in the field of social support also reveals that peer-to-peer networks often allow a heterogeneous group of users to come together for a homogeneous purpose. That is, a wide variety of people can assimilate to pursue a common goal such as facilitating a learning group, taking part in a medical support group, or forming a political action committee. Whether using a blog to share information with friends or a wiki to share expertise with strangers, social computing continues to challenge the ways that social ties are created and managed. Moreover, the processes through which people communicate in these online environments continue to evolve.

As new social computing technologies continue to emerge, it is not only where people communicate online, but also how people communicate online that is subject to change. According to Joseph Walther's social information processing theory, people are motivated to manage interpersonal impressions and affinity, regardless of the medium through which they communicate. He argues that various computer-mediated environments spur users to adapt the encoding and decoding of social information (e.g., socioemotional or relational content) of messages in order to manage impressions. Face-to-face interactions, for example, are channel-rich environments that typically contain language, facial expressions, eye contact, and tone, among other social cues, in a typical exchange. Social computing environments, however, are often channel lean, restricting the means through which common nonverbal social cues (e.g., facial expressions, eye contact, and tone) are used to communicate.

Social information processing theory poses that people adapt to mediated environments such that the content of the exchange often serves as a substitute for the cues that may be restricted by the social computing platform. Though many people have interpreted this to mean that users simply utilize emoticons (such as ☺) or acronyms (such as LOL) to express emotions in channel-lean environments, Walther's theory instead forwards that users enact complex, yet often subtle, shifts in their language content and communication style in order to convey social information that may have otherwise been restricted by the environment. In short, social information processing theory suggests that a change in where we communicate prompts an evolution in how we communicate. Walther also argues that there is a temporal difference between channel-rich and channel-lean environments, such that a decrease in the amount of social cues present in the communication environment leads to an increase in the amount of time it takes to convey social information and manage impressions. Quite simply, the fewer channels available to communicate the longer it may take to develop and/or manage relationships.

Though the propositions forwarded by social information processing theory have received and continue to receive a great deal of support in the empirical literature, researchers have begun to question the utility of the theory since social computing has become increasingly sophisticated and channel rich. For example, there are many instances when traditionally channel lean environments like Web sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter) may provide a great deal of social information about people in a short amount of time that one is not likely to obtain in a brief face-to-face exchange.

In addition, some social computing environments allow for synchronous (e.g., Skype, instant messaging) communication wherein users can engage in simultaneous communication in real time and, in turn, speed up the exchange of social information. While theorists have questioned the utility of social information processing theory, a great deal of empirical evidence remains in support of its fundamental tenets. Moreover, the tenets of social information processing theory have the capability of informing those interested in effective relationship development and maintenance across a wide variety of contexts, including politics.

Social Computing Practices in Politics

New technologies are undoubtedly altering how people interact in their social lives and are playing

an increasingly significant role in political worlds. Just as social computing has been used to develop and/or maintain close personal relationships for millions of individuals, it is used by political candidates to build relationships with constituents. From "personal" e-mail and text alerts from candidates to live chats and social network feeds, political candidates are finding new and inventive ways to harness social computing to help voters feel connected to their campaigns and, moreover, motivate voters to feel connected to candidates as individuals.

Nicholas Christakis and James Fowler, authors of *Connected*, note that President Barack Obama "forever changed the face of politics though the use of new technology" in his 2008 presidential campaign. The Web site mybarackobama .com, built by one of Facebook's founders, Chris Hughes, logged over 1.5 million user accounts at its peak. Interestingly, many users were not logging on to this Web site to simply gather information about then candidate Obama. Instead, they were logging on to engage in social interaction and to take part in political action.

Through an online social presence, President Obama was not only able to connect with individual voters, but he was also able to connect voters with each other. Reports vary, but it has been estimated that mybarackobama.com facilitated between 100,000 and 200,000 campaign-related events and served as an organizing tool for over 25,000 community-based political support groups. What's more, these reports do not include the number of events and support groups that were organized outside the purview of the official campaign Web site. It is clear that the Obama campaign's social networking efforts not only influenced the outcome of the 2008 election, but it appears that these efforts have shaped the way that many Americans continue to engage in our political process.

The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press report that 56 percent of Americans watched the first live presidential debate of 2012 and 11 percent of Americans "dual screened" the live debate, meaning that they watched the debate on television while concomitantly following dialog or commentary about the debate in real time online. What's more, 5 percent of dual screeners actively engaged in posting comments about the debate in an online social network. And once the debate concluded, 36 percent of Americans reported gathering information about the debate from an online social network. One thing is clear from these figures—social computing is playing a significant role in the American political process and it appears to be here to stay.

Emerging Areas of Study

Social computing is a rapidly evolving field that has garnered the attention of researchers and practitioners alike. People are developing and managing relationships face-to-face, over the phone, via text message, on e-mail, in social networks, and in online support groups, among other means. Political relationships are no exception to these trends. As new technologies continue to emerge, so do trends in social computing research. For example, scholars interested in social relationships and new technologies continue to examine how people manage multimodal identities, as well as how these multimodal identities impact their sense of individual and relational well-being. Relationship scholars also seem increasingly interested in issues of online disclosure, influence, social support, social networks, and privacy. Likewise, those interested in attitude and behavior reinforcement or change among voters are pursuing similar topics from an applied political standpoint. From scholars interested in interpersonal relationships to those interested in political relations, many opportunities for exploration across these fields of study remain.

Jessica L. Moore
Butler University

See Also: Communication; Constituencies, Social Media Influence on; Influence on Elections; Social Capital; Social Networking Web Sites.

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Social Good Summit

The Social Good Summit of 2011 took place in September during United Nations (UN) week. The goal of the event was to convene a dynamic group of leaders, including technophiles, innovators, entrepreneurs, social media gurus, bloggers, and all others who wanted to contribute and work in the social good space, either live or via Internet. The point was to raise awareness about challenges that impact the world and generate a conversation about innovative solutions to these challenges in the context of the UN General Assembly Week in the hopes that those in power would address these new challenges.

The byproduct of the connection of all of these minds would be the ongoing collaboration and open trade of best practices for social good. This ongoing, sustainable forum of intellectual leadership would be poised to generate more innovation and solutions for global challenges.

Agenda

Monday, September 19, 2011, featured a session called "Next Generation Leadership: An Opening Keynote Conversation" given by Ted Turner, chairman of Turner Enterprises Inc. and Adam Ostrow of the UN Foundation and editor in chief of Mashable. Alec Ross, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's Senior Advisor for Innovation, presented "How Networks Are Changing Global Foreign Policy and Activism." Next, discussing "The Future of Maternal Health," were Christy Turlington Burns of Every Mother Counts (EMC) and Heather Armstrong, creator of dooce.com and advisor of technology and media for EMC. Howard G. Buffett, executive director of his foundation, spoke about "Social Value Investing: A New Paradigm for Future Generations." Finally, author Simon Mainwaring presented "Building a Private Sector Pillar of Global Social Change."

The second day of the summit opened with a joint presentation on "Ancient Values and New Media: The Future of Ethics in a Connected World," given by Pete Cashmore of Mashable and Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel of the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity. Next up were Lance Armstrong and Doug Ulman of LIVESTRONG, discussing "The Original Social Network." Then a panel discussion moderated by Aaron Sherinian, vice president of communications and public relations for the UN Foundation, on the following topic was presented: "Women and Girls Lead: Where Storytelling, Gaming and Public Media Converge." The panel was comprised of actor Geena Davis; Abigail Disney, of *Women, War, War & Peace* renown; Tamara Gould, vice president of ITVS International; and Asi Burak, copresident of Games of Change.

The summit's third day started with a joint discussion titled "How Micro-Financing Is Enabling Social Change," featuring Dr. Muhammad Yunus of Grameen Bank and Matthew Bishop, the American business editor and New York bureau chief of *The Economist*. The CEO of the UN Foundation, Kathy Calvin, next presented "A Conversation with Global Leaders on the Importance of Social Good." Next, Skype CEO Tony Bates presented on "The Future of Technology and Education: Skype in the Classroom." The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Raj Shah then discussed "Developing Technology for the Developing World: The Big Challenges." Finally, experts on vaccinations in childhood convened with a large panel. The last day featured an event showcasing various start-ups that address social issues with innovation, technologies, and Internet use. The showcase was also a competition for a $10,000 cash prize.

Impact

More than 1,600 new media notables and innovators registered for the in-person event, including three Nobel Prize laureates, world leaders, activists, U.S. government officials, movie stars, business leaders, bloggers, and journalists. Organizers estimate that more than 100,000 have watched the live stream of the summit proceedings to date, totaling more than 1 million hours of footage watched. Innovators from five continents participated in the summit, which was also live-tweeted.

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

See Also: Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Human Rights; Mashable; Poverty; Shot@Life Campaign.

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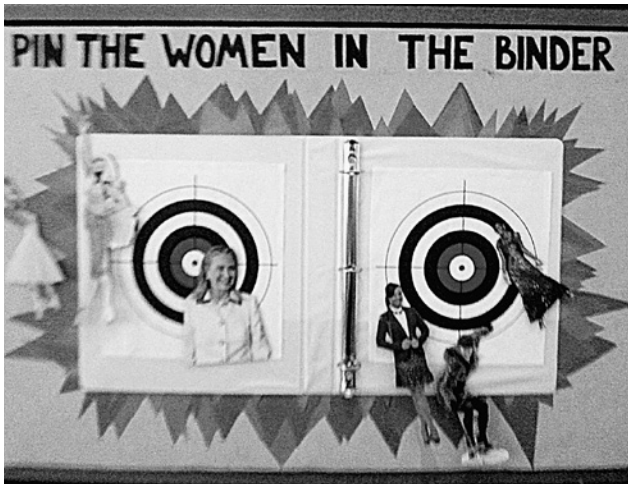
Social Issues Advocacy, Netroots Driven

Netroots is a diverse and decentralized network of progressive bloggers that officially emerged in 2005. The goal of these activists is to expand the influence of online progressives on the national political and social stage and to support candidates who advance a progressive social agenda. Many of the original members were vocal dissenters and online leaders of the opposition to the George W. Bush administration. Their agenda has persistent themes, but the flexibility of the Netroots community means that they are ready to quickly marshal forces to speak out on any number of issues that arise in the public discourse, spurred by political battles or national/international events. The view of these activists is that online activism can be an effective and important tool of political influence when properly mobilized.

Through petitions, actions such as boycotts and strikes, campaigns, and events such as the annual Netroots Nation convention, netroots activists use a variety of strategies and platforms to organize and deploy their social media capital. The netroots network has grown to encompass a number of traditional Democratic constituencies, but their discourse on social issues is predominantly focused on equality for women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual (LGBT) communities, as well as economic and justice issues insofar as they relate to issues of discrimination based on race, gender, or sexual orientation. Although they are diverse, and tend to see connections between issues, the social issues that have activated the Netroots during recent political campaigns mainly revolve around LGBT and women's reproductive rights.

For progressives, social issues overlap with economic issues and even broader policy issues such as immigration. The issue of health care and women's rights overlapped as politicians, pundits and organizations came into conflict over provisions in the Affordable Care Act that compelled insurance companies and employers to cover birth control. The issue of income inequality is frequently invoked in order to mobilize multiple constituencies, as it was during Occupy Wall Street protests in fall 2011. Arguments about social welfare and health care programs often stress questions of personal responsibility. Terms such as "lifestyle choices" and "entitlement society" bring the personal lives of citizens into the realm of the economic. In response, the Netroots have employed strategies such as economic sanctions against corporations and organizations to make a point about a social issue.



Mitt Romney's choice of words during a presidential debate, referring to a time during his tenure as governor when his aides brought him "binders full of women" as possible additions to his administration sparked a frenzy on social media sites.

The Netroots activists are dedicated to harnessing the power of the Internet as a tool of action, rather than just viewing it as a method for mobilizing traditional offline political activities such as voting. The network is diffuse and diverse enough to penetrate every social media platform. Connections are loose, and Netroots activists rely on viral transmission of local and regional stories that speak to their agenda and goals.

Politicians and Political Campaigns

The early days of Netroots activism are associated with the presidential campaign of Howard Dean in 2004, and Netroots activists have since mobilized their network for online political campaigning in every subsequent election, gaining in reach and penetration as social media has taken hold in popular culture. Donations are mobilized for local and statewide candidates when a candidate is seen as congruent with the Netroots agenda on social issues.

During the 2012 elections, the issue of restrictions on abortion in the case of rape inspired Republican candidate Todd Akin to use the term *legitimate rape*, asserting that if a rape was legitimate, pregnancy would not occur because the female body had ways to "shut that whole thing down." This was an example of a politician making a comment that quickly became an Internet meme, spread throughout social media networks. The meme of the Republican War on Women, as evidenced by such statements, was used successfully in fundraising efforts for candidates across the country.

Presidential candidate Mitt Romney was the source of several memes during the 2012 campaign, and one that particularly ignited the Netroots was his comment that during his tenure as governor, when there was a suggestion that his administration did not include enough women, his aides brought him "binders full of women." Viewers who were live-tweeting the debate immediately seized upon this comment. Online and traditional media converged and sustained endless jokes about "binders" and "women," and Governor Romney's awkward syntax. These memes provided late night comedians and political pundits with content, and perhaps more importantly, a scrolling exhibition of public sentiment, expressed in memorable ways that often draw connections between multiple issues.

When it comes to fundraising, the memes that reinforce key campaign messages can be employed to motivate voters who have money to donate and wish to support candidates, or perhaps just as often, to oppose candidates whose views are seen as impeding progress. Sites such as ActBlue.com highlight candidates based on their positions on social issues that are important to progressives.

Petitions

Progressive activists employ numerous petition sites, and petitions are circulated through social media platforms. Sites that allow for the creation and distribution of online petitions include Change.org and Care2Cause.org. One example of a highly successful petition was created by the mother of Trayvon Martin, a young man who was shot and killed in Florida when he was on his way home from a convenience store in his father's gated community in Sanford, Florida. The petition had more than two million signatures, and was still attracting new signers more than a year after it was launched.

In the Trayvon Martin case, social media played a major role in pressuring authorities to bring charges. For activists, the case was a confluence of issues, but the primary issue was race and

how it influenced both the actions of the shooter and the decision not to press charges against George Zimmerman, who admitted to the killing. This decision was only reversed after intense social media pressure. In this case, large numbers of signatories to a petition provided activists with evidence, and kept an issue on the public agenda. The White House also accepts petitions on its official Web site, providing responses to petitions that achieve a preset level of support. In the world of online political discourse, petitions allow for online activists to bring attention to issues they wish to influence.

Boycotts

Another strategy employed by Netroots activists is the boycott, which involves the avoidance of certain corporate brands or retail outlets. Also utilized is the opposite strategy called a "buycott," in which supporters of a particular issue or principle will intentionally purchase products made by companies that have demonstrated sympathy for that issue. Boycotts and buycotts may be launched for a variety of reasons, but social issues have proven an active site for this type of protest in the past decade. When the CEO of Chik-fil-A fast food restaurants made statements opposing same-sex marriage, online activists organized a boycott on behalf of LGBT rights, while activists on the right organized a Chik-fil-A Appreciation Day led by former Arkansas governor and presidential candidate Mike Huckabee.

Social media also provide platforms that allow Netroots activists to crowdsource and actively aggregate information about companies and businesses that support a progressive agenda, and those who are seen as perpetuating inequalities or exploiting the ideals of the movement. One example was the reaction to the Unilever Corporation when it released a commercial for its Dove brand of products, aligning the brand with the resistance to improbable and idealized notions of female beauty in advertising. This ad was considered compelling, and spread virally on social networks, especially Facebook. However, online activists were quick to respond with a debunking critique, pointing out that Unilever was also the parent company for the brand Axe, aimed at young men and infamous for commercials filled with images that are misogynistic.

Conservative voices have dominated the realm of talk radio at the national level for some time, particularly Rush Limbaugh and his three-hour daily radio program. Through this widely syndicated vehicle, Limbaugh has exerted great influence over the thinking of conservative activists and politicians. However, on February 23, 2012, a Georgetown University law student named Sandra Fluke testified before a congressional committee on the issue of birth control accessibility, speaking against "morality clauses" that would allow employers to deny birth control coverage to students and staff based on the argument that it offended their religious beliefs. Conservative bloggers criticized Fluke with headlines about "Sex-crazed co-eds." On February 29, Limbaugh delivered a monologue about Fluke on his show, calling her a "slut" and a "prostitute" who wanted "taxpayer subsidized sex."

The response to Limbaugh was swift and negative. By March 3, he had apologized, but by then a campaign had been initiated by the Netroots that came to be known as Stop Rush or Flush Rush. Netroots activists decided to go after Limbaugh's advertisers, national and local, and because of the widespread and extremely negative publicity Limbaugh received, this campaign resulted in the exodus of a number of Limbaugh's sponsors. One year after his comments about Fluke, netroots activists at StopRush.net are still promoting the boycott, and have introduced a mobile phone application so that citizens can avoid Limbaugh advertisers. Through a loose association of hashtags, and/or membership in Facebook groups, Limbaugh critics collectively monitor, document, and publicize the names of advertisers who are heard on his program. On the one-year anniversary of the campaign, activists claimed that Limbaugh had lost 2,600 advertisers nationwide. In May 2013, a CNN article asked "Is Rush Limbaugh Still Relevant?" In this article, Cumulus Radio CEO Lew Dickey was quoted as attributing a steep decline in 2012 sales to the success of the boycott against Limbaugh.

StopRush.net is the work of a number of activists, and represents a crowdsourced approach to technology, information, and free market persuasion. The @StopRush Twitter account is operated by an employee of Media Matters for America, a media watchdog organization, although the

account profile states the connection and indicates that the posts represent only the individual. While this account is active and focused solely on Limbaugh, the StopRush network benefits from numerous less-dedicated, but interested participants who help to monitor and spread the names of Limbaugh advertisers through sharing on social media sites.

Events

The Netroots Nation convention began in 2006, and has been held annually in various major U.S. cities since then. The DailyKos Web site is a major hub for many Netroots activists, and the Netroots Nation emerged from their YearlyKos event. The convention brings together online progressives from across the country, where they conduct panels and workshops designed to train individuals to be more effective online and offline activists. This event has grown, and the increasing influence of the Netroots activists is demonstrated by the increase in participation by numerous media and political elites, and the harvesting of talent from the Netroots to more traditional political campaigns and nonprofit organizations. The convention has become a major event for progressive activists, and offers journalists and bloggers the chance to connect online identities with "real life" people who have a variety of offline roles.

Loose Affiliations/Decentralized Organization

Twitter users found via a search for "Netroots" editors of major progressive Web sites such as RawStory and DailyKos. There are leaders among the activists such as DailyKos founder Markos Moulitsas and John Aravosis of AmericaBlog, who are viewed as founding figures. There are also celebrities who lend their images and enthusiasm to the causes, most notably George Takei, an actor who starred in the original *Star Trek* television series. He is now a prominent Facebook poster, sharing memes, many of them related to social issues, and in particular marriage equality. His Facebook page has more than four million "likes," and his popularity is a testament to the viral nature of comic presentations in social media because the vast majority of the content he shares is humorous in tone.

While sites such as DailyKos and Democratic Underground.com serve as hubs for Netroots activists, the network is large and dispersed across a wide variety of sites representing causes, organizations, communities, and interest groups. Sites such as Facebook and Twitter serve as staging grounds and fuses that can ignite a meme and rapidly spread it around the country, and in some cases, the world. A good example of this type of activism is provided by the marriage equality battle. As the Supreme Court heard arguments in two marriage equality cases during the last week of March 2013, more than 2 million Facebook users (and many Twitter users) changed their profile images to a red background with an equal sign, symbolizing their support for marriage equality. Many personalized variations also appeared, including one in which two strips of bacon symbolized an equal sign. The phenomenon was widespread enough to catch the attention of many traditional print and broadcast news outlets, and generated stories about the public show of support. Although the image began with the human rights campaign, by the time it spread through the social media network, many users were far more familiar with the meaning than with the origins of the image.

Many of the Netroots projects and tactics were not considered serious when they first emerged, but the now well-established network of activists has proven that the groundwork that was laid in the early days of online politics has paid off. Much like the Occupy Wall Street movement, supported by many in the Netroots community, the network is simultaneously local, national, and international, without clear boundaries on membership or sharply defined roles and hierarchies. It is an experiment in an alternative media model, uniquely suited to the affordances of the Internet. Activists organize themselves, moving with agility to respond to issues and outrages, and are harnessing the power of online fundraising and information crowdsourcing to an unprecedented degree. Connecting local stories to national issues and vice versa, and monitoring public discourse across mediums and ideologies, Netroots activists are answering the power of industry lobbies, traditional media outlets, conservative think tanks, and political action committees with online mobilization and the exercise of consumer pressure

through boycotts organized and sustained by the netroots. Particularly on social issues, the Netroots show no signs of surrendering the ground that they have gained in the public discourse, and have become a powerful voice in the national conversation.

Jeanette Castillo
Ball State University

See Also: Crowdsourcing; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights; Networks, Political; Occupy Movement.

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Social Issues and Augmented Reality

Isomorphic games (games that reflect or attempt to model reality) have been a part of both teaching and entertainment since the beginning of human intellectual history. Plato's dialogs asked his student to consider hypothetical situations. Lao Tzu presented situational advice. The oldest simulation games are chess and similar war simulations, based in part on mathematical calculations of geographical parameters and the strengths and weaknesses of various military units.

The advent of the computer age spurred the massive expansion of gaming—both fantasy games with little or no connection to the real world and isomorphs. The first isomorphs were primarily developed by the military and used for training purposes: Simulations of nuclear strikes and counterstrikes operationalized as many factors as the feeble computing capacities of the Cold War could handle. With the beginning of standalone computing (free of massive tape drives and building-sized processors), an entirely new sort of game emerged. Pioneered by authors such as Sid Meiers, schooled in computer languages and gaming, games such as *Railroad Tycoon* (1990) began to appear. What separated *Railroad Tycoon* from earlier games, such as *Pacman* and *Tetris,* was the ability of the gamer to make critical decisions about the parameters of the world in which the game was played. The *God Games* (*Populous* from 1987, *Civilization*, and *Alpha Centauri*) allowed gamers to control entire worlds, planets, even galaxies on a gigantic scale and in tremendous detail. While fantasy and entertainment were central to these games, they also attempted to model reality in a way that chess, for example, never could.

By the turn of the century, the level of detail in these games was often surprising: the *Total War* series (the first, *Shogun,* was marketed in 2000) employed dozens of historians of eclectic periods to fact check and generate historical accuracy. While the early games were really only playable by single players, the protocols quickly jumped to playability over a local area network (LAN) of several players on separate computers that were linked. It was a short technological jump to allow players to play over the Internet. Internet linkages allowed for not only far more detail, but also a theoretically endless number of players because of the increased memory of games that were not resident on single machines; they "lived" on central servers, or in "the cloud."

The development of these games, and the availability of an almost unlimited platform, has led to the development of simulations that cover nearly every critical contingency for extremely complex virtual realities. Augmented reality games are a logical progression. Briefly, potentially catastrophic situations are simulated in a world that models reality in all ways other than the subject catastrophe. It then lays out the disastrous event, and offers the gamer opportunities to meet the crisis with self-developed (or in some cases, team-developed) solutions. Augmented reality is a type

of virtual reality that mimics the world environment for a user. In this reality, a user is presented with different situations, and depending on the user's actions, several scenarios are played out. The goal of augmented reality is to show a system in which the user cannot tell the difference between the real world and the created world. The benefit of this system is to show users what would happen in certain situations, depending on how they react. Augmented reality is often used in showing users what would happen in extreme cases. In these cases, the objective is to show what would happen if people do not change their actions, such as to better the world environment.

World Without Oil

Columnist Chris Dahlen voiced a much-discussed augmented reality game (ARG) concept in 2007. In his article, he hypothesized that if ARGs can spark players to solve very hard fictional problems, could the games be used to solve real-world problems? Dahlen was writing about the popular *World Without Oil,* the first ARG centered on a serious near-future scenario: a global oil shortage. Another ARG, *Tomorrow Calling,* is a beta test for a future project focused on activism with environmental themes.

World Without Oil was a one-of-a-kind game that attracted many types of gamers. It was produced by Ken Ecklund ("Writerguy"), and was a project of PBS's Independent Lens, and its Electric Shadows Web-original programming. It was the first game that featured two distinct genres: a serious game and an alternate reality game. A serious game teaches the user, and has much more value than entertainment. An alternate reality game is one in which the game is played in a cognate of the real world, but there is a bit more added to the world, an augment from the creators.

The game was open to anyone who could access the Internet, and was not bound to a particular geographic or political group. As long as one had the ability to connect to the Internet, they could play the game and help solve the problem. Over 1,800 players played the initial release of the game over a specific timeline. While only 1,800 players participated, over 60,000 watched the game play out. This game demonstrated a couple of important ideas and practices. At the heart of the development process were several critical issues upon which the eventual success of the games would turn: Could an alternate reality game help address a current or future world problem? Can people be brought together by a game to fix a problem? Are people interested in playing a game to help others, without seeing a direct reward for their actions?

The purpose of *World Without Oil* was to create a future scenario, which may or may not come to pass. It connected many people, coming from different lifestyles and backgrounds, to come up with solutions to an oil shortage crisis. What was so unique about this game was that it allowed the players help create the story, and in return helped yield a multitude of solutions for many players. To play the game, players documented their lives as though the oil shortage occurred at the current moment. Stories and ideas were recorded daily, and they could post videos, images, or blog entries. One of the added benefits of the game was that it called people to work together to reach a common goal. By doing this, the game masters proved that people could come together in a team to begin to solve future problems before they occurred.

The result of the game was that people came together to find a stabilizing point within the crisis. At one point in the game, gas prices reached over $7 a gallon, but at the end of the 32-week period, it stayed around $5.60 a gallon. Even though more than 2 million people had lost their jobs, the companies in the game began to hire again. Riots occurred in most of the major cities, and the damage was just beginning to be cleaned up. Overall, the game revealed what could possibly happen if a real oil shortage occurred around the world. It was a positive experience that showed that people from all aspects of life can come together to find a common solution to a worldwide problem.

Augmented reality is a real possible solution to solve future problems today. It gives users the opportunity to face these problems head on and receive the best and worst possible outcomes in advance. By knowing these outcomes, users will be able to work together to come up with the best scenario for everyone involved. Serious ARGs introduce plausibility with third-person narrative features to attract players into the game. People

participate to experience, prepare for, or shape an alternative life or future. The games thus have the potential to attract casual players because "what ifs" are games that anyone can play. Serious ARGs may therefore be sponsored by organizations with activist or educational goals.

Their subject's intensity and severity may lead serious ARGs to separate from mainstream ARGs in design. Instead of the challenge of normal first-person player games challenging collective intelligence to solve a game-mastered puzzle, *World Without Oil*'s puppet masters, and others who followed, acted as players to guide the collective imagination to create a multi-authored chronicle of the alternative future, purportedly as it was happening. By asking players to chronicle their lives in the oil-shocked alternative reality, the *World Without Oil* game relinquished narrative control to players to a degree not previously seen in an ARG.

In October 2008, the British Red Cross also came up with an ARG called *Traces of Hope* to promote their campaign about civilians caught in conflict. According to a press release, the game is "an experience in which on-screen characters reach out into the players' real world." The story will revolve around a Ugandan teenager searching for his mother during a time of civil war and unrest. The experience combines "storytelling, detective work, technology and treasure-hunt style gameplay in a compelling 21st century narrative, as players seek to reunite Joseph with his mother." As Joseph (the teens), arrives at a camp, the game focuses on how the Red Cross' tracing and messaging service offers the "last traces of hope" for displaced civilians searching for their families.

In 2008, the European Union funded an ARG to support motivation for multilingualism within European secondary school students called *ARGuing for Multilingual Motivation in Web 2.0*. This project is now complete, and papers on the project and the resources produced for education are to be presented at the 3rd European Conference on Games Based Learning. In 2008 and 2009, the MacArthur Foundation supported an ARG called *The Black Cloud* that was based on the book of the same name written in 1957 by Sir Fred Hoyle. The object of the game is to teach high school students in the United States about the state of the quality of indoor air. The project is active and allows teachers to rent sophisticated air quality sensors to run the game locally.

R. Bruce Anderson
Hannah Gifford
Jon Klos
Florida Southern College

See Also: Social Issues Advocacy, Netroots Driven; Social Media Political Gaming; Television and Social Media; *World Without Oil*.

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Social Listening

Social listening consists of listening and responding to the conversation about individuals and businesses on social media Web sites. The majority of businesses have a social media presence on the Internet. Their presence is established through Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and other social media Web sites. Social media play a significant role in the lives of businesses and individuals; they allows users to create and share content. It is important to stress that every business application of social listening can be, and in many cases already is, used as a tactical component in social media political strategy. Moreover, social media sites allow users to develop a public profile, connect with a set of users who share similar interests, and view, change, and sort their list of connections and the lists of others. In other words, social media has a large impact on people's lives.

It is the fabric that connects people socially. For example, Facebook was originally intended for relatives, friends, and others to connect on a small group level; however, it quickly burgeoned into

the social networking giant that it is today. Today on Facebook people share videos and photos, post links, and write blogs to update their profiles. A unique feature of the site is that it allows individuals to meet one another, make connections, and form bonds while making these social networks public. For businesses, social media can enhance a company's reputation and brand or destroy it. Further, social media influence how individuals interact with brands.

Monitoring social Web sites manually can be done with five tools: Google Reader for collecting the results of searches, Technorati to see blogs about a company, Google Blogsearch (to see blogs), Summize.com to see a summary of items related to a topic, Link Checker SEO Pro monitors who is linking to your URLs and what the text is composed of, and Crazy Egg to visually identify the most tracked areas of a Web page. Professional Web sites that monitor social media Web sites are available for a monthly fee, such as Radian6.com, Tracx.com, and SproutSocial.com. Listening to social media empowers businesses to have more effective Web sites. Social media provides a venue to promote Web sites, products, and services that traditional media do not, focusing a collective power.

The ideal social listener listens to multiple online communities, joins the conversation, and responds to the comments that users make online. Effective social listening can result in: initiating a dialogue between client and consumer, expanding awareness of the brand to a new audience, driving relevant links to the Web site, increasing the number of people who follow the brand, and increasing traffic to the brand's Web site. Social listening is effective in creating a conversation about a brand, which eventually could build lasting relationships. Further, social listening and monitoring social media sites can be used to respond to negative publicity about a company's product.

Responding quickly on social media sites is a good way to counteract a complaint about the company's product. It is a way of joining the conversation. In fact, Fortune 500 companies have a plan in place to deal with negative publicity. The case with Dell computers is a prime example of effective social media listening. Jeff Jarvis, a customer as well as a blogger, started a series of blogs emphasizing Dell's lack of customer service. This event occurred in 2005. It was estimated that 50 percent of the conversations occurring about Dell were negative.

In the crisis response, Dell started a company blog called Direct 2 Dell, where it answered complaints directly from the consumer. Further, it started a new blog in 2007, called "Idea Storm." This blog allowed consumers to post new ideas and comments. Dell monitored these posts and directly responded to consumers. They also showed their follow up on some of the ideas. For example, one user in particular wanted Dell to standardize the power cord on the laptop computers. This post had the most promotions and showed how the Idea Storm site worked. The interaction of Dell with the community could be viewed on the Web site. The Dell community contributed 12,901 ideas, promoted 697,461 posts, and posted 87,605 comments. Dell implemented 389 ideas. Its blog was effective because it listened, responded, and implemented the ideas of the consumer. Idea Storm is still used, and is now carried through to Twitter. After engaging in these series of social media blogs, the negative opinion of Dell began to decrease, and it was viewed more positively in the public eye.

Clemson State University is a second example of social listening used in academe. Clemson posts on several multimedia platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Twitter. There is a separate Twitter account for students, prospective students, staff, faculty, and alumni. There are multiple Flickr accounts, iTunes U, Google apps, and multiple online communities. It also makes use of RSS feeds and Google apps.

Further, it has its own version of a networking site, called Net Community. This site is specifically for alumni. Clemson University and Dell are much more effective because of their social listening skills. In fact, both have created conversations across the World Wide Web. Social listening caused them to create sustainable relationships.

Shirley M. Crawley
Western Connecticut State University

See Also: Social Media, Definition and Classes of; Traffic Analysis; Web Mapping and Online Politics.

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Social Media, Adoption of

With the proliferation of social media platforms and their convergence with traditional forms of media for entertainment and information dissemination, as well as traditional forms of social interaction, the idea that one can choose whether or not to use social media is quickly becoming antiquated. As the digital divide continues to diminish and new social media platforms are created, adoption of social media will continue to become less of an option for those who want to maintain interpersonal relationships, keep up-to-date with the latest news or information, and maintain work tasks. Most people find that they enjoy the affordances offered by social media and quickly integrate social media platforms into their everyday lives.

One common reason for the adoption of particular social media outlets is that they offer entertainment. Social media allow for conversations to occur between friends in places where they might have been disruptive or impossible in the past. For example, texting can quietly occur while waiting in a doctor's office, where a phone call might be loud and disruptive. Even if a friend is not available for such synchronous interaction, social networking sites such as Facebook can allow for several friends' status updates—often with photos, links to other sites, and references to other friends who can be linked right into the message—to be observed. Even after reviewing Facebook updates and responding to what individuals have posted, an individual is able to play games and share scores, read his or her favorite blog, respond to the author or other fans, or a host of other activities that can pass time.

Although it is easy for some to dismiss texting and social networking sites as only about entertainment, these forms of interaction also have relational functions. Reading a Facebook post or tweet offers insights into others, and they allow connection where distance or time constraints might not allow such connections to be possible. Some enjoy social media platforms because they allow a feeling of distance and comfort where sensitive topics might be more easily discussed, and social media outlets also allow for a sense of community. In fact, some adopt platforms such as Facebook because they hear other friends or family members mention that they learned something about a personal friend or relative through the site, and they did not want to feel left out from hearing the latest news. Sometimes, social media are stereotyped as the domain of the young, but these family connections will often draw users of all ages. For instance, many Skype users report that they started using the service in order to see their grandchildren and have conversations from distant locations.

Information is also secured through social media. It is not uncommon for businesses—ranging from small "mom and pop" operations to the largest of corporations—to create social media profiles where they can promote their products and establish goodwill with consumers or other stakeholders. For example, a coffee chain might tweet a link that allows those following the chain on Twitter to open a Web page with coupons or information about a promotion. The forms of connection between businesses or other organizations and individuals can also be highly personalized. For instance, members of a small business might share news that extends beyond the business, such as the announcement of an employee's engagement, or news of a baby being born. Larger organizations might refer to customers as part of their family and offer them special benefits

or offers for their loyalty. When an individual follows, "likes," or otherwise affiliates with a business or organization through social media, it is often noticeable to friends or family members, who may also affiliate. All of this, in turn, encourages people to adopt social media platforms as a way of feeling that they can take advantage of the best offers or know when new products will become available.

Sometimes, social media are also seasonally adopted, or when particular needs arise. For example, television fans will often join a message board forum in late April when final decisions are made about what shows will be cancelled, and what new shows will air in the fall. Once that information is determined, they may abandon the forum until the following year, when that information is sought again. Online daters will often use social media only when seeking new relationships, or as a lurker when in an unsatisfying relationship and contemplating a new one. Sometimes, people see themselves using a platform temporarily, but then find that they stay after that need has passed. For example, many who are preparing for a wedding will go to a site such as Pinterest to look for creative ideas, but then find that they want to stay when they realize how many good recipes and other shared resources are available.

The process of adopting social media platforms has become even more simplified with the development of smartphone applications (referred to as "apps") that can quickly be downloaded and just as quickly removed. Many established social media outlets will develop an app as a companion, while other nonsocial media outlets (such as businesses or online shopping sites) will develop apps as a way of capturing a social media–like experience for customers. Still, users find

Social media are often adopted by users to avoid feeling left out from hearing the latest news about friends and family on sites such as Facebook. Being able to make connections with family can draw older users to services like Skype, where many users report that they used the service to see children and grandchildren who do not live nearby.

themselves confused about what is shared on a social media site, or even when they are actually joining one. While businesses or voluntary organizations typically do not require social media connection for patronage, some are now adopting social media platforms as a requirement for work. Many times, workplaces will have private social spaces specially tailored for employee interaction or available through platforms like the more private elements of Google, rather than use publicly available platforms.

Barriers to Adopting Social Media

However, employees or individuals are often expressly prohibited from using public outlets such as Facebook or Twitter (or are closely monitored when doing so). Individuals also report that they choose not to adopt such public platforms because they worry about others posting information or statements to their profile that would reflect poorly upon them as an employee or in a public social role or political office. That has sometimes led to people using fake names or having multiple accounts (often one that is public and another that is private) when adopting a particular social media platform. Other reasons for not adopting social media include fear of loss of private information (especially information requested when setting up an account), confusion about how a social media platform works, or the lack of a unique feature or reason for using a particular platform. Early adopters to social media outlets will often find themselves with multiple abandoned accounts as they inhabit a new social media space and then leave once they realize that others are not joining them or they realize that the platform is not a good fit for their social media needs.

The digital divide, particularly lack of access to high-speed Internet, can also prevent the adoption of social media. Social media platforms used to be developed with low-speed Internet connections in mind, but as higher speeds have become more common, social media have become more sophisticated, so those using dial-up or other low-speed connections often find themselves unable to take advantage of what these newer versions have to offer. This raises important questions about the political implications for adopting social media. As a number of institutions continue to gravitate toward social media platforms, those who are politically engaged may find it difficult to access their causes or candidates because of the digital divide. For those who can access social media, they may find it difficult to connect to smaller sects or splinter groups affiliated with a primary political organization. They may not know the implications or nuanced viewpoints of some the groups they connect to online. These concerns aside, adoption of social media are an important and integral part of political and social issues campaigns in many countries.

Jimmie Manning
Northern Illinois University

See Also: Communication; Digital Revolution; Mobile Apps; Social Media, Definition and Classes of.

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Social Media, Alternatives to Commercial

Social media support the creation, upload, sharing, and collaborative creation of user-generated content. However, outcomes of participatory and collaborative information communication technologies and "prosumer" activities via social media networks are often seen as standing in opposition to commercial interests. Along with this, business leaders are figuring out how to

harness social media for marketing, sales, customer service, and other business objectives, without alienating the online user. Professor of economics at Harvard University Martin Weitzman masterminded the idea that the "share economy" might deliver even higher levels of total economic welfare for all.

One might expect a rich literature and ample empirical insights into the plethora of issues involved in social media's potential to speed up collaborative consumption, peer-to-peer marketplaces, and private noncommercial transactions among the like-minded, and the rich array of electronic markets and networked business issues. However, a review of the literature concludes with a clear picture of the relationship between social media is a marketing tool and that the managerial economics in gaining sustainable competitive advantage through open marketplace transactions is only emerging. Can social media come to be seen as alternatives to commercial media outlets when it comes to generating economic value or welfare? Arguably, the blogosphere has opened up the paradigms of mainstream media economics toward not yet commercialized spaces of mediated interaction between humans.

Understanding Social Media Economics

Commercial mass media are struggling to find new revenue streams that can reshape their broken business model. Many scholars posit that the mass media industry's future will be defined by experiments in monetization. New publishing business models are evolving, and companies are looking for new revenue streams, while using cost-cutting strategies as a tool to drive their businesses toward innovation. But the advertising and subscription business models that supported traditional media companies in the past appear not to in the digital age.

Addressing the capitalization gap raises the fundamental question of how commercial media will manage to survive as traditional sources of revenue (e.g., paid display ads, subscriptions, and direct sales) shrink. Solving this issue is vital because the legacy revenue model through paid and owned media is failing. Paid advertising has found many outlets, atomized into thousands of blogs, Facebook pages, and specialized television and radio stations, so that return on investment is becoming difficult, notably for print-only media.

Social media, on their side, has become another platform available to engage consumers. For example, digitization and convergence lead to what industry research suggests should be considered the future of television, a new media ecosystem whereby TV changes in several levels concurrently: from analogue to digital, from scheduled broadcasts to on-demand TV on the Internet, from a lean-back (passive) to a lean-forward (active) media, from straight watching to the consumption of content connected to additional services, from the sole TV viewer to the viewer being part of social networks and communities regarding the TV content, from single-screening to multiscreening.

Consequently, broadcasters are developing sophisticated social TV integration tools. They aim to drive viewer tune-in, engagement, and loyalty to boost ratings, live viewing, and ad revenue. In addition, social TV apps and multiscreen solutions open new avenues for usage. These apps let users see what their friends are watching and invite them to watch it simultaneously; chat, share, and tweet around TV programs; register through Facebook or Twitter; receive additional information on anything they see on screen through direct links in the app to information Web sites; instantly purchase products and download content (e.g., songs, series, and books); download apps to their mobile phones; and interact with the enabled adverts to enter competitions, vote, or participate in polls. Finally, and perhaps most important for companies seeking to protect and enhance business value, social media provide a point of entry into transforming the notion of business value from Michael Porter's traditional model of the sequential value chain into a model of "value constellation," a concept first coined by Richard Norman and Rafael Ramirez in 1993.

There, consumers and other partners and suppliers actively coproduce relationships along with the enterprise. In their model, the business model is meant to be actively co-created between the various actors involved. To support this, interactive network technologies would potentially open organizations toward customers' involvement for value generation. Coimbatore Prahalad

and Venkat Ramaswamy have further elaborated on changes in the traditional logic of governance in electronic commerce and analytically depicted by the concept of the linear and horizontal value chain. They claim the need for producers to establish interaction platforms for "co-creating unique value with customers." Only this would achieve sustainable competitive advantage for the business firm. Likewise, German and Scandinavian researchers in business and management have focused on "customer integration," "value Webs," and "interactive value creation."

Social Media Alternatives to Commercial Media

Certainly, businesses are trying to make the most of social media in order to achieve competitive advantage through product differentiation and customer integration techniques, thereby reducing the pressure of direct competition from identical products or close substitutes. So far, however, the noncommercial nature of social media artifacts and platforms and their underlying communicative social practices help to insulate them from full commercial exploitation. Social media is about community, not commerce. They offer unparalleled opportunities for people to network and collaborate.

On the side of social media service providers, they currently offer intangible value at best, such as enhanced coverage and improved brand loyalty. However, this is not tangible cash value. But the present examination of the relationship between social media and their potential as an alternative to commercial media becomes particularly meaningful when considered in the light of calling into question what business models will have to change, should commercial media want to succeed in the future.

As for commercial television broadcasting and its transition into connected TV of the future, managers are faced with the need to satisfy users' expectations and also undertake convergence as an industrial strategy to achieve economies of scope and scale. Social media enhancements are the best drivers of opportunity to complement paid and owned media revenue models. Paid media (i.e., all forms of advertising for which a media buy is necessary), and owned media (i.e., all content assets a brand either owns or wholly controls) are complemented by earned media revenue-generation activities through user-generated content created and/or shared by users. Still, earned media are the most elusive of the three marketing channels.

Second, with social media, consuming information becomes a collective process of sharing it with other users. Hence, public good attributes come in when information is freely shared among users, and between users and social platforms or providers. Additionally, social media are said to confer properties of merit to goods in the sense that their provision and use may benefit society at large, such that objective information, high culture, and education are promoted. For example, interactive social media applications and services may then be used as tools for strengthening citizen integration in the democratic marketplace. Overall, noncommercial social networking activities among end-users have the potential to build up commercial value, and thus business opportunities, for providers offering valuable online goods and services.

Paul Murschetz
University of Salzburg, Austria
Mike Friedrichsen
Stuttgart Media University, Germany

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Earned Media; Return on Investment; Television and Social Media; User-Generated Content; Value.

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Social Media, Definition and Classes of

Social media is the term often used to refer to new forms of media that involve interactive participation. Often, the development of media is divided into two different ages, the broadcast age and the interactive age. In the broadcast age, media were almost exclusively centralized where one entity—such as a radio or television station, newspaper company, or a movie production studio—distributed messages to many people. Feedback to media outlets was often indirect, delayed, and impersonal. Mediated communication between individuals typically happened on a much smaller level, usually via personal letters, telephone calls, or sometimes on a slightly larger scale through means such as photocopied family newsletters.

With the rise of digital and mobile technologies, interaction on a large scale became easier for individuals than ever before; and as such, a new media age was born where interactivity was placed at the center of new media functions. One individual could now speak to many as easily as many could speak to one, and instant feedback was a possibility. Where citizens and consumers used to have limited and somewhat muted voices, now they could share their opinions with many. The low cost and accessibility of new technology also allowed more options for media consumption than ever before—so instead of only a few news outlets, individuals now have the ability to seek information from several sources, and to dialogue with others via message forums about the information posted. At the core of this ongoing revolution is social media. The characteristics, common forms, and common functions of social media are explored here.

Core Characteristics

All social media involve some sort of digital platform, whether mobile or stationary. Not everything that is digital, however, is necessarily social media. Two common characteristics help to define social media. First, social media allow some form of participation. Social media are never completely passive, even if sometimes social networking sites such as Facebook may allow passive viewing of what others are posting. Usually, at bare minimum, a profile must be created that allows for the beginning of the potential for interaction. That quality sets social media apart from traditional media where personal profiles are not the norm.

Second, and in line with their participatory nature, social media involve interaction. This interaction can be with established friends, family, or acquaintances, or with new people who share common interests or even a common acquaintance circle. Although many social media were or are initially treated or referred to as novel, as they continue to be integrated into personal and professional lives they become less noticed and more expected.

Common Forms

As this overview of common forms of social media demonstrates, some are primarily used for recreation or personal connections, others for work or professional reasons, but most allow leeway for both.

E-mail. Probably the most common form of social media used in everyday life, e-mail (short for electronic mail) involves users logging into an account in order to send and receive messages to other users. Anyone who sends or receives an e-mail must have an account. Many options for free e-mail accounts are available via the World Wide Web, but many times Internet service providers will also offer free e-mail accounts with service packages, or employers will offer e-mail addresses to their employees. Most workplaces have strict rules about how e-mail accounts can be used, although many organizations report that they have no specific e-mail training. Those who work for public organizations (including politicians, professors at state universities, and administrators and assistants for government offices) are often subject to open records laws that will allow interested people or organizations to request any e-mails sent or received to a government-funded e-mail account or an e-mail account used to conduct government business.

Use of e-mail predates the Internet, with some organizations having the ability to send messages electronically within a local computing network.

As the Internet rose to prominence, sending messages across different servers also became a possibility. E-mail acts as a quick and highly reliable way to send documents or images, updates, or important details at a moment's notice, or to share one piece of information with a large number of people.

Many people face issues with spam, or unsolicited e-mail, that is usually from commercial sources. Many times spam is exacerbated by computer viruses that use e-mail programs to capture all of the e-mail addresses in a user's address book. An address book is the list of e-mail addresses that an individual saves to quickly send an e-mail to an individual or a group of people. People often divide an address book into different kinds of friends, colleagues, or family members to send correspondence to those to specific groups.

Texters. Similar to e-mail, a text uses two-way communication channel that allows individuals to quickly send a message to another person or a group of people. Although media portrayals often make it look as if texting is a particularly youthful behavior, people of all ages have adapted to texting. Still, younger individuals tend to text more often, and usually do so at a faster speed. As texting technology has improved, it is easier to text photos or to copy and paste links into texts in order to share them with others. Texters often make use of emoticons, keyboard characters to make pictures such as a smiley face (e.g., :-P), a practice that is also common with e-mail. Texters are derived from chat rooms, or computer programs that make use of the Internet to allow people to quickly talk back and forth via text characters.

Although the use of texting is often highly convenient and allows many benefits, particular attention has been paid to two texting behaviors that have led to problems: texting while driving and sexting. It is estimated that texting while driving makes a car crash at least 23 percent more likely. Sexting is most harmful when adolescent children share pictures that are later redistributed to others by the receiver. In some cases, those forwarding pictures of people under the age of 18 have been charged with child pornography. Politicians have faced scrutiny for sharing sexual messages with others, including interns. Despite these problems, many adults report that sexting is a satisfying alternative to sexual interaction when they are away from their partners.

Blogs. The word *blog* is derived from the word *Weblog*. A blog is a Web page where an individual or group can share information or ideas with a large group of people via the Internet. It is not uncommon for a person to start a blog, and then never update it again. Some of the most successful blogs are updated on a regular basis so the followers of the blog can know when to expect new entries. Blogs cover a wide range of topics, including political issues. A common feature to blogs is a feedback forum where, after reading an entry, people can interact with both the blog author and others who have commented. Many traditional media outlets have adopted blog-like features online in order to entice readers to continue sticking with their news or entertainment offerings. For example, many newspaper stories end with the opportunity for readers to share their thoughts or comments about a current issue. These news stories—especially when about hot or particularly partisan political issues—can lead to serious debates. Because of the contentious atmosphere many blogs and news outlets find, it is not uncommon for a user to be required to register in order to participate.

One particular type of blog that has gained popularity is the microblog. The most popular microblog, Twitter, is one of the 10 most visited Internet outlets. Microblogs involve sending out very short messages—usually 140 characters or less—to the general public via a microblogging platform. People can use their accounts to read all of the messages sent by a particular user or related to a specific topic, a practice that is usually referred to as "following," with those who are following known as followers. After Twitter became popular, sites such as Facebook also began to allow followers, meaning that public-level content could be tracked and read by someone who is not a Facebook friend. Twitter has inspired social media in many ways. One especially popular feature is the retweet, or the ability to share a tweet with others via one's Twitter account.

On a stylistic note, the hashtag, which denotes a topic, idea, or attitude using a pound sign (#)

and a word or phrase (e.g., #Lost, #firstworldproblems) was not only used on other social media platforms but in hip-hop music as well (being coined as hashtag rap after being brought to national attention by musical artists Kanye West and Drake). With over 500 million users, Twitter is also used as a gauge for what is popular, with the term *trending on Twitter* often used to describe a large-scale cultural event or topic of conversation. As such, traditional media or event managers often encourage people to tweet using a provided hashtag (e.g., #DancingWith theStars or #Lollapalooza2013).

Message boards. It is not uncommon for fans of television programs or other popular entertainment to frequent message boards that allow users to post messages about a clearly defined subject. Message boards also prove popular with people seeking social support or advice, whether they are wounded warriors trying to make sense of life after war, or someone facing breast cancer who wants to talk to someone else who has been through the experience. Advice is also offered through review sites such as Yelp that allow users to rate businesses such as restaurants.

Young women texting in Olympia Park, Chicago. With the interactive age, instant feedback became commonplace, and the affordability and accessibility of new technology has allowed for more options for communication and consumption.

Connection sites. Online dating is another form of social media. Users approach online dating sites—some that require paid membership and others that are free of charge—and create a profile that tells who they are and what they seek in a relationship. Some are skeptical about how honest the information displayed in an online profile is, but research shows that people are generally honest. The stigma placed on online dating sites has continued to diminish as more people continue to use them in order to meet dating partners. In addition to dating, others may use connection sites to find friends or activity partners. For example, the connection site Meet Up allows users to find activist groups, book clubs, or hobby circles. Users enter a profile, and then they can send messages to group leaders in order to learn more about the activity or see if they would make a good fit for the group.

Social networking sites. Facebook and other social networking sites are almost ubiquitous features in contemporary culture. Even those who choose not to create an online profile and participate will often hear information gained from such social platforms from others. A key distinguishing feature that makes a social networking site is the fellow list of users that one connects with, usually based upon friendships, family, work relationships, or even weak-tie relationships. Initially, social networking sites were great ways to meet new people, and although that is still a possibility, many social networking sites now discourage people from adding connections they do not know. The public nature of information posted to social networking sites often allows a space for social or political viewpoints to be displayed, although research suggests that much of this political activity reinforces pre-existing beliefs—especially because people tend to be friends with people who are similar.

Games and entertainment. Online games and entertainment often carry a social dimension. Puzzle games like Bejeweled or Words With

Friends allow friends to challenge each other for higher scores, send gifts that will allow for advanced game play, or even collaborate to beat a game together. Other games such as Farmville carry social dimensions, where people can build a virtual farm, town, or business, and fellow players can patronize or lend a helping hand to each other. Many times, these games will automatically send requests to others to join in, much to the chagrin of those receiving such requests. It is becoming more common that these games will allow for some kind of chat or interaction to accompany each move.

Apps. Short for mobile applications, apps are not necessarily social media–oriented; but people can often connect through apps via another form of social media (typically Facebook), and many times apps in and of themselves have some kind of social dimension. One example is Grindr, an app that allows gay men to find other gay men who are within close proximity. Like many apps, Grindr uses a smartphone location tracker to determine where the user is, and to determine the distance between other users.

Common Functions

As the classes of social media make clear, social media have many different functions. First, they allow people to conduct identity work. When an individual puts who he or she is into a profile, it requires some kind of reflection. As individuals see reactions to their online social presence, they will consider themselves in a new light and notice that online interaction allows them to feel more open about thoughts, opinions, and inquiries. Second, social media allows people to tend to their relationships in different ways. Even if popular discourse often demonizes outlets such as Facebook or Twitter as narcissistic and shallow, research shows that they allow people, who may not otherwise be able to connect, an outlet to interact. People also report meeting some of their best friends and even spouses through computer-mediated communication platforms. Third, social media allow people to perform work functions. Sometimes, the social media is their work, such as a popular blog or someone with a large social network circle who is hired to promote events. Other times, people interact with work colleagues via social media sites, or especially with e-mail, take care of most of their work communication using the social media outlet.

Fourth, social media allow people to seek information or share ideas. This information can range from political campaigns to local issues and disaster relief to where is a good place to buy plus-size clothing. Fifth, and often in line with information sharing, people can also offer opinions or consider the opinions of others through social media. Finally, individuals can find entertainment through such sites.

Jimmie Manning
Northern Illinois University

See Also: Blogs; Evolution of Social Media; Facebook; Friendster; LinkedIn; MySpace; Second Life; Social Media, Adoption of; Social Networking Web Sites; Social Worlds; Twitter.

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Social Media and Freedom of Information Act

On Independence Day 1966, U.S. President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Congress passed the law to give citizens the ability to request access to documents compiled and collected by executive branch government agencies. Subsequent acts and executive orders have amended the wording

of the FOIA, clarifying what information is safe to release, to whom agencies can safely release information, and the process by which citizens can retrieve documents. The act will continue to evolve in light of citizens' informational and technological needs, as well as the need for further electronic security as the government discloses more information.

Before the FOIA, both citizens and government officials were concerned about the government releasing documents containing potentially confidential information. Therefore, in addition to defining what records the government would disclose to the public, the initial bill introduced nine exemptions to deny requests for information based on sensitivity and privacy rights. For example, agencies may deny requests that might reveal a business's "trade secrets," compromise legal proceedings, or provide information specifically exempt from disclosure by statute.

Congress updated the FOIA after the Watergate scandal and passed the Privacy Act of 1974. The amendment gave citizens the right to request government information pertaining to them, and the ability to amend that information if it proved inaccurate, irrelevant, or incomplete. The act also offered individuals the chance to sue the government if one's information was improperly shared. Furthermore, the government clarified exemption number three of the FOIA with the passage of the Government in Sunshine Act in 1976, denying requests for information that hinder national defense, relate solely to personnel rules or practices, accuse a person of a crime, or interfere with legal investigations. These two acts further clarified the FOIA, and serve as the modern core of the FOIA today.

Despite the federal acts allowing for disclosure, President Ronald Reagan's Executive Order 12356 permitted federal agencies to withhold large amounts of government data. However, public outcry led President Bill Clinton to push for a more open government during his presidency. For instance, by executive order, he opened government records 25 years or older to the public. Additionally, under Clinton's directive, Congress passed the Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments of 1996 (E-FOIA), mandating that certain types of records created after November 1, 1996, were to be made available electronically. The 1990s marked the foundational stages of e-government in the United States.

Although the Clinton administration furthered citizens' access to information, especially technologically, President George W. Bush restricted government transparency after the events of September 11, 2001, via executive order and the Intelligence Authorization Act of 2002. However, to assuage years of critiques against supposed instances of government secrecy, the George W. Bush administration passed the Openness Promotes Effectiveness in our National Government (OPEN) Act of 2007. One major contribution of the act was its creation of the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to review compliance with FOIA deadlines. Another contribution is the act's definition of a "representative of the news media" as "any person or entity that gathers information of potential interest to a segment of the public, uses its editorial skills to turn the raw materials into a distinct work, and distributes that work to an audience." This understanding of journalism is fundamental to the creation of capable citizen journalists who can spread their views via social media sites.

Recent Developments

President Barack Obama has continued to expand the U.S. government's online presence by creating the Web site http://www.data.gov and improving http://www.usa.gov, which "increase public access to high value, machine readable datasets generated by the Executive Branch of the Federal Government." Although some data still requires an FOIA request, these sites provide citizens access to more mundane government data. These developments demonstrate that the United States is attempting to develop a better e-government presence.

A major reason that the U.S. government is developing a better informational infrastructure is because citizens expect to have access to the information government collects. In fact, the number of FOIA requests is increasing each year, and in 2012, the government reported receiving 251,254 requests. Of these requests, about 40 percent of the documents were released in full, 30 percent were partially released, 30 percent of the requests were backlogged, and only 5 percent were denied in full. The highest frequency of backlogged

requests were from the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State, while the Department of Health and Human Services provided the most full grants. However, since Obama took office, the number of backlogged requests has decreased. Part of the increased processing speed can be attributed to the sheer amount of online information already available, as well as the increasingly well-developed infrastructure of government agencies creating and updating electronic records.

Potential Improvments

Access to information is not necessarily enough, as the data the government provides must be provided in a timely manner, in a usable format, and for a number of purposes. In order to improve the release of government documents, some argue that the government could utilize social media to itemize the data, make it searchable, and improve the processing time of information requests, even among federal agencies. Currently, the government often provides citizens with a PDF document or unstructured data in response to their FOIA requests, which are difficult to maneuver. Moreover, the FOIA only requires an agency to provide records in "any form or format requested by the person if the record is readily reproducible by that agency in that form or format." Worded in this manner, the government's focus is not on providing data in formats most useful to citizen journalists and social media users, such as records in machine-readable databases. However, using the horizontal organizational structure of social media, members of various federal agencies and the public could help refine agencies' files by providing accurate keywords for the documents and links to other relevant documents to make them more usable.

Social media could also allow citizens to participate or follow along with government's decision making with increased access to government documents. Following the ideology of the open source movement, open access to information is a way to ensure accountability with elected officials. In order to ensure such participation, information must be timely, comprehensive, high quality, relevant, and reliable. Those in favor of increased disclosure contend that FOIA offers the potential for government documents to be released and shared for such accountability checks, especially encouraging collaboration among people with expertise. Citizen journalists are one group that could freely associate with the data to find new ways of governing, fix budgets, or commend the government for a job well done because social networking is a tool that allows citizens to make such connections.

It is important to note, however, that this may be in practice a much more complicated issue than it seems in theory, and one that may not "play" the same way across the entire social spectrum. In particular, many privacy advocates have noted the significant downstream potential for violation of individual privacy, and in some cases, personal security, that is made possible by access to public information that has been cross-referenced in a way not possible before the computer age. Of special concern is personal information that is then linked to physical location via GPS technology, which makes patently undesirable behaviors such as stalking and identity theft much easier to commit.

Although the process to obtain information under the FOIA is still cumbersome, the government must first produce an easy way to ensure that there is no national security information in the body, by statute or executive order, before they can release some of the more sensitive information to a social media outlet in readable formats. However, the government could benefit from an increased use of social media by data mining what individuals think is important. For instance, by monitoring Web traffic during normal and crisis periods, such as weather-related or traffic disruptions, the government could assess the type of information that individuals find important, as well as which individuals use the Web for data. This would take far less time and money compared to traditional types of research.

Conclusion

The right to access information is fundamental to American liberty, as the Declaration of Independence even mentions that the separation of records from legislation was a major reason for revolt. Thus, as information sharing evolves alongside technology, the government must evaluate how it shares information with the public. Although various agencies and the White House have experimented with social media, the FOIA

does not discuss the procedures or limitations on using social media to disclose information.

As many FOIA requests contain the most politically sensitive or controversial information, amendments to the FOIA process need to be made in order to ensure that security concerns are addressed before releasing information onto a social media platform. With rigorous planning, preparation, and monitoring, citizens are much more inclined to believe that government could effectively use social media. A divide exists between those who prefer the right to information and those who believe in the right to privacy and security. With careful planning, and by updating the laws, the FOIA could benefit by using social media to disseminate information.

Jeffrey Delbert
Lenoir-Rhyne University

See Also: Citizen Journalism; Data.gov; E-Democracy; Federal Privacy Act; Open Source Politics; Press Freedom & Online/Social Media Security; Streisand Effect; Web 2.0.

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Social Media Career Wreckers

Facebook, Twitter, and other Web sites can help or hinder the careers of new and seasoned professionals. Social media career wrecks are common occurrences in the Facebook era. Professional athletes, politicians, lawyers, teachers, and other professionals are not immune to the potentially negative career implications of social media. Social media career wreckers can emerge in different forms, can result from unflattering pictures or posts, and be perpetuated by negative reviews or lack of endorsements.

Examples

When individuals post information from personal digital devices or personal computers that may feature multiple profiles, the individual might post a personal social media post from a company or organizational account. For example, Scott Bartosiewicz, a social media manager for a media agency, posted a tweet about one of his clients, Chrysler, and how "in #motorcity, no one knew how to [expletive] drive." When he discovered that the post emerged from the wrong account, he stated that the account was compromised, and that the company was working to resolve the matter. After the company discovered the tweet, Bartosiewicz was fired from the agency. Bad links can also lead to a social media career wreck. One of the social media spokesmen for Meg Whitman's political campaign posted a tweet that contained an incorrect hyperlink. This hyperlink led followers to a video of a Japanese man named J. L. Freaks, who dressed like a cross-dresser and played the guitar.

Social media content can also lead to the end of someone's career. A police officer from Fort Lauderdale posted a rant on his Twitter feed against his constituents, which including welfare recipients and teenagers. His tweets eventually resulted in the end of his career as a police officer in the Fort Lauderdale Police Department. CEOs are not immune to the negative implications of their social media posts and public perception of the posts. The CEO of Go Daddy, Bob Parsons, tweeted a picture of himself and his recent hunting kill, an elephant in Zimbabwe. Animal rights groups were outraged by the tweet.

Unflattering Pictures or Posts

Unflattering pictures or posts can emerge from first-hand social media posts (directly from the individual—potentially in the form of social media posts made while drinking) or secondhand (or third-hand) social media posts (posts from people who are with the individual, or posts focused on secondhand information). Social media posts can also include pictures, especially profile pictures (the main picture on the

individual's social media profile). This picture is seen by viewers of the individual's public and private social media profile. Consequently, this picture could mean the death of an individual's positive perception in the lives of others. This picture is a glimpse into an individual's personal life, and their perceptions of their personal life may not be correct. These profile pictures might emerge in the following categories: the party picture, the provocative picture, the pet picture, and travel pictures. Recently, Web sites have been launched to prevent social media blunders. One site, the Social Media Sobriety test, enables users to install an extension on their Internet browser or the app on their cell phones to prevent social media posts during a certain time period. From Facebook and Twitter to YouTube and Tumblr, users can program their devices in this way.

Meg Whitman in 2009 at the Tech Museum in San Jose, California, during her campaign for governor of California. Her campaign became known for a tweet with an incorrect hyperlink that led to a video of a cross-dressing guitar player.

Negative Reviews and Posts

Social media Web sites like LinkedIn enable users to create a professionally based social media profile and to gain endorsements from other users. These endorsements serve as virtual references for individuals, and can help others boost their online and offline careers. Individuals on Linked In who do not have as many endorsements may not be perceived as desirable as their endorsed counterparts. In addition, individuals who receive negative endorsements have the option of erasing their endorsement, but individuals need to constantly check their social media profiles. In addition to LinkedIn, other Web sites like Yelp and review-based sites can enhance or devastate the career of service-based entrepreneurs.

When negative reviews are posted, the entrepreneurs sometimes have the option to delete the post, retaliate, or post a response. Any of these options can negatively impact the customer–client relationship, and/or contribute to a "social media career wreck." Social media can also have a negative impact on individuals who do not have a social media presence. Other individuals can contribute negative posts on Facebook or Twitter, and while these posts may be true or untrue, they can negatively impact an individual's career. If someone experiences social media career wrecking posts, they might have to divulge these posts in future job interviews. This information might need to be revealed in a way that would not detract from the individual's candidacy. Sometimes, the individual can post favorable comments on industry specific blogs to potentially cover negative social media results that emerge during a Google search.

Jennifer Edwards
Tarleton State University

See Also: Blogging; Dooced; Petraeus, David; Privacy; Professional Bloggers; Tweet Insurance; Unemployment; Weiner, Anthony.

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Social Media Noise

The term *social media noise* refers to information overcrowding in networked environments, especially the rapid proliferation of unattributed, superfluous, and often redundant messaging that can explode around any given social media meme, including those the political arena. As a side effect of the digital era, the phrase captures the user experience of extraneous chatter cluttering the social media "airwaves."

As a sociological concept, it is reminiscent of the term *information overload*, which describes situations in which "listeners" are so bombarded by a constant stream of messages that they actually cannot handle the sheer volume of material, and eventually "tune out." Similar consequences emerge when social media noise contributes to an overly saturated social media universe. Ultimately, social media noise exerts a negative impact on the efficacy of political messaging, per se, in that everyone involved in the political food chain—citizens, elected officials, and potential voters—develops strategies for dealing with it that do not always allow substantive material to penetrate the psychological and/or technical buffers (like advanced filtering devices and social media monitoring software) that are put in place as coping mechanisms.

Individuals around the world increasingly rely on social media to connect with political figures, seek and share information about political issues, news, and events, and organize with those who share similar political views. The number of Americans who use social media for political reasons grew with the 2008 presidential election, in which candidate Barack Obama harnessed the power of social media to connect with voters in a way that greatly surpassed that of his opponent, Senator John McCain. By the 2010 midterm elections, the number of Republican voters utilizing social media for political reasons was more balanced. Social media is of increasing importance to the global audience as well. Social media platforms have been influential in several protests abroad. This growth in social media use provides many opportunities for political messaging; however, there are consequences to using social media as well.

With myriad social networking sites and mobile applications, access to information is easier than ever before. These sites connect people despite traditional boundaries, such as geography, and bring together people of all political affiliations. "Friends" on social networking sites are very powerful in politics; if friends share information on a candidate or issue, the message is potentially more persuasive. Indirectly, friends place a spotlight on political issues and political candidates, often influencing debates and support, or lack of support, for candidates. However, this shared information is not vetted for accuracy. This is particularly problematic for politicians, as they must continually seek to separate fact from fiction for their constituents and potential voters. While social media will continue to be a platform on which political figures reach out to the public, these ever-increasing sites create confusion. It is ever more important for politicians to engage social media managers in key campaign roles to ensure that the public is updated on the politician's activities and stance on key issues, and that candidates can immediately correct misleading information.

Social media have also impacted global issues, playing a substantial role in promoting and organizing political movements such as Turkey's Taksim Square protests, a movement organized in response to the government's decision to replace a green space in the center square with a shopping center. The protests were fueled by angst over years of public discontent with the government. The social media response to the Taksim Square protests generated more than 2 million tweets in the first 24 hours of the protest, with consistent tweets thereafter. While the protests generated a large social media response, social media were used as a means to replace Turkey's more traditional forms of media, with Turkish protesters tweeting to others to "turn off the television." This plea from protesters to shun traditional media and

rely on social media for news provided protesters with a forum to describe events as they unfolded in Turkey. Rather than inundate the Turkish public with confusing messages, protesters sought to guide the public to social media messages.

Social media also allows political protesters to organize across borders. During the Arab Spring revolutions, social media played a vital role in organizing individuals across north African and Middle Eastern countries. Residents relied heavily on blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and the WhatsApp application to spread their political messages. The revolutions were heralded for relaying expectations, discussing strategy, and providing breaking news to the public in a way that was organized and unified, rather than confusing and disjointed, which is often the case when organizing people online, across geographic boundaries, and with large amounts of information. Often, social media noise—increased social media presence—preceded major events in the revolution. The Arab Spring movement highlighted the role of social media as a tool for bringing together like-minded but socially fragmented individuals to unite for a single politically motivated cause.

Social media noise can create confusing, often misleading information on both individual and group levels. Thus, it is imperative that politicians, governments, and constituents be aware of the impact of social media on political outcomes.

LaKesha N. Anderson
Indiana State University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Arab Spring; Cognitive Surplus; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; Social Networking Web Sites; Superconnected; Twitter.

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Social Media Optimization

Social media optimization (SMO) is the strategic use of interactive Web-based and mobile technologies to make information highly visible and easily disseminated across social networking sites. These technologies, also called Web 2.0, encompass a combination of user-generated content on wikis and blogs, social news and social bookmarking sites, as well as RSS feeds and social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Pinterest, YouTube, and Instagram that reuse, remix and repurpose content with the intention to generate viral publicity or become widely circulated.

In the past decade, social media has changed not only how individuals communicate with one another, but also how political campaigns are conducted. These technologies have fundamentally shifted the balance of power between candidates and voters, as well as the relationship between governments and citizens. For example, many scholars have extolled the virtues of tools like Twitter and Facebook and their use in helping to give birth to the Arab Spring movement, which ignited rebellions that resulted in the overthrow of governments in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Tunisia by people newly empowered through social media.

Social media has revolutionized a voter's or citizen's ability to impact political discourse and decision making and has given rise to such efforts being called open politics, politics 2.0, or

participatory politics. Politics 2.0 is the idea that participatory technologies will transform an individual's ability to follow, support, and influence political campaigns.

Previously, content producers created Web sites or blogs and used search engine optimization (SEO) techniques to improve the chances of their sites rising to the top of search engines like Google, Yahoo!, or Bing. Today those same producers rely on users of Twitter, Facebook, StumbleUpon, or Digg, and other social media to repost their content and send users back to their sites. According to social media expert Brian Solis, the metadata—or data about data—that users organize using keywords, tags, and categories to classify user-generated content is uploaded to social networks. This creates an index of online content—text, images, or video—that allows others to discover it.

Like search engine optimization, SMO can drive traffic to a Web site. However, SMO differs from SEO in a few significant ways. SEO makes use of strategically placed HTML code, keywords, and tags to drive traffic to a particular Web site; SMO takes content to users. While SEO may penalize a site that repeats its message, SMO rewards those whose messages are repeated across multiple platforms. In fact, SMO gave rise to the use of share icons that make it easier to forward an item across channels. SEO draws users to content on the site that created it, whereas SMO facilitates the flow of that content to where the influential people are. With the increase in "walled-garden" social media communities such as Facebook and Twitter, more users distribute information to their personal connections through links and retweets.

Consequently, people doing the linking have become influential arbiters of relevance, and that relevance can also mean that content surfaces high on search engine result pages, thus making it easier for others to find. As a result, social media optimization becomes the online version of valuable word-of-mouth promotion. Social media upends the gatekeeping barrier created by editors and writers, and permits citizens to tailor the conversation, which has sparked the erosion of mass media authority. Social media differs from the traditional mass media model—source–message channel receiver (SMCR)—in which a sender transmits a message through a given channel, which is then translated and distributed with limited opportunity for feedback from the intended receiver. According to scholars Emily Metzgar and Albert Maruggi, this top-down, one-way model of mass media is ceding to interactive media technologies that give the audience more influence.

Origins

The term *social media optimization* was first coined in 2006 by blogger Rohit Bhargava, who outlined five rules for SMO that were created to distinguish SMO from the concepts of SEO, which was then the main criteria for increasing online visibility and measuring successful online currency. They have evolved to reflect the following prevailing use of the technique:

- *Create shareable content.* Previously, linkability was the measure by which content was deemed valuable. Inbound links to a specific site implied reliable and useful content. In social media, sharing may take the form of "likes" in Facebook, tweets in Twitter, or plus ones in Google Plus, each of which include links back to the source of the information. Creating content that others find useful and informative increases its ability to surface in search engines and to build a brand. It also helps the site owner or content producer to earn social authority or perceived authenticity.
- *Make sharing easy.* Use of "share" icons can encourage linking within social media tools like Digg or Diigo, or to Facebook, Google+, or Twitter. Such sharing includes creating an RSS feed to distribute content throughout social media and the Internet at large.
- *Reward engagement.* Responding to those who engage in the conversation by posting comments, retweeting, or other social sharing can help improve the performance of content. Such efforts can build a dedicated user base that proactively disseminates content.
- *Proactively share content.* This encompasses such activities as syndicating content using social tools such as RSS

feeds, Slideshare, or Scribd, or posting to profiles or sharing video on YouTube, which can extend the visibility of content. It is not enough to have content in one place. For social media optimization, content must be where the users are.

- *Encourage the mashup*. The mashup encourages others to take ownership and to revise posted content to optimize it for the social Web. This is a key to optimizing content on the social Web.

2004 Election

In every era, the transformation of media has impacted the political campaigns of those who have been able to best exploit them. For example, in the 1930s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt used the rising popularity of radio to conduct his well-received fireside chats. In the 1960s, John F. Kennedy mastered television to politically devastating effect against his presidential rival Richard Nixon in series of televised debates. In 1994, Democratic Senator Diane Feinstein of California was credited with launching the first campaign Web site. John McCain was among the first to disseminate political news and information in 2000, and used the Internet to raise $500,000 in online donations. By 2002, more voters turned to the Internet to find political information.

In 2004, many social networking sites were just launching, and political campaigns began to recognize the growing clout of bloggers. Many were issued credentials to cover the Democratic and Republican conventions for the first time that year.

Former Vermont Govenor Howard Dean's 2004 Democratic presidential bid was one of the earliest examples of SMO. Even as his supporters used Meetup.com to fuel his insurgent run, Dean used blogs to generate voter interest, to recruit, and to motivate volunteers. There was also an evident shift from an era of top-down politics that foretold the potential of participatory politics. Despite a lack of sufficient funding, Dean's strategy of Internet-based fundraising and grassroots organizing set the stage for the strategies adopted by the presidential campaign of Senator Barack Obama.

Dean's political Web strategy focused on the use of SEO to drive supporters to his candidate Web site. In the old order of top-down politics, candidates and their consultants and advisers and the media controlled the message. In the evolving era of participatory politics, citizens increasingly have and wield more clout. Dean took advantage of those who wanted to engage with him by enlisting them to canvas for supporters, organize events, and reach out to undecided voters.

Dean was successful in creating an online presence that supporters used to carry his message to other social networks. His use of Blog for America and Meetup.com helped him raise $20 million online, 40 percent of his campaign contributions. At one point, he had nearly 140,000 supporters on Meetup.com. Dean's campaign was even more unusual because in 2004 only 31 percent of Americans used the Internet to access political news and information, according to the Pew Internet and American Life Project. In that pre-Facebook era, the Dean campaign relied on Meetup.com, a Web site that allows users to arrange meetings around common interests. Ultimately, the supporters in his online network did not translate into votes, and he lost in the Democratic primary.

SMO and the 2008 Election

By 2008, SMO was becoming the coin of the political realm. The number of people getting their news and information from social media more than doubled, according to a Pew study. Democratic presidential candidates Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, and John Edwards declared their candidacies online for the first time.

More politicians began incorporating the use of social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube channels, and blogs to connect with their constituents and challenge opponents. Barack Obama, a former community organizer, is credited with taking advantage of self-organized grassroots efforts to lower the cost of building a political brand and to create a sense of connection and engagement.

Obama utilized social media to build a cost-effective campaign tool that went beyond traditional political networks. He optimized information by maintaining a profile in 15 strategic online communities, including AsianAve.com, MiGente.com, BlackPlanet.com, Myspace, Facebook, Eons (a site for Baby Boomers), LinkedIn, and

Twitter. Chris Hughes, a cofounder of Facebook, created a site for Obama called MyBarackObama.com, which mimicked some Facebook features. The campaign also created an iPhone app and used text message reminders to send voters to the polls. The campaign also carefully monitored the traffic and data from the social networks. Obama's social media efforts allowed him to beat overwhelming odds, first against strong primary opponent Democrat Hillary Clinton, and then presidential challenger Republican John McCain.

The Obama campaign bypassed traditional means of communications to amass a database with millions of names, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers of people who could be instantaneously engaged. At the time, Obama had nearly 2.4 million supporters in Facebook. McCain had 620,000. On Twitter, Obama had about 112,000 followers to McCain's 4,600. On YouTube, there were more than 18 million channel views for Obama, compared to 2 million channel views for McCain, according to Pew.

These networks can be the perfect tools for politicians who zealously guard their reputations by monitoring social networks through use of the analytics in tools like Hootsuite or Tweetdeck. Although politicians have been making use of the Internet for more than a decade, their skill in optimizing social networks is relatively new.

Although Obama's efforts highlight the upside of successful social media optimization, some politicians have experienced its negative impact. Social media optimization also ensures that negative messages are easily disseminated far and wide. Such widespread distribution can have disastrous impacts on political careers.

For example, when Senator George Allen of Virginia used a slur to refer to a man of Indian descent during the 2006 U.S. midterm elections, it was caught on camera phone and went viral on YouTube. Subsequently, Allen was defeated at the polls. Similarly, New York Democratic Congressman Anthony Weiner's political career was destroyed when sexually explicit photos and messages that he texted to several women went viral. Democratic presidential candidate John Edwards's secret extramarital affair and love child found traction in social media before it reached the mainstream press. Even candidate Obama experienced the sting of social media when midwestern voters became outraged by a comment he made about their "clinging to guns and the Bible" that was recorded and posted by a blogger for the *Huffington Post*.

On the other hand, political organizations like the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street have successfully exploited social media optimization techniques to fuel growth in their respective organizations. For example, in 2009, citizens angered by the bank bailout formed Tea Party groups. These groups underwent new media training to learn to use blogs, Twitter, Facebook, Digg, and other social media tools to reach like-minded individuals. Their influence in the 2010 midterm election helped sweep Tea Party–affiliated candidates into office. Similarly, the Occupy Wall Street movement sprang up using Facebook, Twitter, and Meetup to coordinate events nationally and internationally. The group conducted conference calls on Skype, giving voice to what they termed the "99 percent" who felt excluded from the political discourse.

Ingrid Sturgis
Howard University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaign Strategy; Search Engine Optimization; Social Media Strategies and Tactics.

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Social Media Political Gaming

Social media political games, or political Internet games, are games that critically address political and social issues and can be played online. They are considered a subgenre of games in general, and are in academic settings often referred to as serious or persuasive games. While some of these games are wildly popular and are played by many people, most games are played by a select group of players (who often are already interested in the topic of the game).

Ian Bogost coined the term *persuasive games* in 2007 as a reaction to the then (and still common) dichotomy of entertainment games versus serious games. He argued that the aforementioned terminology wrongfully suggests that entertainment games are not suited to communicate serious messages (i.e., be used for something other than just mere entertainment). Additionally, the term *serious games* alludes to an almost exclusive focus on game content rather than on the communicating process of the specific medium. This procedural aspect of gaming is what allows for the communication of serious information in such a unique way. The term *persuasive gaming* reflects the centrality of this procedural rhetoric while at the same time focusing on those games that challenge given norms and worldviews. As such, the intent (to persuade) of the creator of the game is also important in defining it as a persuasive game.

There are many different forms of persuasive games addressing different topics and developed by different stakeholders. There are games that focus on health issues (e.g., *Re-Mission,* which shows children undergoing cancer therapy the importance of adhering to their medical treatment programs), social awareness or advocacy (e.g., *McDonalds Game,* which is concerned with the meat industry and its negative impact on society), humanitarian crises (e.g., *Darfur is Dying,* which deals with the famine in Darfur and its effect on local families), or games that promote a particular company or organization, so-called advergames. The military makes use of these games as well, both for recruiting and instruction. *America's Army* is probably the most successful and well known example in this regard. The U.S. Army, developer of the game, claims a significant increase in recruitment information requests due to this game alone.

The political subgenre of these persuasive games specifically focuses on games that challenge certain political stances or worldviews or address political issues. In order to fully appreciate and understand the different games available within this subgenre, the different parties that can develop such games should be taken into account alongside the topic or issue they address. This differentiation mainly happens on three dimensions: political institutions (such as political parties), nonprofit organizations (such as the United Nations or HopeLab), and individuals.

Howard Dean for Iowa is a game that was developed by a political institution in 2004. The American Democratic Party developed the game in light of the 2004 U.S. presidential elections,

Screen shots from the game Darfur is Dying*, which is based on the humanitarian crisis of famine and conflict in Darfur, Sudan. Players choose their character from among members of a family that has been displaced by the crisis. Players then try to avoid the militia so that they can water crops, build huts, and keep the camp running for seven days without being captured.*

and was launched around the end of 2003. Its aim was to help supporters of Howard Dean to understand grassroots outreach and to encourage them to participate in precaucus campaigning in Iowa. This game was successful in that it was one of the first games commissioned in light of the U.S. elections, and as such, added to the overall success of Howard Dean in harnessing the potential uses of the Internet in campaigning.

Poverty Is Not a Game was developed by the European Union for the European year against poverty and social exclusion in 2010. The game aims to raise awareness and to discuss the complex mechanisms underlying poverty, especially among youth. By playing as a young character who unexpectedly becomes poor, players can experience what it means to be poor and how certain problems relating to this can be overcome, whereas others cannot. Several lesson plans were developed and made available free of charge alongside the game for educators to use in the context of the classroom.

September the 12th is an example of a political game developed by an individual. Gonzalo Frasca developed this game based on the events after the tragedy of 9/11 in 2001. The game shows a market square where citizens and terrorists can be seen walking around. The player has the choice to shoot rockets toward the market to kill the terrorists. However, a shot, no matter how well aimed, always results in civilian casualties, which in turn leads to some of the grieving survivors turning into terrorists as well. The intent of the creator was to persuade players of a political stance (such as that violence will only generate more violence) and to make them reflect on this issue, much like political cartoons.

In general, playing these persuasive games has shown to contribute to an increased motivation to learn, acquisition of factual and procedural knowledge about specific topics, and the further development of digital skills. After playing *Re-Mission*, for example, treatment adherence and indicators of cancer-related self-efficacy and knowledge significantly improved. More specifically, there is some evidence that suggests that playing political persuasive games contributes toward an increase in political participation and civic engagement. This is especially evident when people talk with friends and family about the issues discussed in the game (also referred to as "social facilitation" or "civic talk"). This shows that the effects and impact of playing these games should always be set in the context of everyday life, and not be regarded as isolated events.

Joyce Neys
Erasmus University Rotterdam

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Campaigns, Virtual; Debate via Social Media; Digital Activism; Evolution of Social Media; Immersive Journalism; Poverty; User Generated Content.

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Social Media Research Foundation

The Social Media Research Foundation (SMRF) is a collaborative effort between researchers of varying disciplines interested in creating open source tools, generating and hosting open data, and supporting open scholarship related to analyzing social media. Established in 2010, the foundation's objective includes mapping, measuring, and understanding social media usage through projects that involve the collection, analysis, and visualization of social media datasets. The foundation is comprised of faculty, students, developers, and researchers with a shared interest in understanding the interconnectivity of social media communities. Colleagues of this collaborative group include researchers with backgrounds in sociology, computer science, information technology, communication, engineering, and psychology. This interdisciplinary approach to developing social media tools and datasets has led to implications in a variety of fields, including national politics and international relations.

Social media platforms have grown in size and scope, with many developing a niche user base to separate their Web sites from others. The study of social media is still relatively new, and for social media researchers, gathering and analyzing the vast amount of social media data across a variety of platforms can be a challenge. Previously, detailed social media data metrics were only available through fee-based commercial research organizations focusing on user demographics and search habits, or funded by private research grants. SMRF aims to make such data openly available to academics and anyone else researching these platforms, contending that exploring such data provides valuable insight into social media communities, administrators, marketers, and community members. Aside from building open tools for the collection and visualization of social media data, the goals of the SRMF are to connect users to network analysis, connect researchers to open social media data sources, archive and aggregate the results of users' collected data and analysis, and create open-access research papers and findings.

SMRF hosts open datasets relevant to the study of social media. Using NodeXL, one of the open tools developed by SMRF, researchers can upload their social media data to share with other researchers. Social media datasets can also be downloaded for further analysis. Such a feature may possibly allow another researcher to find additional information in a dataset. Also, such a feature would allow for the replication of research.

In an effort to promote continued open scholarship and collaboration, SMRF has sponsored workshops at Purdue University and the University of Maryland, in addition to online "Webshops," which are conducted to create greater reach and awareness. Researchers involved with the SMRF contribute from around the world, and many are published experts in their fields. Academic institutions represented by the collaborative include Stanford, Columbia, Brigham Young, Oxford, and Cornell universities, and the University of Maryland. Members of the organization have also published research papers on social media, social media research, and NodeXL.

SMRF has developed two open tools for analyzing social media data, ThreadMill and NodeXL. ThreadMill, as the name implies, is used to analyze the threads of conversation found in discussion forums, message boards, Twitter, and more. NodeXL is used to analyze the social networks (i.e., interconnected groups of people) based on social media data such as "likes," follows, and so forth. While ThreadMill has value, NodeXL has garnered the most attention from SMRF researchers and others. In 2011, the foundation introduced NodeXL specifically created for collecting and analyzing social media metrics.

NodeXL—designed primarily by SMRF researchers Derek L. Hansen, Ben Shneiderman,

and Marc Smith—is a downloadable open source template compatible with Microsoft Excel 2007 and 2010. The foundation suggests that integrating NodeXL into the Excel software environment makes this product easy to use for anyone familiar with the Microsoft application, and that it extends spreadsheets' capabilities to capture and analyze complex social network interaction. To access the social media data, the Excel add-on also provides built-in connections to Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and e-mail. The Excel add-on also allows for customizable visual graphs showing interconnectedness of the group of people studied.

Use and Implications

There are many uses and implications for such social network data. The SMRF proposes that this information can offer researchers an in-depth view of social media users and their followers. For example, identifying subgroups of people who are well connected within a community and isolating important individuals in that subgroup might be of significant importance to political researchers. These subgroups are easily recognized because they are more interconnected, representing cliques of people or organizations that know each other or interact regularly, but are generally led by a small group of individuals.

In their 2009 article, "Discussion Catalysts in Online Political Discussions: Content Importers and Conversation Starters," SMRF researchers Eric Gleave and Marc Smith concluded that the flow of online information from content creators continues to be mediated by a small group of people who act as filters and amplifiers. In evaluating group cohesion and social roles within groups, researchers can pinpoint key contributors who often interact with one another, answering questions and leading the direction of conversations. Such information would be important in educational recruitment when investigating certain group interactions.

In 2012, the implications of SMRF's work expanded into international politics. In the publication *Foreign Policy*, an article about women's rights in an international context resulted in over 70,000 "likes" and 3,000 comments. A later article in *Foreign Policy* showed a NodeXL graph that indicated how polarized readers were about the article and the issue of women's rights. A NodeXL graph was also used in a later *Foreign Policy* article about social media use during rebellions and demonstrations.

William Hart
Terry Marsh
Norfolk State University

See Also: Berkman Center; Big Data; Data Mining; Networks, Political; Open Data; Social Network Analysis.

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Social Media Sharing, P2P, BitTorrent

BitTorrent is a protocol mechanism that functions as a peer-to-peer (P2P) file sharing network. P2P networks are generally used as applications to share files such as audio, video, documents, electronic books, online games, conferences in real time, and similar content. The BitTorrent platform does not support streaming video.

P2P networks also connect end hosts (also referred to as peers). The protocol is used to distribute large amounts of data over the Internet. A "peer" refers to any computer that runs the file of a client. Clients prepare, request, and transmit computer files over the network using a protocol mechanism. Unlike traditional client–server networks, where servers provide the content and clients consume the content, each client functions as both a peer and a client.

Depending upon one's location, P2P protocol sharing networks dominate the traffic on the

Internet. BitTorrent, created in 2001, has over 150 million active users, and is maintained by BitTorrent, Inc. BitTorrent has more active users than YouTube or Facebook.

The BitTorrent protocol can be used to distribute large files, which reduces the strain on the original server. When many recipients need to download a file, it is an efficient method of distribution. Instead of downloading a file from a single source, BitTorrent allows users to join a "swarm" of hosts who simultaneously upload and download from the group. This is much more efficient than using a single server, enabling clients to immediately download available pieces.

When a peer downloads a file, it becomes an additional seed. The file spreads through many peer computers, and the more peers that join in, the more likelihood there is of a successful download. The BitTorrent protocol can also work with a desktop or mobile phone. Pieces are downloaded at random and rearranged into proper order by the BitTorrent client. The client monitors which piece it has and which piece needs to be uploaded to other peers. A single download consists of pieces the same size. A file can stop downloading and resume at a later date, without losing data.

Peers in P2P networks are independent entities with no central authorizing network. As a result, P2P networks heavily depend on the resources of volunteers who contribute to the system. It is in the best interest of the peers to limit their amount of contribution because cooperation may be costly. With this being the case, some peers may be unwilling to contribute their fair share of resources. In some cases, this may lead to what is called a "tragedy of the commons." This occurs when peers maximize their use of the utility, while the overall utility of the system decreases. Consequently, the mechanism that gives a peer incentive to contribute resources is crucial for the success of P2P systems. In such a system, it is important to be fair to peers who distribute content because it gives them incentive to contribute resources

Among the criticisms of such systems is the argument that the BitTorrent protocol does not enforce fairness, and that "free-riding" occurs within the system. In other words, there are peers will try to download data without first uploading the data to other peers, trying to circumvent the system.

Shirley M. Crawley
Western Connecticut State University

See Also: Communication; Evolution of Social Media; Instant Messengers, IRC and ICQ; Peer to Peer; Value.

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Social Media Strategies and Tactics

Since the 2004 elections, political campaigns have been incorporating social media as part of their outreach repertoire. The use of social media continued to grow in the 2008 U.S. presidential election as they became better integrated into campaign efforts and expanded across multiple platforms. Candidates routinely moved beyond Web sites as they maintained a presence on social media sites such as Myspace and Facebook, and shared videos on YouTube. According to the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project, 36 percent of social media users now believe that these mediums play an important role in providing political information. As such, the use of social media is now viewed as an integral part of a political campaign.

Political campaigns are interested in adopting social media because they can provide a new avenue of communication when effectively used. Extant research on the use of social media in political campaigning efforts has concluded

that social media use may have great potential to benefit campaigns. There are signs that potential benefits may arise from strategically harnessing the potential of social media. However, the true potential of using social media is not yet known because they are not being fully utilized. In fact, political campaigns have failed to understand the reasons why this context is important and what they should do with them. Although empirical research on the use of social media for political campaigning is relatively new, this area is increasingly important as social media adoption continues to penetrate all sectors of society.

Reaching Constituents

The ability to directly reach constituents is important to political campaigns because candidates require public exposure. As such, candidates are now using a variety of social media to gain unprecedented access to potential voters. Although originally thought of as a means to connect with youth, social media have gained mass appeal across generations. Due to the large number of citizens using these online networks, the use of social media is assumed to aid candidates in gaining exposure. Therefore, public officials are driven to use social media for campaign activity.

Social media is unique because these platforms are freely available for both citizens and politicians to share information and connect to one another. The social media environment also encourages direct communication between campaigns and constituents. For example, Facebook has been used to facilitate direct communication between presidential candidates and citizens. In 2012, Barack Obama drew praise by personally answering questions posed by ordinary citizens through the social media news site Reddit. These types of interactions with constituents through social media are capable of personalizing a candidate. For example, videos depicting favorable aspects of candidates, such as advertisements or news appearances, can be posted on YouTube and shared to expand reach. As such, this video-sharing social media service is acting as a free political advertising tool with massive potential for exposure.

Social media also allow political campaigns the ability to reach mass audiences outside of traditional media. Because political information is commonly retrieved outside of traditional media, using social media in campaigns can increase candidate exposure and allow for self-promotion. Candidates who effectively use these mediums have the ability to develop a following and spread their messages. In fact, using social media can have positive effects on a candidate's poll standings, especially among lesser-known candidates. This has also been demonstrated in Australia, where smaller parties appear to have successfully used these free online mediums to impact the electorate. As such, the social media environment may increase new entrants, given the low barriers to entry, allowing them to develop a following and spread their message at a low cost. In fact, the eventual frontrunners of the 2008 presidential primaries arose from those who had the highest number of YouTube views and Myspace supporters.

Although there is evidence that social media use can provide new opportunities for reaching constituents, the norms associated with traditional media remain a dominant force. For example, the most popular political news videos on YouTube have been found to feature political elites (major party candidates) and generally consist of traditional media content. Furthermore, the number of Twitter mentions that a political candidate receives has been found to be directly related to the number of mentions a candidate receives in traditional media, as opposed to their social media activity. This indicates that while social media may change the nature of political campaigning, they may not influence public attention to the extent that many believe they are capable of.

Information Dissemination

Social media provide candidates with a new medium they can use to disseminate information. Campaigns may find these online contexts to be an effective way to communicate with supporters, explain strategies, show the inner workings of an organization, and reiterate their proclamations. As such, politicians are using social media to spread messages and directly communicate with constituents. Since the 2008 U.S. presidential election, YouTube has emerged as a significant medium for political communication. In fact, visits to a candidate's Web site are found to be positively correlated with YouTube views. This

indicates that YouTube exposure may lead viewers to engage in further information seeking. However, it is important to acknowledge that social media are not simply places for information dissemination.

Image control is especially important in political campaigns. The use of social media in campaigns has caused concern because users fear that they will have a reduced level of control over their image. The online social media environment challenges election campaign strategists in their ability to deliver a clear and consistent message and image of candidates. The open nature of social media allows them to be freely used for continuous distribution and consumption. As a result, these networks weaken the amount of control that campaigns have over a candidate's image and their message. In fact, voters' heavy use of YouTube has led some campaigns to develop unflattering or controversial video content as a tactic in ruining an opponent's image. On the other hand, losing control of one's image in this context could be seen as a strength because it may be seen as a display of authenticity.

Building and Managing Relationships

When effectively used, social media can offer political candidates the ability to build and manage relationships with constituents. In 2006, Facebook was the first to invite candidates for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to use the network. Social media, such as Myspace and Facebook, have been touted for affording direct one-to-one linking between politicians and constituents. In fact, supporters have been found to use Facebook to establish a personal relationship with candidates. By 2008, congressional campaigns were quickly establishing supporter groups on Facebook. Although the use of social media for political campaigns had become mainstream by 2008, a lack of understanding of how to strategically implement and effectively use this medium to benefit the campaign still remained.

Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign provided one of the most sophisticated strategic communication plans, using social media as part of a larger campaign effort. This campaign implemented a specialized "new media dream team" to handle various social media, including its (MyBO), to build relationships with supporters. The campaign also worked to strategically harness the power of YouTube, Facebook, and other social media sites as a political tool. For example, the campaign employed personnel entirely devoted to the creation of YouTube videos supporting the campaign. Tactics such as this enabled the campaign to have dialogue with key publics by using different social media tools to communicate and build relationships. The campaign also worked to keep lines of communication open as it actively paid attention to online dialogue and made an effort to respond in a timely and personal manner. The social media environment also allowed supporters to directly communicate with each another about the campaign.

Social media also provides an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability for political campaigns. Transparency is an important aspect of all forms of social media because they inherently demand authenticity. Social media also enable politicians to directly communicate with the constituents, rather than through traditional media gatekeepers. For example, Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign used its online spaces to foster transparency as they gave volunteers access to resources such as voter files and budget information.

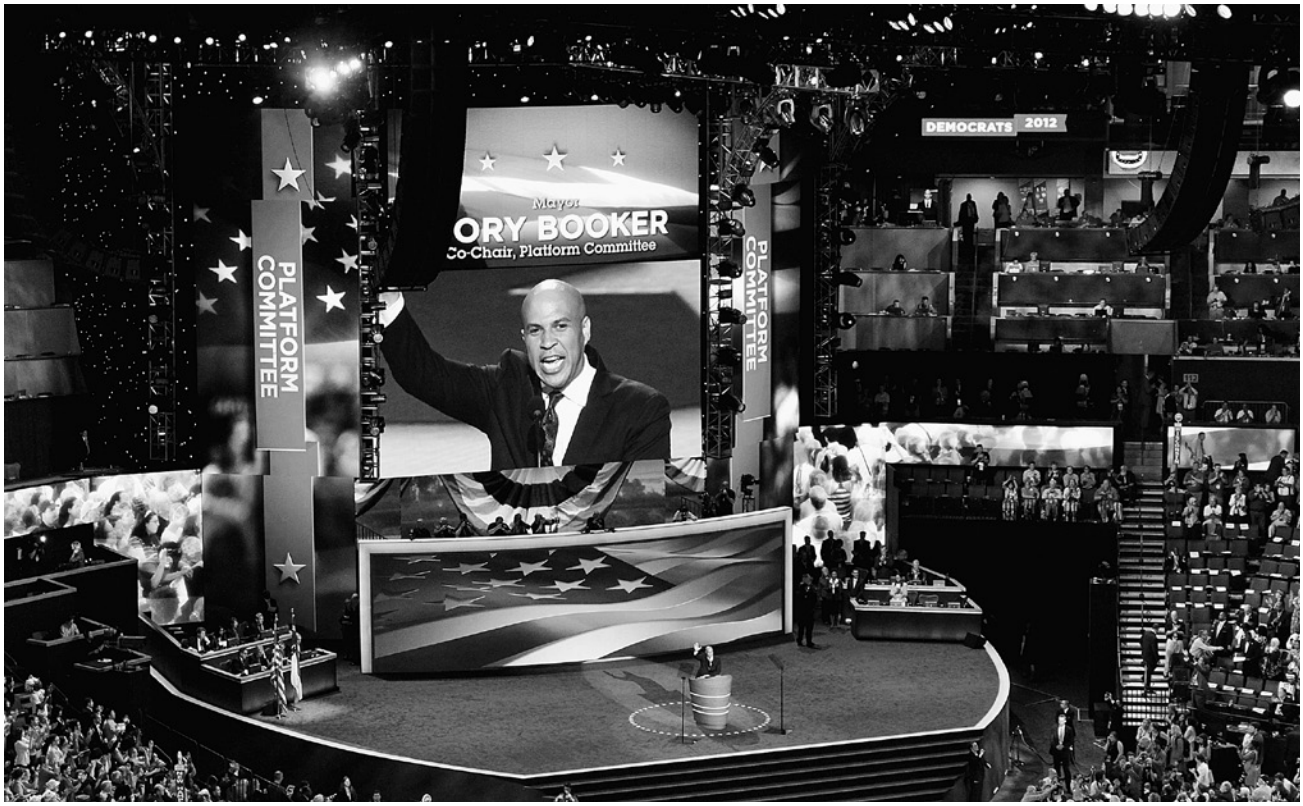
However, most political campaigns have not yet realized the importance of two-way communication and interaction in the social media environment. Many political campaigns have a tendency to use social media as a one-way communication tool and have failed to utilize the interactive capabilities of different platforms. For example, campaign activity on Facebook has tended to revolve around a campaign's postings, which have failed to generate meaningful communication with constituents. Political candidates have also been found to provide inconsistent social media updates, and very rarely respond to comments left on their Facebook walls. Reacting to comments may indicate a candidate's willingness to listen to voters. In fact, research has shown that candidates who react to comments are more positively evaluated by potential voters. By failing to maintain an interactive presence in this environment, candidates may be seen as not understanding the social norms of the space or appearing unauthentic. Additionally, using social media in campaigns can be difficult because there is a desire to target

a broad audience. When using social media in the same way as traditional broadcast mediums, campaigns fail to take advantage of the interactive and engaging environment. As a result, opportunities to foster relationships are lost.

Mobilization and Fundraising

Using social media can provide political campaigns new opportunities to mobilize constituents, recruit volunteers, and enhance fundraising. Additionally, social media can be used to showcase involvement opportunities for potential voters. This can lead potential voters to interact with one another and aid the campaign. When used effectively, social media can aid political campaigns in turning online enthusiasm into real-world support by gaining access to potential volunteers. Again, one of the most successful uses of social media as a mobilization tool was by Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign. Campaign staff used a variety of social media platforms to engage volunteers, and actively worked to make them a part of the extended campaign staff. This allowed campaign managers to essentially create a partnership with constituents that they believe led to an increase in donations, volunteers, and voting. However, the extent to which this activity actually led people to perform these duties is unknown.

Unfortunately, most campaigns have failed to effectively utilize Facebook and other forms of social media as a mobilization tool. Although there is evidence that social media users have expressed their intent to volunteer on Facebook, those who announced their support in this medium tended to be those who were previously recruited by the campaign. Additionally, campaigns may not understand the individualized utility of varying social media services. For example, YouTube is not believed to be an effective tool for fostering



Cory Booker, then-mayor of Newark, New Jersey, speaking at the 2012 Democratic National Convention on September 4, 2012. Booker has used social media to a degree that outstriped most political peers. He communicated daily with his constituents via Twitter, where he had nearly 1.5 million followers in August 2013, and answered questions and responded to problems well into the night. In October 2013, Booker won a special election to fill the term of the late Frank Lautenberg and became New Jersey's first African American senator.

volunteer engagement, but there is reason to speculate that it could be an effective fundraising tool during election campaigns. The use of YouTube alone would not be an effective tool for political campaigns. Further, a lack of clearly defined goals in the social media context is likely the cause of the failure that campaigns have experienced when mobilizing supporters. Development and implementation of such goals should be better developed to further involve people with a campaign.

Conclusion

The use of social media for political campaigning has been investigated across a variety of platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, Myspace, and Twitter. Empirical work on this use of social media has tended to be descriptive, and has offered limited, but seemingly positive insight on effects. There are also indications that the benefits of using social media may vary by political party. For example, research on the role of social media in U.S. politics has found that Democrats are more likely to say that social media sites are important compared to Republicans and independents. Dutch voters have been found to evaluate candidates more positively if they respond to social media comments, but these effects were noticeably stronger for voters who leaned toward the right. This may indicate that right-wing candidates can benefit more from reacting to comments. Research on the Australian federal election has found evidence that candidates outside of the two major political parties may benefit the most from social media campaigning.

Since campaigns have historically utilized a variety of media outlets, they are incorporating the use of social media into an extant multiplatform campaign plan. Political campaigns still rely on the traditional Web site as an information hub. As such, social media platforms are commonly used in conjunction with a Web site, allowing candidates to integrate a wider online presence via social media outlets. Although this approach is necessary, campaigns are still in the infancy of learning how to strategically and effectively implement social media in their multiplatform tactics to benefit the campaign. Although social media may be appear to be beneficial to campaign efforts, the question remains whether incorporating social media into a campaign strategy leads to increases in volunteers, donation, and actual voting behavior.

Obstacles hampering the effective use of social media by political campaigns include an inability to control their public image, difficulties in mobilizing online stakeholders, failure to directly interact with constituents, and a lack of strategic campaign planning in the social media context. Suggestions for political campaigns include the need to strategically integrate the use of social media. This requires campaigns to gain a comprehensive understanding of the different social media platforms available, and to plan how to use these mediums for image control, transparency, and meaningful engagement. Additionally, there is a need to use integrated social media as part of a campaign's existing multiplatform strategy and develop policies for their use.

Weiwu Zhang
Texas Tech University
Sherice Gearhart
University of Nebraska at Omaha

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2008); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaign Strategy; Candidate Image; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Political Parties; Voter Turnout.

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Social Media Week

Social Media Week is one of the world's largest conferences. It was founded by Crowdcentric Media in 2009 and was the first global conference to solely focus on social media. It offers a week's worth of keynote addresses, research paper presentations, workshops, discussion panels, and networking events for members of industry. The conference highlights the social, cultural, and economic dimensions of social media. The mission of the Social Media Week organizers is to connect people and organizations by encouraging the sharing of research, ideas, and information on the role of social media in society, and by promoting collaboration among those in the field.

Two global conferences are held each year, designed to help society understand the complex role that social media play on local, national, and global levels. Thousands of individuals, industry professionals, and local organizers collaborate to produce the weeklong conferences. Events are simultaneously held in multiple cities, including research panels, workshops, and networking sessions. These events are linked worldwide through mobile and online platforms. Social Media Week also partners with CNN. CNN facilitates the release of news, interviews, and stories to the press through its iReport platform. The iReport platform allows ordinary people to upload stories, videos, and photographs to the CNN Web site. The stories from the conference tend to focus on how social media affect the iReporters' lives in terms of entertainment, news, and political choices. Content from Social Media Week is also disseminated by journalists, industry writers, and a global blog. Past conferences have also been highlighted on a YouTube Channel. The aim is to expose how social media are transforming the lives of people worldwide.

The sharing of research, keynote addresses, and the content of the conference is largely done through the Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn social networking Web sites, as well as through online platforms, mobile apps, and the Social Media Week Realtime application. Social Media Week Realtime is an HTML 5 application that provides realtime infographics to online users.

In its first year, the conference was held in New York City. Since then, it has expanded to include 21 cities, including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Toronto, Vancouver, Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, London, Paris, Rome, Milan, Glasgow, Berlin, Moscow, Istanbul, Beirut, and Hong Kong. Host cities are chosen based on six major factors, including (1) the size and population of the city, (2) the frequency of smartphone use, (3) the frequency of broadband use, (4) whether social media has a strong influence or not, (5) the level of social media engagement, and (6) how much of the population uses Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites.

With most conferences, one would pay a registration fee, but Social Media Week was designed to be free. Over 80 percent of the events are free. With others, there is a minimal charge; however, one has to register for each event. Further, for those unable to attend in person, they may watch the simulcast online, or download an application for their mobile phone. Apps are available

for the Windows phone, the iPhone, the iPad, and Android mobile phones.

Some of the top 10 media events to be highlighted in recent and upcoming conferences are the Arab Spring uprisings in the Middle East. The term *Arab Spring* was coined to represent the revolution, protest, and civil unrest that began in December 2010 in Tunisia and spread to such countries as Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria. Arab Spring activists have used social media to organize protests, spotlight government crackdowns, and criticize the injustices of their governments in a phenomenon that some claim illustrates the potential for social media to sway public opinion and transform politics on a global level.

Shirley M. Crawley
Western Connecticut State University

See Also: Arab Spring; Evolution of Social Media; Network Influentials; Social Media, Adoption of.

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Social Network Analysis

Social network perspectives focus on the structure of social systems and how the elements of a social system come together. Individual characteristics are only part of the story; people influence each other, and ideas and materials flow throughout the network. From the network perspective, the social environment can be expressed as patterns or regularities in relationships among interacting units. These patterns are often called structure.

A social network is generally defined as a system with a set of social actors and a collection of social relations that specify how these actors are relationally tied together. Network analysis provides two purposes: revealing the underlying social structures, and discovering the dynamic interactions among social actors. Network analysis identifies the system's structure through examining the relations among the system components, its actors.

Computer and information systems are electronic communication networks that are structured so that data, information, and messages may be passed from one location in the network to another over multiple links—transmission lines (copper wire, coaxial cable, optical fiber, and wireless connections, including satellites) and through various nodes (generally computers). When these networks link people (or higher-level social systems such as work groups, organizations, or nations) and machines, they become social networks.

The form of network that is generated through the use of social media is a communication network, defined as the patterns of contact that are created by the flow of messages among communicators through time and space. Communication network analysis identifies the communication structure, or communication flow. Relation ties (linkages) between actors are channels for the transfer (flow) of either material or nonmaterial resources, or for an association between actors, such as a friendship tie. The ties that exist between the nodes can vary along several elements, including direction, reciprocity, and strength.

Links between actors can be measured as either directional or nondirectional. Links that are directional indicate the movement from one point to another, such as the number of e-mails one person sends to another, or the degree of "liking" one person has for another. Additionally, these links can also be symmetrical or asymmetrical. If the link is directional but there is not the same value of relation, the link is asymmetrical and lacks reciprocity. Nondirectional links simply indicate an association of two actors in a shared partnership, such as two social media users linking to a similar artifact.

The basic network data set is an n × n matrix S, where n equals the number of nodes in the analysis. A node is the unit of analysis. Each cell, Sij, indicates the strength of the relationship, for example, the amount of communication from person i to person j. Relationships in networks are analyzed as directional, when possible. This method provides the directional differences between all analyzed parties, representing the communication matrix.

The central power of social network analysis is to bring to life an otherwise static social structure, and to graph the development of this structure over time. Although a static analysis can reveal a traditional organizational structure, for example, such as a hierarchical organization, the ability to identify emergent structures greatly increases the understanding of social systems and better contributes to understanding communicative behavior.

Centrality

There are many operationalizations of the centrality measure, but the most frequently used are degree, betweenness, closeness, and eigenvector centralities. The degree measure of centrality is calculated by counting the number of adjacent links to or from an actor in a network. This measure can be conceptualized as an indicator of individual activity, but it does not capture system-wide properties of the network. It does, however, represent the number of alternatives available to an individual in the network. Degree centrality may also be appropriate for capturing such power-enhancing behaviors that happen via direct interaction, such as integration and reciprocation. Likewise, degree centrality can also indicate other direct interactions, such as coalitions and the avoidance of relying on mediating actors for indirect access to resources. While a relatively straightforward measure, degree centrality provides insight into individual contributions to the interconnectedness of the overall network.

Betweenness centrality measures the relative brokerage of an individual node i by indicating the number of nodes j that need to go through i to get to other nodes k that could otherwise not be reached, that is, how many actors need to go through a particular actor to reach all other actors not otherwise reachable. Betweenness centrality is calculated by the proportion of all geodesics linking j & k that pass through i, Σ for all nodes.

Closeness centrality for a particular node is measured by the inverse of the sum of its distances to all other nodes. The closeness measure can be used to indicate how easily, or quickly, information can spread from a particular actor to all other actors sequentially.

Eigenvector centrality is often used to indicate the influence of a particular actor in a network. It assigns relative scores to all nodes in the network, based on the concept that connections to high-scoring nodes contribute more to the score of the node in question than equal connections to low-scoring nodes. An eigenvector can be defined as a non-zero vector that, when multiplied by the matrix, yields a vector that differs from the original at most by a multiplicative scalar. Eigenvector centrality is defined as the largest eigenvector of the sociomatrix defining the network. The defining equation of the eigenvector is $\lambda v = Sv$, where S is the sociomatrix of the network, λ is the largest eigenvalue of S, and v is the eigenvector.

Strength of Ties

Strength of the ties between actors, indicating quantity of the relation, can greatly vary and has profound impact of the nature of the network. Strength of the tie can be measured as dichotomous, simply indicating the presence or absence of a link, or valued, indicating the degree of the relation (e.g., how many times per week does one person contact another).

Although much interaction is with members of close groups, often the most novel and important information comes from individuals that one has weaker ties to, generally outside of these groups. Groups of people are clustered in social networks via strong ties, and the association with each other through redundant ties allow for local clustering. This local connectivity establishes multiple independent pathways, which can provide reliable accessibility. Yet, there are also a substantial number of weak ties in networks; these are the connections that our close ties have with people that are not necessarily connected to, or have much in common, with the user. Social media has enabled people to maintain a persistent connection to many more weak ties than was previously

possible, and as such users of social media have access to a plethora of novel information.

Network Density, Centralization, and Cluster Analysis

Density is used to measure the completeness of the relations in a network, also called connectedness. Measured as the ratio of total links to possible links, density can identify networks as being sparse (relatively disconnected) or dense (relatively well connected).

Centralization measures the disparity, or variation of the individuals' centrality in a given network. The higher a network's degree centralization is, the more likely it is that few individuals are well connected, while others are less connected. Conversely, the more decentralized a network is, the more equal the members' centrality scores are.

Cluster analysis identifies clusters, also called groupings or cliques, of actors that best characterize their measured associations. To perform a clustering procedure, take an n x n matrix of similarity (S); the pair of actors with the greatest occurrence of communication is pooled to form a cluster (C1). Following this initial step, a new similarity matrix (S*) is generated with the pair of actors combined as a single actor. S* is an n-1 × n-1 matrix. The procedure is repeated by adding a third actor to C1; or a new pair of actors combined to form C2. The procedure continues until all n actors are incorporated to form Cm clusters, which is inclusive of all actors. The procedure described above assumes that the distances in S are unambiguous. That is, sij = sji. In this case, S was made symmetrical by taking the average of sij and sji.

Structural Holes and Affiliation Networks

Structural holes have been widely studied, yet are largely based on the work of Ronald Burt. Burt's conceptualization of a structural hole is that it is a relationship of nonredundancy between two contacts, and the hole acts as a buffer. When two contacts have a hole between them, the resulting effect is that it provides network benefits that are in some degree additive rather that overlapping. Structural holes can have different effects for individuals with different attributes as well as for organizations of different kinds. Structural holes can also be summarized as existing when two members who are not directly connected to each other also lack a common network contact. Likewise, structural holes make a network more constrained or sparse because individuals have less opportunity to access novel information and resources. Structural holes can also lead to inequality between network members and power opportunities.

In affiliation networks, represented as bipartite graphs, two nodes can be thought of as affiliated if they participate in the same group or event. Affiliation networks differ from single mode networks in several ways. Affiliation networks are dual-mode, or two-mode networks, where a set of actors and a set of events each constitute a mode. The graph is bipartite in that links go from members of one mode to members of the other. Connections among members of one of the modes (e.g., simple ties between pairs of actors) are based upon the linkages formed via the second mode.

Affiliation networks have been very useful when studying political networks, as a person's social connections may include links to other individuals, but also political groups/parties, policy votes, and social media connections (among many other examples). Much of the utility in studying affiliation networks is the individuals' membership in collectives, or social circles, which provide conditions for development of interpersonal connections. Individuals are brought together through joint participation in social events, and participation in more than one event establishes a linkage between the two events, thus overlapping group membership and allowing for the transmission of information between groups. Therefore, this can be interpreted as either actors linked by events, or as events linked by actors.

Network Analysis Software and Visualization

Most network analytic procedures and research are conducted using network analysis software, which generally provide many mathematical and statistical routines that allow the user to create, manipulate, and measure networks. Many of the social network analysis software packages include

mechanisms for the visualization of networks. Examples of user-friendly and widely available social network analysis software packages are Gephi, MultiNet, NetMiner, NodeXL, Pajek, StOCNET, STRUCTURE, and UCINET.

Network mapping procedures are used to generate sociogram maps that visually represent networks created using the above procedures. Sociograms allow for the visual analysis of network data, as well as elaborate cliques and network roles that can remain cloaked when only analyzing numerical outputs. Yet, when combined with statistical outputs, visualization can highlight structures and patterns and provide an illuminating window into social systems.

Conclusion

The science of social networks has progressed in parallel with the use of social media. The precise measurement of communicative flows has been a challenge, and the increased use of social media to manage communicative interaction has provided social network scientists with a wealth of precise and novel data.

Further, the increased analytic representation and theoretical understanding of new media and information systems provides developers with improved insights into the uses of technology to manage the resources embedded in their social networks. The science of social network analysis and the development of new and social media have coevolved as catalysts of each other's development and advancement.

Communicative technologies and social media have provided precise measures of social networks. From social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), to microblogging networks (e.g., Twitter) and global cooperation networks (e.g., CouchSurfing), the material and nonmaterial exchanges of individuals and larger social systems are recorded and largely retrievable, presenting social network researchers with powerful new data. There are four main implications of having access to social media data.

First, analysts now have access to measurements of social network relations that are more reliable than in the past. Second, the nature of the relational data is unique, allowing for the analytical exploration of network structures in ways that are pushing the boundaries of the science. Third, analysis of network evolution is increasingly possible, since much of the data available through social media is dynamic (a historically persistent challenge when collecting network data). Fourth, dynamic network data has contributed to visualization methods that allow for the animation of social networks.

Devan Rosen
Ithaca College

See Also: Going Viral; Networks, Political; Social Capital; Strong-Tie Social Connections Versus Weak-Tie Social Connections; Viral Marketing.

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Social Networking Web Sites

Social networking Web sites (SNWs) are digital applications that facilitate social interaction and promote social networking among individuals. Sixdegrees.com was the first SNW; it was founded in 1997, inspired by the idea of "six degrees of distance" originally proposed by Stanley Milgram. Previous experiments had focused on dating or recuperating ties with former classmates, such as Classmates.com, founded in 1995. Truepeers.com may also be considered among the pioneers in this area. From these first experiences,

many different digital applications for managing personal and professional contacts have emerged and have grown to a generalized online activity in which tens of millions of users are engaged. The journal *Business 2.0* named these tools the Technology of the Year in 2003. The number of users exponentially increased; Facebook, currently the largest SNW, reached 1 billion active users in September 2012. This set of new media and platforms for social interaction has implications for how people network, manage, and operate among social contacts, as well as in political movements and community participation.

SNWs combine social networking, a list of contacts, and a personal profile. Most of them depend on friend-of-a-friend (FOAF) logic to build up online social networks. SNWs can then be used for managing personal contacts for obtaining commercial outcomes or improving professional opportunities, as well as for initiating, deploying, or maintaining interpersonal relations. Participation in SNWs usually entails sharing personal data, conventionally considered private information. However, the popularity of Web sites of this kind for social interaction has become part of wider changes in patterns of sociability and the notion of privacy.

Types

SNWs differ in their purpose. First, a broad distinction could be established between those sites with mainly a personal or a professional focus. Second, there are also significant differences in the activities of users, including sharing photos and videos, to exploring hobbies and common interests, activism or community development, or simply maintaining a relationship through mundane tasks such as status updates.

Professional SNWs aim at promoting trust and widening social networks, both considered forms of social capital that facilitate commercial relations, economic transactions, and business activities. Two different types of digital applications have been developed for this purpose. On the one hand, there are programs for the systematic analysis of professional social networks. They provide the user a general view of the personal network, improving brokerage and commercial transactions. For instance, Visible Path and Spoke are two different software packages that were designed to help company sales forces reduce marketing cycles. Both platforms are integrated in the sales department of an organization and enable relational data storage and analysis. The data are generally obtained from e-mail, personal agendas, and meetings scheduled by vendors or the commercial department.

With this information, it is possible to draw personal network maps, or even the network of contacts of the whole organization. On the other hand, there are Web sites for sharing professional profiles, promoting new relationships, and managing professional contacts. For instance, Linked In is a Web site originally designed to facilitate networking among managers and executives, which is now open to professional profiles of any kind. From its first year of operation, it emerged as an excellent means for recruitment, obtaining expert advice, and searching for partners. Similar Web sites are Ryze.com, which also organizes face-to-face meetings, and Xing.com.

Personal SNWs are used for connecting with friends, initiating and managing personal relations, as well as flirting and dating. Friendster was one of the first cases of mass dissemination of an online networking service, with millions of users. Similar Web sites with different geographical distribution and population profiles include Orkut, with massive dissemination in Latin America; Friendzy, oriented to younger users; Tribe, which organizes social networks in forums and communities; Myspace, which evolved into a site for exchanging music; and Tuenti, for young users in Spain, among others. Most of the users of personal SNWs are young adults, who are exploring new patterns of online relationships and incorporating these new media among the contexts for interaction with members of their personal networks.

The Web site of reference among these applications is Facebook, given its global reach for networking purposes. Facebook was launched in 2004, and was initially oriented to university students. Users must register to access the site, and then they publish a personal profile and make contacts with "friends." The profile is standard for all users, and the Web site is user friendly. Almost half of users access Facebook from mobile phones. Large segments of the young population use it every day. SNWs that have more users

registered have a cumulative advantage, offering more opportunities for interaction and obtaining social resources. As in the case of Facebook, a Web site with more users participating in networking activities will attract more users than a regular Web site, following a "rich get richer" process of network growth.

Characteristics

The Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS) has summarized the characteristics of SNWs in six basic features: presentation of oneself, externalization of data, new ways for community formation, bottom-up activities, ease of use, and reorganization of Internet geography. The first step of users in a SNW is usually to set up a profile, presenting him or herself to others. This means sharing personal information and making public personal networks to others. Therefore, these sites offer opportunities for community formation, whether based in common interests, network dynamics or social categories. Additionally, platforms like Twitter have facilitated self-organization and collaboration with others, as can be observed by real-time tweets during natural disasters, such as tsunamis, and during political conflict, such as the Arab Spring. Most SNWs require registration but are free of charge and easy to use, making them accessible to the general population. Finally, SNWs are part of a process of personalization of Internet use, so people feel that they have personal information and spaces to interact with others. In this sense, an evolution from homepages to personal profiles has been documented in individual access to the Internet.

Effects

Network effects have been described in SNW adoption and impact. The effectiveness of social networking services largely depends on the number of users associated with a particular application or Web site. A critical mass is often required in order to provide positive networking experiences to members, and in turn it is a self-reinforcing process contributing to the incorporation of new users. On the other hand, this is related to homophily processes, where members of the same platform may share with others of the same gender, language, ethnicity, and educational background. Interestingly, individuals can distribute personal contacts in different SNWs, conforming a complex ecosystem of digital contexts for interaction. Consequently, different sites may act as diverse behavior settings, with an impact in the social dynamics deployed by members.

SNWs may serve to consolidate previous and/or close relations, or extend the social networks of members incorporating new contacts. People tend to use different media to communicate with individuals who are more relevant to them. So, friends, confidants, and providers of multiple types of social support are significantly present in the list of contacts of most of the users of networking services. This is the reason why online and face-to-face relationships are not alternative or competitive worlds, but two sides of a coin showing the multiplexity of support in diverse contexts for interaction. However, SNWs enable managing and mantaining weak links, that is to say, those relationships with lower frequency of contact, intensiveness of interaction, multiplexity of support, or affection exchange. Digital applications reduce the costs for interaction, contributing to wide, distributed, and diverse networks.

Nevertheless, the FOAF logic in which these sites are usually based has been criticized. It has been argued that social confidence and trust is not maintained, irrespective of the friend-of-a-friend chain length. The transitive property may fade when one follows the path of the friend of a friend of a friend of a friend. In fact, three or four steps in the chain may mean a huge social distance. There are also limits to the accumulation of contacts, and the aspiration of unrealistic growth can undermine the maintenance of connections that one seeks to promote. Finally, some users have reservations about sharing relational capital, and/or are worried about ensuring the privacy of information.

Privacy

SNWs offer new contexts for interaction. Personal networks are made public and visualized online. Therefore, individuals publish private data and obtain some explicit feedback on the social structures of interaction where they participate. For some individuals, they provide experience on "network effects" and the impact of social structure on behavior and social opportunities.

This is also associated with legal issues and problems regarding data management. Each SNW has terms of service regarding privacy, security, and propriety of data published online. It is not always clear who owns the data published on an SNW, and it is not always easy to delete a personal profile. The increase in advanced mobile devices has also resulted in wider access to networking applications, promoting an always-on/always-on-you culture, giving the possibility of a continuous presence and pervasive awareness of others in the network. Consequently, the boundaries between different social spaces such as "home" and "work," or "public" and "private," are increasingly blurred.

Finally, networking digital applications are also an environment where individuals, especially young users, explore new ways of presenting oneself to others. Research has shown the key role of this type of site for self-exploration, identity redefinition, and peer validation processes. New skills can be observed in managing the risks of a unitary identity and the complexity of multiple identities. In their relatively short history, SNWs have had major influence in the reshaping of people's social life, promoting and facilitating different notions of "networked individualism."

Isidro Maya-Jariego
Romina Cachia
Universidad de Sevilla

See Also: Cyberculture; Evolution of Social Media; Facebook; Friendster; LinkedIn; Myspace; Social Network Analysis; Snowball Effect; Social Worlds; Twitter.

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Social Security

Social Security is the popular name for the U.S. government program of Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI). The program began in 1935 as part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal legislation. The goal of the program is to provide protection from insolvency in old age.

History

President Franklin D. Roosevelt championed the adoption of a Social Security law during his first term in office (1933–37). He sought to have a program of social insurance to which workers would contribute toward their old age. The plan was to achieve a type of defined benefit insurance against old age that would put in place a safety net to prevent destitution. The plan would also put a floor on poverty and guarantee a steady flow of income that would be spent by the plan's recipients. This portion of the plan was similar to the Townsend Plan advocated by Dr. Francis E. Townsend.

The Townsend Plan, a welfare pension program, called for paying every person in the United States 60 years old and older who was not gainfully employed $200 per month, as long as the money was spent within 30 days in the United States. Townsend believed that the money spent by the elderly would generously stimulate the economy, aid economic recovery, and be an enormous boon to the elderly poor. The idea was immediately popular with millions. Townsend clubs were founded across the country, but President Roosevelt did not endorse the plan.

When the original Social Security Act was adopted in 1935, it was a limited retirement insurance program. As social insurance, it sought to deal with the 50 percent poverty rate among American senior citizens and reduce the suffering of widows and fatherless children. The program

was denounced by opponents as "socialism." Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, a major contributor to the development of the program, denied the claim.

At first, Social Security old age benefits applied to only a few people, mainly older white men, because of labor patterns at the time. Since the adoption of the law, however, its benefits have been distributed to large numbers of women and nonwhites. One of the major reasons is the change in the demographics of the labor market since Social Security was adopted.

Since the beginning of the program, debates have occurred over whether it should be a social insurance program or a social welfare program. Roosevelt did not want it to be a welfare program because he believed that it would not be a success unless adopted and maintained as a social insurance program, and that welfare and other issues should be treated separately. He also postponed a medical component until later because of concerns from the medical community.

Expansion and Modification

Since the original Social Security Act was adopted in 1935, the program has expanded to include provisions for survivors, disability insurance, unemployment benefits, temporary assistance for needy families, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). This last program provides aid to low-income people who are either aged 65 or older, blind, or disabled.

Medical components to the Social Security program have also been added. The medical portion includes Medicare, which is Health Insurance for the Aged and Disabled. Medicare is partially paid for by users, who pay a Medicare tax. The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 (OBRA-90) created the Medicaid Drug Rebate Program and the Health Insurance Premium Payment Program (HIPP). These programs sought to address the cost of prescription drugs paid for by retirees. Under President George W. Bush, the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act (Medicare Modernization Act or MMA) was adopted in 2003. The largest modification of Medicare in decades, it sought to make prescription drugs more affordable to retirees. The legislation met with mixed reviews, as some felt it was aimed at preserving drug company profits while others claimed that it provided too high a subsidy to patients.

Another Social Security medical program is the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which covers children. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (often called "Obamacare") is bringing many new changes to the medical portions of Social Security.

Medicaid is a means-tested entitlement program created by the Social Security Amendments of 1965, which added Title XIX to the Social Security Act. The provisions help in partnership with state medical coverage for low-income families, the blind, aged, disabled, and pregnant women.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) was created in 2007. It is an independent agency for administering social security programs, headquartered in Woodlawn, Maryland. Most people who receive social security payments have earned them through payroll taxes. These are taken under the authority of the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA). FICA taxes are then deposited into the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund, Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund, Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund, or Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund. Together these funds constitute the Social Security Trust Fund. Its funds have been widely believed to have been separate in a so-called locked box; however, politicians have consistently used the surplus funds for general revenue purposes.

Debate

Since the beginning of the program, Social Security has been a subject of debate. Many think that the entire program should just be a welfare program for the poor, which is contrary to what Roosevelt sought. For others, the issues have been about equality, and for others about adequacy of benefits. Still others have looked at the costs, which for employers are payroll taxes and for employees are expensive tax deductions. One important complaint was that federal workers were not covered under Social Security and this was changed in 1983.

Another controversial topic is the taxation of Social Security benefits, which has been occurring since the 1980s. Ostensibly, the taxes on benefits were to reduce the threat of insolvency for Social Security. Some critics have complained that

Social Security taxes are regressive. Milton Friedman argued that the program benefits the wealthy more than the poor. Others argue that while Social Security uses a regressive taxation formula, it uses a progressive benefit program. Low wage earners actually receive more proportionally than higher wage earners.

Some opponents of Social Security point out that it has a low rate of return. These critics would prefer a market-defined benefit that can rapidly change with fluctuations in market price. Other critics claim that Social Security has been a lie because the payroll tax rate was never to rise above 3 percent. Some have claimed that it is just an elaborate Ponzi scheme.

In 2005 President George W. Bush proposed allowing workers to divert part of their social security taxes into private investment accounts. Other leaders have called for changes in the program to make it more sustainable. There are numerous organizations involved in these battles over Social Security; most of these are now using social media to spread their messages.

Social Media and the Social Security Debate

The Social Security Administration uses Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. Its use of YouTube is to inform retirees or those near retirement about available programs. One has retired actress Patty Duke explaining how to register for Social Security online.

Social Security advocates include veterans' organizations, disability organization advocates (such as the Paralyzed Veterans of America and AMVETS), organizations to aid the elderly, minority organizations (e.g., Latinos for a Secure Retirement), labor unions and others (such as the Alliance for Retired Americans, which is associated with unions). These groups are using Facebook, Google+, Twitter, and other forms of social media to cooperate, engage in grassroots politics, and lobby Congress. The AARP also uses social media to unify its community of members. Three of its social media links include Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Opponents of Social Security range from those who want to abolish the whole program to those who want to develop a partial or full privatization program. They are also using social media such as Twitter. Think tanks on the right (such as the Heritage Foundation or Cato Institute), in the center (the Brookings Institute or Rand Corporation), and on the left (the Center for American Progress) use their permanent Web sites to provide information pertinent to the politics of Social Security, with the addition of YouTube videos and other media resources. They may encourage readers to respond by posting comments. This is in effect a blog, YouTube, Twitter, and/or Facebook combination. The same combination is used by online media, which provide "opinion" connections to Twitter, Facebook, and other social media to allow for responses to their stories.

Grassroots advocacy groups for Social Security, such as the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (which describes itself as a nonpartisan, nonprofit advocacy group), use social media to mobilize opposition to changes in Social Security and Medicare by posting incumbent ratings, advertising their side of issues, raising campaign contributions, and endorsing candidates.

Since the expansion of social media following the 2004 election, studies have found that Americans are using Facebook or other media more, but are also more politically polarized by ideology, which leads to self-segregation. Social media users are using personal "trust filters" so people share with those they trust, but not with the public at large. Even professional sites that are open

A protester holds a sign demanding that Social Security and other beneftis not be cut at an Occupy St. Petersburg (Florida) demonstration on October 14, 2011. About 300 people were in attendance, in solidarity with Occupy Wall Street in New York.

produce incivility because participants resort to ad hominem attacks instead of offering reasoned arguments for their policy positions. Analysts have expressed suspicions that some groups may be stalking social media sites in order to silence opponents through incivility. Some studies see social media as having little influence on elections or policy debates. Others see dynamic changes occurring that will affect politics, including important issues such as Social Security, as groups engage each other online.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: AARP; Age; Health Care; Medicare; Taxes.

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Social Worlds

The idiom *social worlds* indicates several related concepts referring to a group of people accepting, sharing, and united by common worldviews. Worldview is comparable to *Weltanschauung*, "meaning system," "belief system," "patterns of thought," "perspective," "perceptual framework," or "cognitive orientation." The main concern here is not merely with the intellectual or cognitive aspects of the social worlds but also with the social and subjective domains in which individuals locate and define themselves in relation to others.

The focus is on the way that ordinary people imagine their social world. It is not expressed in theoretical terms, but is manifested in images, stories, and legends. Worldview is concerned with people's place in the universe, setting boundaries between nature and culture on the one hand, and between the local and global on the other. Worldviews, contingent on cultural traditions, are clusters of ideas, beliefs, shared meanings or understandings, and practices that render social life possible.

Though worldview represents a cultural phenomenon, it is seen as constituting social facts or collective representations impacting people's actions. Worldview indicates the notion of thinking and acting as a group member for a group reason. This means that a group of persons can collectively share worldviews, attitudes, intentions, and goals as group members o ra collectivity.

The differences in worldviews of people in different social worlds are great. Therefore, it is important for social actors, particularly politicians, to establish strategies to penetrate forms of separation and understand how other people experience their social worlds. The distinctive feature of social worlds as a unit of social organization is contingent on communication, shared action, and interaction. Mediated interaction is very important in creating and sustaining any social world. In other words, social worlds may signify a sort of social organization defined by communication and interaction, rather than physical, territorial, kinship, or formal ties. However, meeting places, coffee houses, convention sites, and street corners, among other locations, provide geographical centers for interaction in various social worlds that might include, for example, social groups or social collectivities within larger societies such as social clubs, political parties, associations, labor unions, and religious societies.

In contrast to the concept of formal social organization or social structure, a social world is based on negotiation, voluntary participation, and collective commitment, and not an enforced or imposed conformity. A common type of social world consists of networks of interrelated voluntary associations, including social and political parties. People are agents in making their social worlds; however, social worlds, consisting of assemblages of social actors, are not based on a centralized authority or order. Rather, social actors are freely and partially involved in certain portions of the events of any social world. As Unruh states, each social world is a universe of regularized mutual response, an arena in which there is some kind of organization that facilitates anticipating the behavior of others.

Classifications

Social worlds can be classified into small local worlds, or large and more diffuse worlds. Within this context, the term *social world* is flexible enough to include ethnic, subcultural, and transcultural communities. The vocabulary of most politics is pertinent to small informal units as well as to large units. However, each social unit, small or large, has a worldview characterizing its social world. Large social worlds, dispersed in space, do not completely rely on face-to-face interaction, but rather on various forms of communication, particularly new media and electronic circulation, notwithstanding the importance of spatial sites. Some social worlds, such as ethnic minorities, might have a comparatively homogeneous population, while others such as global groups (e.g., the European Union) and international political parties are heterogeneous and mixed.

Although politicians are committed to similar tasks, they have different ideologies and aspirations and interact with different social worlds, especially in pluralistic societies in which applications of various forms of communication networks are crucial. Political actors involved in distant social worlds not immediately represented on the scene may express their views or exercise their influence through mediated communication or social networks. The social world of an alien group will cease to be problematic once its worldviews are spilled out through effective communication.

Social media have had a profound effect on the social worlds and daily lives of people around the world. The widespread use of social networks has revolutionized the way that people communicate on personal, social, and professional levels. Social worlds differ from each other because their communication channels differ in range, scope, and effectiveness. For example, one-way communication tools such as radio, television, and print media are not as effective as two-way communication technologies and social networking systems such as the Internet, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, e-mails, blogs, mobile phones, text messages, and forums that can be used to foster dialogue and express the social and political demands of individuals belonging to certain social worlds.

Social worlds are significantly different regarding the view of social and political solidarity, as well as the sense of identification perceived by their members. In the United Arab Emirates, for instance, there has been a great emphasis on social and political solidarity generated by the locals' image of themselves as a "minority" in their homeland, where the number of expatriates from various countries exceeds that of nationals or locals.

Consequently, the ruling and political elites of the United Arab Emirates, contingent on both traditional social world and modern networks, proliferate folk heritage not only to gain legitimacy but also to transform the local or tribal identification into a national identity. They are continually inventing their paradigm of heritage, signifying their social world as represented in the "inside," as opposed to the "outside."

For the Emirati people, an essential tradition is based on the perception of "our social world," or "us" (insider-national, or *muwatin*) as opposed to the social world of the "other" (outsider-non-national, or *ghair muwatin*). The dynamic factors that help disseminate the Emirati social world and related forms of social and political solidarity that help to narrow the gap between generations include such modern devices as computers, iPads, and Internet-based online heritage narratives, as well as other kinds of electronic broadcast media.

el-Sayed el-Aswad
United Arab Emirates University

See Also: Communication; News Media; Psychographics; Social Capital.

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Sockpuppets

The term *sockpuppet* has come to refer to the creation and use of false online personas for public argument. The use of sockpuppets has been common for some time, and can refer to a variety of deceptive tactics used in online argumentation. The term is decidedly negative and is used as a pejorative.

Basic sockpuppets are false names in posting online comments. This would involve merely creating a false user name. In more sophisticated approaches, the user concocts or purchases fictional profiles that include images, histories, preferences, or other content testifying to the humanity of the account owner. This sort of sockpuppet use would be ideal for engaging in online arguments, often through comment sections relying on third-party validation. The sockpuppet would allow the user to avoid being labeled as potentially self-interested, or to position the false identity as being more involved in, or possessing information related to the dispute at hand. Sockpuppets create a form of synthetic word of mouth. In this sense, the sockpuppet provides argumentative resources as it allows a single message or argument to come from persons who would seemingly hold different perspectives. Many sockpuppets created by individuals outside an organized campaign, intended to incite argument, would tend to be of this type.

Other sockpuppets are less personal, and take the form of members of a crowd. A sockpuppet user could purchase thousands or tens of thousands of online identities for the purposes of providing the image of support, a crowd of often silent puppets. Commonly, this comes through the purchase of large numbers of followers on social media services. Due to the logistical difficulty of managing this large number of accounts without detection, these are often dormant accounts. As social media trends are news stories in and of themselves, it is not uncommon to read stories about the political use of social media, including stories that directly compare basic numbers of followers or the rate of social media activity of a campaign's supporters. This would provide an incentive for a candidate to purchase sockpuppet followers as a strategy for persuading the press that it has more grassroots support than in reality.

Sockpuppets purchased for the purposes of being part of a crowd tend to be passive, not sending messages or making additional connections. Sockpuppets used for other argumentative purposes are often of a single mind and have very short relational histories. Given the propensity for persons and news agencies to recognize and disregard the activity of sockpuppets, more advanced techniques for creating sockpuppets and managing them will appear in the future.

A more formal name for the activity of deceptive false identities in computer science is the Sybil problem. Sybil was a mythical character exhibiting multiple personalities that would provide verification for the information in the other personalities' deceptions. Sockpuppets used in an argument can be used to as a form of Sybil character, verifying information for each other. A number of technologies have been proposed for filtering out Sybil characters; however, these generally raise barriers for access to systems and are potentially expensive, although development is ongoing.

The impact of the public discovery of sockpuppet use is often of greater magnitude than the supposed good of the deception. The likely argumentative gains for any individual sockpuppet are extremely limited; the embarrassment and reputational damage from being publicly involved in deceptive activity is great. For example, a Wikipedia editor found to be engaged in sockpuppetry

faces permanent stigma, and possibly other sanctions. Given the poor perception of sockpuppets (and their users) it is not uncommon to see the accusation of sockpuppetry as a political attack in online comment thread debates.

In the future, sockpuppets will become more advanced, with the eventual goal of passing a simple Turing test and effectively persuading the public both of the reality of the false persona and their argument. A number of defense and other agencies have expressed an interest in automated sockpuppet systems for future use. So far, the benefits of sockpuppet use have been outweighed by the risks.

Daniel C. Faltesek
Oregon State University

See Also: Astroturfing; Avatars; Decoy Campaign Web Sites; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Flog; Military-Industrial Complex.

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Spanish 15M Movement

Under the slogan *Toma la calle!* ("Take the streets!"), the Spanish 15M Movement has led the so-called European revolutions that were born from frustration with the global economic crisis. The Spanish 15M movement sprang from a need to find and experiment with new forms of democratic politics. Since May 15, 2011, the date from which the movement takes its name, ordinary citizens have been mobilizing, heavily relying on the use of social networks for organization and social action. The movement has bridged generations and interest groups while drawing national and international attention to demands that ordinary citizens have made of traditional political elites. The movement uses social media, not only as a resource of information and dissemination, but also as a structure for deliberation and active participation. The movement shows in practice how activism on the streets, together with the use of new technologies, can merge to support demands to further democratize contemporary societies.

Among the countless social mobilizations that broke out around the world in 2011, the Indignados (the outraged) Movement, or #spanish revolution, as the Spanish15M is also known, set a precedent for the Occupy movements in the rest of Europe and the United States. The movement has been led by the social network and digital platform Democracy Real YA! (Real Democracy NOW!). It has found inspiration in the work of Stéphane Hessel and other social networks and digital movements, such as the Spanish Juventud Sin Futuro (Youth Without a Future), V de Vivienda (V for housing), the Portuguese movement Geração à Rasca (Precarious Generation), the Greek revolts, and most conspicuously, the Arab Spring. Initially starting as a massive, spontaneous protest creating *acampadas* (camps) in main public squares across Spain, the 15M evolved as an autonomous movement, rejecting the influence of any formal and traditional representative structure, like political parties or trade unions.

The movement shifted in strategy: It started operating at the larger national level when occupying main public squares in large cities across Spain, but it later turned to operating at the local level, organizing citizens in their neighborhoods to occupy local squares as assembly points under the rallying cry *toma los barrios!* ("Take the neighborhoods!"). This illustrates the multilevel character of the movement: its global connections with similar movements from Greece to Chile, its national and regional demands to the Spanish state as well

as the European Union (EU), and its local organization in neighborhoods.

Since its eruption in May 2011, the 15M has become the leading platform for numerous protests, mobilizations, and camps across Spain. In its manifesto, the movement declares itself to be formed by ordinary people who, despite their various backgrounds, ages, political affiliations, and interests, are outraged by the ways in which formal politics and politicians have led the management of the socioeconomic and financial crisis since 2008, privileging the interests of banks and corporations over the needs of the citizens. Frustration and anger over high and increasing rates of unemployment, further privatization of public services, and austerity measures, as well as the corruption and nepotism of political and economic elites contributed to mobilize large sectors of the population in defense of the needs of ordinary citizens. The 15M became the platform and symbolic agent of this popular discontent. It emerged to disrupt the traditional image of politics as a realm of representation in which the legitimate actors are political parties and experts. The movement has brought politics "back to the street" and to the neighborhoods—challenging the political community involved in decision-making processes. At the same time, the 15M has imposed a demand in the public sphere for further transparency and accountability of political elites. The 15M is about politics happening not only in the institutional sphere and among elected representatives, but also among lay people who are willing to engage in decision-making processes affecting their daily lives by directly participating in street assemblies, solidarity actions, or via the use of the media.

The Spanish 15 Movement, named because it began around May 15, 2011, started in a few Spanish cities and spread across the country with the assistance of social media networks. The movement attracted national and international attention.

The movement does not have political affiliation, and it is autonomously organized according to a horizontal structure, that is, its main form of organization is based on popular assemblies that often take place in squares and parks with open access to the public. Deliberation and discussions are done in working commissions and working groups that convene in direct and consensual decision-making processes. Participation in these assemblies can be concrete or virtual, since activists can also participate via Twitter. The movement also created digital encyclopedia (15Mpedia) in the ethos of Web 2.0; it is a collective and open-access production in which the history of the movement's development can be traced, as well as its organization, working strategies, achievements, and networks.

Conclusion

The 15M is yet another expression of the urge to further democratize democracy. The movement is about democracy, but transcending its regular understanding as merely an electoral system. The movement's demands are for increasing accountability and transparency in decision-making processes. It demands the state be more effective in recognizing and addressing the needs of its population; it denounces the vices of representation and the urgency for representatives to engage in further achieving social justice and equality, rather than protecting their privileges.

In this sense, the 15M has become a legitimate and powerful source of opinion leaders who can articulate collective action at national and local scales in projects that range from organized struggles against the eviction of families who are unable to pay their mortgages to neighborhood brigades protecting civilians, legal and illegal, from police harassment. Local activism in neighborhoods feeds back to the general movement in its demand to promote a constitutional process in Spain that can transform the political and economic system in its totality. The 15M is an expression of public indignation, but mostly the illustration of how active citizens and their use of social media, digital networks, and public spaces, can contest traditional politics to demand real-time and real-space democracy.

Daniela Vicherat-Mattar
Leiden University College

See Also: Activists and Activism; Arab Spring; *Democracy Now!*; Digital Revolution; Egypt; International Revolution; Occupy Movement.

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Speak2Tweet

Speak2Tweet is a service developed by Google and Twitter in the beginning of 2011 to allow people without Internet access to tweet voice messages and listen to tweets by dialing designated international phone numbers. The service automatically posts the voice messages as tweets on the Speak2Tweet account on twitter. The tweets contain a link to the audio message and a hashtag of the country from which the phone call was made. The service was launched on January 31, 2011, to allow Egyptian protesters to circumvent the Internet blackout enforced by the Egyptian government. Although the service was initially developed to support Egyptian protesters, voice-tweets were also sent from other countries in the Middle East and north Africa, such as Bahrain, Libya, Algeria, Sudan, and Syria. In November 2013, Twitter and Google relaunched Speak2Tweet in response to an Internet blackout enforced by the Assad regime, to support Syrian citizens and opposition activists who were cut off from Internet access.

Egypt

The Speak2Tweet system was developed and launched during the massive uprising against the Mubarak regime in Egypt in January 2011. On January 30, 2011, the Egyptian government cut Internet access in order to prevent the public from organizing protests. Within hours of the Internet blackout, engineers from Google and Twitter collaborated through Skype chat and developed the service based on a technology developed by SayNow, a company that Google acquired a week before the service was launched.

On January 31, 2011, less than 24 hours after Egyptians were cut off from Internet access, the service was officially launched and announced on Google's official blog. The announcement, posted by Ujjwal Singh, cofounder of SayNow, and AbdelKarim Mardini, Google's product manager for the Middle East and north Africa, expressed hope to help the Egyptian people circumvent the Internet blackout.

In the days that followed the announcement, the @Speak2Tweet Twitter account posted voice tweets from Egypt at a rate of about 100 tweets per day. The @Speak2Tweet account immediately attracted thousands of followers from around the world, many of whom retweeted the international telephone numbers that protesters can dial to send out voice tweets. To help spread the messages outside Egypt, activists also set up an open Google spreadsheet in which volunteers collaborated to

transcribe the voice messages in Arabic and translate them into English, German, and French. The citizen media initiative Small World News and its project Alive, which focuses on developing the capacity of citizens to engage with the international community in crisis areas and conflict zones, partnered with Speak2Tweet. The Alive in Egypt Web site displayed a selection of audio files tweeted through Speak2Tweet by protesters at Tahrir Square, with an English translation of the messages.

Although some voice tweets reported real-time events from Tahrir Square and other places in Egypt, the majority of tweets expressed support for the protests and objection to the corrupt regime. It should be noted that there were also a number of tweets supportive of Mubarak. After the Mubarak regime dissolved in March 2011, the rate of voice tweets decreased, and after September 2011, the Speak2Tweet account was relatively dormant.

Syria

Syrian protests against the Assad regime also started in 2011. Although the Speak2Tweet service was initially launched for Egypt, in early 2011, it was also used from Syria, albeit less frequently. In the same year, the crisis-mapping platform Ushahidi incorporated Speak2Tweet to display the reports on the interactive map that documented human rights violations in Syria.

In November 2012, Internet access in Syria was cut off by the Assad administration. In response, Google and Twitter relaunched the Speak2Tweet service with new designated international phone numbers, urging Syrian protesters to call to post messages and listen to messages even without access to the Internet.

Despite Speak2Tweet's technological innovation in circumventing Internet blackouts and providing real-time crisis reporting, the service was not significantly used by protesters, who in many cases were cut off from access to landline and mobile phones, in addition to the Internet blackout.

Both Google and Twitter are American corporations. Their development of the Speak2Tweet service to assist protesters against authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and north Africa is seen as corporate adoption of U.S. foreign policy in promoting democracy through Internet freedom. It is reported that in 2013, Speak2Tweet calls from Syria were made through satellite phones provided by the U.S. State Department to Syrian opposition activists.

Anat Ben-David
University of Amsterdam

See Also: Africa, north; Arab Spring; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Egypt; Google; Middle East; Syria; Twitter; Ushahidi.

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Special Interest Campaigns

Special interest campaigns are mounted by special interest groups, which are organizations of like-minded individuals who share a similar position on a policy or political issue. Special interest groups have been involved in American politics as far back as the 1830s, and they have used various methods to increase awareness of their issues or topics, including media advertising campaigns, polling, lobbying, public stunts, and civil disobedience. Most campaigns are used to exert pressure on the government, which usually holds the

power to change policies or regulations. Modern special interest campaigns are making great use of social media to try to influence public opinion and change existing policies.

These types of organizations can be controversial, with some voters expressing unease with the power that special interests can hold over candidates and elected officials. It is not unusual during an election for one or more candidates to declare that they will not be accepting money from special interest groups, as this would make them seem beholden to those groups that helped get them elected.

Some well-known examples of special interest groups include the National Rifle Association (NRA), AARP, MoveOn.org, and Swift Boat Veterans for Truth. While these four groups have very different constituents and important issues, all of them have found ways to impact political elections.

Types

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) awards tax-exempt status to special interest organizations, provided they are registered with the agency. The IRS recognizes at least three different types of political special interest groups, including 501(c)and 527 groups, political action committees (PACs). Within the 501(c) classification, there are at least 26 different categories of nonprofit groups ranging from child-care nonprofit organizations to religious, literary, and scientific groups. Some of the classifications can engage in political activities, as long as it is not their primary purpose. Others, such as religious organizations and charitable groups, are not allowed to engage in political activities.

527 groups are more loosely regulated but are allowed to raise soft money for political activities, voter mobilization efforts, and issue advocacy. Issue advocacy is when an organization uses its money and resources to bring public awareness to an issue. A group might be concerned about an environmental issue, for instance, and develop a series of online ads to promote awareness of that topic. Many 527 groups run by special interest organizations raise unlimited amounts of money to spend on issue awareness activities. 527s can be designated as federal or state, depending on the purpose of the group.

PACs raise and spend money for the expressed purpose of electing or defeating candidates. This type of organization raises what is referred to as hard money, as it is collected to be used in support of specific federal candidates and is subject campaign finance regulations. There are limits on the amount of money that PACs can give to federal candidates during individual elections.

Some organizations operate both a PAC and a 527 group so that they can raise both hard and soft money and focus attention at both the federal and nonfederal levels.

Campaigns

When these types of organizations use their resources on behalf of a candidate or a cause in an attempt to shape public opinion, it is referred to as a campaign, and their methods can vary as much as their particular causes. Traditional communication methods have included printed materials, such as brochures and issue papers, as well as radio and television advertising. Campaigns can revolve around a myriad of topics, including proposed legislation at the state or federal level, the protection of environmental resources, voter registration efforts, or the maintenance of teaching standards.

Most special interest campaigns are planned in advance and last for a set period of time. They are usually designed to catch people's attention and influence public opinion. For instance, if a campaign is planned to register voters in a particular state, that voter-registration drive will be promoted through local media, online Web sites, and various types of social media. Different communication appeals can be used, including educating the public about a specific issue, or appealing to safety, status, or American values. Appeals are matched to particular campaigns for the development of an effective message.

Special interest campaigns may or may not have a political component, but special interest groups are very active in political issues. Special interest groups often raise money for political candidates or issues, and depending on the size of the organization, they can be influential in lobbying and pushing for legislative reform.

Although special interest groups have been involved in politics in the United States for a long time, it was not until the most recent decade that

they were able to expand the scope of their influence through the Internet.

Social Media

Beginning in the 2000 presidential race, special interest campaigns used the Internet to identify like-minded members and volunteers and raise public awareness of political issues. Organizations used chat rooms available through companies such as America Online (AOL) to look for prospective members and discuss issues. Grassroots organizing was used to build membership numbers, and that led to some groups maintaining a large online presence after the 2000 election ended. E-mail lists were developed as a way to keep in touch with members and exchange information.

The number of people using the Internet grew from 361 million in 2000 to more than 812 million worldwide in 2004, meaning that the Internet grew 125 percent in those four years. Access to faster Internet connections helped fuel that increase, with broadband service utilized by 50 percent of those online. This increase in faster service led to easier sharing of online videos, photographs, and other larger files. Because the number of sites on the Web also dramatically increased, Americans had more reason to go online, whether it was to discuss political topics or shop. The increase in people online and the development of social media technologies helped special interest campaigns diversify their communication methods and more easily spread their messages.

Groups seeking to pressure the government on particular issues found social media to be of great value during the 2004 presidential campaign. Although still in their infancy, online tools such as blogs and discussion groups allowed special interest organizations to identify and communicate with like-minded individuals. Discussion groups had been a fixture on the Internet since the 1990s, but they began to be eclipsed by sites that were easier to use and offered more flexibility. Yahoo! Groups was a popular online community in which members could share photographs, document files, and plan and coordinate upcoming events. This type of site was a good place for special interest groups to begin to recruit new members and search for those with similar ideas.

Another popular social media outlet used in the 2004 election was Meetup.com, a social software tool created to help people with similar interests to organize local meetings. This was helpful for special interest groups as well as those opposing such groups' influence in politics. Meetup.com offered new tools that helped groups begin to do grassroots organizing all over the country, rather than just in a few geographic areas. By giving people the tools to organize, special interest groups began to grow in areas where they had previously not been effective. Democratic candidate Howard Dean used Meetup.org in his campaign, which gave it additional media attention and added to its popularity.

Special Interest Campaigns in Presidential Elections

During the 2004 presidential election, at least two high-profile special-interest campaigns gained national attention for their efforts to highlight political issues. MoveOn.org, a political action committee and advocacy group with about 3 million members, ran a series of prominent ads designed to hurt the re-election prospects for President George W. Bush. The group also developed an online ad contest that encouraged members to create and submit ads critical of President George W. Bush's administration. It tried to run the ad that won this contest during the 2004 Super Bowl, but the ad was rejected by CBS because the network said that it was an issue piece and was not appropriate for the broadcast.

Swift Boat Veterans for Truth was a 527 organization that ran a series of ads critical of Senator John Kerry's Vietnam service. The ads featured men who said that they served with John Kerry during the Vietnam War, and all of the ads featured the address of the organization's Web site, where additional material was available that related to Kerry's time in Vietnam. The ads were controversial, and some of the claims made in the ads were later challenged.

Advocates and detractors of both groups took to online blogs and traditional media to discuss the ads, making these two special interest groups among the most well-known organizations involved in the 2004 election.

During the 2008 presidential election, special interest groups began to use more social media. By

this time, YouTube had been founded (in 2005), and Facebook had evolved from a fledgling campus and regional site to a national social media outlet. Blogs had become influential in driving the national political conversation and in providing information outlets for candidates and special interest groups.

Money in Special Interest Campaigns

Money used in special interest campaigns is raised by individual organizations, often through memberships or donations. Critics have often lamented the amount of money spent in federal political campaigns, and in recent elections, special interest groups raised and spent much money on behalf of candidates or causes.

Money spent on the presidential election in 2008 totaled more than $5 billion. It was the most expensive campaign ever, eclipsing the 2004 total by more than $1 billion. Among the special interest groups garnering attention for their efforts during the election was MoveOn.org, which had 4.2 million members in 2008. MoveOn.org spent more than $7 million in a campaign to tie John McCain to lobbyists, in addition to its social media efforts to influence the election through Facebook and YouTube.

The American Issues Project, which received $2.8 million from one donor who had also given money to the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth group in 2004, turned its resources toward ads linking Barack Obama with 1960s radical William Ayers, Jr. The group also used Facebook to identify supporters and share information.

Social Media Opportunities

Although more attention was given to then-candidate Barack Obama's use of social media, special interest groups were also quick to adopt these new forms of communication. Groups established pages on Facebook and began using Twitter to spread their messages and establish grassroots organizing campaigns. Unlike a political campaign, which ends once the voting is over, special interest groups can continually engage members and like-minded individuals in online discussions and events, with their emphasis on a continuing push to make their issues more visible to the public.

Social media have provided a new way for special interest campaigns to recruit supporters and spread messages. In addition to Facebook and Twitter, groups can now take advantage of social media such as LinkedIn and Foursquare, and they can have Web sites that stream video. Organizations also often post video on sites such as YouTube. Many groups also have developed smartphone apps for volunteers and keep lists of members' numbers for text messaging. A quick glance at current and past Facebook pages confirms that special interest groups are maintaining a political presence through social media. For example, many recent propositions placed on ballots in California were either supported or opposed by special interest groups with a page on Facebook.

State and Local Campaigns

Special interest campaigns are often pegged to state initiatives, rather than federal campaigns. For instance, before the 2004 presidential race, few people had ever heard of a 527 organization because they had mostly been involved in state races and referenda. When these groups were utilized at the federal level to get around provisions in the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA), many people were surprised by their ability to raise money and quickly spread messages. In that presidential race alone, there were 53 groups that received $246 million during the 2003 to 2004 campaign cycle.

Prior to that presidential election, these special interest groups had been involved in many state issues and elections. The Progressive Majority, for instance, was created in 1999 to help elect progressive candidates across the country. It still provides political support to progressive candidates in races as small as local school boards and up to statewide races. While it once focused on traditional types of media, it now features Twitter feeds on its Web site and provides support to help candidates navigate through the Internet and the intricate maze of social media. Some groups focus on state legislation or political races, whereas others focus on lobbying efforts in state legislatures.

Special interest campaigns are as varied as the types of organizations and interests represented through their membership. They are generally comprised of individuals who are passionately interested in a specific topic and are willing

to spend their time and money trying to influence public opinion in that area. Special interest groups have adopted several types of social media into their campaigns and everyday communication with members.

Melissa M. Smith
Mississippi University for Women

See Also: Activists and Activism; Campaigns, Grassroots; Chat Rooms; MoveOn.org; Social Media, Adoption of.

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Spending and Debt, Government

Government spending and debt are two sides of the same coin. On one side, government spending includes the things a government purchases, such as goods and services; on the other side, government debt is what the government owes for purchasing goods and services. Of course, the spending side is more complex as the needs of the constituencies change. As the population ages, a government may spend more on helping its citizens with medical costs while providing an income for those same constituencies that includes a pension paid out to citizens at a certain age. The debt side can be even more complex. As a government tackles the challenges of an aging population, high levels of unemployment and fiscal crisis and setbacks can impair its ability to provide for the needs of its population. As such, governments look for other means of financing that may include bonds or long-term loans acquired from citizens, other governments in other states, or other countries. Government spending and government debt are difficult to research on social media sites because governments do not publish those numbers online. Instead, social media sites host discussions and examinations of government spending and government debt, and allow users to formulate some type of analysis of capital resources.

Government spending and debt often involves language and actions centered on concepts like budgets, deficits, surpluses, and interest. Depending on which aspect of government action one undertakes to discuss or examine, the conversation will likely land in either the camp of government spending or expenditures, or government debt or interest and principal payments on expenditures. Generally, governments operate within the three traditional branches as it relates to expenditures. Major departments of a government receive money to meet its objectives to its citizens and reallocate money for achieving those objectives.

In most countries there is extensive debate on the national budget. Prominent budget items can include national defense and security, payments to individuals to provide greater income security, retirement payments, and payments on the national debt. The payments on the national debt indicate that one of a government's expenditures includes interest payments that it owes to itself or others, and are also part of the government debt as well. Research and infrastructure maintenance are also government expenditures, but these can suffer reductions in funding due to the shift in importance of issues such, as national security or interest payments on the national debt that are immediately due. An IMF Staff Position Note published in 2009 states that age-related spending for governments has increased, taxes collected by governments around the world have failed to

meet expenditures, and in the G-20 countries, 100 to 700 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP) is devoted to government spending of one kind or another.

Types

To understand government debt it is essential to delineate the type of government debt that may occur. Internal debt is debt that governments owe to their citizens. This debt has been borrowed from citizens and secured through legislation or referendum. External debt is borrowed from abroad and owed to debtors abroad. This source of debt has spawned a host of discussions since 1990, when U.S. external debt represented over 60 percent of GDP. The U.S. debt-to-GDP ratio in 2011 was over 100 percent. Internal and external borrowing by government is no longer simply a measure used by the United States to meet its obligations to citizens through public services. Most governments around the world owe some portion of their debt to their citizens or to a foreign entity or government. Therefore, internal and external debt as a portion of government spending and debt have become very common.

Government spending and government debt can differ from state to state and region to region. Over 40 percent of the state of Idaho is designated national set-aside. As such, merely 50 percent of the state is available for trade, commerce, and the like. Government spending in a state such as Idaho would be quite different from government spending in states like Delaware, which has no designated national park areas. Government debt in Idaho would also be different and debt acquired would most likely go toward items that the state cannot supply due to its large designation of national park area. For the most part, government debt among U.S. states tends to be acquired to take care of education, health care, welfare, defense, and retirement.

Budget Types

A government chooses from a variety of options when it designs its budget for reallocation of resources. These options are generally known as budget types, and can include performance budgets, program budgets, line-item budgets, outcome-based budgets, or zero-based budgets. Depending on the need of the government, one or more of these budgets options may be implemented and used to gauge the likelihood that objectives and goals can be met. Some governments try at all costs to not become indebted. They attempt to use budgeting options that ensure they will meet all obligations without having to borrow internally or externally. One way they do this is to use a pay-as-you-go method of budgeting that helps to keep government spending at an available level, and government debt nonexistent. This is a good method if nothing comes up that would require the government to spend all of the money it has. In times of natural disaster or a slowed economy, the pay-as-you-go method of spending and budgeting may not be adequate. If a city, state, or national government used this method as the sole method for spending, a natural disaster large enough to cause substantial damage within its borders could empty the public coffers and force the entity to borrow.

Fiscal Crises

In good times or times of surplus, governments may embark on funding projects that will increase or maintain infrastructure or economic development. In times of fiscal crisis, these projects may be abandoned in order to supply more vital public goods. Another option during a fiscal crisis is budget cuts and austerity. These entail the decrease in funding of projects or programs that take up a huge amount of government funding, but may be projects or programs that can be provided perhaps by the private sector, but at a higher cost than the government can provide. In this case, government spending decreases in an effort to stave off government debt. A country like Greece that is a part of the European Union (EU) and suffering from a fiscal crisis may be asked to implement drastic spending cuts and severe austerity in order to maintain support and funding from other EU nations. In 2012, austerity measures in Greece were so severe that they sparked protests around the country and an exodus of Greek citizens to other European countries like Germany. Although the fiscal crisis that Greece has experienced was not planned, problems like high unemployment, government spending, and a wholesale national funding crisis emerged, causing Greece to stall in its development and ability to accurately budget for the future.

Social Media

For the most part, governments around the world have only a trickle of social media employed for discussions and examinations from the public related to government spending and debt. Most of the Web sites that are posted do not engage the public in issues related to government spending and debt unless some crisis has emerged or in the event that a contentious election is approaching. Still, most governments attempt to provide their citizens with some level of input, although most of it remains symbolic.

This may be because of the fact that social media is still a new tool, and government officials are still attempting to process the uses of social media, both internally and externally. However, there is little doubt that once governments begin to understand the range of use and functional options of social media for interaction and suggestions regarding spending and debt, social media will become as common as a login and password. Info.apps.gov is a Web site provided by the U.S. Government Services Administration that provides governments with platforms for cloud computing social media options.

A Google search demonstrates how many cities around the world are building Facebook pages for immediate and consistent feedback from citizens. Some, like those in England, have used crowdsourcing, or soliciting public response, in an effort to prioritize spending cuts using the Facebook platform. For the most part, internal use of social media by governments has been in the form of records management. Wiki pages developed as Web pages or pages set up for information on particular subjects are becoming more common, and in some cases are entirely built by the very public servants working in those particular agencies or departments. In early 2011, the U.S. Coast Guard, using a platform from the former Apps.gov (now Info.apps.gov), created a Wiki Page to develop its IT strategy and summarize best practices for that strategy. Another Web site, IT Dashboard, tracks public spending to improve transparency and accountability while helping governments manage investments. The Dashboard is a tool that the public can use to track government spending on particular items while keeping up with the level of government spending and resource allocation on a specific item.

Of those countries with official government Web sites, most employ Twitter, Facebook, RSS feeds, and YouTube as part of their social media options for citizen participation and feedback. However, an expanded search will show that there are not many official Web sites that can be counted on to post anything beyond published documents as they relate to spending and debt within the social media options available on their Web sites. A few notable exceptions include England's use of social media options for citizen feedback. England's Web site Democracy UK is used by government departments to host discussion forums on spending items. In 2005, India passed a Right to Information Act emphasizing the need for data sharing and transparency. In 2012, India also passed a National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy to emphasize the government's commitment to easy access to data for scientific, economic, and social development purposes.

The United States has a Web site devoted to cataloging each federal award, amount, and funding agency. The Web site, called USAspending, was launched in 2006 as part of a statute requirement of the Transparency Act. In 2009, President Barack Obama entered office with a number of initiatives aimed at using social media as part of the approach for reaching and communicating with the public. In the same year, his Open Government Directive was one such initiative that called for increased online publication of government information for public consumption. Agencies and departments in the government began to collaborate with universities and programmers in an effort to develop social media uses to meet the president's initiative.

In 2009, the Web site YouCut was launched as an effort by U.S. Representative Eric Cantor to seek recommendations from the public regarding which government spending to cut. For editing and sharing, Google Docs can be set up by one agency or department and sent to others for input on strategies or policies, without having to physically meet for regular input sessions. This type of collaboration saves an enormous amount of time and money by eliminating meeting times and separate task force sessions, and by employing specific experts all in real time. Google+ is also a tool used by many governments when putting together spending and debt documents for presentation

IT Dashboard, an official U.S. government Web site, "allows the general public and other stakeholders to view details of federal information technology investments . . . to provide information on the effectiveness of government IT programs."

to groups or the public. Google+ is available as an application for mobile devices or for desktops, with features such as Circles for organizing groups and the instant messaging feature for Circle groups called Huddle. Another major feature of Google+ is the ability to invite contacts from Hotmail and Yahoo! The U.S. State Department is an agency that uses Google+. The Foreign Assistance Dashboard keeps up with U.S. global aid, and allows citizens to see where their tax dollars are going in the international community. If one wanted to know the total amount of global debt the world has, a visit to the *Economist* Web site shows the global debt clock as it ticks off in real-time, up-to-date debt totals for global debt adding over $300,000 per second. For a closer analysis of the meaning of the total, the color legend red shows states with the highest individual debt, and dark green for states with less debt.

Debategraph is also a social media tool that governments have used to assess comments and suggestions on policy issues, including those regarding government spending and government debt. Debategraph provides digital visual mapping of the ideas and opinions of diverse groups around an issue. Despite being used by agencies, departments, politicians, and individuals seeking political office, this has been used by several governments and entities, including the United States, England, and Canada, as well as the United Nations. There have been a number of other collaborative social media tools experimented with by governmental entities around the world. Most were temporary, but some have resurfaced. A search of official government Web sites in many countries yields social media symbols unique to that particular country. Unique to Portugal is the social media tool called the "start tracker," while Morocco and Costa Rica use DIPNOTE BLOG. These are by no means the limit to social media used by governments around the world, which may one day be even more useful when governments become more comfortable using them to collaboratively report and assess their spending and debt.

Lisa Saye
Independent Scholar

See Also: Crowdfunding; Digital Government; E-Voter Institute; Influence on Elections; Microfinance Initiatives.

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Spiral of Silence

Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, a German public opinion researcher and professor of communications research, coined the term *spiral of silence* while trying to explain public opinion polls' failure to predict outcomes of elections in West

Germany. The spiral of silence model began as an explanation of the interaction between public opinion and voters' behavior. At the foundation of the theory lies the assumption that potential group pressure transmitted via mass media (usually in the form of public opinion data, illustrating majority opinion) forces supporters of unpopular views (about political candidates, beliefs, or ideas) to stay silent and even change their opinion. Once started, the effect amplifies itself. In this spiral-like process, the support for the popular belief grows and the minority view is increasingly silenced at every step. Mass media, as the source of information about popular beliefs, play a crucial role in this process. Emergence of the Internet and social media, while providing new channels and means for mass communication, can potentially change the nature of spiral of silence mechanisms.

Background

Last minute swings of public support for candidates in 1965 and 1972 West German federal elections, connected to the voters' capricious political attachments and their prognoses of election outcomes, puzzled Noelle-Neumann and other scholars and analysts alike. Both in 1965 and in 1972, two major parties were racing neck-to-neck to gain majority in the Bundestag (German federal diet). Voting intentions among German constituencies remained largely unchanged until the last minute. At this point, people became aware of the "expected winner" and jumped on the bandwagon. As Noelle-Neumann described it, "What had occurred … [was] the power of public opinion. Under its pressure, hundreds of thousands—no, actually millions of voters—had taken part in what was later called a 'last minute swing.'"

"Spiral of Silence: a Theory of Public Opinion," a 1974 article in *Journal of Communication*, and a later book titled *The Spiral of Silence: Public Opinion—Our Social Skin*, lay out in detail the idea, research, data, tests, and argumentation of the spiral of silence as "a process that creates and spreads public opinion." Noelle-Neumann adopts what is described in earlier works of social psychologists as "fear of isolation" as the motive of the spiral of silence mechanism. "The social nature of human beings" stipulates the close attention paid to group judgments. Being afraid to become social isolates, people take steps to ensure their attachment to a group. Belonging to a larger group, or winning side (the majority), boosts a person's self-confidence and reduces the risk of isolation that might follow his or her expressing an opinion. In other words, popular opinion is more comfortable to subscribe to and is more easily expressed.

"Willingness to speak out" is another cornerstone of the theory. The stronger the individual's belief is that his or her opinion is the dominant one, the more likely he or she is to express this opinion. The more vocal support a view receives, the stronger it appears. The stronger the view appears, the easier (less risky) it is to support it, and it ultimately gains more support. Triggered by the fear of isolation, vocal expressions of support for popular views and lack of support for opposing minority views set the spiral of silence in motion.

According to Noelle-Neumann, individuals use their "quasi-statistical organ" to assess their social environment and figure out the distribution of opinions, as well as amount of support for and against their ideas. People sense trends in the social weather. If the individual's view appears to be losing ground, this person would be less willing to express the opinion, and may even subscribe to a different view out of fear of isolation. At this crucial stage of environmental surveillance, mass media, as the main source of information about public opinion, come into play. Noelle-Neumann believes that individuals are dependent on mass media in their evaluation of the climate of opinion. Involving mechanisms of agenda setting (and going a step beyond by not just telling people what to think about, but also providing an assented take on what others think), media create public opinion by providing environmental pressure. Individuals respond to this pressure by expression of their support for or acquiescence to the dominant position, or silence. In describing this process, the spiral of silence theory takes a side in the debates of whether media simply retransmit public opinion, or influence it.

In Noelle-Neumann's research, cases where people were mistaken about what the popular opinion was (a condition called "pluralistic ignorance") were very likely to be, the author

suggested, a consequence of media providing a mix of viewpoints disproportionate to their strength in society. In the process, described by the spiral of silence model, what matters is the majority opinion perceived through the quasistatistical organ and not the popular opinion itself. In her book, Noelle-Neumann suggests that pollsters are asking the wrong question. Instead of asking, "Who do you plan to vote for?" one should ask, "Who do you think will win the election?" Responses to the latter question, when analyzed for the book in public opinion data, demonstrate more consistency with ultimate election outcomes, and illustrate much clearer trends. If a current majority is considered a minority at the moment, it will decline in the future. As long as a group is perceived as a minority, people will be unwilling to express support for the group. In a reversed process, if a minority is perceived as the majority, the faction will grow, and may ultimately win popular support.

Social Media and the Spiral of Silence

Mass media, the main source of information about the majority opinion, play a very crucial role in the spiral of silence effect. According to the theory, one learns through mass media who the majority is and what their views are. Different media systems (open versus closed, strictly controlled versus liberal) in different political systems (democratic, authoritarian, and totalitarian) offer different tools that factions can use in their struggle to gain recognition as the majority, which can ultimately generate and enlarge their actual support.

While being less susceptible to external control and including a larger number of more diverse messages, messengers, and audiences, the World Wide Web in general (and social media in particular) influences the spiral of silence process. Social media provide easy, low cost, (arguably) safer access to mass audiences, which potentially should promote diversity of opinions. While representing a greater diversity of opinions, social media can reduce the fear of isolation: one could more easily find a group to subscribe to, and can for an unpopular opinion.

Research shows that spiral of silence effects are still present in the social media environment. However, the magnitude of the effect is lessened by multiple factors. Many of these factors are determined by the nature of social media, and others are determined by distinct characteristics of their audiences. While traditional media still hold the position of the main source of information on controversial political issues, new channels of communication are growing in popularity. When it comes to authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, where the access to alternative information is limited (if not restricted), the role of social media in political communication becomes more significant. The importance of social media is higher for traditionally unpopular groups, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities, which can gain voice now after being largely ignored by the mainstream media for a long time.

Being accepted by the popular majority becomes less significant for individuals altogether. It becomes more difficult for the majority (actual and/or perceived) to maintain status quo, which arguably contributes to social and political change. The examples of the Arab Spring and social unrest in multiple countries, backtracking to social media, provide demonstrative illustrations of the new tendency.

Dzmitry Yuran
University of Tennessee

See Also: Arab Spring; Citizen Journalism; Cyclical Message Strategy; Framing Theory, Social Media and; Gate Keeping Theory.

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Splogs

Splog is a fairly new term referring to spam blogs. It is defined as any deliberate human action meant to trigger an unjustifiably favorable relevance or importance for some blog, considering the blog's true value. The purpose of a splog can be to increase the page rank or backlink portfolio of affiliate Web sites, to artificially inflate paid advertisement impressions from visitors, and/or use the blog as a link outlet to sell links or get new sites indexed.

Splogs can be broadly classified into link spam blogs and fake blogs. The former is quite common in the rest of the Web, and usually contains a high number of links to sites associated with the splog creator, which are often disreputable or otherwise useless Web sites. The latter is more frequent in the blogosphere. Fake blogs unjustifiably extract text from other sources on the Web and publish them as a post, and are only created for search engine spamming. They create favorable relevance to posts on diverse topics, enabling placement of context-sensitive advertisements that drive revenue. The use of fake blogs as a spamming technique is driven by the very nature of blog content and blogging infrastructure.

Blogs are usually commentary oriented, in which an excerpt from another page is included as part of the post. This makes it difficult (for humans and machines alike) to differentiate between fake and authentic blogs, thereby giving splogs credibility they do not deserve. Indeed, further blog hosting services and applications provide programmatic interfaces for posting content, which in turn eases the automated posting of large amounts of spam content. In addition, blog search engines return results by post time stamp, making fake blogs an easy and effective spamming technique. These fake blogs make the splog detection problem particularly challenging. It should be noted here that comment, trackback, and (update) ping spam are different aspects of blog spam, although they might be related to splogs.

The issue of splogs has quickly grown. Research has estimated that one in five blogs is a splog. For example, the tracking service Technorati, which follows 20 million blogs, found that up to 8 percent of the 70,000 blogs created every day are fake. Feedster blocks thousands a day, while Splogspot.com publishes a weekly list of splogs. The latest figures show 41,000 splogs, of which 34,000 are on Google's free Blogspot hosting service.

Splogs have caused various problems to many Internet users. For example, splogs can clog up search engines, making it difficult to find real content on the subjects that interest users. They may scrape content from other sites on the Web, using other people's writing to make it look as though they have useful information. In addition, if an automated system is creating spam posts at an extremely high rate, it can impact the speed and quality of the service for legitimate users.

Political Effect

Splogs have been an issue in the political arena. In 2008, there were allegations accusing political blogs of being splogs in order to convince Google to block these political blogs. As a result of these allegations, several anti-Obama bloggers were unable to update their sites, which were hosted on Google's Blogger service. These bloggers, most of whom were supporters of Senator Hillary Clinton and opposed to Senator Obama, received a notice from Google claiming that their sites had been identified as potential splogs, and that they were not able to publish any more posts to their blogs until Google reviewed their sites and confirmed that their sites were not spam blogs.

Although Google announced that it had not been tricked, it admitted that the cause of the temporary blockage was because of the antispam filter. According to Google spokesman Adam Kovacevich, Google's antispam filters caused some blogger accounts to be blocked from creating new posts. He mentioned that this may have been caused by mass spam e-mails mentioning the "Just Say No Deal" network of blogs, which in turn caused Google's system to classify the blog addresses mentioned in the e-mails as spam. He insisted that Google restore posting rights to the affected blogs as soon as the incident had been investigated, and stressed that Blogger remains a tool for political debate and free expression.

Chit Cheung Matthew Sung
Lancaster University

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Astroturfing; Blogs; Deception in Political Social Media; Decoy Campaign Web Sites; Flogs; Sockpuppets.

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Sponsored Listings

Sponsored listings (also known as sponsored links, sponsored search, or sponsored ads) refer to a set of online search-based advertisement schemes, advertisements that are based on users' queries on a search engine and are guised as organic results. Unlike advertisements in traditional media, sponsored listings are more organically integrated into the naturally occurring practices of users' online behavior. They appear as a result of a query made by users. For example, a user looking for information on a medical condition is likely to have products and services pertinent to that condition appear as results, which are ads. Surveys report that only a minority of search engine users is aware of the distinction between sponsored and organic search results, and still a smaller minority can tell the difference between the two.

Providers of sponsored listings are primarily search engines and social networking sites. These media do not only provide advertisement space, but also act as technologies that collect real-time information from the audience, indicating the kind of ads that an audience will respond to. The companies profiting most from sponsored listings are Google (almost all revenues come from search-based advertising) and Bing, the biggest search engines.

Sponsored listings work as follows: An advertiser bids for keywords with a search engine company. Once a user makes a query using that keyword, the advertisements that won the bid are displayed as part of the result page. Bids are dynamic, and respond to basic market rules of supply and demand. The most expensive keywords in Google Adwords (the company's sponsored listings program) in 2011 were insurance, gas/electricity, mortgage, attorney, claim, loans, and lawyer. Winning biddings for each reached dozens of dollars.

Unlike traditional marketing, which segments customers based on demographics and past behavior, sponsored listings rely on the dynamic interests of consumers, which segment themselves to an individual level. The technology can help advertisers determine not only which keyword to bid on, but also which demographic the ad would target. For example, a cooking Web site can bid on the keyword *cheesecake* in a search engine, and can limit its display by geographical and temporal specifications (geotargeting and temporal targeting, respectively).

Unlike traditional advertising, advertisers pay not for impressions (i.e., how many potential consumers watched the ad), but for clicks, those consumers who were interested enough in the ad to follow its link, a method commonly known as pay per click (PPC). This innovative model is made possible by the interactive nature of new media, where the effectiveness of the ad can be measured in real time in terms of visibility and its ability to drive action.

One of the most recent developments of sponsored listings is Facebook's Sponsored Stories, introduced in 2011. Sponsored Stories allows companies to buy posts by users pertinent to their business, and feature them as advertisements in the news feed of these users' friends. It features all the key elements of sponsored listings: their organic nature and reliance on audience labor, and the capacity of these media to access individualized information in real time and commodify it. Indeed, almost all global businesses report using social media marketing.

A more critical outlook suggests that sponsored listings represent a mixture of advertisements

and organic search results, or the commodification of personal information. They epitomize the Internet as an entangled space where information is free and accessible, but also has an economic value and is highly commodified. This undermines the ideological view of search engines as a neutral, unbiased medium between users and the plethora of information on the Web. Search results reflect not only the interests of users to get the most relevant results, but also commercial interests.

In business discourse, sponsored listings are portrayed as a way by which powerful and indispensable search engines can be provided for free. A more critical political economy analysis, however, sees the free service as a form of wages for audience labor. Users of search engines produce a plethora of valuable information, commodified and sold by search engine companies to advertisers. This information concerns users' geolocation, consumerist behavior, and general interests. Indeed, in comparison with mass media, advertisements on social media are conditioned on audience labor to a greater extent.

Conclusion

In sum, sponsored listings are a form of advertising that builds on the sociotechnical features of Web 2.0—particularly its interactive and networked nature, its capacity to activate audiences, and its ability to mobilize audience labor both at the aggregate and individual levels. Sponsored stories epitomize important tensions that prevail on the Internet between free, collaborative culture on the one hand, and commodification on the other hand.

Eran Fisher
Open University of Israel

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; Click-Through Rate; Facebook; Geo-Locational Enabling; Google AdSense; Search Engine Optimization; Social Media Optimization; Web 2.0.

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Stanford Center for Internet and Society

Founded at the Stanford Law School in 2000 by Lawrence Lessig, the Center for Internet and Society (CIS) serves as a public interest technology law and policy program. As part of Stanford Law School's Law, Science and Technology Program, the CIS aims to examine how new technologies and the law intermingle, interrelate, and interconnect in ways that promote or hinder a variety of public goods. The public goods that interact with technology and the law and that are explored by the CIS include diversity, free speech, innovation and invention, public commons, privacy, and scientific inquiry. The CIS undertakes a variety of programs to address these issues including publications, symposia, and statements on matters of topical concern.

The Stanford Law School, due in part to its proximity to a variety of high-technology firms, including those involved in the manufacture of computer hardware, software, and other related businesses ("Silicon Valley"), has long had an interest in areas related to the Internet and how it affects individuals and society. Lessig, then a faculty member at Stanford Law School, founded CIS in an effort to focus attention upon an area of increasing importance to those interested in civil rights, free expression, and technology. The CIS joined other Stanford Law School centers devoted to a variety of themes including international law, natural resources and the environment, conflict resolution, corporate governance, negotiation and mediation, criminal law, and computers and the law.

As a former law clerk for both Judge Richard Posner of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and Justice Antonin Scalia of the U.S. Supreme Court, Lessig was well versed in the law and economics approach favored by both of those

jurists. Lessig, now Roy L. Furman Professor of Law and Leadership at Harvard Law School, is known for his interest in copyright and trademark law, especially as it pertains to use with technology. Lessig based the CIS in part upon the objectives of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard, a research and advocacy center that examines issues related to the World Wide Web. In particular, Lessig has advocated reducing the limitations on copyrighted and trademarked material, and has also opposed legislation extending these protections. Although Lessig left Stanford Law School in 2009, the CIS continues to advocate for these positions.

Areas of Interest

Although interested in most interactions involving the Internet and society, the CIS concentrates on four areas. These four areas include architecture and public policy, copyright and fair use, privacy, and robotics. Examining how changes in computer network architecture shape the economic environment for those seeking to create new applications and foster competition on the Internet, the CIS also considers how the law will respond to these transformations. Recognizing the constitutional bases of the United States' copyright system, and the significant financial encouragement such protections provide, the CIS also seeks to protect fair use, which safeguards vital public interests such as free speech and expression. Using the many perspectives afforded by Stanford University's disciplinary strengths, the CIS has delved into how privacy is defined in the 21st century, especially as it interacts with new technologies. Finally, the CIS has investigated how administrative law, personal injury proceedings, malpractice suits, and employment regulations are affected by the increasing use of robotics in manufacturing, warehouses, health care facilities, and schools.

Projects

As it provides leadership in investigating and exploring these pressing policy issues, the CIS works to engage decision makers to consider democratic values and civil rights when crafting guidelines and procedures that relate to these issues. To this end, the CIS creates educational resources and studies that further explore matters that involve civil rights, free expression, and technology. Sponsoring a variety of conferences, symposia, and workshops, the CIS seeks to provide speakers on these issues to a variety of audiences so that attention will be paid to these important concerns.

The CIS also sponsors the Fair Use Project, which serves as a legal clinic and provides representation to clients involved in litigation involving copyright and trademark matters, free speech, technology, and civil rights. The Fair Use Project has assisted individuals seeking to use or make reference to material that is copyrighted through assertions that the fair use exception to the copyright law should be broadly interpreted so as to permit use of material for commentary, criticism, library annals, reporting, research, teaching, scholarship, and search engines.

Although not always successful, the Fair Use Project has permitted litigants the resources necessary to withstand legal challenges from movie studios, record companies, publishing houses, and broadcasters who tend to have deep pockets that permit them to engage in legal skirmishes that are tactically intended to intimidate individuals and small businesses.

Barbara van Schewick succeeded Lessig as CIS faculty director, and she is joined by other directors responsible for copyright and fair use, civil liberties, and privacy projects. The CIS has worked to provide materials and position papers related to emerging issues related to technology and society. For example, the CIS has recently sponsored publications regarding the practices involved in hydraulic fracturing (fracking) used to remove petroleum products from the Earth, law enforcement procedures and privacy considerations related to unmanned aerial vehicles (drones), protecting worker rights related to the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA) that permits employers and law enforcement agencies to classify workplace behavior as a federal crime if it involves a computer, and other emerging areas of concern. As technology evolves and becomes increasingly important in a variety of aspects of individual's lives, the work of organizations such as the CIS will continue to be relevant and important.

Stephen T. Schroth
Knox College

See Also: Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life; Berkman Center; Center for Communication and Civic Engagement; Center for Information Technology and Society; Center for Internet Studies; Digital Media Law Project; London School of Economics Public Policy Group; Oxford Internet Institute.

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Streaming Media

Before broadband Internet was widely available, it took a long time to download large multimedia files and view them. To compensate for this, streaming media was developed. When the connection was slow, the browser, plug-in, or application could start displaying the content without waiting for the download to complete. Currently, this is part of cloud computing, where all data is stored in the cloud, as is the case with multimedia content. The ability to stream material on the Web and over social media conduits is increasingly important in the political sphere because both candidates and advocacy groups have come to rely on these technologies to ever-greater extents.

Streaming media currently refers to all multimedia streaming content on the Internet. While delivered by the host, streaming media is, hence, multimedia that is continuously downloaded by, and immediately shown to the user. An application plays the data that is presented by the host before the file is entirely downloaded. Streaming media may not only refer to the most common examples, such as video and audio. Other live media, such as stock exchange data, closed captioning, and Twitter feeds can be considered streaming media. Of course, audio and video can also be presented live or in real-time via the Internet. Web radio channels and television broadcasts make use of this option.

The first type of streaming media was Muzak. Inventor George Squier was granted patents for a system for the transmission and distribution of signals over electrical lines in the early 1920s. In the 1930s, this led to Muzak, which entailed continuously streaming music to commercial customers without the use of a radio.

It took until the 1990s before enough progress was made in hardware capabilities to display streaming media on computers. In the 1970s and 1980s, high cost and limited capabilities prevented the breakthrough of personal computer systems to the mass market. Nonstreaming media included digital file storage systems such as floppy disks, CD-ROMs, and tape media.

Only in the 1990s did personal computers become affordable and powerful enough to support the required CPU power and bus bandwidth to bear up to the required data and content rates from the Internet to prevent interrupted media playback, and buffer underrun. In the past 15 years, Internet users have encountered bigger network bandwidths, better networks, and increased connectivity and standardized protocols and formats, such as TCP/IP, HTTP, and HTML to enhance streaming media's possibilities. Most of the biggest social networking sites and media platforms, such as Twitter, YouTube, Spotify, and Facebook, all support or even deliver streaming media in the form of video, audio, and text.

Advances in networking capabilities and affordable hardware have made streaming media almost ubiquitous, especially with regard to mobile Internet. Smartphones, tablets, radio devices, televisions, and even photo and video cameras not only support the playback of streaming media via (mobile) wireless connections, but most of the technologies also support recording, uploading, and, optionally, live-stream multimedia. While media files became bigger because of consumer demand for high-definition video and audio, this also led to better and more complex compression of media files and more storage and transmission capacities.

Streaming media is frequently found as either live streams or video on demand. Live streams allow users to view and broadcast live video content using a camera and a computer. Examples of

content include Web casts, live sports events, and news broadcasts. Platforms supporting this functionality include TwitVid, BlogTV, Justin.tv, and Ustream.tv. The latter, video on demand, is a system that allows users to select content on demand and watch it. A set-top box, a computer, or any other device, such as a smartphone or tablet, allows the user to stream the content, in real time.

Stijn Bannier
Maastricht University

See Also: Real-Time Communication Nodes; Rich Media Ad; Skype; TwitVid.com; Vlogging; YouTube.

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Streisand Effect

The attempted suppression of embarrassing, harmful, or otherwise private information can have the unintended outcome of increasing its visibility. This frequently occurs with legal action aimed at quieting inconvenient content or critics that generates publicity. The Streisand effect captures this loss of information control, which is facilitated by more highly distributed communication networks. The inspiration for this eponymous term dates back to 2003. The American vocalist star Barbra Streisand sought to remove an aerial photo of her California estate from the California Coastal Records Project. The nonprofit project maintained an online collection of 12,000 photos of California's coast in order to document erosion and promote environmental awareness. Streisand felt that the image invaded her privacy. Her action and then lawsuit against the project's photographer, Ken Adelman, attracted wide media coverage. The photo of her house circulated, and this image arguably received far more publicity than it would have if Streisand had taken no public action. Streisand lost the case, Adelman successfully countersued, and the photo is still available on the project's Web site.

Mike Masnick coined the term in a January 2005 Techdirt blog post. Writing critically about an airport and a resort that sought to suppress their mentions in a Web site dedicated to photos of public urinals, he observed that the result was similar to Streisand's legal campaign. Masnick wrote that lawyers had to understand that seeking to remove online content can easily backfire. At the end of the post, he declared: "Let's call it the Streisand Effect." Over the years, the concept has gained more currency among academics, pundits, and mainstream media who see traditional information-suppression methods as counterproductive.

Examples

Despite the lesson of this effect, subsequent examples of secrecy that only generates further attention abound. One commonly cited case involves the Church of Scientology's attempt to have a video of Tom Cruise taken offline in 2008. Many more viewed the video after hacker groups like Anonymous and the news media talked about it, and it was posted on numerous Web sites. Also, the U.S. government's campaign to block the availability of WikiLeaks's published State Department diplomatic cables piqued global interest.

In April 2013, the French domestic spy agency Direction Centrale du Renseignement Intérieur (DCRI) forced Wikimedia France to take down an article containing allegedly classified information about Pierre-sur-Haute, a military radio base. After Wikimedia France publicized this in a press release, the story spread around the world. The reposted article was soon translated and further disseminated internationally, becoming the highest viewed page on Wikipedia's French page.

Role of Information Technology

While lawyers and governments have long considered the risks of adverse publicity accompanying litigation or prosecution, the Streisand effect

Contrary to Barbra Streisand's intent when she fought for the removal of an aerial photo of her California estate taken by the California Coastal Records Project, the lawsuit led to extensive media coverage and the coining of a phrase in her name.

involves the more rapid circulation of news and multimedia content. Enabled by the wider distribution of digital publication and content-sharing capabilities—from blogging platforms to social media—the Streisand Effect most often refers to instances by which computer-mediated communication is central. Information technology is central for two reasons. First, with the greater circulation of data, private individuals, organizations, companies, and governments are more likely to find objectionable content, giving them more cause to seek content removal. Second, a more dynamic and complex information environment increases the likelihood that legal endeavors to quiet someone will attract wider publicity. Defendants and issue advocates can more easily "go public," that is, publicize the suppression efforts.

The Legal Context

The Streisand effect is not just caused by changes in technology but draws on dimensions of the legal system. In the American context, the high levels of litigiousness around information has a history, while the rules and conventions of public access to the courts help enable public attention to lawsuits.

In the United States, private legal action to quell public criticism is frequent enough to be given an acronym. A SLAPP suit, or a strategic lawsuit against public participation, is designed to pressure critics into silence through the threat of expensive litigation, even if the grounds for the suit are dubious. Those seeking the removal of content frequently start with a cease-and-desist letter. It outlines the potential legal violation and suggests actions that the letter's recipient can undertake to avoid penalties or costly litigation. Use of SLAPP suits and cease-and-desist letters increased in the earliest days of Web publishing.

Previously, someone subjected to a SLAPP suit or a cease-and-desist letter who lacked resources to expend on legal representation did not have much recourse, and as such, tended to comply. (Anti-SLAPP statutes have been passed in some states, however. These encourage countersuits against SLAPPs.) However, the same tools of Web publishing can be used to publicize such letters. The photographer who Streisand sued countered by publishing the letters and legal documents. Going public could both scrutinize those seeking to remove content and help a potential defendant to gain access to crowdsourced legal advice.

Public access to courts is well established, rooted in the constitutional right to a public trial, and has become conventional, even though openness is not absolute. This also fuels the effect. Those interesting in writing and commenting on an unfolding court case can draw on legal documents and sit in on proceedings.

Movements and Organizations

There is a freedom of information community that promotes increased public access to knowledge and opposes efforts to enhance secrecy. They are instrumental to highlighting legal efforts contrary to the spirit of openness. For example, they take exception to government efforts to restrict the public's access to government documents and proceedings. They draw attention to overt government steps to restrict information access.

Organizations dedicated to publicizing efforts to remove online content have also emerged. The Chilling Effects Clearinghouse, for example, was founded at the Berkman Center for Internet and Society. It gathers complaints and cease-and-desist letters to enhance the publicity costs of unwarranted measures to silence speech. Social movements and issue advocacy groups can also promote information that the government or their opposition seeks to quiet.

Political Implications

The Streisand effect matters politically to the extent that incumbent powers, governments, corporations, and famous individuals have less latitude to prevent public criticism through prior constraint, censorship, or lawsuits. It shows that previous instruments of controlling information are outmoded. Over the long term, it may prove more valuable to simply ignore criticism, given the problem of information overload. Similarly, some could flood the public with countervailing messages to cause confusion. Or, powers could seek changes to the law to allow for more secrecy around attempts at suppression, thereby solving the paradox of the Streisand effect.

William Lafi Youmans
George Washington University

See Also: Berkman Center; Demand Progress; Morozov Principle; Social Media and Freedom of Information Act; United States; Wikipedia; WikiLeaks.

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Strong-Tie Social Connections Versus Weak-Tie Social Connections

Discussions regarding the strength of social ties relate to social capital theory. As Robert Putnam describes it, social capital theory suggests that social networks have value at the micro (individual), meso (community), and macro (societal) levels. An individual's social network is comprised of multiple, multiplex social ties of varying strengths. Strong ties exist among individuals connected within densely knit, homogenous networks such as those involving kin and close friends. Weak ties exist among individuals connected within sparse, heterogeneous networks such as those involving acquaintances.

Strong and weak ties, according to Mark Granovetter, are both important because they connect individuals to valuable resources (e.g., information or opportunities). The utility of strong and weak ties varies, however, as a function of the particular situational context in which it is utilized. The different utility of strong and weak has been widely debated as a result of the implications of tie strength for a wide variety of social and psychological outcomes, such as psychological well being, social capital and cohesion, job opportunities and social mobility, and political and civic engagement. This debate has been amplified by the emergence and influence of new technology, especially social media.

Strong Versus Weak Ties

As Granovetter posits, the strength of any tie is a function of the frequency and duration of interaction, level of emotional intensity and intimacy, and the reciprocal services found within the tie. On a continuum, strong ties involve more frequent interaction, emotional intensity and intimacy, and feelings of reciprocity. Strong ties are often homophilous in nature. That is, they form among individuals who share similar cultural, demographic, or attitudinal characteristics. According to Granovetter, the stronger the tie, the more homophilous the tie. This relationship results in a densely knit, exclusive social network where those connected via strong ties also share other friends—friendship circles tend to overlap.

Weak ties exist on the opposite end of the continuum. Weak ties involve less frequent interaction, lower levels of emotional intensity and intimacy, and lower feelings of reciprocity. Moreover weak ties are less homophilous than strong ties. That is, they form among individuals who share varied cultural, demographic, or attitudinal characteristics. Consequently, weak ties represent a relatively heterogeneous, sparsely knit social

network. This relationship results in a sparsely knit, inclusive social network where those connected via weak ties rarely share other friends—friendship circles tend to remain distinct.

The Strength of Strong Ties

Historical comparisons of strong and weak ties have typically concluded strong ties connect individuals to be more beneficial social and psychological resources than weak ties. Their "bonding" function has been especially heralded. That is, strong ties strengthen interpersonal relationships, resulting in increased feelings of reciprocity and trust. This cultivates feelings of social solidarity and overall social cohesion. From this perspective, strong ties reflect Fredinand Tönnie's conceptualization of *Gemeinschaft*—a geographically bound community characterized by a strong sense of togetherness and moral obligation. This generates greater motivation to provide assistance to strong ties during times of need. For example, it is often easier to convince family and friends to help one move across town than it is to convince an acquaintance to help.

Because of their distinct characteristics also strong ties can possess certain negative aspects. As Putnam suggests, strong ties can result in antisocial outcomes such as sectarianism, ethnocentrism, and corruption. They can also cultivate exclusive identities and a narrow sense of self. Granovetter also suggests that although strong ties breed local cohesion, they do so at the expense of the exchange of opportunities and information with diverse others. Their insular and exclusionary nature, therefore, contributes to social isolation and the overall fragmentation of society.

The Strength of Weak Ties

Weak ties can also be utilized to connect individuals to valuable resources. Granovetter is a strong advocate for the "strength of weak ties," suggesting that they serve an important "bridging" function. That is, weak ties foster connections across cliques or subgroups, opening paths for the rapid and efficient exchange of opportunities and information across social distance. Granovetter suggests that certain weak ties represent "local bridges"—the most efficient links between social groups because they minimize the amount of time, energy, and potential for message distortion. Weak ties connect heterogeneous individuals to valuable resources unavailable within the densely knit, exclusionary structure of one's close ties. And while all weak ties are not necessarily bridges, strong ties, by definition, cannot serve a bridging function. Such interaction and sharing across heterogeneous weak ties can therefore be viewed as contributing to social integration and cohesion.

Historical and contemporary critiques of weak ties originate from the belief that they lack the feelings of reciprocity and trust characteristic of strong ties. From this perspective, weak ties mirror Tönnie's conceptualization of *Gesellschaft*—a community comprised of fluid, contractual, and instrumental relationships based on individual self-interest—and cultivates individualism and feelings of social alienation.

The Changing Nature of Social Ties

Concerns about the balance of strong to weak ties within individuals' social networks have existed since the Industrial Revolution. These concerns originated as a result of urbanization, improvements to transportation and communication networks and technology, and the emergence of consumer culture, among other factors. As Barry Wellman has documented, these changes have initiated a social shift from what he terms "neighborhood-based communities" to "person-to-person" communities. Geographically bound, densely knit communities of strong ties have not been replaced, but are rather supplemented by "far-flung, loosely-bounded, sparsely-knit and fragmentary" communities comprised of self-selected strong and weak ties. Individuals actively create communities of kin, neighbors, friends, coworkers, and various other acquaintances who share interests.

The emergence of "person-to-person" communities has been met with some trepidation. Critics fear that these communities of "limited liability" lack the same sense of reciprocity and trust present among strong ties. They fear consequences such as diminished face-to-face interaction, increased feelings of alienation, lower levels of social cohesion, and diminished life satisfaction. Yet, far from signaling a definitive shift from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*, Wellman argues that new

forms of community coexist with and supplement pre-existing modes, much like strong and weak ties coexist and supplement one another.

Tie Strength and Social Media

Initial analyses of the effect of social media on tie strength echoed concerns previously raised. Critics bemoaned the geographically dispersed, anonymous, and voluntary nature of social ties predicated on shared interests. The integration of social media into daily life only amplified concerns regarding diminished opportunities for face-to-face interaction. The technological features of social media (e.g., enabling both synchronous and asynchronous interaction) also raised concerns regarding its ability to convey emotion and cultivate feelings of reciprocity and trust. Essentially, critiques concluded that ties created and maintained online via social media were less supportive and beneficial than those created and maintained offline.

Current thinking, however, presents a more balanced view. Studies of social media, specifically social networking sites (SNSs) such as Facebook, conclude that SNSs support sociability and quality social ties in a similar fashion to face-to-face and geographically based social interactions. Such findings emerge from the fact that SNSs are more often used for tie maintenance, rather than creation. That is, individuals rely on SNSs to maintain existing offline ties, rather than creating connections with anonymous, online others. Often, online interaction fosters offline interaction, such as when friends coordinate face-to-face meetings via social media. SNS "friends" are therefore more likely to include family members, close friends, coworkers, and old high school friends than individuals who share some interest, but had not met offline prior to "friending" one another. Caroline Haythornthwaite has posited that many SNS-based ties may not actually exist without SNSs. These "latent ties"—ties that remain meaningful but suffer from a lack of frequent interaction—can actually be strengthened as a result of social media–based interaction. That is, interaction via social media holds the potential to improve tie strength by converting latent ties into weak ties and weak ties into strong(er) ties.

Malcolm Gladwell and Clay Shirky's debate regarding the role of social media and tie strength in contemporary political activism reflects these divergent perspectives. Gladwell argues that social media are a weak-tie phenomenon capable of increasing participation in social causes by facilitating collaboration, coordination, and the expression of ideas. However, it does so by decreasing the level of financial or personal risk involved in participation. According to Gladwell, high-risk activism is a strong-tie phenomenon, and therefore is absent in social media activism.

Shirky argues that social media is integral in high-risk activism, irrespective of the strength of ties present within a network. As he argues, social media strategies connect committed social actors and create new strategies and bonds that facilitate social change. Specifically, social media increase access to information and the ability to respond to information on a massive and rapid scale, which helps actors coordinate and demand social change. Shirky acknowledges that superficial social media activism exists, but concludes based on anecdotal evidence from recent social movements that social media represents a vital tool capable of strengthening civil society and the public sphere in the long term.

Implications of Tie Strength

In the absence of empirical evidence, the Gladwell and Shirky debate remains unresolved, but illustrates that the composition of social networks and the integration of social media into their maintenance and functioning has numerous implications for political and civic life. As Putnam proposes, for a democracy to properly function social capital must be managed to maximize the positive consequences while minimizing the negative consequences. This logic holds, regardless of whether democratic discourse and functions occur offline or online.

Tie strength, for instance, influences the likelihood and nature of political discussion and civic deliberation. It is more likely to occur among close ties, but discourse may be limited to topics relevant and/or acceptable within the local community. Close ties may also exert undue social pressure to conform one's thinking to the group norm, or to adopt more extreme views than under other circumstances. Weak ties play an opposite role in this process. Such discourse may occur less among weak ties, but more diverse perspectives

and inclusive worldviews can result instead in partisanship, polarization, and political bickering.

Active political discussion and civic deliberation contributes to social cohesion and the formulation of a local identity and political and civic participation. This may manifest itself as a commitment to a community, or through involvement in community organizations. The rise of "person-to-person" communities complicates this relationship, because increased connections to weak ties may shift one's primary local identity and engagement from geographically bound communities to geographically dispersed communities.

Strong ties, especially those that are geographically proximal and benefit from frequent interaction, may be more easily mobilized to achieve collective goals than geographically dispersed weak ties. However, when social networks are comprised of too many strong ties, it becomes less effective at mobilizing individuals outside of the close ties to their cause. Hence, it becomes necessary to mobilize both strong and weak ties to achieve desired individual and communal ends within and across communities.

Conclusion

Current thinking concludes that tie strength is not indicative of more or less beneficial social ties. Both are capable of promoting political and civic participation because they help individuals gain relevant information, create meaningful interpersonal relationships, and coordinate to achieve individual and collective goals. But it is only through the combined resources made accessible via both strong and weak ties, complete with their ability to provide bonding and bridging social capital, that individuals, communities, and society at large gain the resources needed to fully and efficiently participate in a democratic society. Social media supplements, rather than detract from, this process.

Mark A. Rademacher
Kevin Y. Wang
Butler University

See Also: Evolution of Social Media; Facebook; Network Influentials; Social Capital; Social Networking Websites.

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StumbleUpon

StumbleUpon calls itself "a discovery engine that finds and recommends Web content to its users." In fact, it is a Web search engine that allow users to discover and rate Web pages, Facebook posts, Twitter updates, photos, videos, and all other Web content that is personalized to their tastes and interests using peer-sourcing and social-networking principles. To monitor a users' browsing, toolbar versions of the service are available for all major browsers and mobile operating systems. Founded in 2001, StumbleUpon had 1 million users by December 2002. In 2012, the Web service claimed 25 million registered users.

Technology and Derivatives

Web 2.0, the current phase of the World Wide Web and online applications, is characterized by interactive and dynamic content. Web 3.0 is assumed to comprise the following opportunities: a hybrid, semantic, and intelligent Web made possible by the convergence of several new technologies, which will make data and content more usable and accessible. When the World Wide Web changed from 1.0 to 2.0 to 3.0, the user changed, respectively, from a viewer, to a producer/prosumer,

to a producer and user of personalized content. This personalized content is both user generated and machine generated. It offers many new possibilities to the user because it makes content more accessible and usable with recommendations or a (machine-) predefined selection of content.

StumbleUpon answers to this possible semantic, intelligent Web and uses collaborative filtering where machine-generated and user-generated content are also combined. This comprises the combination of human opinions with machine learning of personal preference, which makes it possible to recommend new Web sites to like-minded Internet users. The common interest is found by monitoring the surfing behavior of users and collecting explicit interest information, such as "likes" or other ratings. In combination with the social network, the service offers pages to "stumble upon," explicitly recommended by friends and peers. Other options included in the service are creating favorites and stumble personal interests that are not reflected by the user's social network.

The StumbleUpon toolbar makes it possible to give a site a "thumbs up" or a "thumbs down" and to write commentary. StumbleUpon tries to recreate a "word-of-mouth" referral of Web sites, and as with Web 3.0, should improve the Internet experience by recommendation and personalization. Other features of the service include content filters, allowing the user to stumble with audio, video, or images, and a personal overview page.

In 2006, StumbleUpon launched StumbleVideo. The site aggregates videos from CollegeHumor, DailyMotion, FunnyOrDie, Google, MetaCafe, Myspace, Vimeo, and YouTube, and allows users to stumble through all these videos.

The StumbleThru service was launched in 2007. The service allows users of the toolbar to stumble within sites such as YouTube, WordPress, *Rolling Stone*, Wikipedia, and many others. StumbleThru focuses on specific sites, rather than the entire Web. In 2009, StumbleUpon launched Su.pr as its own URL-shortening service comparable to TinyUrl, youtu.be, or bit.ly. It is primarily used to link to Twitter and Facebook statuses and updates.

Business Model

As with most social networking Web sites and Internet services, StumbleUpon's free service uses advertising income to generate money. The ad system it uses to improve the ad experience is called Paid Discovery. The hybrid of machine-generated and user-generated content is embedded to create a better user experience, matching one's personal interests. Paid Discovery also uses the same hybrid to include an advertiser's URLs (Web sites, images, and videos) and make them part of that stream.

Up to 5 percent of all stumbles are reserved for Paid Discovery, where advertisers directly insert their Web page into the user's experience. This means that the audience lands directly on their Web pages, videos, and photos. Users can also provide feedback ("thumbs up" or "thumbs down") on this content. Different from other Web services, no pop-ups, advertisements, or banners are displayed because Paid Discovery sends visitors directly to an advertiser's page. To indicate this feature, "Sponsored" is shown in the toolbar or mobile app.

Stijn Bannier
Maastricht University

See Also: Content Communities; Digg; HootSuite.com; Reddit; Social Media Optimization; Streaming Media; Twitter; Vlogging.

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Sunlight Foundation

The Sunlight Foundation is a nonprofit organization that focuses on improving the transparency of government in the United States. It is nonpartisan and specializes in putting information that

is publicly available online and in making that information more useful by creating Web and mobile phone tools and applications, along with promoting changes to government policy that encourage greater openness of information. It was founded in 2006 by the well-respected and well-connected lawyer Michael Klein, and Washington, D.C., advocacy expert and activist Ellen Miller. This dual expertise in law and grassroots public activism is reflected throughout the organization's history, current issue area focuses, and information tool development.

History

Since 2006, the Sunlight Foundation has been at the center of a number of high-profile campaigns that both respond to political events as they occur, and which seek to shape the future accessibility of government information. Most of its past projects continue in some form, but it has also been part of major political stories in its own right. These include exposing political conflicts of interest and inaccurate financial disclosures, and crucially, working with the U.S. Congress and other groups in a collaborative effort known as the Open House Project. This early work brought in congressional workers from Capitol Hill, lobbyists, grassroots activists, and information specialists to craft recommendations on how the U.S. House of Representatives could make more of its process and data publicly accessible, and generated a report that was presented to the House to generally positive reviews in 2007. This work has been complemented by a number of similar efforts that use technology to reveal the influence of money in politics, the way in which bills evolve through the legislative process, and the use of earmarking by politicians to gain special favors and funds for constituents and contributors.

Issue Areas and Projects

The Sunlight Foundation identifies two primary issue areas, each with additional subtopics as their priority concerns. The first is the "transparency of money in politics," and the second is "opening government data." Each of these areas is targeted through data tool creation, lobbying, and public awareness campaigns.

The money in politics concern is currently split into eight active campaigns. These include efforts about campaign contributions in advocacy of the Disclose Act, a campaign finance reform bill that requires much greater disclosure of funding sources for politically active organizations, an exploration of the *Citizens United* Supreme Court decision and a look at its implications for fiscal transparency and access, and an examination of the links between the finance industry and government officials.

Other projects in this advocacy area focus more on the lawmaking process, with tools for seeing what earmarks lawmakers have added to given bills, an examination of food and health policy and what actors are influencing them, and reports on lobbying activities and work on making those reports available in real time instead of a considerable amount of time after events and meetings have occurred.

Two other ambitious projects include an effort to make all television political ad records publicly available, which would allow people to know who is paying for various ads and who is providing them for distribution, and a continuation of the Open House Project called the Senate Campaign Disclosure Parity Act, which would make it mandatory for Senate campaign financial reports to be filed electronically.

John Wonderlich, left, policy director of the Sunlight Foundation, gives a presentation on freedom of information at the Open Up! "Show and Tell" gallery tour in London on November 13, 2012.

The opening government data concern is a more ambitious effort, but is split into only four categories. The first is a position that papers published by the Congressional Research Service, which is the nonpartisan service that crunches the numbers and finds the data that representatives and senators need to make decisions on legislation, should be made publicly available and easily accessible, rather than needing to be specifically requested from a legislator. The Sunlight Foundation has published editorials in prominent newspapers, published posts on the issue on its blog, and has begun the process for Congress by helping to fund Open CRS, which is a database of many significant CRS reports.

Sunlight also has an effort called Freeing Federal Data, which seeks to augment White House open data executive orders and databases like Data.gov with an important added level of disclosure, namely, how the government decides which information to release. This allows for information to remain secret if necessary, but also provides a public rationale for doing so, and a standard by which political actors can be held accountable.

The third key area of opening data focuses on the state legislature level of government, which is often overlooked, but is equally influential on day-to-day life. Specifically it looks at how model legislation is prewritten by interest groups, and then lobbied to various state houses. Its Superfastmatch tool identifies shared wording and phrasing across pieces of similar legislation from different states, sometimes revealing that lawmakers have simply copied and pasted language directly from interest groups.

Examples of this effort's effectiveness include the exposure of the NRA's provision of language in "stand your ground" laws, and the role of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), a group composed of exceptionally wealthy companies and individuals in a host of regulatory legislation. Finally, National Data Apps use federal information to provide useful information to the public on health care and quality of life through simple mobile applications.

Applications

Sunlight's present Web and mobile applications are its primary entry into public discourse. Prominent among these are Churnalism, which identifies the repackaging of press releases as news reporting; Checking Influence, which shows how retail firms engage politically; Influence Explorer and Poligraft, which connect political contributions to relevant legislation; and Scout, which is an online alert service that allows users to receive instant updates on legislation and issues when they are acted upon by Congress. In sum, these efforts have produced a wealth of tangible data, and have greatly improved the accessibility and usefulness of federal data on behalf of U.S. citizens.

Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St. Andrews

See Also: Data Mining; Data.gov; Election Monitoring; Information Aggregation; Open Data; OpenCongress.org; OpenGovernment.org; Transparency.

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Superconnected

A widely accepted understanding of the term *superconnected* originated in a September 1997 survey by *Wired Magazine* and the Merrill Lynch Forum. Based on the analysis of several surveys, the authors "divided those polled into four groups: the superconnected, who exchanged e-mail at least three times per week and used a cell phone, a beeper, a laptop, and a home computer; the connected, who exchanged e-mail at least three times

per week and used three of the four technologies above; the semiconnected, who used at least one but not more than four of the target technologies; and the unconnected, who did not use any of the target technologies."

Evolution of Telecommunications

Communication is a function inherent to any living organism; humans distinguish themselves from other forms of life by using language, and because of the specificity that language allows them. Moreover, communication cannot exist without media tools. Throughout history, people have used different forms of media. With the rise of the Internet, the increasing ease of connecting people with each other is a social phenomenon that has affected many countries in which there is widespread access to digital technology.

The evolution of telecommunications was at the origin of several other revolutions. First, connection to the Internet via a personal computer allowed users to communicate with more of their peers, and also allowed the development of e-mail systems, videos on demand, and browsers. The second revolution is connected to the creation of social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter. The most recent revolution is the use of mobile technology (e.g., smartphones and tablets), which allows the user to be constantly connected from anywhere. It is estimated that the growth in mobile technology will lead to the existence of 40 billion communicating devices by 2015.

The global network, based on fixed points (nodes) and mobile links, has undergone a major technological and societal transformation. The use of transactional technological objects such as smartphones, to connect to the Web means that the point of connection is no longer fixed from a geographical point of view.

Effects of Superconnection

The permanent connectivity of people and objects, regardless of whether they are real (PC or mobile phone) or virtual (software applications), will have a deep impact on the organizational structure of the various civil societies in the world. Furthermore, the notion of a "network" has also evolved. The possible effects of networks connecting an array of users led to Metcalfe's law (for Bob Metcalfe, a coinventor of Ethernet). The law stipulates that "values of a network increase proportionally with the square of the number of its users (n2)," and can be expressed by the formula:

$$U(n) = [(n-1)\ n/2].$$

The phenomenon of superconnection means that information and communication technologies allow one to connect with anyone else who is also on these networks, regardless of whether the correspondent is a member of one's family or group of friends. Moreover, users are able to keep up with world events; they can also send videos, share them with other users, or make real-time comments on blogs, forums, or online newspapers. Finally, for the superconnected user, it is less a phenomenon of perception that is activated by digital society, than a mental representation of the objects of the world. This means that the only things that appear real are one's subjective impressions and thoughts and sensations (solipsism). Indeed, the Internet user understands the virtual object presented on the screen of his or her computer, touchpad, or mobile phone only by seeing or listening; the sensation of touch is excluded because the object represented on a screen is only a manifestation of binary codes.

Marcienne Martin
Université de la Réunion

See Also: Addiction, Social Media; Digerati; Digital Citizen; Social Media, Definition and Classes of.

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SurveyMonkey

SurveyMonkey is the world's largest survey company, founded in 1999. The company is helping customers collect over 2.2 million online survey responses every day, and the Web site sees 43 million surveys completed every month. The intuitive Web interface makes it easy for even nontechnical people to create surveys and export collected data. SurveyMonkey works according to the "freemium" principle. On one hand, the Web site offers a free limited account, where one can create an online survey and store a maximum of 100 responses. On the other hand, it offers several premium services on a paid basis, where one can create unlimited surveys with an unlimited number of questions and responses.

The large set of features and services offered, combined with the ease of use of the interface and its pricing structure, are believed to account for the popularity of SurveyMonkey. This article will elaborate on the different features offered by SurveyMonkey and discuss the importance of SurveyMonkey as one of the research tools of the digital era in the case study of the *Slate*/SurveyMonkey Political Survey.

Concerning survey design, SurveyMonkey offers the standard question types such as multiple choice, rating, comment, question matrix, skip pattern, and branching, as well as custom questions. One can add questions that require an answer before allowing respondents to move on to the next question. The service also offers sample surveys and stock questions

Concerning analysis, the Web site offers real-time results, but also text analysis, SPSS integration, and multiple custom reports, with output files ranging from PDF to XLS and CSV. The analysis tools are able to filter and cross tabulate responses by custom criteria, and the user may create and download custom charts. Several options of both survey design and analysis are limited to paid plans.

The Slate/SurveyMonkey Political Survey

Slate, an online daily magazine offering analysis and commentary about politics, news, business, technology, and culture, teamed up with SurveyMonkey to create the *Slate*/SurveyMonkey Political Survey during the presidential election of 2012. On a monthly basis, this survey unveiled "an informal survey of people's attitudes toward the presidential candidates—and how they are shifting." The collaboration featured a survey of more than 1,000 registered voters across the country, drawn from SurveyMonkey's pool of more than 2 million survey respondents.

Despite the fact that the *Slate*/SurveyMonkey Political Graph took a humorous approach to the presidents, it showed the added value of online survey tools for constituency profiling and campaign design research. According to *Slate*, "forging a personal connection with voters is critical. Both camps are trying to present their candidate as someone who connects with voters, someone who is in touch with people's needs. Therefore, we wanted to ask survey participants who they would prefer—Obama or Romney—in basic everyday situations that demand a little bit of trust."

Constituency Profiling and Campaign Design

According to journalist Scott Martin, "online surveys and social-media information have become the de facto research tools of the digital era's fast-moving small businesses." Whereas in the past, surveys required substantial time and money, services such as SurveyMonkey make surveys cheap, quick, and easy to do it yourself online. SurveyMonkey is also used by many political organizations and candidates for constituency profiling and campaign design research. The online survey tools give great options to identify campaign supporters and gather feedback from constituents, but also to gain feedback on political events and speeches. Respondents can be asked to weigh in on political issues and be polled about everything related. SurveyMonkey proves to be an ideal tool for this, in part because they also offer access to possible respondents.

Stijn Bannier
Maastricht University

See Also: Focus Groups; Polling; Voter Identification; Web Metrics.

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Syria

Following the success of Egypt's January 2011 uprising, a small number of activists called for a "Day of Rage" in Syria on February 5, 2011, using Facebook. While the initial protest was poorly attended, events in early March prompted a wave of protests that quickly spread, setting into motion an uprising that would eventually be described as a civil war. Early protests were well-documented, and the violent images and videos that emerged from them were widely shared on social media and used by journalists. The widespread use of social media in reporting on the conflict resulted in the Syrian government—which already controlled the media and the Internet quite heavily—pursuing online activists through various means, prompting response from hacktivist groups such as Anonymous and leading to what would later be called a full-scale cyberwar among various actors.

Just three days after the initial, unsuccessful "Day of Rage," the Syrian government restored access to Facebook, YouTube, and Blogspot, all of which had been banned since 2007. The response to the action was mixed: While some bloggers celebrated it, some observers suggested that it would make surveillance by authorities easier to conduct.

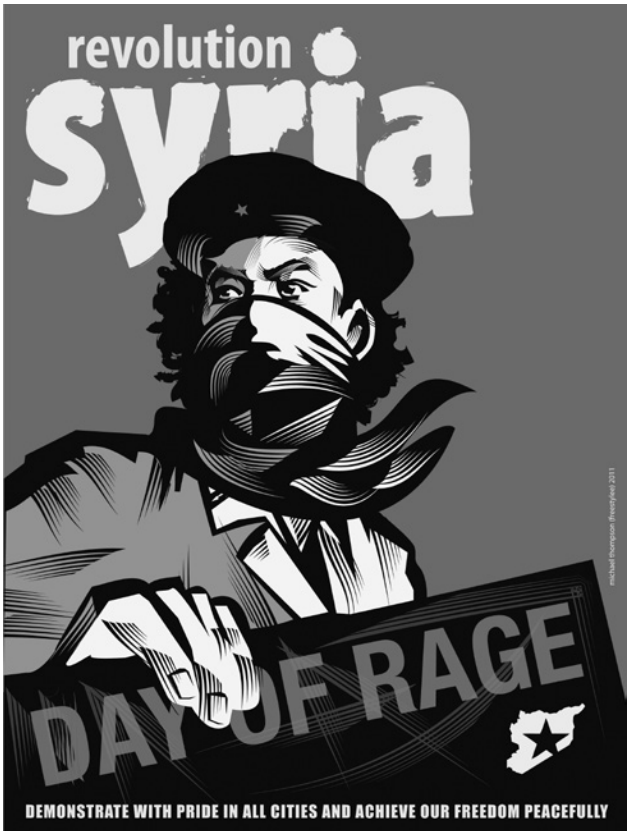
Several weeks later, the arrest of several young boys in the southern city of Daraa (reportedly for writing antiregime slogans inspired by Egyptian revolt) triggered local protests, prompting activists to call for a second "Day of Rage" on social media. Scheduled for March 15, the "Day of Rage" attracted hundreds of demonstrators in several cities across Syria, who demanded an end to the country's emergency law, an end to government corruption, and more freedoms.

On March 16, the protests continued in front of the Interior Ministry in Damascus, with an estimated 200 people calling for the release of political prisoners. Several human rights activists were arrested during the protest, prompting calls on Twitter for their release. These events led to the announcement of a "Day of Dignity" on Friday, March 18, a phenomenon that would designate Friday as a weekly day of protest for the first several months of the uprising. On March 18, the first reports of casualties in Syria emerged on Twitter.

Initially, Facebook served as a central location for information sharing, as Syria's Facebook user base quickly grew following the site's unblocking. A page called "Syrian Revolution" that emerged in March 2011 had 41,000 fans within a few days, and by late 2012, had more than 650,000.

As protests in Daraa escalated, graphic videos began to emerge and were posted to YouTube and other video-sharing sites by individuals and citizen media collectives. Some of these groups were formed early in the uprising, such as *Shams News Network*, which states on its Facebook page that it was established February 28, 2011. Citizen videos were used in reporting by media outlets including the *New York Times* (on its Lede blog) by mid-March, drawing global attention to the unfolding crisis. On March 23, news broke on Twitter that 150 demonstrators had been killed in Daraa amid rumors of an Internet shutdown in that city.

By late March, counterdemonstrations began to occur alongside antigovernment ones, with a similar dynamic emerging on social networks. Syria's small but robust blogosphere began to divide along political lines, and progovernment



Syrians organized campaigns on Facebook and Twitter calling for a "Day of Rage" in the capital city of Damascus in February 2011. Inspiration came from Egypt's and Tunisia's use of social networking sites to rally people for sweeping political reforms.

accounts began to emerge in large numbers on Twitter.

Syrians Online

Prior to the 2011 uprising, an estimated 18 percent of Syrians had access to the Internet. The relatively active Syrian blogging community (or "blogosphere") was comprised of a combination of Syrians living in the country and those living outside, with a mix of Arabic and English-language blogs.

Syrians were also users of social media, despite government bans on several sites (including Facebook) put into place in 2007. Many reportedly accessed Facebook by using proxy services. Notably, Blogspot.com—Google's blog service—was blocked, but Blogger.com (the URL at which Blogspot users compose blog entries) was not, allowing Syrians to blog for an external audience.

Unlike Tunisia and Egypt, where social media had long been used for activism, Syrians had only experienced a handful of campaigns. One successful campaign organized on social media occurred in 2009, when groups fed up with the high prices of mobile phone packages organized a boycott of mobile providers, which was picked up by local media and resulted in lowered prices.

An Online Battle

By late March, accounts of government interference with social media began to emerge. One prominent activist, Khaled Elekhetyar, briefly went missing and returned to find government supporters had hijacked his accounts.

In mid-April, a group calling itself the Syrian Electronic Army (SEA) began perpetrating attacks on the Web sites and Facebook pages of those it deemed supportive of the opposition. One example of an early SEA target is the Web site of Syrian singer Asalah Nasri, which was defaced after it was reported by newspapers that Nasri had rejected an invitation to sing in support of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad.

The SEA also organized spam attacks, whereby hundreds of highly repetitive comments would be left on a selected Facebook pages in a short period of time. The attacks targeted the Facebook pages of those deemed to support the Syrian opposition, including the European Parliament, the White House, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, Oprah Winfrey, and Human Rights Watch.

The SEA's own Facebook page was removed numerous times by Facebook administrators. At one point, the SEA posted a screenshot to its Web site showing an automated e-mail from Facebook explaining that the page was removed for violating the site's terms of use.

Also in mid-April, coordinated spam attacks began to emerge on Twitter. Using hashtags popular with opposition supporters at the time—including #Syria, #Daraa, and #Mar15—the accounts would post messages and links to images, sometimes at a rate of several per minute. The messages and links were typically irrelevant to the conflict, and served the purpose of flooding the hashtags to draw attention away from the opposition content.

In June, President Bashar Al-Assad recognized the SEA as a "real army in virtual reality." While

research by Helmi Noman linked the SEA to the Syrian Computer Society, headed by Assad in the 1990s, direct links between the organization and the government were not proven, and Facebook pages in support of the SEA showed involvement or support from individuals outside of Syria.

The Syrian government had tightly controlled the Internet for years, blocking opposition Web sites, blogs, and social media platforms. In October 2011, the hacktivist collective Telecomix, along with Tunisian group Reflets.info, released a set of logs purportedly showing that commercial network filtering devices produced by the American company Blue Coat were present in Syria. The fact that U.S. sanctions on Syria prohibit the sale of such devices prompted several reports and condemnations, resulting in an investigation by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Syrian authorities later sought other means to control the flow of information. In February 2012, Syrian activists began to complain of malware attacks, attacks which compromise a computer system, allowing it to be taken over by the perpetrator. Throughout 2012, dozens of such attacks were reported.

Several brief Internet outages were reported throughout 2012, with most presumed to have been perpetrated by the Syrian government. On November 29, 2012, 100 percent of Syria's networks went offline, an outage that lasted nearly 48 hours. The Syrian government blamed the outage on terrorists, but network analysts demonstrated that the networks had to have been shut down from the central backbone.

In response to shutdown, Google and Twitter revived the Speak2Tweet service that had been set up in response to the January 2011 Internet shutdown in Egypt. On Twitter, the hashtag #ThisIsDamascus—an homage to 1956 Syrian broadcasts that kept attention on Egypt when French and British attacks rendered Cairo's radio broadcasts silent—was used to show support for Syrians.

The Gay Girl in Damascus

In June 2011, one story from Syria captured the attention of the world's media. A Syrian American blogger named Amina Arraf, who blogged under the title *Gay Girl in Damascus,* was reported missing on her blog, which was allegedly updated by a relative. Arraf's alleged arrest was reported by mainstream media, and Twitter users began to call for her release using the hashtag #FreeAmina. A Facebook page was also set up, urging people to contact their local U.S. embassy.

Within days, the story began to unravel, assisted by social media users. NPR journalist Andy Carvin, who had risen to prominence during the Egyptian uprising, used his vast Twitter network to source information about Amina, resulting in further interest from the media. On June 9, the BBC conducted an interview with a woman named Jelena Lecic, who stated that the photos of "Amina" were actually her personal images, stolen from her Facebook account. On June 12, Palestinian blogger Ali Abunimah revealed that "Amina Arraf" was actually the fictional work of Tom MacMaster, an American student living in Scotland. The hoax contributed toward skepticism about other bloggers and citizen reporters in Syria, several of whose identities would later be brought into question.

Media and Verification

Journalists covering Syria from a distance have expressed difficulty in sifting through the abundance of material coming from activists and citizen journalists. Verification is also challenging; following several high-profile errors in attribution (in which the date or location of a video was inaccurately stated by its creators), some media outlets published videos with disclaimers noting that the content's authenticity could not be verified.

One example of journalistic error occurred in May 2011, when Reuters provided television channel France 2 with a video from Lebanon that was presented as originating from Syria. In another high-profile error in May 2012, the BBC presented an image from 2006 in Iraq as having been taken in Houla, the site of a reported massacre. The image, which was removed after nine hours, was captioned "photo from activist."

In September 2011, a revolutionary group posted a video showing the burned and beheaded body of a woman who they stated had been killed by the Syrian government. The family of the alleged victim, Zaynab el Hossni, confirmed her identity, and the video was used in reporting by major foreign media, making Hossni a "symbol of the revolution." Weeks later, however, Hossni

appeared on state TV, claiming that she had fled her home because of abuse.

It has been noted by both observers and activists that some content is intentionally misrepresented by the Syrian opposition in order to gain more attention for its cause. Some activists have admitted to only showing content that fits the narrative of a peaceful revolution.

Amid ongoing conflict, Syrians have used humor on social media to deal with the trauma. On Facebook, one popular page called "Chinese Revolution" (with 155,000 fans as of November 2012) satirized the events in Syria as if they were happening in China. The page spawned several spinoff pages, including CHANA (mocking the Syrian Arab News Agency, or SANA) and the Chinese Electronic Army (satirizing the Syrian Electronic Army).

Memes have also occurred in the form of the Twitter hashtag. One such hashtag, #WhenAssad Falls, circulated in March 2012, and prompted both humorous and serious propositions for the end of the Assad government.

Jillian C. York
Independent Scholar

See Also: Africa, north; Arab Spring; Bahrain; Digital Activism; Egypt; Facebook; Feb 17 Voices; Middle East; Iran; Speak2Tweet; Tunisia; Twitter; YouTube.

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Take the Pledge

During congressional election campaigns, many interest groups will only endorse candidates who "take the pledge," and promise that if elected, they will support the group's policy agenda. Reciprocally, failure to take the pledge can result in the interest group supporting an opposing primary or general election candidate. In recent election cycles, interest group pledges have proliferated, covering issues such as taxes, abortion, social security, and government spending. Although many interest groups require candidate pledges, perhaps the most recognizable and controversial is Americans for Tax Reform, run by Grover Norquist. The Americans for Tax Reform pledge reads as follows:

> I, _____, pledge to the tax payers of the ___ district of the state of _____ and to the American people that I will: ONE oppose any and all efforts to increase the marginal income tax rates for individuals and/or businesses; and TWO, oppose any net reduction or elimination of deductions and credits, unless matched dollar for dollar by further reducing taxes.

In the 112th Congress, all but six Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives signed the pledge, along with two Democratic members; this made a total of 238 signers in the House, which is the majority of the body. In the Senate, all but seven Republicans signed the pledge, along with one Democratic senator; this made a total of 41 pledge signers in the Senate, and a total of 279 pledge signers throughout the entire 112th Congress.

Another example of an interest group pledge comes from the Progressive Change Campaign Committee. In the 2012 election, the group created the Social Security Protectors Pledge. The pledge asked for legislators to oppose cuts to Social Security; the text is as follows:

> Social Security belongs to the people who have worked hard all their lives and contributed to it. Social Security is a promise that must not be broken. We need to strengthen Social Security, not cut it. That is why I oppose any cuts to Social Security benefits, including increasing the retirement age. I also oppose any effort to privatize Social Security, in whole or in part.

In contrast to the pledge from Americans for Tax Reform, the Social Security Protectors Pledge had a much larger support and percentage of signers from the Democratic Caucus of Congress. A total of 110 members of the House of Representatives and 11 senators signed the Social Security

Protectors Pledge, all Democratic members, with the exception of one independent.

Enforcement and marketing for these pledges were elaborated, like any other pledge, over the 2012 election cycle by immense use of social media. Americans for Tax Reform used Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to promote their message and encourage the American public to contact their congressmen and senators, and urge them to sign and pledge. Americans for Tax Reform as well as the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, released numerous YouTube videos as advertisements during the 2012 election, and teamed up with various groups on social media sites to promote their policy platform. Social media have become the largest sources for campaign advertising and promotion for interest groups that hope to spread awareness and gain support for their policy agendas.

There are both advantages and disadvantages for the interest group in such a system. The pledge system simplifies choices for voters. This is because the pledge system allows voters to see what policies they agree with and oppose, as well as see which candidates and legislators fit their policy agenda. By so doing, the voter will be able to recognize who they want representing them in office, with a reason behind it. Additionally, the system, at least symbolically holds the legislator who signed a given pledge accountable for upholding a particular policy. However, a pledge reduces the latitude that a legislator has in terms of the give and take of policy production. Compromise is the heart of the American legislative process, and the thrust of the pledge is to minimize the likelihood of meaningful movement on a given issue.

R. Bruce Anderson
Gage Nicholas
Florida Southern College

See Also: Candidate Image; Social Security; Taxes.

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Taxes

Taxes are an exaction on income or wealth for public use. However, this has been extended by the courts to the much broader term of *public purposes*. Taxing and spending are closely related. The taxing authority for the central government of the United States (the federal government), is located in Article I. Section 8. Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution, which says,

> The Congress shall have power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

The taxing power is one of the "expressly delegated" or "enumerated powers" that are granted to the government of the United States. The use of taxes for the general welfare is the General Welfare Clause, while the requirement that all "Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform" is the Uniformity Clause. The power to tax is limited. The General Welfare Clause has been contentious since the beginning. The loose construction of the clause sees it as a new spending power, while the strict construction of the clause sees it as restricting taxing power. However, in 1936, in *United States v. Butler*, 297 U.S. 1, the Supreme Court moved to accept the broad interpretation. However, there are still limitations. In Article I. Section 9. Clause 4, the power is restricted to deny taxing exports: "No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any state."

The U.S. Constitution allows for a direct tax, a tax that cannot be transferred to someone else, upon individuals. Article I. Section 3. Clause 3,

says, "Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this union, according to their respective numbers . . ." However, Article I. Section 9. Clause 3, says, "No capitation, or other direct, tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken." The per capita tax became the income tax with the adoption of the Sixteenth Amendment. Adopted in 1913 through the efforts of the Progressive movement, it allows the following:

> The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several states, and without regard to any census of enumeration.

In effect, it creates a legal fiction that instructs the Supreme Court to ignore the fact that it is a direct tax levied without regard to a census.

The various states have independent taxing authorities. Their respective constitutions usually prescribe limits on the taxing powers that they can exercise. For example, the Constitution of Georgia restricts property taxes to a maximum of 20 mills, or $0.002 times the value of a piece of property. The various units of regional or local government in the states derive their taxing authority from their respective state governments. Taxes may be used to achieve some moral or social purpose of a government. For instance, medical workers pay a controlled substance license fee. However, when illegal drug dealers fail to pay the tax, their tax evasion is often easier to prove than other charges. The forms and types of taxes may be limited only by the imagination of the rulers or politicians seeking revenues. Taxes have been levied upon people as a direct tax, upon their stocks of physical money such as gold, upon intangible assets such as stocks and bonds, on activities, and on income.

Direct and Indirect Taxes

Taxes are considered direct if they cannot be passed to another individual or entity. Income taxes or corporation taxes are taxes on personal or corporate earnings. They are direct taxes, as are per capita taxes. Indirect taxes are those that can be passed along to others. For example, the state and federal fuel taxes that Americans pay at the pump are passed along by the oil companies doing the drilling, refiners, wholesalers, pipelines, and tank trucks that deliver gasoline or diesel to a service station. The station then acts as a tax collector, collecting tax from the consumer pumping fuel into a vehicle.

People who support income redistribution usually support progressive taxes, such as income taxes that are taxed on the principle that the more one makes, the more one pays. Critics complain that progressive taxes are a punishment for success. Usually, the opponents of direct taxes support indirect taxes, which are levied at the same equal rate upon all who purchase a product or service. Their claim is that indirect taxes punish the poor. The claim is that statistically, the poor pay a higher percentage of their income than the more prosperous. Taxes have always been controversial in American history. The American Revolution developed out of opposition to taxes levied on behalf of King George III by Parliament. The Sugar Act, Currency Act, Stamp Act, and others sparked opposition to taxation without representation as the American colonists were forced to pay taxes that were levied without their consent. The Tea Tax invoked the Boston Tea Party and the events that led to armed conflict.

Taxes in the United States may be consumption taxes, used to reduce the consumption of products such as tobacco or alcohol. These are known as "sin taxes" in some regions. Excise taxes may be levied on the manufacture, transportation, purchase, or consumption of certain items. Certain kinds of licenses to engage in certain trades, professions, or to deal in certain commodities may also be subject to excise taxes. The Whiskey Rebellion of the 1790s was an unsuccessful uprising against an excise tax. Other taxes may be excise taxes, which are usually taxes on luxuries. However, a tax on vaccines may be part of a collection for paying for the treatment or loss of a child or adult who suffers or dies for a reaction to a vaccine. It may be for environmental cleaning after mining, or for used oil disposal. A tax on "Cadillac" health care plans is such a tax.

Unpopular taxes include estate taxes on inheritances. For most Americans, their estates are too small to require the payment of any inheritance taxes. However, many family farms or small

business are prudent to have an insurance policy to pay the death duties that might otherwise require the sale of a farm or the liquidation of a business. Besides personal taxes, there are business taxes for all manner of enterprises, including corporations. Taxes on imported products (tariffs) or entry fees are really taxes, even if they are not reported as such. The list of types of taxes is long and grows with the invention new taxes, such as a carbon tax.

Tax policies also allow for the exclusion from taxation of many sources of revenue. For example, nonprofit organizations such as churches (or other religious organizations), charities, and schools, foundations are not taxed. Their revenues are usually used to further socially important purposes that would either require government money to supply, or for a worthy purpose such as the fees to visit a museum would require that these social and educational institutions be close or curtailed. In addition, the tax code, which is a page for the tax rates and volumes to list the many tax exemptions, permits individuals and businesses to exclude or exempt income or taxes.

Lobbying

Because taxes are so numerous and important for the survival or success of individuals, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and governments, they are the subject of an enormous amount of lobbying. Washington, D.C., and the various state capitals are filled with individuals and permanent organizations that lobby on tax issues. It is unlikely that there is a tax that does not have organizations lobbying for or against the tax. As use of social media grows, they allow virtual communities to arise, and they can then move closer to legislators, lobbyists, or other policymakers. However, there are dangers for nonprofit organizations if they use social media to lobby because they could lose their tax-exempt status. Creating a lobbying organization is safer.

Americans have been subjected to acrimonious debates over taxes since the adoption of tax cuts by the Bush administration from the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. The sweeping legislation, also known as the "Bush tax cuts," was bitterly denounced by Democrats and others as tax cuts for the rich, whereas it was strongly supported by Republicans and others. The legislation was kept by the Obama administration, and would have expired January 1, 2011, but was extended two years by the 2010 Tax Act. It expired on January 1, 2013, following President Obama's victory in the election of 2012. Obama's proposals for more taxes to generate deficit reduction income and to avoid the looming fiscal cliff did not gain support.

The battle over the Bush tax cuts was comingled with other bitter tax debates between opponents in the very partisan culture wars. It developed in the United States in the 1970s, and continues today between those who want free public expression and practice of their religious values versus those promoting a monopoly of secular values. Among the institutions affected are public schools, which are increasingly at the center of political disputes between those who believe that their taxes are paying for an education that is hostile to their religious beliefs. The culture war, an increasingly bitter clash of values, has spread to other areas of life, including health care, with the adoption of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA). The act is often called "Obamacare" by its opponents, partly because of its tax increases. Other areas of life are also affected, some of which involve tax issues. Observers have noted that the culture war in the United States is not a matter of rational debate or accommodation, but a bitter struggle for domination in order to impose the values of one side on another.

At the heart of the culture wars are deep moral divisions between Americans. These divisions define not only what religiously is right and wrong, but also economically, ethically, politically, and therefore what is right in terms of taxes. Taxes are artificial social constructs that reflect the values of society. To institute a tax system or to make major changes in a tax system, changes to the tax culture usually have to be made. These changes include changes to the economic, social, and political culture of the day. Tax conflicts can be over what taxes to adopt, versus how tax revenues should be spent. They are often closely linked. Some taxes, such as those involving fossil fuels, may be of concern to business people, but are treated as a cultural issue by environmentalists. Even with what appears to be a nonmoral tax issue, it is necessary to persuade policymakers and their constituents that the policy is "fair."

Some tax issues stem from the culture war. Some, such as the levying of sin taxes on alcohol and tobacco sales, have a long history. Others are relatively new, such as vouchers for school choice, and funding the National Endowment for the Arts, Public Broadcasting System (PBS), and abortions. There are blogs that deal with these; usually the blogs have social media resources such as Twitter, YouTube, Facebook that allow opinions generated by reading the blog to be spread.

Government Spending

Tax conflicts over what taxes to adopt, versus how tax revenues should be spent, are often closely linked. Some taxes, such as those involving fossil fuels, may be of concern to businesspeople, but are treated as a cultural conflict issue by environmentalist seeking a carbon tax. Even with what appears to be a nonmoral tax issue, such as a capital gains tax, it is necessary to persuade policymakers and their constituents that the policy is "fair." In 2011, the National Society of Accountants launched a social network in order to discuss IRS tax forums and other tax issues for accountants and others engaged in tax form preparation. Other Web sites have been created for tax professionals to have a forum for discussing tax issues, including the ethics of taxation and tax avoidance. For example, a proposal to eliminate a tax subsidy for farmers would very likely require a change in their beliefs about what is a fair farm tax policy.

Social media are an emergent technology that has been adopted by different sides in the tax culture war. Some of those engaged in the conflicts over taxes are opportunists who seek changes in tax policy for their interests, and are not especially concerned about the cultural issues affected by taxes. Many types of social media were used in the election of 2012. Some of these focused on candidate tax policy positions. Others were blogs that focused on tax issues, such as tax havens or revenue-neutral claims.

The Tea Party Movement in 2012 was a diverse movement that made even more use of social media as it sought to reduce government spending and limit taxation. In contrast, liberal or progressive organizations such as MoveOn.org used social media to organize and inform their communities. Those who prepare taxes are also using social media to communicate. Links in computerized tax preparation software can allow links to social media, with Facebook and LinkedIn the most popular. Information about tax planning and tax law is shared via blogs, Twitter, and other social media.

One of the new uses of social media is that made by tax collectors. People whose location was unknown or who have not paid taxes have been found via social media. State collection agents in particular have been able to locate and collect unpaid taxes. Or, they have learned of events at which the tax payer will collect a big fee, so an agent is sent to collect the appropriate taxes. Searches for tax cheats, tax delinquents, and scofflaws can include using social sites and chat rooms; however, agents are not allowed to "friend" someone. The growing use of social media is connecting people who can then debate taxing and spending issues. Government agents are as involved as citizens in conversations that historically took place around the kitchen table, rather than over the Internet. Social media user studies have found that they are more than twice as likely to be politically active than nonusers of social media. They raised much more money for candidates than nonusers.

Observers believe that social media use has changed American elections forever. During the presidential and vice presidential debates in 2012, tweets swarmed into the ether following comments that could be interpreted as rhetorical faux pas. Social media was not "social" because it was used to disseminate positions (or poison), rather than for the debate of issues. Pushing messages by candidates and their supporters on social media bypassed the restraints that filter journalists. The elite pundits and journalists used social media to engage each other. The anonymity of Twitter and some other social media allowed vicious comments or images to be spread between elites and their minions. The increased discussion did not, however, increase political knowledge as partisans sought to slime, "snark," or savage each other. The most telling impact was the ability of elites to frame issues and images that were then disseminated by their followers. The social media framing of stories was in many cases sufficiently powerful to frame the traditional reporting of stories on candidates, and even taxes.

Given the eventual outcome of the Obama administration's tax agenda, many argue that the White House's use of social media as a means of galvanizing popular support for its tax plan dramatically "fizzled out." This includes the White House's attempt to employ Twitter, in particular, as a means of dominating the social media discourse around this specific instance of American "culture war" waged on the battlefield of national tax policy.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: Cynicism, Political; Economic and Social Justice; Fiscal Cliff Crisis; Spending and Debt, Government; Tea Party Movement.

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Tea Party Movement

The biggest story of the 2010 U.S. midterm election was the increasing influence of the Tea Party movement. Since their first rallies in early 2009, these vocal, visible conservatives have succeeded in shifting the center of American political discourse closer to the right than it has been in quite some time. The 2010 midterm elections showed the potential power of social media in American politics. Concerned with a looming financial meltdown, government stimuli, bailouts, and the 2008 election of Democrat Barack Obama as president of the United States, a movement of fiscally and socially conservative Americans calling themselves the Tea Party (for Taxed Enough Already) surprised the country by defeating a number of entrenched politicians. Beyond citizen attitudes toward government and alleged tax-and-spend liberals, many believe that social media was the vehicle that allowed the Tea Party movement to reach its full potential. As such, the Tea Party has been highlighted as an example of how social media can truly impact social change.

History

Only two years after Obama won the presidency and seemed situated to return Democrats to the forefront of national politics, Republicans roared back. But it was not only the typical Christian conservative voter leading the way. Instead, it was a collection of angry, middle-aged, white fiscal conservatives, many but not all of whom share the ideological agenda of the Christian Right, who took aim at national officials. Before turning on Democrats, they chose to turn on incumbent Republicans who they believed were too moderate in their beliefs. Even while President George W. Bush had been in the White House, many fiscal conservatives were unhappy with his administration's decision to give bailouts for banks and for propping up automakers. With Obama in office, these fiscally conservative Republicans grew more vocal about spending. Online networks permitted these individuals to come together across the country, also attracting supporters interested in advancing deeply conservative perspectives on a host of social issues, and their voices began to collectively resonate in a major way.

The initial foray of the Tea Party into social media was likely the Smart Girls Politics blog started by stay-at-home mom Stacy Mott. Mott had become fed up with how the federal government (in all branches) was handling the national economy, especially governmental bailouts. Her blog and social network were aimed at

conservative women who shared her economic concerns. The content eventually caught the eye of Michelle Malkin, and began to gain readers.

On February 19, 2009, Rick Santelli, a CNBC commentator, was broadcasting live from the Chicago Board of Trade. He had doubts about the government's response to the economic meltdown. While on air, Santelli became increasingly angry, and indicated that he was planning a "Chicago Tea Party." After Santelli's rant, the Smart Girls Politics blog went viral, from approximately 400 viewers to thousands overnight. Santelli had struck a chord with the American public. At the same time, hundreds of new blogs began appearing, all focusing on the federal government's misappropriation of money and handling of the economy.

A Tea Party member in early American costume waves a flag of protest outside of the U.S. Congress building on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., during a protest against President Barack Obama's health care reforms on March 20, 2010.

A simple idea had quickly become a grassroots cry for something different.

A few weeks earlier, on January 24, a few dozen citizens of Binghamton, New York, poured soda into the Susquehanna River. The familiar symbolism of the Native American headdress was utilized to protest a slate of taxes endorsed by Governor David Paterson, particularly a tax on soft drinks. Trevor Leach, a spokesman at the protest, noted: "We really want to see a sense of fiscal responsibility from the government and have them get their hands out of our pockets." Recognized as the first Tea Party protest, the Binghamton demonstration exhibited an underlying current of dissatisfaction with the scope of government and resultant policies in a regional setting. However, these early scattered, disparate protests would soon coalesce into something closer to a national movement.

Social Media

Outside of the initial blogs, social networking sites became a key element of the Tea Party. Through these means, members were able to share videos and pictures of rallies, demonstrating to the world both their seriousness and following. Facebook pages were the first to emerge. Because the Tea Party has always prided itself on comprising a connection of local activities, rather than a top-down organization, these pages proved pivotal for coordinating activities. Shortly after the movement's emergence, Facebook was the central calendar for all group activities. Before the end of the first year, well over 3,000 Facebook pages were attached to the Tea Party.

Twitter was equally important for the Tea Party in its early days. A group of top conservatives using the hashtag #tcot began with only 25 members, but quickly grew to well over 1,000. Once membership expanded, the hashtag was used to organize town hall meetings, conference calls, and rallies, and to bring together citizens across the country in one place for the world to see. In order to make sure that information stayed in one place, organizers switched to utilizing wikis. Through this platform, they were more able to provide advice related to protest strategies and organization techniques.

In short order, the ragtag collection of complaints about government spending became a

cause. When Scott Brown successfully won Ted Kennedy's Senate seat in Massachusetts, it was clear that the Tea Party mattered. But not everything was perfect. Articles showed that the initial loose organizations created through social networks had begun to unravel as a result of fighting among groups. National organizations appeared and attempted to take over the ideology of the Tea Party movement. Closer scrutiny of the Tea Party's financial resources kicked off a debate over its self-description as a grassroots movement of "ordinary citizens." Increasingly inflammatory discourse on both sides of the issue heated up even further when the *New York Times* claimed that the movement's three biggest funders were media magnate Rupert Murdoch and Wall Street financiers David and Charles Koch, an allegation that was, subsequently, denied by the Kochs and others. Compounding these funding controversies were other issues.

As the initial euphoria around the movement's early momentum began to disappear, social networks were unable to keep the movement going. After all, the strengths of social media lean toward bringing people together and sharing messages, not rectifying differences or working through political battles. Social media was not as successful as traditional media in bringing national attention to the organization. Fox News, the *New York Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal* took the time and energy to carefully study the movement and its followers.

A study by the University of Michigan zeroed in on the tweets of self-identified Tea Party members. Despite its grassroots nature, the Tea Party appeared to be running an organized campaign. Not only did members tweet more often, averaging 901 tweets during the study period, they exhibited behaviors suggesting a stronger community than their counterparts. Tea Party members retweeted one another more often, rebroadcasting a colleague's message an average of 82.6 times, compared with 52.3 retweets for Republicans and 40 for Democrats. They used hashtags (keywords preceded by the # symbol used to categorize tweets) an average of 753 times, compared with Republicans' 404 times and Democrats' 196 times. The researchers suggest this may be because the Tea Party members joined forces on Twitter to attack key Democrats. Among the party's most popular terms were "Nancy Pelosi," "Barney Frank," and "Clinton."

Characteristics

Prior to April 2010, many Americans, particularly liberals, operated on the belief that the Tea Party was the "flamboyant fringe" that David Brooks described. They were assumed to be uneducated, extreme right-wing patriots who opposed Obama on the grounds that he would bring socialism to America. The American media focused on the misspelled signs and apparent misunderstanding of government programs and economic decision making to paint the entire movement as more sizzle than steak in regard to the movement's potential.

In April, a combined CBS News/*New York Times* poll was released that directly refuted much of the general public's perception and helped show America who the average Tea Party supporter was. Many believed that the Tea Party solely emerged from dissatisfaction with Obama and Democrats, but the CBS News/*New York Times* poll shows that 92 percent of Tea Party backers were at least somewhat dissatisfied with both traditional American parties.

However, Tea Party supporters, as suggested previously, are less likely to believe America needs a third party to compete with Democrats and Republicans than the average survey respondent, believing instead that the Republican Party has strayed too far away from its conservative roots and that government in general needs an infusion of new blood to counteract the complacency and cronyism that they feel has infected Washington politics. The one thing the media seemed to peg correctly was how the Tea Party focused far more heavily on economic than social issues, with 78 percent stating that economic issues were the most important considerations in the lead-up to the elections.

Tea Party supporters are educated and wealthy. They were called to action on the wings of the economic recession of 2007 and the election of a president who spoke of more government spending. They want to remain a network of independent organizations that primarily focus on pushing their issues, not individual candidates. However, they also realize that in many elections, the only way to do so will be by promoting candidates.

The Tea Party movement has succeeded by connecting local groups to the national conversation. Followers relied on new media sites like Facebook and Twitter to follow the movement especially in its infancy.

Because the localized groups were at best loosely connected, they were limited to social media to learn what was happening with similar groups across the country. While large umbrella groups, such as FreedomWorks, were occasionally accused of attempting to dominate the smaller groups, they also provided the needed social media training for groups to be successful in reaching followers. Grassroots groups were able to take off once localized chapters were given the proper tools to share their beliefs, methods, and results.

Impact

Contrary to the predictions of many, the Tea Party had a real impact on the 2010 elections. Whether it was by helping to unseat Democratic senators or forcing moderate Republican hopefuls to become more conservative in their beliefs, the Tea Party showed the potential to be a lasting political force within the nation's politics. Considering that prior to the 2010 elections, the Tea Party had been referred to as a right-wing response to Obama, racist, unsustainable, or not fully committed to its beliefs, it is even more remarkable how the network of local organizations was able to prove naysayers wrong across the country about their possible electoral impact.

Originally deemed an un-American astroturf campaign by Nancy Pelosi, the Tea Party instead helped to usher in the era of Speaker John Boehner and the Republican Party in Washington, D.C. After the rank-and-file Tea Party members were largely dismissed as crazy ideologues, Tea Party candidates were dismissed in much the same manner by the traditional party establishment.

When the more conservative, Tea Party–supported candidates proved victorious in primaries across the country, moderate Republicans realized that they had been stuck in the middle to lose. Without social media, however, the organization may have never grown into the powerful political player it is today. While Barack Obama waged a successful social media campaign in 2008, Tea Party activities showed Republicans how they can do the same between his inauguration and the midterm elections.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Astroturfing; Bachmann, Michele; Boehner, John; Bottom-Up Campaigns; Campaign Strategy; Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, 2012; Christian Right; ContractFromAmerica.org; Political Base; Political Parties.

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Technological Determinism

Determinism conceives of the world as fixed and objectified, and therefore predictable; free will is nearly, if not completely impossible, and life options are outside of human control. For instance, biological determinism is a kind of

determinism that suggests that genetic traits dictate how one should live and what one can do. Some people have argued that sex determines the careers a person is (not) allowed to seek (e.g., arguments such as that women are genetically too weak for the military, or that men are genetically incapable of being good caregivers), and that particular traits are natural, unchangeable, and thus uncontrollable for some kinds of people (e.g., aggression and violence in men or emotion and irrationality in women).

Technological determinism is another kind of determinism. Technological determinists work to find direct and causal relationships among a medium/technology, human behavior, and cultural life, and they often focus on the role that a dominant medium plays in a specific era (e.g., writing, printing, television, computing, and smartphones), particularly how the medium influences on cultural change how one relates and lives.

There are two kinds of determinism: hard and soft. Hard determinists make reductionist, causal, and often uncompromising claims about the role and impact of technology on human behavior and cultural life; often, a particular, dominant medium or technology becomes the "sole" cause of social change. Hard determinists might say that books cause individualistic thinking, television makes children violent, smartphones make people less social, and the grammar of texting and text-speak makes people less intelligent. Hard determinists assume that few differences exist in the use of or exposure to dominant technologies, and that cultural change only happens because of these technologies.

Soft determinists offer more tentative and nuanced reads of media and technology; they view media and technology as one factor in, not the sole contributor to, human behavior and social change. For instance, a soft determinist might say that books may cultivate individualistic tendencies, television can contribute to violent actions, smartphones complicate classroom settings and interpersonal relationships, and texting and text-speak changes language, grammar, and spelling in innumerable, unpredictable ways. For a soft determinist, mediation becomes one of the many focuses on how a particular technology influences cultural life.

Marshall McLuhan and Walter Ong

The two scholars most closely associated with technological determinism are Marshall McLuhan and Walter Ong (a student of McLuhan). McLuhan argued that technologies act as extensions of the human senses—they enhance one's embodied abilities (e.g., clothes protect us from the weather; glasses allow one to see better/more; cars, trains, and planes collapse space and time) as well as how one relates to/with others (e.g., games promote sociability; clocks promote productivity and punctuality; money quickens exchange; and cars, trains, and planes allow one to be/feel closer to friends and family). McLuhan is also known best for his "the medium is the message" aphorism, which calls attention to the form of a message and indicates deterministic thinking.

For instance, consider a news broadcast about crime. Instead of only analyzing what a reporter said about crime in the broadcast, McLuhan encouraged researchers to investigate how the form—the medium—in which the broadcast appeared (e.g., television, radio, or online) influenced persons' understandings of the content. A hard determinist read of "the medium is the message" would suggest that one look at nothing else but the medium's influence on the message—the medium "is" the message and "the" message that matters most. A soft determinist read of "the medium is the message" would suggest that the form and content—the medium "and" the message—are mutually constitutive; a news report about crime may be molded to fit a 30-second time slot on the evening (televised) news, but it is also important to note how the crime was described and what images may have been used. Additionally, the interested viewer may be able to access other coverage of the crime online through news sites, blogs, and video sharing sites like YouTube, with each form modifying the message.

While McLuhan considered the various workings of specific technologies, Ong examined broader cultural changes tied to the invention and use of particular dominant technologies. Specifically, he outlined characteristics of oral cultures (groups that valued storytelling, repetition, and limited vocabularies), literate cultures (groups that valued writing, linear thinking, individualism,

and expanding vocabularies), and electronic cultures (groups that valued storytelling, repetition, writing, linear thinking, and individualism). Ong argued that new technologies do not eliminate the characteristics of earlier technologies; instead, new technologies continue or reframe the use of earlier technologies.

For example, most television and film scripts rely on repetition and redundancy, techniques typically associated with oral cultures. For example, the common mystery movie often requires the repetition of clues so that and can understand how Sherlock Holmes solved the puzzle. However, the plot does not follow a simple chronology as typically expected in an oral text, for example, the producers of *Sherlock Holmes* use literary conventions to heighten suspense—conventions similar to those found in (written) mystery novels. A person may also access the same story through various media. For example, vampires appear in fiction, films, video games, and blogs, as well as in Victorian literature and silent films. Each medium contributes to how a person might understand and interpret vampires.

Technological determinists work to explain how various media aid in the construction of culture, communication, and everyday experience. Currently, most scholars take a soft, inclusive, and nuanced approach to technological determinism, for example, understanding that the existence of television or watching violence on television does not turn people violent; the viewing of violence may help cultivate an orientation toward violent behaviors, but a direct, causal relationship between television violence and violent behavior is just too simple.

While some scholars have historically considered technological determinism in causal and predictable ways, contemporary understandings of technological determinism are more fluid; scholars are much more interested now in how technologies "may" change human behaviors, rather than discerning firm and rigid perspectives on people's relationships to technological invention and innovation.

Tony E. Adams
Northeastern Illinois University
Bradley Gangnon
Art Institutes International

See Also: Cultivation; Cyberculture; Rich Media Ad; Technological Relativism.

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Technological Relativism

Technological relativism serves as an umbrella term for a wide range of ideas, theories, and approaches that are bound together by the shared theoretical belief that technology in itself does not drive social change, but rather it is ultimately shaped by social and cultural forces. Central to this belief is a general skepticism against any predetermined notion of technology's role in the progress of society or the autonomous power of technology. Thus, it stands in sharp opposition to technological determinism. In contrast to, for instance, Marshall McLuhan's deterministic idea that posits that certain intrinsic attributes of a dominant technology exert great influence on the main communication mode of the time as well as the social structure, the relativist would assert that the invention, evolution, and deployment of technology must be understood with regard to its broader context, one that is marked by the fabric of social, cultural, economic, political, ideological, and regulatory forces.

This antideterministic stance derives much of its theoretical appeal from the broader intellectual

movements such as philosophical relativism, pluralism, postmodernism, and British cultural studies, that call into question such notions as universal rationality, absolute truth, and objectivity. Technological relativism focuses on both the complexity and contingency of technology. It refuses to see the technology–society equilibrium in a simple linear, cause-and-effect fashion. In favor of considering the social context of technology, which may be both enabling and restrictive, technological relativism strives to discredit any attempt at discovering or establishing universal standards or principles of technology that transcend space and time. This theoretical effort takes various forms, from strong cultural relativism to social construction of technology and critical cultural studies of technology.

Despite technological relativism's many different forms, a number of important common assumptions and perspectives can be distilled: First, technological relativism sees technology as a human invention, and it accordingly stresses the importance of human agency. Under this view, technology in itself does not have an intrinsic final end, but rather it is the human agent that develops and uses technology to meet certain social needs. For the relativist, the notion of determinism is troubling when it seeks to find or predict the universal path of technological innovation and diffusion. Second, it asserts that a technological artifact, if placed outside of its social context, has little to no significance, so it pays special attention to the social shaping or construction of technology. While humans are free to make technological choices, such choices must be made within the constraints of the time. The social context does not function as a mere backdrop for the smooth, seamless acceptance or refusal of technology. Instead, it serves as a site in which various tensions, conflicts, collaborations, and negotiations interact to shape the contour of technology. Technology is now better understood as an intervention into the relationship between human agency and social structure. Third, it also highlights the role that culture plays in the shaping of technology. Society influences technology not only through formal institutions and regulatory mechanisms, but more importantly via cultural traditions, routines, myths, and desires. Technology cannot avoid facing these multilayered, deep-seated cultural influences, nor is it possible to examine technology out of this cultural context. Last, it takes a careful look at the power relations embedded in the technology-society relationship. In other words, the adoption and wide use of a new technological invention can be either promoted or suppressed by the existing power structure and its hegemonic relations. Consequently, the extent to which a new technology is adopted by society is determined as a result of an interaction between the force to maintain the status quo, and another force to undermine it.

Technological relativism possesses certain advantages over deterministic ideas. Most importantly, it provides a theoretical basis for a contingent, context-specific explanation as to the roles that larger society or culture play in shaping the contour of technology. Therefore, it helps challenge overly reductionist, indiscriminate ideas that prefer to isolate specific, empirically verifiable properties of technologies from their social contexts. It also better reflects some of the most salient values of contemporary democracy, diversity and pluralism. On the other hand, it draws some weaknesses.While technological relativism places a well-reasoned emphasis on the complexity of interaction between technology, society, and culture, it has been criticized for its inability to examine certain intrinsic values of a new technology that may be qualitatively different from the preceding ones. That everything is relative can be criticized by the presence of certain universally adopted technological innovations that show little to no cultural imprints. A second disadvantage is that relativism may result in theoretical chaos or anarchy. Being relative means accepting diverse, pluralistic theories and methods, and in turn this can results in incoherence in theory. Also, it can be overly descriptive, lacking explanatory or predictive theoretical power.

Debate

In light of the increasing role that social media play in contemporary politics and democracy, the heated debate between technological determinism and technological relativism has recently been enlivened. While technological determinism pays attention to the internal distinctive attributes of the technology in fostering democracy, technological relativism pays greater attention to the

roles that culture and social context play in conditioning the actual use, deployment, and effects of the new communication technology. The relativist would argue that the degree to which social media are used for democratic ends is essentially dependent on different sociopolitical contexts. As can be seen in the case of the Arab Spring and elsewhere, social media can be used not only by protesters, but also by state censors. Therefore, technological relativism may well inform cross-cultural or international comparative research on the use of social media for contemporary politics and democracy.

Siho Nam
University of North Florida

See Also: Evolution of Social Media; Innovation and Technology; International Social Media and Politics; Technological Determinism; Technology Diffusion Paradigm.

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Technology Diffusion Paradigm

A predominant theory used to understand the spread of social media is diffusion of innovations. While research has been conducted on technology diffusion since the 1940s, the concept of diffusion of innovations has shown remarkable resilience and portability across various areas of social science. Diffusion of innovations is particularly useful in understanding the spread of media in general, and social media in particular. Not only does the concept explain the spread of the Internet, but also the process by which social media have become embedded so quickly in people's lives.

The term *diffusion of innovations* was coined by Everett Rogers during his research on the spread of agricultural innovations among farmers. The theory seeks to explain the spread of an idea or technology through a population. It suggests that the process of introduction and adoption of a new idea or technology is similar for different types of innovation and for all populations.

Early innovation researchers postulated that the diffusion of ideas and technologies would behave much like the spread of a disease epidemic through a population. This meant that there would be a point of introduction to the new population, then initially the idea would be accepted by only a few people, but as more people adopted the idea, the rate of dispersion would accelerate until it reached a point of saturation in the population, when the rate would slow down. The spread of an innovation, like the spread of an epidemic, would take the form of an S-shaped curve.

Rogers states that the dispersion of any technology goes through four stages: invention, diffusion, time, and consequences. According to this supposition, a technology first has to be conceived, tested, and implemented during the invention stage. After invention, the idea or technology is then offered for consumption to the general public and is gradually accepted into a population. Over time, the innovation reaches a point of saturation or tipping point. Once the innovation has reached enough people and has spent enough time in a population, the impact or consequences of the adoption of this technology become evident.

Obviously, not every technology or idea introduced into a society is equally accepted. This is because the technology has to be properly communicated to the target audience. According to the diffusion of innovations, while the technology can be simultaneously communicated to a large population, each individual has to go through a personal five-step process of decision making. The five steps are as follows:

1. Knowledge, in which an individual becomes aware of a technology and its features
2. Persuasion, in which a person evaluates the technology's benefits and costs
3. Decision, in which a person accepts or rejects the technology
4. Implementation, in which the individual begins consistently using the technology
5. Confirmation, which consists of a formal or informal review of the technology and its usefulness.

Additional factors in the diffusion process are the personal characteristics of individuals in a society. The population can be divided into five adopter categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Innovators are usually excited about trying out new ideas, and tend to be technologically adept. Early adopters tend to be the opinion leaders in their society, and judiciously use the data generated by the innovators in their decision-making process. Early majority adopters constitute the tipping point of the diffusion process. These individuals, while not risk takers, are socially well connected and accelerate the process of diffusion through their personal connections. Late majority adopters are a more cautious bunch, and will often only use the technology once it has become well accepted in society. Laggards are late to join in, either because they are holding onto traditions challenged by the new technology, or because they are economically or socially disadvantaged in accessing the technology.

Ordinarily, the diffusion of an innovation through these five population categories follows a bell curve, where a few innovators try out the innovation in the beginning (2.5 percent). If all goes well, early adopters come onboard, making up the next 13.5 percent of the population. Both the early majority and the late majority make up 34 percent of the user populations. After 84 percent of the population has accepted an innovation, the laggards come onboard, constituting the final 16 percent of the adopting population. Of course, there are some populations and individuals who remain unable or unwilling to use a certain technology because of economic barriers (technology can be expensive) or personal reasons (not all forms of technology are useful, let alone necessary, to different population segments). Additionally, many technology adopters "cherry-pick," embracing specific types of technology that improve certain aspects of their particular lives while declining to use those that do not. One outcome of "opt-out" behavior in the user population would be the digital divide, which continues to persist, despite astounding technological advances.

This process of diffusion of innovations can be applied to both media channels and content. The distinctive quality of social media is the rapid pace of the diffusion process. The length of the process of diffusion of innovations for mass media has become increasingly compressed with each successive technology. Print, especially in the form of mass-produced publications, took a few hundred years to reach saturation. For radio, the diffusion process took about a century. Television reached saturation in a little over 50 years. However, the group of technologies collectively known as digital media have typically had a diffusion time range of two to 10 years, and this timeline is under further compression pressure.

Social Media

Regarding the diffusion paradigm, the distinctive characteristic of social media is that, as a whole, it is made up of different Web sites and apps that are at various levels of diffusion. This means that it is difficult to say with certainty what level the diffusion of social media as a whole has reached. Within the social media context, innovators are mostly young people, the technologically savvy, and social outliers, and many have already started using newer social media such as Instagram and StumbleUpon. Social media early adopters have turned out to be nonprofits, social movements, and politicians, all of who have been quick to grasp the potential of these technologies. The early majority are still at the stage of integrating apps such as Twitter into their daily lives. The people belonging to the early majority are typically older adults, and most are still at the stage of becoming comfortable with Facebook. People belonging to the late majority have concerns about issues such as privacy, as well as those affected by the digital divide. These are people still gaining comfort with technologies such as texting and reading

blogs. Finally, laggards tend to be older adults and people affected by the digital divide; they are still coming onboard with core social media apps such as smartphone messaging and e-mailing.

Saman Talib
Humber College

See Also: Digerati; Digital Revolution; Facebook; Innovation and Technology; Legacy Media/Old Media; Luddite; Media and Communications Policy.

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Television and Social Media

The television ecosystem is in mutation, regarding both production processes and reception tactics. Although television's entertainment content is the primary concern of social media, important implications for the political use of the television/social media nexus are embedded within these less overtly political issues. Because viewers for any given time slot are increasingly fewer and spread across a wide range of channels, interactivity and audience participation are becoming increasingly valued in TV programming. In a society where screens are colonizing a variety of environments (e.g., work, entertainment, and administration), television has to adapt to new ways of consuming programs, whether news, reality shows, documentaries, or TV series on multiple devices such as TV sets, smartphones, tablets, and desktop or laptop computers. Social media, similarly accessible on a variety of platforms, provide a unique setting for networks and viewers alike to communicate with one another. These gathering places offered by social media further facilitate, and even foster, a number of fan activities for active consumers.

Audiences are fragmented and have acquired both the technological skills and the equipment to watch programs wherever and whenever they wish. Social media such as Facebook or Twitter offer audience members ways to show their appreciation for a program, discuss a program, or have access to additional content offered by networks. Moreover, the most active and involved of these viewers, fans, have various activities of creation and content production, ranging from writing could be/would be extensions of stories (fanfictions), video montages (fanvids), or creating costumes (cosplays), and are gathered in communities that spread media content within their communities and in the public sphere. These fans, in their quest for more knowledge and possession with regard to the object of their affection, are also the first to acquire DVDs and other products. Consequently, while the mainstream audience (and the various demographics composing it) remains the primary target of advertisers (and thus, television networks), fans have become the targeted audience of transmedia marketers (who disperse elements of the story across various platforms to create a unified entertainment experience), as well as the television studios that own the rights to the DVDs and the various consumer products.

Social Media Use by TV Programs

In order to reinforce interactivity and spread social links and connections, TV programs now include social networks in their narration or in their communication and promotion. Facebook is mainly used by channel representatives as a support for creating official fan pages, where TV viewers can find information on the programs they enjoy, interact with other fans, and tell others that they enjoy the show through the "like" button. Additionally, with regard to the statistics departments of TV networks, fanpages on Facebook represent a barometer of their shows' appeal because it allows them to instantly see

A viewer controls XBMC open source media player software on a PC connected to a television in 2012. The software allows users to watch and collect movies, television shows, and multimedia content from the Internet. New ways of consuming programs on multiple devices that include TV sets, smartphones, tablets, and desk or laptop computers have challenged traditional television platforms.

how many viewers like the programs, as well as to interact with these fans via Facebook posts. Fan discussions are not always positive and constructive, however, and social media can occasionally serve as an outlet where the audience may express their reaction, sometimes violently, toward something that has happened in relation to the program. A recent example would include the British series *Torchwood*, when fans violently criticized its recent Americanization by U.S. premium cable channel Starz, and attacked the writers for what they considered bad storytelling.

Different platforms offer different strategies. On Twitter, for instance, channels encourage their audiences to interact live during programs through the use of specific hashtags, which are words referring directly to the show (most commonly, the program's title or the name of a character or a situation that has recently occurred). This strategy is an instant barometer for networks that can evaluate the number of viewers who are both watching and live tweeting, along with instant feedback on what the latter think of the program. TV viewers gather in virtual communities in order to (re)create a pseudo-common viewing experience via the use of a hashtag.

As a result, fans usually create personal hashtags, following a principle of fan communities, using their language and their decoding of the programming, thereby reinforcing a sense of belonging. Only those who are part of the community will join the conversation. When fans use their hashtags, rather than those proposed by the production team and appearing on the screen throughout the program, tweet tracking is much more difficult for channels and studios attempting to measure the fan following of their products.

Additionally, TV news channels are present on social networks, particularly on Twitter, where they share their latest news, sometimes retweeted thousands of times within minutes. In addition to these two main platforms, television networks also use other social networks such as YouTube as a means to disseminate trailers, teasers, and other sneak peeks of their current, past, and upcoming productions, rendering them instantly accessible and free to millions of fans and potential viewers across the world.

Fan Use of Social Media

In parallel to official accounts created by the networks, studios, and their official representatives, fans make use of social media by creating fan pages. They use Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, where they upload numerous fanvids, use abstracts or programs, or make videologs (or vlogs) commenting on the latest episodes. Fans are also present on Foursquare and Pinterest, as well as on platforms specifically made for fan gatherings, expression, and activities such as Fanpop, where fans can gather; share pictures, videos, and links; ask and reply to questions; and create and participate to polls and quizzes. Moreover, social network/app GetGlue allows fans to share their viewing experience and keep track of their TV series schedule. They can win badges when they log on to watch a series and share their badges with communities through social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. With this application, they can show their tastes in TV shows and can once again gather in a community of viewers who share the same interest as a way to enhance their viewing experience.

Social networks also allow viewers to advocate some of their opinions and to conceive and implement virtual campaigns. The goal of such campaigns can vary from show to show, but are primarily related to saving a recently canceled program. Most of the time, these online pages will appeal to a physical campaign, which would see fans send letters or objects to networks, channels, or studios headquarters in the hope of convincing executives of the ongoing interest of the audience (and the continuing financial profitability of the program). Recent campaigns include the Save *Jericho* campaign, when fans sent more than 20 tons of peanuts to CBS headquarters in 2007, the Save *Veronica Mars* campaign, which saw fans send over 10,000 Mars bars to the CW in 2008, or the Save *Chuck* campaign, which included sending letters, donating money on NBC's behalf, and purchasing Subway sandwiches (a brand heavily featured in the show) in large numbers during the finale.

History has shown that such campaigns can work. While the *Veronica Mars* campaign did not work, *Jericho* was given a second season, and *Chuck* was renewed for three consecutive seasons thanks to a financial partnership between NBC and Subway. Such successes have since fostered further hope and motivation to millions of fans across the globe. Convincing a network to renew a program for another season, or a different network to buy the rights of the show, are not the only aims of these movements. Other types of campaigns, for instance, include petitioning for a DVD release of an earlier show, or the theatrical adaptation or sequel of a program. Examples of these practices could include the Facebook page where thousands of *Twin Peaks* fans petitioned for the DVD release of deleted scenes from the prequel movie, *Fire Walk With Me*, or the 2013 Kickstarter campaign, petitioning for a *Veronica Mars* movie.

This paved the way, however, for an entirely different type of online fan campaign: Rather than seeing fans appealing to business practitioners for their help, this endeavor was just the opposite. This campaign was launched by the show's main actress, who appealed to fans for "fan financing," asking faithful viewers of the long gone program to donate even a small sum of money in order to reach the $2 million goal, for the (most likely, partial) financing of a *Veronica Mars* movie, and promising different rewards depending of the size of the donation. In the end, over 90,000 fans donated money for the cause, which amassed nearly $6 million in funds. Not all uses of social networks can be seen as franchise friendly, including those—most notably through discussion threads—that are employed to share links to illegal downloads, peer-to-peer or otherwise, as well as to Web sites freely streaming recently aired episodes.

Benjamin W. L. Derhy Kurtz
University of East Anglia/Université Paris Ouest
Melanie Bourdaa
Université Bordeaux 3

See Also: Blogs; Campaigns, Virtual; Crowdfunding; Fan Page; Peer to Peer; Streaming Media; Television Personalities and Social Media in Politics.

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Television Personalities and Social Media in Politics

News anchors and political pundits become media personalities, recognizable to individuals who routinely watch news programming. These media personalities provide citizens with information about politics, and must draw in consumers in order to keep their outlets profitable in a competitive media environment. Increasingly, media personalities have begun to use social media to fulfill both these roles. However, while the rise of social media has changed the relationship between media personalities and consumers, it may also have more detrimental political effects. Most citizens are not politicians. They do not sit in congressional or parliamentary hearings, nor do they attend local city council meetings.

These citizens receive most, if not all of their political information through the news media and the media personalities who cover politics. News media content provides citizens with the basic information that serves as a framework for their knowledge of political events. Yet, media personalities must do more than merely inform the public. When news media are privately owned, news producers need to make profits to survive. As a result, media personalities must draw in consumers. These consumers may pay a fee for their news, as do newspaper subscribers. Consumers may also obtain the news product without paying a fee, as do network or many Internet news consumers. These nonpaying consumers provide profits to news producers by bringing in paid advertisers eager to sell their products to an outlet's audiences.

Connecting With Fans

Many media personalities have embraced social media as a mechanism that allows them to communicate information to viewers and draw them in. Today, media personalities covering politics often use Facebook (a social networking Web site), Twitter (a cell phone-driven social networking site), and/or YouTube (a video-sharing Web site) to reach out to consumers. These social media sites have the potential to reach a large number of consumers. For example, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are among the top 10 most visited Web sites, and together attract about 10 percent of all Internet users worldwide on any given day. The most recent estimates indicate that approximately one billion subscribers use Facebook to connect with their online "friends" worldwide. In the United States, at the end of 2011, Facebook had 133 million active users, who interacted with Facebook content at least once a month. Facebook users also spent a good deal of their Internet time on Facebook—an average of 423 minutes in December 2011. Twitter, while younger than Facebook, already boasts over 500 million subscribers. In the United States, research suggests that 66 percent of all adults who use the Internet participate in social networking sites.

The increasing use of social media has changed the landscape of today's mainstream news media, creating a more active consumer, and altering the relationship between media personalities and media consumers. Print news, radio, and television represent old media. These sources allowed consumers access to political information. However, they gave their consumers little control of news content, other than through market pressures. For example, individuals unsatisfied with the political coverage in a newspaper could choose to use another news source, taking away

subscription dollars from the unsatisfactory newspaper, and decreasing the size of the audience that publication had to offer to its advertisers. Old media sources also maintained a strict division between media personalities and consumers. Those readings a newspaper or viewing a program acted as passive observers, taking in the information presented by their sources. Beyond writing letters to the editor, consumers had few ways to interact with the media personalities they relied on for information.

Social media changes the nature of the relationship between media personalities and consumers. Media personalities use many different types of social media to reach out to consumers. Many mainstream journalists write Web logs (blogs). Others use Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to share content and connect with consumers. These social media outlets create new places for consumers to obtain political information, allow much more consumer control of the media they receive, and provide consumers with a more interactive media experience.

Blogs allow media personalities to share their opinions on political events online. Those following a media personality's blog have the opportunity to comment on the blog's content or respond to the comments of others. Some bloggers not associated with mainstream publications have become media personalities as a result of the popularity of their blogs, or because their blogs covered major news stories before being picked up by the mainstream media. For instance, Matt Drudge of the Drudge Report gained attention because of the popularity of his conservative political blog, which broke major news stories such as initial allegations about the affair between President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky.

Consumer Feedback

Facebook provides another way to disseminate information and create social networks, or overlapping systems of relationships that connect individuals with one another. Facebook allows consumers to "friend" media personalities. When they do so, content posted on Facebook by these media personalities appears in the newsfeeds of those who have friended them. These friends can choose to comment on posts with their content, to "like" the posts by clicking on a picture of a thumbs-up, and to share stories and posts with other friends on Facebook. Thus, Facebook provides media personalities with a forum to post and respond to comments. Facebook also allows media personalities to share stories they like with their friends.

Twitter allows media personalities and consumers to send messages of 140 characters or less (tweets) to one another. Twitter, primarily aimed at mobile phone users, allows individuals to tweet their thoughts or to read the tweets of those they follow. By preceding another individual's user name with the "@" symbol, Twitter users can post a tweet directed to that user. By preceding certain words in their tweet with a "#," individuals hashtag information in a way that facilitates searches of that topic and allows Twitter users to determine what topics are talked about most on Twitter. For instance, a user could post a comment about the 2012 elections and include the phrase "#election2012." When another user searches for #election2012, all tweets containing this tag will appear in search results. If used by enough individuals, a hashtag may become a trend. Trends attract more individual users to hashtagged discussions because the hashtagged phrase appears within the Trending Topics area of a user's homepage.

Individuals can also retweet tweets made by others, sharing another's tweet with those who follow them. Media personalities routinely tweet their thoughts and impressions about politics in real time. For example, news consumers watching the 2012 presidential and vice presidential debates could not only tweet their thoughts about the debate while it was happening, but also read the tweets of their favorite political pundits. Many networks ran a constant stream of tweets about the debate on the screen as the political candidates debated. YouTube allows users to post videos that can be viewed by others. Media personalities can create "channels." Consumers can subscribe to these channels, following videos created or posted by the channel's creator. Individuals can also post video content with their favorite media personalities, sharing these videos with those following their channels. Like all other social media networking tools, YouTube users can post comments about the videos that they find on YouTube.

Many media personalities post stories and updates on social media sites like blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. These social networking sites do more than provide news content. They also allow media personalities to enter into the social networks of consumers. Stories posted on these social networking sites appear in the Facebook and Twitter feeds of those who have "friended" or followed the media personalities. Individuals can also comment on videos shared on YouTube or posts made on blogs. These responses provide feedback to media personalities about their stories and updates. Media outlets use social media to attract consumers to their official Web pages from the social media pages of their personalities. Many news producers use applications on Facebook to create news pages for their major media personalities and the outlets on which these personalities appear. These pages provide basic information about news stories and hyperlinks that redirect users from Facebook to the social media personalities' network Web sites.

For instance, the Cable News Network (CNN) television show *Anderson Cooper 360* has a Facebook page with basic information about stories that will be covered on the program and links to more detailed information that can be found on CNN's Web site for the show. However, someone visiting the *Anderson Cooper 360* page on CNN also has the opportunity to share stories from that page with other members of their social networks via Facebook and Twitter. These attempts appear successful. Surveys suggest that a vast majority of users who follow news links on Facebook or Twitter also get news by going directly to a news organization's Web site or using a news organization's mobile phone app. The use of multiple types of social media by media personalities has become commonplace. The *New York Times*' Nate Silver not only writes for the publication's blog FiveThirtyEight, but also frequently posts comments to almost half a million followers via Twitter. The *Washington Post*'s Chris Cillizza also writes a political blog, The Fix, and communicates with over 160,000 Twitter followers.

Tailored Content

These types of social media allow consumers to receive information from media personalities outside of newspapers, magazines, and news programs. For instance, consumers can now receive information from their preferred media personalities on Web sites like Facebook, or on their mobile phones via Twitter. They can also receive this information in real time. Content posted on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other social media sites are instantly available to users. Consumers no longer have to wait until a newspaper arrives or a program appears on television to find out what their preferred media personalities have to say about political events. About one-third of Americans with smartphones go online, using their phones to view the news. Many of these mobile phone users download applications allowing them to use Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube on their phone. These applications allow individuals to see or share social networking content posted by media personalities virtually anywhere, anytime.

Social media also offers consumers much more control of content than old media. With old media, consumers had little choice in what stories they read or viewed. A viewer of live network evening news could not skip one story to view the next. Social media users can choose which media personalities they connect with via social networking sites. Users can choose whether to read posts or tweets. Users can also use social media to filter their news coverage, deciding what content to read or consider based on what others in their social networks recommend. Finally, social media users can also further spread the content posted by media personalities to others because things that individuals "like," retweet, or post again appear in the personal feeds of other social network members who may not have friended or followed the media personality.

Social media provides its users with a much more interactive experience. Users may respond directly to content posted by media personalities via blogs, Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube. They may also share these comments or information found on other Web sites or social network sites with other individuals in their social network. For instance, Facebook users can embed a YouTube clip on their Facebook page for their friends on Facebook to see. This interactivity has made political information consumption a more social experience for consumers, allowing them to filter, digest, and react to news with other individuals within their social networks. Social media may

also expose new audiences to political media personalities. The audience for political news tends to possess certain demographic characteristics. One of the most prominent among these concerns age. Traditionally, young people have paid much less attention to politics than their older peers, and young people make up a substantial portion of social media users.

Recent research indicates that citizens use social media to receive political news, suggesting that political media personalities are wise to interact with consumers on social media sites. Approximately four out of 10 social media users say that these sites are important in helping them to keep up with political events. A quarter of social network users also say that social networking sites are important in allowing them to debate or discuss political issues with others, and the same proportion of individuals exposed to political content about a particular issue become more active on that issue after reading about it or discussing it on social media sites. Perhaps as important for media personalities trying to reach out to consumers, about a quarter of users say that social media sites are important in helping them find others who share their views about important political issues.

Yet, the extent to which political media personalities reach citizens via social media is limited. In 2012, only about 10 percent of Facebook users received any news from Facebook recommendations from news organizations or journalists. If media personalities reach social media consumers on Facebook, it seems much more likely that they do so through the recommendations of family members or friends outside of the political news industry. Political media personalities may have more luck reaching consumers on Twitter, where almost a third of individuals claimed to receive news directly from a journalist or news organization.

The reach of social media and the social media content posted by political media personalities, also appears quite limited. Those who use online social networks to learn about or discuss politics (political social media users) tend to have distinct demographic characteristics from those who go online, but do not use social networking sites for political purposes. In the United States, political social media users resemble the general population in terms of income, race, and gender. Yet, these political social media users tend to be younger and more educated than the rest of the American population. Political social media users also tend to use technology more than other types of social media users. These political social media users are more likely to go online wirelessly from a cellular phone or laptop computer, to own a laptop computer, to have a high-speed broadband connection, and to use the Internet on their cell phones.

Those who use social media to obtain or share political content also tend to be politically interested. Those that post material about politics on social media Web sites often talk about politics with family and friends. These individuals are also more likely to have friends on social media who post about politics. Those who consider social networking Web sites important to their political knowledge and activities also tend to have distinct demographic characteristics. Democrats are more likely to identify social networking sites as important for political activities. African Americans and adults less than 29 years old are also more likely to say that social networking sites are politically important.

Echo Chamber Effect

A vast majority of social media users post little or nothing related to politics on social media Web sites. Only about one out of 10 digital news consumers obtain news on either Facebook or Twitter using a computer, smartphone, or tablet. Regular political social media users also seek out news elsewhere, making it unlikely that most are exposed to political information from media personalities that they would not otherwise see. Even if people obtain political information from media personalities via social media, it is unlikely that exposure changes their political views. Only a small fraction of social network users claim that they changed their views about a political issue after discussing or reading about it on social media.

Scholars also identify a number of negative effects that may emerge from media personalities' use of social media. The need to convey information in short entertaining fragments further exacerbates media's tendency to convey complex political information in sound bites, which lacking proper context, make it difficult for consumers to

gain a nuanced understanding of politics or political issues. Since consumers can tailor the news coverage they receive based on their interests and/or political beliefs, social media may also create an echo chamber where people only receive information that corresponds with their pre-existing beliefs and opinions. Also, because those who use social media to learn about politics tend to already be interested and active in politics, media personalities are not likely to educate politically uninformed consumers via social media.

These effects suggest that media personalities' use of social media may not have an entirely positive impact. Nevertheless, the use of social media by media personalities has had an impact on politics. Bloggers have broken stories and influenced the topics that mainstream media outlets cover. Social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, have also eroded the barrier that traditionally separated media personalities from consumers, fundamentally changing how and when citizens receive political news.

Leslie A. Caughell
Virginia Wesleyan College

See Also: Echo Chamber Phenomenon; Networks, Political; News Media; Real-Time Communication Nodes; Social Networking Web Sites; Television and Social Media.

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Terrorism

A recent study by Gabriel Weimann of the University of Haifa found that nearly 90 percent of terrorist activities that are organized on the Internet are perpetuated through the various social media sites, with platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube used as a means of spreading terrorist propaganda, recruiting new members, and gathering intelligence. Social media have become a key component in the communication strategy of terrorist organizations. The cheap and easily accessible nature of social media offers terrorist organizations an efficient distribution mechanism, allowing them to reach a global audience with minimal effort. Additionally, because users of social media platforms self-select who they follow or receive messages from, social media platforms circumvent the gatekeeping of traditional mainstream mass media outlets, allowing terrorist organizations to directly interact with their target populations, removing the need for an intermediary in the form of news outlets as a means of releasing their messages to the public.

The idea that there is a symbiotic relationship between terrorist activities and the mass media is not new; terrorist organizations have long used mass media news outlets as a means of disseminating their messages to further their goals. While violent and aggressive terrorist acts have largely been ineffectual in forcing governmental change or the transfer of political and legislative power between factions, when it comes to the reporting of such events by news media, terrorist activities have proven effective in spreading the groups' political message and agenda to a global audience.

Mass media news outlets are silent partners in the terrorist process. Because of the highly

competitive nature of news media, media outlets rush to report on terrorist activities when they occur, which serves to perpetuate the goals, agendas, and messages of terrorist groups by promoting the event and message to a large (and often global) audience. Although mass media outlets may publicly condemn terrorist activities, they are by their very nature required to report on them, and in doing so they assist in the dissemination of the terrorist organization's message and agenda. The competitively charged atmosphere of the news media has made them vulnerable to exploitation and manipulation by terrorist organizations. One example of such exploitation and manipulation can be seen in the way that Osama bin Laden released audio and video threats to Arabic television networks, including Al-Jazeera. These media segments were then repeatedly shown on global television networks.

Use of Social Media

Of the terrorist groups currently in operation, Al Qaeda was one of the earliest to fully exploit the communicative and terrorist potential of the Internet. Brian Jenkins, a senior advisor for the Rand Corporation, notes that while Middle Eastern in origin, Al Qaeda has always viewed itself as a global movement with a global agenda, thus it has always depended on global communication networks to perpetuate their message to its target audience. Jenkins suggests that Al Qaeda leaders view communicating the group's message as the primary struggle. In addition to manipulating traditional news media, it has made extensive use of its Web page as a means of disseminating audio and video messages. Jenkins notes that the number of Web sites devoted to Al Qaeda as a political and religious movement has significantly grown, from several sites to several thousand.

Other terrorist organizations that have adopted social media platforms as a communicative strategy include the Taliban, Somalia-based Al-Shabab, and the Nigerian terror group Boko Haram. The Taliban Twitter account (@alemarahweb) has been active since May 2011, and now has more than 7,000 followers of frequent (and sometimes hourly) tweets. The terror cell Al-Shabab tweets under the handle @HSMPress, and has over 10,000 followers of its frequent tweets. Boko Haram uploaded a video statement on YouTube in defense of its coordinated Christmas 2011 bombing attacks in Kono, Nigeria.

Discouraging Social Media Use

While a number of terrorist organizations have adopted social media platforms as a communication strategy, this use has not gone unnoticed by world governments. The U.S. government encourages social media companies to reject or remove content posted by terrorist organizations, a request that others argue contravenes the First Amendment, which protects freedom of speech. In 2008, Joe Lieberman and the U.S. Senate's Homeland Security Committee released an investigative report, "Violent Islamist Extremism, the Internet, and the Homegrown Terrorist Threat," which claimed that the Internet is a driving force in the terrorist threat to the United States.

The Homeland Security Committee continued to study social media use by terrorist organizations. In December 2011, the Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence held a hearing titled Jihadist Use of Social Media—How to Prevent Terrorism and Preserve Innovation. Key witnesses testifying at the hearing included Brian Jenkins, a senior advisor for the Rand Corporation; Evan Kohlmann, a senior partner for Flashpoint Global Partners; William McCants, a senior analyst for the Center for Naval Analysis; and Aaron Weisburd, the director of the Society for Internet Research. In his testimony, McCants suggested that although terrorist organizations actively used social media platforms to promote their agendas and messages, research failed to show that their use of social media was effective in recruiting members, promoting their message, or fulfilling their overall mission. He further stated that closing user accounts for terrorist organizations would not be an effective strategy for stopping recruiting and radicalization, noting that this could put the United States at a disadvantage by reducing valuable intelligence regarding their activities.

Weisburd went further, suggesting that intelligence and security forces should not strive to remove terrorist groups from online platforms, but rather to deprive them of the branding that lends them an air of authenticity. He suggested that their use of social media was done in such a way as to allow them to brand their content, making themselves more visible and easily recognizable.

Additionally, Weisburd claimed that not only should terrorist groups be monitored, but that any organizations involved in any way in the production or distribution of terror group messages should be considered culpable, including Internet service providers (ISPs). Weisburd argued that ISPs should take responsibility for monitoring the actions of their users, without addressing the fact that current U.S. legislation forbids such censorship by businesses.

This viewpoint was rejected by Jenkins, who suggested that the potential risks associated with the online activities of terrorist groups should not be cited as justification for imposing stricter controls and sanctions upon content distributors like ISPs. He maintained that such attempts at content control at the server/ISP level would not be cost effective, and would ultimately render a valuable source of intelligence information unusable. Furthermore, he noted that there was no reliable evidence suggesting that such control of online content would be possible, a conclusion supported by earlier attempts by the U.S. and Australian governments at creating legislation for censoring Web site content deemed offensive.

Jenkins stated that while countries like China have been somewhat successful in monitoring and banning content deemed offensive, those countries have little concern for freedom of speech, a key foundation of the U.S. Bill of Rights. Additionally, he noted that shutting down one site would only drive terrorist groups to change names and move to another site or another social media platform, which would end up costing the government more money and staff time in tracking the digital trail.

Kohlmann argued for U.S. officials to apply more pressure to social media companies to remove content from terror groups, maintaining that while U.S. law offers few incentives for such companies to voluntarily turn over information regarding the illicit activity of their users, they must be held accountable for the perpetuation of hate speech by such groups. Between 2008 and 2011, the U.S. government made a number of requests of social media companies, asking that they remove content or accounts associated with known terrorist organizations; however, it was not until 2010 that some social media platforms began to comply with the request.

One of the earliest social media platforms to give in to government demands (from the United States, Chinese, and other governments) was YouTube, which in December 2010 changed its policy to allow for pulling video content posted by known terrorist organizations from its servers. In allowing for this removal of material, YouTube created a new category that allowed users to flag offensive content as "promoting terrorism," a subcategory to their "violent or repulsive content" category.

Twitter has also amended its policy on censorship, following complaints and pressure from U.S. officials. Upon learning that Al-Shabab was using Twitter as a recruiting and propaganda tool, U.S. government officials demanded that Twitter executives close the account. Despite pressure from government officials, Twitter declined to shut down the account. However, in January 2012, Twitter announced a significant change to its policy, stating that it would begin censoring tweets in countries where the tweets could be seen as breaking local laws. This move drew significant criticism from Twitter users, who felt that the change was an attack on free speech and the open use of the Web.

In its defense, Twitter released a statement on its Web site that argued that various countries restricted certain types of content based on historical and cultural reasons, citing France and Germany's bans on pro-Nazi content, and noting that prior to its policy change, the only way to deal with content deemed offensive in one country was to remove the content globally. The new change allowed the company to selectively restrict content from users in a specific country based upon government restriction agreements, while allowing it to remain visible to users from other countries. Twitter also announced that the content removal process would remain transparent, informing users of why the content was restricted or withheld.

Danielle Lawson
Edinboro University

See Also: Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Cyber-Jihad; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Hate Speech, Online and Social Media; U.S. Pentagon Social Media in Strategic Communications Program.

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Third Palestinian Intifada

In March 2011, the removal of a Facebook page calling for a third *intifada*, or uprising, in Palestine following a letter from Israel's Public Diplomacy and Affairs Minister to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg caused controversy about the responsibilities of social media platforms in upholding certain types of speech. The call for an uprising came amid the ongoing demonstrations in the Arab world. The use of the term *intifada* was intended to evoke the First and Second Intifadas, uprisings by Palestinians against Israel that started as nonviolent demonstrations, but ended with significant casualties on both sides. The Facebook page, created in early 2011, called for 1 million people to join forces against Israel on May 15, 2011, and stated its purpose as being "against injustice, division, and corruption."

Given the violence of the First and Second Intifadas, the Israeli government moved to act against the Facebook page. Israel's Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs Minister Yuli Edelstein wrote a letter to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg requesting the removal of the page, which Facebook refused, stating that its policy is not to remove content that speaks out against "countries, religions, political entities, or ideas." The company spokesperson did, however, state that individual comments or posts considered "problematic" would be removed, and the page would be monitored.

As news of Edelstein's letter emerged, the page's administrators claimed that their page was being singled out among thousands of pages containing similar content, and threatened a Muslim boycott of Facebook if the page was removed.

On March 28, 2011, accounts of videos and images posted to the page disappearing began to emerge. The next day, Facebook removed the page, stating that while the company does not typically take down content that "speaks against countries, religions, political entities, or ideas," it monitors reported pages and removes them when they "degrade to direct calls for violence or expression of hate—as occurred in this case."

At the time of its removal, the Facebook page had amassed nearly 350,000 fans. While a number of Palestinian and pro-Palestinian groups expressed outrage at Facebook's action, several Israeli and pro-Israeli groups, including, notably, the Anti-Defamation League, praised Facebook's decision.

Although the original page was not restored, dozens of copycats cropped up in its place, many remaining after more than a year. This phenomenon, which occurs when attempts to hide a piece of information have the unintended consequence of publicizing the information more widely, is known as the Streisand effect, after an incident in which actress Barbra Streisand attempted to suppress photographs of her residence, inadvertently generating more publicity.

Responsibilities of Service Providers

The case reignited discussion of the responsibilities of online service providers in hosting controversial speech. While in the United States, service providers are allowed to determine what speech they

find appropriate, some scholars, such as Rebecca MacKinnon, have argued that the responsibilities of social media platforms need to be rethought in light of the fact that they are the primary locations in which online speech is conducted.

Other prominent cases in which political speech has been removed have occurred in Egypt, where prominent blogger Wael Abbas found his content removed from YouTube because it contained violent images of police brutality; and in Morocco, where in 2010 a group promoting atheism was removed from Facebook. In 2011, shortly after the Egyptian uprising, photo-sharing site Flickr (owned by Yahoo!) was also the target of anger after its staff removed photos of police officers that were taken from Egypt's raided state security apparatus and posted to the site. Yahoo!'s Business and Human Rights program blogged about the incident.

In the aftermath of the takedown, calls for a boycott of Facebook continued, though there appeared to be no effect if one occurred. Additionally, an American lawyer, Larry Klayman, filed suit against Facebook in Washington, D.C., Superior Court for $1 billion, describing himself as an American citizen of Jewish origin active in "matters concerning the security of Israel and all people." The complaint called on the court to bar Facebook from allowing the page and similar pages that "advocate violence and death to Jews."

Facebook responded by saying that the case was without merit, and filed a motion to dismiss in late July 2011. In the motion to dismiss, Facebook called Klayman's monetary demand "outrageous," and cited the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (CDA), 47 U.S.C. § 230, which stipulates that an online service provider is not liable for most speech by third-party users. After Klayman failed to file an amended complaint, the lawsuit was dismissed without prejudice.

Jillian C. York
Independent Scholar

See Also: Arab Spring; Facebook; International Social Media and Politics; Middle East; Streisand Effect.

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38Degrees.org.uk

38 Degrees is an online, multi-issue campaigning organization, based in the United Kingdom (UK), which emerged in 2009 and currently has over 1 million members. The organization was inspired by MoveOn in the United States, GetUp! in Australia, and Avaaz globally, and is founded on the same campaign model, commonly described as "digital activism," meaning using the Internet to mobilize people through campaigning. Groups such as 38 Degrees represent a challenge to traditional forms of political participation in that they are not directly involved with the state, and they are often critical of the state and corporate interests. 38 Degrees takes its name from the critical angle at which the incidence of a human-triggered avalanche occurs, which is meant to symbolize the power invested in mass mobilization.

The question of whether 38 Degrees marks a succinct break from traditional modes of political participation, or whether there are continuities, is important for the study of political participation. In terms of its organizational structure, 38 Degrees has attempted to avoid the concentrations of power and hierarchy that characterize formal politics. It presents itself as a decentralized and nonhierarchical organization, with its primary focus

to campaign on issues selected by its membership. The organization describes itself as nonpartisan and issue orientated, with a commitment to a progressive agenda, which seeks to: "campaign for fairness, defend rights, promote peace, preserve the planet and deepen democracy in the UK." 38 Degrees has its physical headquarters in London, comprised of a small core team of paid and voluntary staff, headed by Executive Director David Babbs. It also has a board that advises on campaigning and financial matters. While originally dependent upon donor contributions, the organization is now largely funded through membership.

Under the motto "people. power. change." 38 Degrees argues that it "puts power into people's hands by giving members 'a new way to be involved in politics,' with the ultimate aim of strengthening democracy." Online technology is critically important to the new method developed by digital activists such as 38 Degrees. 38 Degrees uses the Internet and social media to mobilize, coordinate, communicate, and build community among its membership. Like GetUp! and MoveOn, 38 Degrees's core tactic for campaigning is mass e-mail, although social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs are also used to promote campaigns. Online tactics are supplemented by offline methods, such as telephoning or writing to a member of Parliament (MP), meeting with MPs, and organizing local meetings.

The 38 Degrees Web site has three main functions: offering members actions for mobilization, polling members about which campaigns 38 Degrees should champion next, and providing information about the progress of campaigns. Enabling members to vote for which campaigns to pursue ensures that campaigns are member-led, which is central to their campaign model. This aim is also achieved through the "Campaigns by You" section of the Web site, which allows members to initiate new campaigns and act as the contact and executor of the campaign.

Stand up for the NHS, Spotlight on Tax Dodging, and Save Our Forests are all examples of 38 Degrees campaigns. The success of campaigns is measured through achieving stated aims and raising awareness of issues. As an example, the Save Our Forests campaign was a response to the UK government's plans in 2010 to sell off publicly owned forest and woodland in England. In response, 38 Degrees coordinated a series of actions, beginning with an online vote on whether 38 Degrees should develop a campaign on the issue. Following a positive response to this question, key actions included: an online petition, members donating to fund a YouGov poll, e-mails and calls to MPs, and ads in national newspapers. Additionally, local groups around the country campaigned, and members shared the campaign on Facebook. As a result of its actions, 38 Degrees claims to have succeeded in persuading the UK government to drop plans to privatize England's forests.

Forms of Political Participation

The emergence of 38 Degrees must be located within a broader context of debates on declining levels of political participation in the UK and beyond. In Britain, voter turnout at general elections has steadily declined, and this pattern is broadly replicated across the world in countries where voting is not compulsory. In a similar vein, all three main UK political parties have experienced a dramatic decline in membership levels since the 1960s. These concerns have led authors such as Robert Putnam to argue that political apathy is increasing, and that democracy is at risk. An alternative interpretation is that the decline in traditional forms of participation must be situated within a broader understanding of the rise of alternative forms. Accordingly, people are not apathetic and disillusioned with politics in general, but with formal politics, and seek new modes of expression. The group 38 Degrees offers one such avenue.

The popularity of 38 Degrees as an online platform for political mobilization is evidence that there has been a change in the types of political actions in which individuals are engaging, a point made by Pippa Norris. Drawing on extensive analysis of social movements, Norris argues that political participation has diversified in terms of changes in the agencies (the collective organizations through which people mobilize), the repertoires (the ways in which they choose to express themselves), and the targets (the actors toward whom participants are attempting to direct their action) of political participation. 38 Degrees is an important new agency using new repertoires, but its main focus is on influencing government.

With declining levels of formal political participation, it may be tempting to posit a radical

change in forms of mobilization. Stuart Shulman and Micah White, however, suggest caution in this view, and argue that clicktivism, or digital activism through mass e-mailing, requires minimal engagement effort and has negative long-term effects for citizen engagement because authorities learn to ignore such tactics and they crowd out more substantive participatory efforts.

In contrast, David Karpf suggests that online mobilization is, for many, a first step on a ladder of engagement. In addition, he argues that mass e-mail is often one strategy among many, and that digital activists also employ many offline strategies. This is true for 38 Degrees, and was also found to be the case by Ariadne Vromen and William Coleman in their research on GetUp! State and formal politics remain central to this model of political participation, which suggests that 38 Degrees' aim is not to reject formal politics, but to improve it through enabling greater participation and reconnecting people to government.

Sadiya Akram
University of Canberra

See Also: Activism and Activists; Avaaz; getup.org.au; MoveOn.org.

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Thune, John

When John Thune's name was raised as a possible Republican candidate for the presidency in the run-up to the 2012 election, few Americans had heard of him. But the South Dakota senator was well-known in political circles for his historic defeat of Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle in the 2004 election, in which he was one of the first successful candidates to lean heavily on social media in his campaign strategy.

John Randolph Thune was born on January 7, 1961, in Murdo, a small town in the most sparsely populated part of South Dakota, where his paternal grandfather, a Norwegian immigrant, owned the Thune Hardware Stores chain. An accomplished high school athlete, Thune played basketball at Biola University in California, from which he graduated in 1983 with a bachelor's degree in business. An M.B.A. followed a year later from the University of South Dakota. After college, he worked for Senator James Abdnor, a Republican who in 1981 had defeated Democrat George McGovern, then one of the pre-eminent liberal icons in American office.

Thune then worked for the South Dakota Republican Party, serving as its executive director from 1989 to 1991, and for the next few years had various jobs in politics and civil service. He first ran for office in 1996, at age 35, and was elected the congressman from South Dakota, arguably a significant role in a state with only one representative.

Thune was successfully re-elected twice by significant margins, and resisted suggestions to run for governor, instead unsuccessfully challenging Senator Tim Johnson in 2002. When Daschle, then the Senate Minority Leader, announced he would not run for president in 2004, Thune ran against him for his senate seat in 2004. The country was in the midst of the George W. Bush presidency, with many expecting that a Democrat would defeat Bush's re-election efforts. The PATRIOT Act and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were key areas of dispute, despite having received bipartisan congressional support in the heady months following 9/11. The race between Thune and Daschle became the most expensive in South Dakota history and the most expensive Senate race of the election cycle, with $30 million spent overall. Thune wound up winning with 51 percent of the vote. Daschle was the first senate leader in over 50 years to lose re-election. Thune subsequently won re-election in 2010, running unopposed.

Social media was key to Thune's campaign, and while at first glance this may seem unexpected for a rural senator, the rurality of Thune's constituency was exactly his reason for relying on social

media. Though South Dakota is the 17th-largest state, it is the fifth-most sparsely populated. South Dakotans are less likely to have access to face-to-face time with candidates than small states like New Hampshire or densely populated states like Maryland. Vigorous use of social media allowed Thune to communicate with South Dakotans, to convey his views, to respond in real time to issues brought up by the Daschle campaign or the media, and to monitor the issues South Dakotans were talking about online, in order to adjust his campaign and media strategy. He involved bloggers in his campaign efforts, interestingly doing so at a time when ultraconservative pundit Glenn Beck was especially critical of blogs as appealing only to fringe elements and anonymous attackers.

Jason Van Beek's South Dakota Politics blog (home to a "Kranz Watch" feature criticizing Sioux Falls Argus Leader political reporter David Kranz) became the center of the Dakota Blog Alliance that formed in the spring of 2004, and for which the Thune–Daschle race provided considerable material. The Daschle campaign was never quite able to figure out how to handle blogs; Thune, on the other hand, proved able to turn their antimass media sentiments to his advantage, since the journalistic mainstream of South Dakota had a long history with Daschle. Two bloggers were hired by the Thune campaign, and paid a total of $35,000 to attack the election coverage of the Sioux Falls Argus Leader, which both influenced the Argus Leader's coverage and discredited much of its support of Daschle. Notably, Kranz had previously worked for Daschle, a connection the bloggers played up in their discrediting efforts.

As senator, Thune has been an active proponent of gun rights, wind energy, and ethanol subsidies, and as the Republican Conference Chairman, he is the third-highest ranked senator. Though he wound up not running for president in 2012, despite widespread speculation and the support of Republican leaders in the Senate, speculation continues to center around a 2016 presidential race. He continues to use social media in his outreach to his constituency, and is personally involved in running his social media accounts.

Bill Kte'pi
Independent Scholar

See Also: Blogstorm; Blogs, Role in Politics; Candidate Image; Candidates, Political Branding of; Campaigns, Congressional (2002); Campaigns, Congressional (2004); Political Parties.

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Topology of Social Networks

Social networks can be defined as the systems of grids, lattices, and ties that create, shape, and maintain the relations between individuals. There are different ways of classifying social networks, taking various factors into account. One of the ways is to classify social networks according to their cohesion and complexity. In this case, the classification of social networks into loose networks and dense networks is applicable.

Another factor that can be used in typologies is propinquity. Networks discussed by taking the notion of nearness into account can be categorized by geographical or mental closeness. The next notion is homophily. Homophilous networks encompass users who are similar in terms of origin, gender, education, interests, and knowledge. The common feature was the deciding factor in their selection of networks. Thus, homophilous networks are popular when people want to

exchange knowledge with people in possession of similar skills or profession. The mentioned similarity is treated as the factor guaranteeing the level of discussion and credibility of information sources.

The next type of networks are heterophilous networks that attract individuals who do not possess exactly the same skills or expertise, and may vary as far as such features as education, gender, or social status is concerned. The aims of these networks are as follows. First of all, such networks allow for knowledge exchange between people of different backgrounds and skills. In this case such networks stimulate information flow between people having different expertise on the discussion topic and different attitudes to the discussed issues. Additionally, such networks as linguistic homophilous and linguistic heterophilous networks can be observed. Homophilous linguistic networks rely on common code, and a convergent communication style is adopted to foster information flow.

On the other hand, heterophilous linguistic networks aim at showing independence, uniqueness, and so on. The aim of divergence is to differentiate oneself from the group. Another issue in social networks is mutuality, which stresses the notion of reciprocal relations and little power or asymmetry. This approach allows one to divide organizational networks into employee networks and employee–employer networks, as well as classify family networks. Moreover, social networks can be divided into ego-centric, sociocentric, and open-system networks. Ego-centric networks are the ones connected with a single node, sociocentric networks reflect the connections in a closed system, and open-system networks encompass relations in networks of unfixed boundaries.

Organization

Social networks can also be divided according to how they are run. Thus, self-organizing networks do not require steering, whereas directed networks are controlled. Social networks are also divided according to the age of their members such as children's, teen, and senior networks. Apart from age, social networks are related to some stages of life (e.g., student networks, expatriate networks, pregnancy networks, or parent networks). What is crucial in such networks is the temporality of engaging in such networks. For example, most pregnant women do not continue discussion in such networks after they become mothers. Networks may also transform from a temporary to a more fixed network, such as from expatriate networks and migrant workers networks. Gender or sexual preferences can also determine social network formation. Social networks can be investigated by examining the purpose of their creation and development. The following networks can be observed: relation networks, knowledge networks, innovation networks.

Purpose

Another important factor to take into account is the reason for a social network's creation. For example, social networks are created to keep people of similar origin in contact when the primary reason for their staying together does not apply any longer, such as with alumni networks. Social networks can also be classified by taking into account the sphere of life they are related to. For example, health networks (such as cancer or diet networks) are created for information and support. Social networks can also be classified by stating the entry conditions. Networks are classified by privacy and entry conditions are concerned. Thus, some social networks are free, whereas others are closed, being directed exclusively at a certain group of people. Taking into account the last factor, general networks and elite networks can be examined. Moreover, the law can also determine network formation, by dividing networks into legal and illegal networks. Networks can be also viewed from the legal perspective where the division of legislative or policy networks applies.

Other Characteristics

As far as geographical differences are concerned, urban and rural networks can be observed. Networks can be divided by taking into account family relations and kinship networks. Apart from family, there are also hobby networks that gather individuals interested in specific leisure activities. Network types are also related to the vocational sphere of life, with professional networks, such as scholar networks and teacher networks.

Another characteristic to consider is scope. Thus, at the microlevel, individual networks are investigated. Other levels are constituted by organizational and government networks. Then there are regional, international, or global networks. Networks can also be classified by taking their duration into account. For example, project networks are temporarily formed for task completion. Moreover, social networks can be classified according to the relation between entities. Vertical networks encompass diversified stakeholders, whereas horizontal networks involve people or entities at the same organizational level, that is, having the same position in a company, or offering similar merchandise.

Networks can be of internal and external character, being within or outside the organization (inner organizational networks and outer organizational networks). For example, interdepartmental networks are an example of inner networks. Networks can be also classified by taking the material focus into account: for-profit and nonprofit networks.

Social networks can be divided by taking into account different perspectives, such as customer or user perspectives. In the case of organizations, consumer, patient, and student networks can be observed. Networks are also determined by the national culture of their users. Thus, in some countries more collaborative networks or more transactional networks can be observed. Taking the level of formality into account, social networks can be divided into formal and informal networks. Moreover, social networks and their types can mirror political and historical circumstances. Thus, one may deal with opposition networks, antiwar networks, repatriate networks, or human rights networks.

Politics

Online social networks take advantage of the speed, reach, interactivity, and low cost of social media. These features determine both upward and downward communication in politics. Thus, politicians can quickly reach many potential voters, supporters, or opponents. At the same time, social media give an audience the opportunity to take part in political discussions, exchange opinions, offer support, or express dissatisfaction. Social media centered around politics do not exist in a vacuum, but instead constitute a part of the broader system of social networks.

Social networks in social media can also be characterized by taking into account their durability. Thus, fixed online networks and temporary online networks could be investigated. Temporary networks are often created in the advent of sudden and unexpected need, such as risk or crisis situations. They are used by politicians to respond to unexpected situations. As far as online social networks and participation forms are concerned, asynchronous and synchronous networks can be examined. In asynchronous online networks, people are given time to become acquainted with posted information, whereas synchronous online networks require immediate response.

Magdalena Bielenia-Grajewska
University of Gdansk

See Also: Networks, Political; Social Network Analysis; Social Networking Web Sites; Social Worlds; Strong-Tie Social Connections Versus Weak-Tie Social Connections.

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Tor

Tor, originally an acronym for "the onion router," is open source software that facilitates anonymous

use of the Internet. Onion routing is an encryption service based on David Chaum's mixed-network technique that sends data through a series of proxy servers. These proxies function as intermediary nodes, or onion routers, where data is encrypted. Data is re-encrypted at each successive node, resulting in multiple layers of encryption. This technique makes it difficult for those conducting surveillance or traffic analysis to determine the source, destination, or contents of a message. The Tor Project is a nonprofit organization that has been responsible for onion routing software development and education.

Tor has become a subject of popular notoriety since Bradley Manning (now Chelsea Manning) was discovered to have used the software in acquiring and leaking classified materials to WikiLeaks, including the Afghan War Logs and the *Collateral Murder* video. Dissidents across northern Africa and the Middle East began using Tor to anonymously organize mass protests and political action in the Arab Spring. Detractors of Tor describe it as a tool that enables illegal activity to more easily thrive online. Whether one supports it as increasing user agency, or decries it as a criminal weapon, Tor is a site at which debates concerning surveillance, control, and anonymity play out in a tangible way.

Like Internet working technology, Tor originated as an intelligence tool of the U.S. military. The U.S. Naval Research Laboratory (NRL), with the support of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), charged Paul Syverson with leading a team to develop onion routing software. Syverson successfully recruited Roger Dingledine and Nick Mathewson, recent graduates of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), who had been involved in developing an anonymous data storage system called Free Haven. Because the Free Haven system functioned through a distributed, anonymous, decentralized peer-to-peer network structure, Syverson saw Dingledine and Mathewson as good candidates for the job. While the team had established a functional onion routing network by 2002, it was not until 2004 that they announced the availability of Tor as second-generation onion routing software. Diverse groups began accessing the Internet through Tor all over the world, including militaries, law enforcement agencies, businesses and corporations, leakers, whistleblowers, activists, citizens living under repressive regimes, and ordinary users concerned with maintaining privacy. This broad adoption of Tor is not at odds with its origin as an intelligence tool of the U.S. military. By virtue of its decentralized and distributed structure, Tor must be used by a diverse group of actors for anyone to maintain anonymity.

Support

In addition to DARPA and the NRL, the Tor Project has received financial support from a diverse group of organizations. From 2004 until 2005, the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) offered Tor additional support and publicity. The EFF, an international digital rights advocacy group, provided Tor with popular legitimacy among politically minded Internet users. Other organizations that have funded the Tor Project include the National Science Foundation, Human Rights Watch, Google, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). Perhaps the most surprising sponsor of Tor is the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), which has recently been the most generous donor. The BBG was formed in 1999 as an independent agency in charge of all nonmilitary international broadcasting sponsored by the U.S. government. The BBG is responsible for broadcasting services including Voice of America, the Office of Cuba Broadcasting, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Free Asia, and the Middle East Broadcasting Networks. A large portion of these broadcasting services' intended audience is subject to government censorship. The BBG sees Tor as a powerful tool through which Internet users can circumvent government censorship, increasing the audience of U.S. government broadcasting internationally.

The most visible spokesperson for Tor is Jacob Appelbaum, a core member of the project, who is also the only American member of the WikiLeaks team. Under the leadership of Julian Assange, WikiLeaks is widely believed to have siphoned over a million documents from the Tor network, including some stolen by Chinese hackers and spies, before the site was even launched. Following Bradley Manning's use of Tor to submit the Afghan War Logs to WikiLeaks, Assange, fearing arrest from the U.S. government, chose to cancel a trip to New York City where he was scheduled to give a talk at the 2010 Hackers on Planet

Earth conference. He asked Appelbaum to take the stage in his place, representing WikiLeaks and Tor in tandem. Since that time, Appelbaum has consistently travelled the world as an outspoken advocate of anonymity, regularly publicizing his subjection to what he claims is systematic harassment by the U.S. government.

Political and Illegal Usage

Egyptian dissidents used Tor to circumvent government surveillance during the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak's regime early in 2011. Social media, including Facebook and Twitter, allowed protesters, activists, and revolutionaries to organize and publicize political action on a global scale, spurring the popular media to refer to the Arab Spring as the "Twitter Revolution." The use of Tor was less widely reported. When the Mubarak regime began to block sites such as Facebook and Twitter, for example, Tor witnessed an exponential increase of downloads from the region as Egyptian citizens accessed the Tor network as a proxy for their Web browser. Tor allowed dissidents the continued use of the Internet as a tool of political action, even though popular social media sites were blocked.

Tor has been used to facilitate criminal activity. For example, the onion network has become a preferred method for distributing and acquiring child pornography. In 2010, hacktivists working under the banner of Anonymous carried out Operation Darknet, conducting distributed denial-of-service attacks on a child porn site called Lolita City. This operation brought to light the dark underbelly of the Tor network. The network is also home to an anonymous marketplace called the Silk Road, where illegal drugs are exchanged via Bitcoins, a digital currency that is encrypted and provides strong anonymity. The popularity of Tor points to sociopolitical anxieties concerning surveillance, privacy, and control. The software, used for good or bad, facilitates the strategic deployment of anonymity, which has become a primary means to increase agency while online. Tor does not only facilitate anonymity; the software has also become a site of contestation, where competing discourses over the political role of the Internet and social media clash.

Steven Malcic
University of California, Santa Barbara

See Also: Anonymous; Arab Spring; Egypt; Electronic Fronteir Foundation; Peer to Peer; Pretty Good Privacy; Privacy; WikiLeaks.

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Townhall.com

Launched in 1995, Townhall.com is a conservative online publication providing commentary and analysis; U.S. and world headlines; entertainment, health, financial, science and technology, religious, and political news, and conservative opinions from more than 250 columnists. The site's columnists have included Neal Boortz, Ann Coulter, Dinesh D'Souza, Larry Elder, David Limbaugh, Michelle Malkin, Michael Barone, Star Parker, Dennis Prager, John Stossel, and Thomas Sowe. Opinion leaders and researchers from many conservative partner organizations contribute to the site as well. According to its Web site, Townhall.com is designed to "amplify those conservative voices" in political debates.

Townhall.com also acts as a media center for conservatives to engage in politics through other forms of media, such as talk radio and magazines. Townhall talk radio offers daily commentary, a weekend journal, news via podcasts, and online streaming through affiliated radio stations owned by Salem Radio Network. *Townhall Magazine* is a monthly news and opinion journal featuring in-depth interviews, investigative journalism, and research analysis by right-wing reporters, opinion leaders, and political insiders.

In 2006, Salem Communications acquired Townhall.com, and in 2010, it also purchased Hot Air, which is a continually updated blog that features political and cultural analysis from the center

to right perspective. Commentators for Hot Air include well-known conservatives such as Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, and Laura Ingraham.

Traditional forms of media have seemed to be separated from society and culture, reporting on news from a nonpartisan position. As scholar Jason Wilson has written, a minority of citizens are attracted to and emotionally involved in the spectacle of mediated politics. Unlike traditional forms of media, new forms of social media encourage commentary from laypersons and experts alike. These media tools are relatively unrestricted compared to traditional mass media outlets. Therefore, participants can immediately shift the conversation and influence the political platform in a manner that traditional media outlets cannot. Townhall.com is a media hub where conservative voices can engage in dialogue, making it an influential political tool. According to experts on social media and politics, the use of social media tools allows "political fans" to participate in platforms and practices, contributing to live commentary on political broadcasting.

Through the implementation of new forms of social media, Townhall.com is contributing to the phenomenon labeled political mediatization. Mediatization is a theory used to describe the influence that the media has on society and culture, acting as agents of change. Mediatization describes the impact of the media on various institutions; however, it is not a universal process—only Western societies are affected by it. According to this theory, mediation occurs in four phases. The initial phase of mediatization is the degree to which the media constitutes the dominant news source. The degree to which the media is independent from the governance of political institutions is the second phase. The third and fourth phases consist of the degree to which media is governed by political or media logic, and the degree to which political actors are governed by political or media logic.

At the time of Townhall.com's launch, there were only a handful of political Web sites in existence. For the past 15 years, Townhall.com has been providing conservatives with the opportunity to engage in the political process with "unprecedented ease," and has become an important part of the nationwide political discussion.

Jennifer Summary
Southeast Missouri State University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; ContractFromAmerica.org; News Media; *Politico*; Ryan, Paul; Tea Party Movement.

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Traffic Analysis

Because the Internet has become a key factor in the information and communication society, the analysis of traffic generated through this medium is particularly important for different uses. Traffic analysis is a concept with multiple definitions in the field of computer networks, from military and security applications designed to avoid national communication system attacks, to commercial applications with the main goal to measure the number of users who visit a Web site for advertising and commercial reasons. It is of great importance to those who seek to not just understand, but also affect political issues and election outcomes, with success predicated on an accurate reading of the appropriate pulse in any number of body politics. One of the concerns of computer security is traffic analysis in the context of military intelligence or counterintelligence. Thus, there is a special technique of attack that involves interference patterns of communication between the different entities of a system.

Traffic analysis is a process of intercepting and examining messages through communication patterns, from which one can deduce the information they contain. This technique can be applied even though messages can be encrypted and decrypted. The traffic deduction will be easier the higher the number of messages observed, intercepted, and stored. In fact, it will allow knowledge of who the subjects of communication are, when it occurred, and for how long. Other information that may be useful in this attack technique is the size of the packets exchanged between two communicating hosts, even without access to the content of it, either because it is encrypted or not available. Thus, one can deduce that there is an interactive session between two hosts from a short burst packet payload byte (each packet indicates a single key), with subsequent pauses between each packet. By contrast, large packets sustained over time can indicate the transfer of files between computers, further indicating which host is sending, and which host is receiving the file.

This information does not have to perform terribly harmful activity to the security of the network, but creative attackers will be able to combine this information with other information to elude the safety mechanisms. At the same time, it is necessary to highlight that traffic analysis can also be used as a defensive technology by identifying anomalies in traffic patterns. Administrators can use traffic analysis to baseline the traffic to and from hosts on the network for a period of time and display the information in a graphical format (e.g., line charts or other graphics). As a daily routine, the administrator can review this information and compare the patterns of network activity to and from hosts and networks, including the number of packets, packet sizes, use of bandwidth, and connections per hour.

Traffic Analysis and Commercial Uses

Another definition of the concept is used to measure the amount of data sent and received by the users of a Web page. The traffic of a Web site is determined by the number of users who visit a page, and the type of content they visit. Traffic analyzes pages for their popularity. The most visited sites become a major attraction for advertisers, which are the basis of the business model of most Web pages. Web traffic can be analyzed through the data that is stored on a server that is hosted on the page, which automatically generates a listing of the spaces that have accessed the Internet, the content downloaded, and the time visitors have spent. When a user requests a Web page from the server, it generates a hit. That is an "impact," or a visit to the Web site. The server performs a hit for each time a visitor views text and graphics on the site. A page with five images will make a hit with the text of the Web site, and another five for each graph. So, the total number of hits of the Web site is six (raw access), although advertising only takes into account one (net access). The visitor will always generate at least one pageview (front), but can generate many more. There are also external applications that make Web sites record data by inserting a metatag (small HTML code) on every page of the site. Web traffic is also sometimes measured by packet sniffing, and also delivers random traffic samples and external information, particularly on the use that the Web page has on the Internet.

The main parameters measured to analyze the traffic of a Web site are number of visitors, average page views per user, average time of a user on the site, average page duration; dominant classes (levels of IP addresses required to open Web pages and content), the prime time, most requested sites, and covers most requested (the first page of the site, which attracts more visitors). The amount of traffic on a Web site is a measure of its popularity. Analyzing visitor statistics is useful in order to know what is working and what should be improved on a Web site. Traffic data can also help to increase (or in some cases decrease) the popularity of the site and the number of people who visit.

There are numerous free tools to measure the traffic on Web sites. Alexa is one of the most popular services. It generates Internet traffic statistics and Web site rankings based on people who access Web pages using the Alexa toolbar. It also provides data on percentage of users by country, keywords that are well positioned in search engines, and sociodemographic data. URL Trends offers the user the possibility of checking statistics. BizInformation is another provider of traffic statistics. In addition to providing data such as social bookmarking, Web recognition, and social metrics, BizInformation allows one to know the value of a Web site in economic terms. Google

Analytics is one of the most popular services. It is part of the free tools provided by Google. It is a traffic analysis service that allows monitoring of the Web both qualitatively and quantitatively, during a period of time, from different sources, including search engines, third-party Web sites, direct traffic, and traffic that comes from a campaign such as AdWords (sponsored keywords from a marketing campaign in the pages of the Google search results).

Political Uses of Traffic Analysis

Traffic analysis is also used for political and electoral purposes. Many countries, especially those with dictatorial governments, use monitoring tools on Internet data traffic to censor certain Web content and monitor communications of political opponents, activists, and journalists. The presence of this type of tool in countries where they violate human rights is disturbing because this kind of censorship isolates the population and contributes to maintain dictatorships because of the lack of external information. From the electoral point of view, analyzing and controlling Web traffic can help empower governments by spying on insider opponents. Although these traffic analysis uses violate fundamental rights, democratic governments normally use these tools for filtering viruses and prosecution of crimes such as child pornography distribution.

Raquel Vinader Segura
Natalia Abuín Vences
Complutense University of Madrid

See Also: Data Mining; Google+; Keystroke Logging.

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Transparency

The concept of transparency refers to an open administration of the *res publica* (literally, "the public thing," that which concerns everybody and which belongs to the public). Transparency guarantees citizens the ability to control both state institutions and elected representatives through enhanced monitoring and whistleblowing structures, providing space for the punishment of attitudes that harm the public interest.

Nadia Urbinati argues that visibility (which leads to more transparency) is fundamental to democracy because it provides citizens with a powerful weapon that goes beyond the ability to express opinions freely, or even the chance to vote in clean and fair elections. Therefore, being clear about what is happening inside the structures responsible for the decision-making process makes it possible to establish a unique type of control over public affairs.

On one hand, it is known that many contemporary transparency initiatives necessarily use mass media resources. Due to factors such as geographical distance, there is no way to directly monitor the activities of political representatives. Moreover, it has become impossible for citizens to access, filter, and interpret the vast amount of data concerning the administration of public affairs.

On the other hand, the diagnosis carried out by a number of researchers indicates that one of the reasons for citizens' alleged distrust of politics has grounds in the inefficient communications strategy maintained by state institutions. Accordingly, an essential step in order to increase transparency would be to ensure that information flows through various channels with good quality and depth.

Digital Media

It is precisely at this point that expectations arise about the contribution that digital communication could offer for improving transparency mechanisms. According to Herwig Ostermann and Roland Staudinger, as well as John Carlo Bertot, Paul Jaeger, and Justin Grimes, the repositories of information offered by digital media reduce the costs of collection, storage, distribution, access, and filtering of government information.

Among the various digital communication media, social media have gained attention in

recent years. Interaction is key to such platforms, since they are based on the concept of Web 2.0. Indeed, for many scholars, the use of social media presupposes the opportunity for users to contribute to the production, dissemination and, naturally, consumption of information.

A significant part of research into the Internet and democracy finds that social media offer a distinct advantage for improving transparency mechanisms. For John Carlo Bertot, Paul Jaeger, and Justin Grimes, such an argument is based on valuing four points: collaboration, participation, empowerment, and time.

Three kinds of resources can be perceived as the main social media used to foster transparency:

- *Blogs*: Government agencies worldwide have used blogs in various ways. However, in certain cases, depending on the openness of each institution, blogs provide only unidirectional information, without opening up space for interaction with users. Sometimes, citizens create "mirrors" of official blogs (keeping the content the same), with the differential of providing space for comments, which indicates a singular appropriation of these initiatives originally created by governments.
- *Wikis*: By using wikis, users can, for example, collaboratively draft laws. After discussing the need to create a new law, an outline of the project is submitted to the public. Each citizen can propose new paragraphs, as well as rewriting or suggesting the elimination of parts of the project under discussion. The tracking of changes is an additional element to ensure internal transparency of the collaborative process. A separate page serves as a space for discussion of each item of the project, promoting what contemporary political theory literature has identified as "public deliberation."
- *Social network sites* (SNSs): These are platforms that connect users who share affinities. They allow a rapid exchange of information (usually messages without many words). SNSs indicate the possibility of establishing a more egalitarian relationship between users, since open profiles (e.g., on Twitter) can be freely mentioned and provoked into responding to demands addressed by unknown users. There is no guarantee, however, that all agents involved in the interaction are willing to exchange ideas or respond, once they are triggered.

Challenges

Despite the undeniable potential of social media, a number of the difficulties that characterized the performance of earlier digital communication platforms still persist. At first, one can identify problems related to the political and institutional context of every democracy. To Bertot, Jaeger, and Grimes, the factors that may hinder the adoption of social media in order to promote transparency range from citizens' traditional distrust of institutions (as John Gastil mentions) to the difficulty in making state agents accept changes in the political culture in which they operate because transparency demands bureaucratic organizations to take on new behavior.

Additionally, it is essential to adopt access to information laws, which, among other provisions, stipulate the response time to demands made by users and set the pace for updating data. A privacy policy intended to protect users each time they request information is also essential, as there is no clarity about the increasing amount of data that states hold on citizens.

Second, it is essential to consider factors specifically related to the use of digital communication technologies. The language employed in the experiments aimed at making the work of the state and its representatives more visible needs to be simple and straightforward. According to Dieter Zinnbauer, an essential step is to make tutorials available that are aimed at explaining to citizens how to find and acquire the data that they need. In addition, the importance of improving the navigability of Web sites and promoting alternative low-cost Internet connections should be considered. Another critical step, also suggested by Bertot, Jaeger, Sean Munson, and Tom Glaisyer, refers to the integration of the communication systems of government agencies, such as creating an apparatus for searching for and retrieving information in order to facilitate monitoring of public spending, for example.

Even while praising the need for transparency, Nadia Urbinati warns that visibility does not necessarily guarantee that citizens will see what really matters. That is, the mere provision of more data on the state's performance can represent virtually zero gain if the information available is of little relevance. Besides, as Ed Felten points out, it cannot be forgotten that there is the possibility of governments using digital mechanisms only to promote their own public image and to create an aura of legitimacy, but without presenting relevant information.

Ultimately, Kevin Marsh's argument gains strength when he states that the mere provision of more services and information does not guarantee an automatic solution to the problems that affect democracies, such as corruption. Transparency is only one of the dimensions to be considered in order to improve democratic practices.

Francisco Paulo Jamil Almeida Marques
Federal University of Ceará, Brazil

See Also: Communication; Digital Government; E-Democracy; Web 2.0.

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Trending Topic

A trending topic is a general idea that gains popularity for a brief period on the microblogging Web site Twitter. Trending topics draw from frequently recurring words or phrases on the site. Some conversations get marked with a hashtag, or a # sign in front of a word or series of words without spaces. Users wishing to join a conversation, for example one about an Occupy protest, might include "#occupy" as part of a tweet. If enough users include the hashtag in their tweets, then it might become a trending topic. Also, users wishing to build interest in a topic might quote or retweet another tweet.

An Occupy Washington, D.C., protester advertises the "OCCUPY" Twitter hashtag during a street action on October 6, 2011. Trending topics on Twitter may quickly disappear, with 13 percent of the top 1,000 usually turning over every 24 hours.

Started in summer 2008, trending topics appear in a sidebar on the main Twitter site. Users without a geographical preference in their profiles will see the global trends, while users with settings limited to countries or cities will see the top trends in those areas. By clicking on a listed trend, users can read what other users are saying about it.

Content of trending topics widely varies. News events that receive global attention become trending topics. For example, when the earthquake and subsequent tsunami hit Japan in 2011, the topic "#PrayforJapan" quickly grew in popularity as people expressed their concern. Celebrity deaths (both real and fake) also become trends. The unexpected death of Michael Jackson became a trend in 2009, while several still-living celebrities experienced "hoax deaths," including Paul McCartney, Morgan Freeman, Jim Carrey, and Lindsay Lohan. Living celebrities become trends, particularly singer Justin Bieber.

Other trending topics become more like memes, which bring together people sharing viewpoints on particular cultural ideas. Tweeters will include the hashtag of the meme, and then add their ideas toward a site-wide conversation. Most memes center on personal opinions, such as "#ThatsSoAttractive" or "#iwish." Some memes receive strong backlash for their racist and/or sexist implications, such as "#hoodhoe" and "#whatmakesablackgirlmad."

Trending topics are intentionally used, however. Some trending topics are "promoted," in which a company pays to have its products or services featured at the top of a trending list. Pixar bought the first one in order to promote the release of *Toy Story 3* in 2010. These promoted topics appear on all pages. Other purposes start with raising awareness, such as the wearing of a black-hooded sweatshirt in memory of Trayvon Martin or the police and protester clashes during Occupy protests around the world.

Twitter uses an algorithm, or a mathematical computer formula, to identify topics that quickly gain popularity, with emphasis on the immediate over the long term. The topics churn, or change, very quickly. Topics that appeared as the top 10 list one hour might change within the next hour, with about 17 percent of the top 1,000 changing within that period. Across a 24-hour period, about 13 percent of the top 1,000 topics disappear. Search queries based on key events, however, cause spikes that supersede these data. Steve Jobs's death, for example, resulted in a 15 percent spike.

Aside from promoted trending topics, the primary influence on trending topics comes from mainstream media outlets, such as the *New York Times* or the *Huffington Post*. These outlets start 72 percent of trending topics, which reinforce mainstream agendas. Without the popular press backing, and even with Twitter users' backing, promoting alternative ideas and viewpoints into the trending topics proves challenging because retweets make up just less than one-third of all trending topics.

Twitter draws criticism for its supposed failing to recognize trends that users perceive as relevant. Some call this failure "censorship" conducted by the company itself. Two trends that drew attention to this issue include "#wikileaks" and "#occupywallstreet." Three reasons explain these exclusions. One, the algorithm focuses more on novelty than simple frequency. Two, users might misperceive the actual popularity and pace of a trend. Three, the trend might have previously appeared under different terms or locations. Still, the site ensures that no profanity, violence threats, and copyright violations appear within these trending topics, thus raising questions about the possibility of censorship.

Heather McIntosh
Boston College

See Also: Going Viral; Hashtag; Meme Mapping; 140ELECT.com; Twitter; Twitter Archiving Project, Viral Marketing.

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Trendrr

Founded in 2004, Trendrr.tv (formerly Trendrr .com) is a subscription-based analytics service specializing in graphical representations of social media traffic relating to television networks, programs, and advertisements, both historically and in real time. Trendrr combs social networking sites (primarily Twitter, Facebook, and the social TV viewing app GetGlue, and others) for mentions of programs, brands, and characters, and compiles data to gauge the social influence of each topic. The Trendrr dashboard, which graphically presents the "influence level" of a television phenomenon, is marketed to television networks, potential advertisers, cable television or multiple-system operators (MSOs), news agencies, and political organizations and candidates.

Many of these entities have found Trendrr useful for measuring online chatter about their programs and products, and note that these quantitative representations can supplement traditional television ratings data and result in actionable programming or advertising decisions. Further, Trendrr data are often cited in news reports by major print, television, and Web agencies. Trendrr has also supplanted more qualitative methods of following audience trends within social media, and is unique among its data-oriented trend spotting counterparts (like the Google-owned Trends and Insights) in that its data gathering is not limited to a single online platform.

Trendrr is owned and operated by digital marketing agency Wiredset, which was founded in 2004 by Mark Ghuneim and Tom Donohue, both former employees of Sony. Ghuneim and Donohue launched the first version of Trendrr in 2006 under the name Infofilter (the name was changed to Trendrr in 2007). In October 2012, after six years of review, Trendrr's proprietary "system and method for processing data" was awarded a U.S. patent. Though it launched as a free service, within nine months, owners moved Trendrr to a pay model in order to capitalize on increased interest in quantitative analytics within the media industries. According to business blog Fast Company, access to the Trendrr service costs a monthly rate of between $499 to over $2,499 for its "enterprise package."

For the monthly fee, subscribers gain access to "dashboards" that collect data for a given number of trends (the fee increases as more trends are monitored). A dashboard includes an aggregate number of daily or weekly mentions ("total volume") of a given program, network, or brand, along with charts of volume ranked by social network (with Twitter, Facebook, GetGlue, and Miso sourcing most of the data).

The dashboard also monitors historical trends from week to week, and breaks down daily social media mentions according to pre-air, during air, and postair time periods. Trendrr also offers dashboards that focus on data specific to Twitter, Facebook, and GetGlue, marking percentage changes from week to week, and representing mentions by time of day in a line graph. Additionally, clients can view a live timeline feed of all social media mentions as they happen, and can map trends for popularity of individual characters on a television program. The Trendrr interface uses natural language analysis to gauge positive, negative, and value-neutral mentions of products, programs, and characters.

News and Politics

While Trendrr has marketed itself heavily toward analysis of social media discussions of prime-time television programs (with ramifications for potential advertisers), the service produced some notable information in regard to the 2012 American presidential election. Trendrr aggregated social networking data relating to many of the year's major political events, including the Republican and Democratic conventions, the three presidential debates, and media coverage during Election Day. As picked up by several online and offline media organizations, Trendrr data suggested that CNN "won" the election cycle on social media, gaining more online mentions during the debates, conventions, and vote counting than its closest competitors FOX, NBC, MSNBC, and ABC. Trendrr also noted that during televised election-related events, men were more likely to be socially active online than women were (a reversal of the common trend during other kinds of prime-time programming), and that networks that used hashtags to promote their political content on social media tended to have greater social media performance than those that did not. Trendrr attests to its usefulness in news and politics by marketing itself as an accurate measurer of

popularity of news topics, news personalities, and political candidates.

Conclusion

Trendrr's founders have attempted to position the platform as a useful and necessary outgrowth of a broader trend of "social TV," wherein consumers of television increasingly use personal computers and mobile devices as additional methods of engagement with televised content, from news and political events to sports, entertainment awards shows, and daily viewing. As television content continues to outgrow the constraints of its original medium, quantitative trend aggregators like Trendrr may become more useful to networks, advertisers, political groups, and media owners.

Mark C. Lashley
Anandam Kavoori
University of Georgia

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Information Aggregation; Social Network Analysis.

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Truth Team

Early in President Barack Obama's 2012 reelection effort, his campaign announced the creation of the "Truth Team." The Truth Team was created to combat rumors, misinformation, and false or misleading claims about Obama and his campaign. In addition to defending the president and his record, the Truth Team highlighted what they believed to be inaccurate or misleading statements made by Mitt Romney's campaign. Using the slogan "Know the Facts. Get the Truth," the campaign encouraged voters to join the team to receive factual corrections to claims made about Obama, or more general misrepresentations made by the Romney campaign, although at least one mainstream media site, ABC News Online, suggested that the team sometimes confused "criticism" with "smears." The campaign's goal to correct inaccurate information was similar to Obama's 2008 "Fight the Smears" campaign. The Truth Team campaign addressed several prominent misperceptions, for example, claims that Obama was not born in the United States, that his administration purposely leaked national security information for political gain, and inaccurate beliefs about the Affordable Care Act. The Truth Team also highlighted misinformation regarding Obama and Romney's policy goals.

The Truth Team campaign heavily relied on social media platforms to provide people corrective information. Visitors to the Team's Web site were encouraged to follow the campaign on Facebook and Twitter, which provided updates directly to users' social media platforms. In addition, corrective articles on the site included tags that allowed visitors to instantly share the information on Facebook and Twitter, or e-mail it to other people.

The Truth Team Web site was divided into several distinct subsections. First, the "Attack Watch" segment highlighted misleading claims aimed at President Obama that surfaced in the news, online, or in political advertisements. The Web site provided evidence challenging inaccurate claims, and often directed visitors to external news sources or fact-checking Web sites such as Factcheck.org or Politifact. The second section, labeled "Romney's Distortions," reported on what the Truth Team felt were false claims made by the Romney campaign. Items in this section were often focused on differences between policy statements made by Romney, and his record as governor of Massachusetts. These items were sometimes accompanied by a "Romney versus Reality" tag. The third

Among the topics the Truth Team addresses are misconceptions about President Obama's Affordable Care Act. This Tea Party rally against health care reform gathered on March 13, 2010, in St. Paul, Minnesota, to hear Michele Bachmann speak.

section was titled "Obama's Promises Kept," and focused on Obama's political record during his first term in office, including his work with the American auto industry and the Affordable Care Act. This section also highlighted the president's policy stance on a variety of key campaign issues, Obama's plan to reduce the federal deficit, or to create jobs.

The Truth Team used multiple message formats in an attempt to reach voters. Many of the items produced by the campaign took the form of written rebuttals to inaccurate information. These items generally offered the misleading claim, followed by a series of facts or evidence intended to dispel them. In addition, the campaign used a series of videos and graphical information to persuade users of the site. The videos employed a variety of themes; some videos featured direct appeals from Obama or other prominent politicians like former President Bill Clinton. Other videos featured citizens discussing why they were supporting Obama, or included a series of clips from news organizations that attempted to rebut the false information. The infographics used by the Truth Team often featured simple graphs highlighting differences between the Obama and Romney campaigns on a variety of issues including the economy, job creation, and taxes.

The final section of the Truth Team Web site allowed citizens to report perceived falsehoods that they encountered during the campaign. This "Fight Back: Report an Attack" section asked citizens to contact the Truth Team with information about misleading claims, including when and where the claim was encountered.

Impact

Despite the efforts of the Obama Truth Team to correct false information, national surveys suggest that many Americans maintained misperceptions about the president. For example, according to a July 2012 survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, 17 percent of voters believed that Obama was Muslim, including 30 percent of Republicans. The extent to which these false beliefs impacted voting behavior is yet to be determined, especially given that President Obama's re-election campaign was successful. However, the percentage of voters who remained misinformed even with an aggressive truth campaign highlights the power of rumors and misperceptions and the difficulty that presidential campaigns face in overcoming them.

Brian E. Weeks
R. Lance Holbert
Ohio State University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; FightTheSmears.com; Online Smear Campaigns; PolitiFact.com; Rumors; Truthy Research Project; Twitter.

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Truthout

Truthout is a 501(c)3 nonprofit "online-only" news organization that publishes investigative reporting, critical analysis, and op-ed commentary. Since its founding in 2001, the site has established itself as an influential and sometimes controversial source in progressive independent media by publishing featured content from well-known journalists and opinion writers and extensive coverage of political, economic, and social issues. Truthout's strategic use of a variety of social media platforms has also been an important factor in its visibility, fundraising, and in the maintenance and growth of its audiences. The site currently serves over a million unique visitors per month through its network of Web sites and its daily newsletter.

While the domain truthout.org was officially registered in 2001, several sources point to the aftermath of the 2000 presidential election as the context of the site's beginnings. Photographer Marc Ash and other media activists were inspired to start the site in response to what they felt was an insufficient mainstream media response to the U.S. Supreme Court appointment of 43rd U.S. President George W. Bush after the contested election. Truthout was founded as an alternative to existing media outlets, including trusted sources such as the *New York Times* and NPR.

Truthout commissions articles from in-house and outside journalists and secures permission to reprint select articles. Their reporting includes coverage on a wide range of domestic and global political issues including election politics, the Iraq War, interrogation techniques, health care, the economy and wealth inequality, veterans' health issues, the labor movement, environmental issues, prison reform, and the FBI's monitoring of Occupy Wall Street protests. In many cases, original Truthout content has been picked up by mainstream media sources and cited in legal proceedings related to these events. The organization holds a contract with the nationwide Newspaper Guild/CWA, and claims to be the first online-only news site to successfully unionize. They facilitated that process online through virtual meetings and member authorization.

Social Media Reach and Collaborations

Truthout's primary social media platforms are Facebook and Twitter, with Facebook the largest single source for referrals. In fiscal year 2011, Facebook traffic accounted for 38 percent of readers who visited truthout.org via another site (including cellphone and mobile device users). As of December 7, 2012, Truthout's Facebook page showed 171,480 "likes" and their Twitter account had 56,195 followers. Buzzflash, Truthout's closely affiliated sister site, had 4,139 "likes" on its Facebook page, and 29,419 Twitter followers. Truthout also has a presence on sites such as Reddit and Google+. The site has a YouTube channel, and has experimented with Pinterest and Tumblr, but these are less of a focus of its social media strategy. Truthout also targets and shares its audiences by linking to coproduced and/or licensed radio and video content with partners such as Bill Moyers, Thom Hartmann, Richard Wolff, the ACLU, and various independent media outlets.

Coverage and Controversies

Truthout has produced significant coverage of U.S. torture policy in the War on Terror. A 2009 report on the Bush administration's authorization of controversial interrogation techniques was cited by MSNBC's *Countdown with Keith Olberman*, and eventually by Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin. Truthout's Jason Leopold wrote the initial piece discussing the Department of Justice's retraction of its earlier claims that waterboarded detainee Abu Zubaydah was the third-most powerful official in the Al Qaeda organization, and that he helped to plan the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Truthout's highest-profile controversy occurred when reporter Jason Leopold wrote that U.S.

Attorney Patrick J. Fitzgerald had handed an indictment to Karl Rove for his role in the leak that disclosed the identity of C.I.A. agent Valerie Plame. Rove and his attorney flatly denied this claim, which prompted widespread speculation and commentary in both traditional and alternative news media about Truthout's journalistic standards. However, both Leopold and Truthout Director Marc Ash stood by Leopold's source until Fitzgerald's June 13, 2006, announcement that he would not indict Rove. Truthout then offered an official apology to its readers saying that on this matter, it deferred to the nation's leading publications.

Truthout published coverage of safety issues at various British Petroleum (BP) operations following the April 2010 explosion at the Deepwater Horizon oil drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico. These reports, which included first-hand testimony and other evidence of future oil spill risks, were cited by several mainstream media outlets, including *60 Minutes*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and CNN. They were also cited by the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure during a hearing on the safety of hazardous liquid pipelines.

Truthout claims to be the first news organization to ever file a Freedom of Information Act request with the Department of Homeland Security. This request was filed in connection to Truthout's investigation of the agency's extensive monitoring and shutdown of various Occupy Wall Street protests.

Chenjerai Kumanyika
Pennsylvania State University

See Also: Blogs; News Media; Social Media, Alternatives to Commercial.

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Truthy Research Project

Truthy is a research project intended to analyze Twitter in order to separate the true from the merely "truthy," or seemingly true but actually false, in tweets on political topics. The word *truthy* was coined by comedian Stephen Colbert, and means misinformation masquerading as fact. The project analyzes patterns that online political discussions create, and makes all of its findings publicly available, with the ultimate goal of making everyday users more aware of the manipulation of data.

According to its lead researcher in 2010, Filippo Menczer, the ultimate research question asked by Truthy is "Can we put together our understanding of complex social networks and crowdsourcing to automatically detect the spread of misinformation?" The goal of Truthy is comprehension of the ways that information is created and recreated via complicated informational relationships, which are social and technical. The hope is that utilizing tweets as sociocultural and "behavioral trace data" researchers will be able to understand and predict the way that information spreads at a unique level of fine detail.

Truthy researchers are attempting to study the ways that information profligates via social media networks and other online relationships. Truthy uses the Twitter database of memes and usernames in order to assess the frequency at which a meme is mentioned. It gathers samples of tweets from Twitter using the Web site's "Streaming API." This designated sample is alleged by Twitter to be random and representative. This sample only

covers three months back, but because Truthy began gathering the data in September 2010, it has a broader sample.

The system also performs basic sentiment analysis by comparing Twitter memes and tweets against psychologically designed databases of words. In this way, it discerns a meme or tweet's mood or emotion; it will see that someone has mentioned #Truthy, and then assess based on the words and word patterns around the meme how the user feels about it.

Researchers ask that visitors to Truthy flag memes that appear to be manipulated as "truthy." This crowdsourcing aspect of the project is hoped to be a large part of revealing the patterns of misinformation and ultimately aid researchers in covering more ground faster vis-à-vis development of algorithms for automatic identification of Twitter abuse. Researchers are aware that crowdsourcing may or may not be reliable; this is part of the long-term research plan.

The Truthy Project created a unique way to graphically image memes as they evolve. These meme maps depict the ways that users interact with color coding; they trace tweets, retweets, and @replies. As each new topic develops, the cluster of user interactions about that topic visually grows. In the case of political topics, the meme map tends to show two distinct clusters around a general topic. For example, if the topic were #BarackObama, there would likely be two clusters, one conservative and one liberal. Members in each group tend to talk to and about each other using like phrases and echoing each other. All of these trends create distinctive looking meme maps.

The Truthy Project was inspired by a study from early 2010 by a professor of computer science at Wellesley, Pagiotis Takis Metaxas. Metaxas studied Twitter "bombs" used by a conservative political group on an election day. The bombs were cascades of messages intended to manipulate trending on Twitter and, ultimately, Google results as they reported results in real time.

Truthy uses as its basis a sentiment analysis system designed to predict market trends and instead adapts it to assess political sentiment. Truthy researchers have begun this process by generating analyses of political affiliations, partisan speech in online political participation, and communication within and across various ideologies.

By 2012 Truthy researchers were working to expand the Truthy platform and make its data more accessible to professional, technical, and lay-public users. They were studying how and why certain memes go viral and the ways that sentiment plays into the spread of information, such as what factors influence popularity in the political setting. Researchers were also working toward automation of the Truthy process. Finally, the ultimate goal in 2012 was to detect astroturfing, political smear campaigns, and other social manipulation.

In March 2012, Harvard University and MIT jointly sponsored a Truthiness in Digital Media symposium that "[sought] to understand and address propaganda and misinformation in the new media ecosystem." The symposium featured data, presenters and papers from the Truthy Project.

In 2012, the principal investigators behind Truthy were Fil Menczer, Alessandro Flammini, Johan Bollen, and Alessandro Vespignani. Other members of the research and Web development team included Michael Conover, Karissa McKelvey, Clayton Davis, Alex Rudnick, Jacob Ratkiewicz, Bruno Gonçalves, Mark Meiss, Snehal Patil, Luca Aiello, and Przemyslaw Grabowicz.

Karla Lant
Northern Arizona University

See Also: Astroturfing; *Colbert Report, The*; FightTheSmears.com; Meme Mapping; Rumors; Truth Team; Twitter.

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Tumblr

Tumblr draws upon a history of other blogging sites such as LiveJournal, Wordpress, and Blogger, but what sets it apart is its alignment with the trend of microblogging sites such as Twitter. Tumblr makes it easy to post content because it provides single-click options for the posting of a picture, video, audio, Web link, or text. Just as political bumper stickers were once a clear way of sharing opinions and making a message enter the public consciousness, Tumblr contributes to the sharing and replicating of images and memes to the point where they reach viral levels of transmission. By 2012, political campaigns, news media, and advocacy groups had all incorporated Tumblr into their social media and Web strategies.

Like other forms of social media, the ability to easily follow content feeds, discover new content through links, and search for new content via tags provides Tumblr users a convenient way to aggregate news stories from content sources. One of the key features is the ability to simply reblog another post. Like other blogging and social media platforms, users can import a social graph or easily add new Tumblr blogs to their feed by subscribing to a particular blog.

This feature works like following on Twitter, adding on Facebook, or adding an really simple syndication (RSS) feed to a reader/aggregator. One easy way that users do this is via hashtags such as #politics, #Iran, or #TeaParty. Users can post content and have it align with a particular hashtag to make it more easily searchable to others, and vice-versa, users can search hashtags to find all content relating to a particular topic.

A common use of Tumblr is for creating a simple "single-serving site," which generates a particular type of content such as a particular image with variations in the text. One of the most famous examples of this was the "Texts From Hillary Clinton" Tumblr, which used a photograph of Hillary Clinton (taken by Diana Walker for *Time* magazine) wearing sunglasses and texting on her phone.

The photo is often combined with another photo of someone ostensibly texting Hillary, with Hillary offering a flippant or pithy answer. This site became so popular that Hillary Clinton responded to the creators via text message, and President Barack Obama mentioned the phenomenon in his 2012 White House correspondents' dinner speech. Similarly, the "Hey Girl, It's Paul Ryan" Tumblr riffs on the famous Ryan Gosling meme of a similar name, and produces pictures that highlight Paul Ryan's attractive looks with text overlay that focuses on matters of public policy.

Of course, for politicians, the use of Tumblr allows their campaigns to tap into existing user communities and provide those communities with very easy ways of duplicating and disseminating messages, images, and video provided by the campaign's official Tumblr blog. In the 2012 presidential election, Mitt Romney and Barack Obama's campaigns were highly active on Tumblr just as they were on Facebook or Twitter. Importantly, the content distributed via these networks was not always duplicated because each site provides a different way to engage with the voting public.

Like many other blogging platforms and social networking sites, Tumblr has gained a sizeable user base, and has integrated itself into the everyday online practices of many people. While it is a platform for many different uses, its ability to simply create and share content with a wide audience has turned it into an important tool for politicians, activists, and individuals interested in gathering news and information.

Shayne Pepper
Northeastern Illinois University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Content Communities; Going Viral; Hashtag; Microblogging; Moblogging; RSS Feeds; Twitter; Web 2.0.

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TuniLeaks.org

TuniLeaks is a set of diplomatic cables made public by whistleblowing Web site WikiLeaks that illuminated neglect of human rights in Tunisia, freedom of expression restrictions, and widespread corruption of the former Tunisian ruling party. TuniLeaks is the name of the Web space provided by Nawaat.org, an independent collective blog on Tunisia that first published the documents several weeks before widespread citizen uprisings in December 2010 and January 2011, which resulted in President Zine el-Abedine Ben Ali and family fleeing the north African nation on January 14, 2011. Nawaat.org launched TuniLeaks on November 28, 2010, only one hour after WikiLeaks released the documents. The hashtag #tunileaks was created on Twitter so that people within and outside the nation could share various details revealed by the leaked documents. In addition, the Al-Jazeera network played a significant role in translating the cables into other dialects of Arabic and informing broader publics about the content of the leaked diplomatic documents.

The Tunisian government rapidly halted access to TuniLeaks by blocking http://tunileaks.appspot.com within Tunisia. On November 29, the government blocked Google App Engine's Internet protocol (IP) address so that TuniLeaks access under https would also be blocked. The government had previously blocked nearly all Web sites on domestic human rights and political opposition, and was in process of obtaining all Tunisian Facebook users' sites via a state-sponsored phishing attack. Access to other international media that reported on the leaked cables, such as Lebanese news organization Al Akhbar, was also blocked. Hacktivist collective Anonymous responded with a distributed denial of service (DDoS) attack to take down the Tunisian government's Web site in an effort known as #optunisia.

TuniLeaks solidified what Tunisian citizens had known for years, but were unable to publicly articulate. Tunileaks reported the following:

> The problem is clear: Tunisia has been ruled by the same president for 22 years. He has no successor. . . . His regime has lost touch with the Tunisian people. They tolerate no advice or criticism, whether domestic or international. Increasingly, they rely on the police for control and focus on preserving power. And, corruption in the inner circle is growing. Even average Tunisians are now keenly aware of it, and the chorus of complaints is rising. . . . Anger is growing at Tunisia's high unemployment and regional inequities. As a consequence, the risks to the regime's long-term stability are increasing.

While Tunisian citizens had a keen sense of the extensive extravagance and corruption of the Ben Ali regime, and in particular the Trebelsis, the extended family of First Lady Leila Ben Ali during his 23-year reign, the leaked documents added clarity and a corpus of specific detail, strengthening consciousness of the privilege of the power elite to which citizens had previously been unaware.

From large-scale power architecture, such as the need for certain connections to do anything from starting a small business to engaging in seizing of property, to insidious excessive luxuries such as a pet tiger that was fed four chickens each day (more than some Tunisian families might

A young woman in an Anonymous t-shirt looks out over a May 1, 2012, protest in Tunis, Tunisia. The Anonymous collective launched a distributed denial of service attack on the Tunisian government's Web site in response to Internet censorship in 2010.

consume in a week), Tunileaks solidified the deep sense of inequity experienced by Tunisian citizens. It underscored numerous struggles: a high unemployment rate (20 percent of the population who are of working age, or 750,000 people); the futility of professional development and meritocracy (25 percent of that population of unemployed are college graduates); and an unwieldy bureaucracy of rules, regulations, and laws to which the elite are immune.

For example, one document reported on a yacht, allegedly stolen from a French businessman by Ben Ali's nephews, Imed and Moaz Trabelsi. Tunileaks reported,

> The numerous stories of familial corruption are certainly galling to many Tunisians, but beyond the rumors of money-grabbing is a frustration that the well-connected can live outside the law. One Tunisian lamented that Tunisia was no longer a police state, it had become a state run by the mafia. "Even the police report to the Family!" he exclaimed.

Perhaps the elite's living "outside the law" was particularly galling to Tunisian citizens after they learned of the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi on December 17, 2010. Bouazizi, a fruit and vegetable vendor in the provincial town of Sidi Bouzid, had been repeatedly hassled by local police officers, who confiscated his scales and the produce he attempted to sell from his humble market cart because he lacked what they claimed was a necessary permit and funds to pay a recent city fine of 400 dinars ($280, equivalent to two months of his wages). Normally, a *bakshish* (bribe) would be enough to keep the officers at bay, but on this particular day, a local policewoman slapped Bouazizi's face and cursed his late father, an act of public humiliation and demoralization that led Bouazizi to douse himself with kerosene and light himself on fire in front of the municipal office that refused to hear his concerns.

Given the timing of the release of the documents, which gave evidence to the vast divide of the elite and the disempowered, TuniLeaks, Bouazizi's self-immolation, and the following protests in Sidi Bouzid fueled public protests elsewhere. These have since been named the Jasmine Revolution, and the first of numerous uprisings in Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen, and elsewhere in the Middle East and north Africa that are now known as the Arab Spring.

Lara Lengel
Bowling Green State University

See Also: Anonymous; Arab Spring; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Evolution of Social Media; Tunisia; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring.

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Tunisia

On December 17, 2010, a young fruit vendor named Mohamed Bouazizi self-immolated in the Tunisian city of Sidi Bouzid after experiencing harassment from police. Bouazizi's act sparked

protests in the city, which were captured on cellphone and other cameras and uploaded to social media sites, causing the demonstrations to grow and spread throughout Tunisia. With international media largely prevented from entering the country, journalists used social media to identify sources, locate images, and report on the growing unrest, while bloggers and activists produced images and videos that they shared with the world on sites such as Facebook. In response, the Tunisian government, which had for years conducted censorship and surveillance on online networks, responded with sophisticated cyberattacks. The protests, which lasted for nearly a month, eventually led to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fleeing with his family to Saudi Arabia, ushering in a new era of governance for Tunisia.

Official state media did not report on the protests initially, and with international media largely absent from the country, the growing unrest at first went unreported. By December 28, a select few international media outlets had begun to report on the demonstrations. Using images taken by Tunisian blogger and 2011 Nobel Peace Prize nominee Lina Ben Mhenni, Al Jazeera English became one of the first major English-language outlets to report on the demonstrations, calling them a "rare display" of popular anger. Another media outlet to report on the demonstrations early on was France24, which, using amateur footage sourced from social media, issued its first report on December 27. Some bloggers, including Mhenni, traveled from one city to another to capture such footage.

Spreading Information

Meanwhile, Tunisian blogs and independent news sites had been reporting on the unrest since it began. The award-winning Tunisian site Nawaat.org, which was founded by Tunisian exiles in 2004 and had risen to prominence for its various campaigns—such as one in which it mapped unofficial use of Ben Ali's presidential plane—began aggregating videos, images, and other updates from the ground on its site as early as December 17.

On Twitter, Tunisians used the hashtag #SidiBouzid to share information about the demonstrations, while existing networks on Facebook and other sites were used to aggregate information about upcoming protests, as well as videos and images of ongoing ones.

Videos proved to be particularly powerful, offering Tunisians in disparate locations a view into what was happening in other cities. From Kasserine, where the government's crackdown was particularly harsh, emerged videos showing that police officers were using live ammunition against protesters.

At times, social media also proved ripe for rumors: On January 12, a Tunisian Twitter user reported the possibility of a coup, which quickly spread across Twitter, and was eventually as reported on by technology site The Next Web.

Circumventing Censorship

Although Tunisia's Internet penetration was relatively high at an estimated 36 percent (thanks in part to government efforts to expand usage), its Internet was pervasively censored, causing the country to frequently be named one of the most censorious in the world by groups like Freedom House and Reporters Without Borders. Among the Web sites blocked were those critical of the country's human rights record (such as hrw.org and rsf.org); local opposition sites and blogs; anonymizer and proxy tools; and popular video-sharing sites such as YouTube, Vimeo, and DailyMotion.

Social media had nevertheless become popularized in the years prior, with some sources claiming that the number of Tunisian Facebook users exceeded 1 million in 2010, giving it one of the highest rates of Facebook use per capita in the world. Two factors contributed to the popularity of Facebook: In 2009, mobile phone operator Tunisiana introduced low rates that enabled Tunisians to access Facebook from their mobile phones, and the blocking of other popular platforms (particularly those that allowed video-sharing) led to Facebook emerging as a central, accessible platform for sharing photos, video, and written content.

Although most video-sharing sites were blocked, diaspora and solidarity networks outside the country posted videos to YouTube in an effort to gain more attention for the demonstrations. Nawaat.org maintained a dedicated YouTube channel for videos coming out of Tunisia throughout the period of unrest.

In addition to censoring the Internet, the Tunisian government had been monitoring online activity using sophisticated methods such as deep packet inspection (DPI), and had harassed and jailed bloggers starting as early as 2001. Tunisian Internet service providers (ISPs) were required to lease bandwidth from a central agency, the Agence Tunisienne d'Internet (ATI)—the governing body set up by the Ministry of Communication in 1996—giving that agency the capability to install filtering and surveillance software to monitor all of the country's networks. In addition to technical surveillance, the ATI held Internet café owners and state-controlled public Internet centers (or "publinets") responsible for their customers' activities, and required them to register the IDs of Internet users.

The extent of control exerted over the Internet by the ATI was widely known to activists, who had dubbed the censorship regime "Ammar404," a personification that played on the 404 error message served up by censors in an effort to disguise their censorship. Over the years, numerous campaigns, both serious and humorous, were leveled against Ammar404 online.

Aware of the utility of social media in fomenting further unrest, the government began to seek out new techniques for intimidating users. Without a system in place, authorities resorted to a piecemeal approach, which included conducting man-in-the-middle attacks that redirected Facebook users to a fake login page, resulting in Tunisians attempting to access Facebook accidentally handing their login information, including their password, to Tunisian who were authorities. Victims of these attacks would later log into Facebook and find that their accounts had been hijacked or deleted. Some Tunisian social media users complained of government infiltration of Facebook groups, a possible result of account hijackings.

The attacks were combined with an increase in online censorship, as well as the targeted arrests of bloggers, journalists, and online activists. Prominent blogger Slim Amamou was detained at the Ministry of the Interior, which he reported to his online friends and followers using Google Latitudes. Lina Ben Mhenni and another well-known blogger, Sofiane Chourabi, found their e-mail and Facebook accounts hacked.

In response to the attacks, sympathetic foreign groups such as the collective known as Anonymous defaced and attacked government Web sites under the banner of "TunisOps." The collective managed to successfully disable the Web site of the country's prime minister and the homepage of the Tunisian government. They also sought to provide information that would help Tunisian Internet users access online security, censorship circumvention, and anonymity tools.

In what would be Ben Ali's final speech addressing the Tunisian people, he promised an end to censorship in the country and an end to his rule by 2014. The speech was heavily tweeted by Tunisians, still using the #SidiBouzid hashtag. Three hours after Ben Ali's speech, Slim Amamou tweeted "Je suis libre" ("I am free"), signaling his release from the Ministry of Interior. The next day, Tunisians reported the Web site blocks to have been lifted, and media reports confirmed that Ben Ali had fled with his family to Saudi Arabia.

WikiLeaks

Whistleblowing organization WikiLeaks' release of diplomatic cables occurred just weeks before the first signs of protest. Nawaat.org, the popular Tunisian news site, had made a deal with Wiki Leaks that allowed them to translate and release a set of cables related to Tunisia simultaneously with the *New York Times* and other major media on November 28.

The site hosting the cables, tunileaks.appspot.com, was rapidly blocked by authorities, which—realizing that Tunisians were able to route around the censorship by going to the encrypted version of the site at https://tunileaks.appspot.com—blocked Google App Engine's IP address, resulting in a partial block of the Google product's site. Later, when Lebanese news site Al Akhbar republished some of the TuniLeaks cables, authorities, blocked that Web site also.

While some, including Amnesty International and WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, credited the 2010 cable release with prompting the uprising, others viewed the whistleblowing site as having a limited role. Sami Ben Gharbia, one of the cofounders of Nawaat.org, argued that because the cables were then available for Tunisians to read, they helped tip the balance by confirming

what many citizens already knew. Prominent award-winning Egyptian blogger Wael Abbas shared Gharbia's sentiment, comparing the role of WikiLeaks to that of the many videos he had posted of Egyptian police brutality.

Social Media

The international attention afforded Tunisia, and the resulting support of the people's demands by foreign governments, including the United States, may have in the end forced Ben Ali's hand. That international attention took weeks to attract, and was drawn by social media, indicates that the documentation and reportage of protests on social media by participants and amateur observers was significant. Once the world's attention was drawn to Tunisia, foreign media, particularly broadcast media, continued to rely on content gleaned from social media in its reporting. Al Jazeera called on individuals to submit their amateur footage to the station for rebroadcast, and continued to utilize citizen media throughout the Arab Spring. The station's viewership was far bigger than the number of citizens that Facebook could reach.

Whether social media played a role in the communications infrastructure of the protest movement remains a debated topic. Research from the Dubai School of Government shows that a majority of Tunisians (88.1 percent) report that the majority of news they accessed during the protest period came from Twitter and Facebook,

Protesters holding a sit-in in the Kasbah area of Tunis on January 28, 2011. Despite the country's extensive pattern of Internet censorship, Tunisians accessed Facebook and Twitter during the revolution, when as many as 88 percent of all Tunisians got most of their news from these sites. Some claim that there were more than 1 million Facebook users in the country in 2010, which, even before that number more than doubled after the revolution, would make it one of the highest rates of Facebook use per capita in the world.

indicating that the sites may have played a role in spreading the protests. Additionally, a sharp increase in the number of Facebook users between 2010 and 2011 (from an estimated 1.1 to 2.3 million) may indicate that Tunisians joining the site did so because of its utility in the Arab Spring protests.

The role of mobile networks, including the use of SMS as an organizing tool, is also important: In 2009, an estimated 95 percent of Tunisians had a mobile phone subscription, and many of those phones had cameras that were used to record images and video of protests. SMS was also reportedly an important tool for sharing location information of protests.

Tunisians and scholars have pointed out that online activist networks in the country had been building for at least a decade. Early blogs, such as TUNeZINE (whose founder, Zouhair Yahyaoui, was imprisoned for his blogging and later died, reportedly of injuries caused by torture during his imprisonment) broached political topics that were considered off-limits, contributing to the country's culture of political blogging. Nawaat.org's popular campaigns also contributed toward the politicization of young Tunisians.

In 2008, protests in the region of Gafsa prompted the ATI to ramp up its censorship, as activists were using Facebook to spread information about the events. The ban on Facebook sparked protests, leading the government to lift the ban after about two weeks. The ban, and the success of protests in overturning it, also emboldened free speech activists, many of whom would go on to play significant roles in the uprising.

The country's tight restrictions on media had allowed a blogging and citizen journalism community to flourish, and Tunisian digital activists had been operating innovative campaigns since the early 2000s. According to an interview with Nawaat.org's Gharbia, many Tunisian activists were integrated into networks that spanned the Arab region. Many prominent bloggers were also among the first to participate in the street protests. Howard and Hussain muse that Bouazizi's death merely pushed those virtual networks into physical public spaces.

Still others have framed social media's role as an oppositional information/action cascade: Enough Tunisians were in favor of, and prepared for dissent but only took advantage when it became clear, through social media, that their views were shared by many others. For those who were perhaps not prepared, the videos and images depicting the government's brutal crackdown on demonstrations in cities like Sidi Bouzid and Kasserine that spread rapidly across social networks may have been a tipping point.

Jillian C. York
Independent Scholar

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Africa, north; Anonymous; Arab Spring; Bahrain; Egypt; Facebook; Syria; TuniLeaks.org; Twitter; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring; YouTube.

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Tweet Insurance

With social media becoming increasingly prominent, odds are that all individuals participating have made a comment or statement on a platform that they regret. While for an individual, the effects of a single misguided retort is likely minimal, for large companies or politicians the results can be damning. As a result, the Kiln Group—an underwriting firm at Lloyds of London—has begun working to protect companies from the damages sustained from insensitive postings on social media Web sites, especially Twitter. As employers continue to increase their use of sites such as Facebook and Twitter to market products, communicate with customers, and collect information, they leave themselves open to regulatory, legal, and reputational risks. With the use of social media in the corporate world comes the potential for problems with privacy issues, intellectual property infringement, and defamation. For $100,000, a company can received $10 million in coverage to protect its brand identity from damage caused by poor choice of words.

The concerns revolve around the fact that Twitter is a clear mode of communication. If false statements are made and reputations are harmed, the individual making the comments would face accusations of libel. Companies, understandably, want to be protected from such an occurrence. Lawyers routinely point to the common type of rant in which individuals complain about their employer. Such complaints can lead to lawsuits, and wherever lawsuits are in play, so is insurance. From a political standpoint, the real benefit is still a few years away, according to Kiln. Individuals are not yet eligible to be covered by the insurance program. To provide an example of the difference, one can look at the recent controversy involving actor Gilbert Gottfried. Gottfried was fired as the voice of the Aflac duck because of tweets he sent about the earthquake in Japan. While Aflac would be able to cover itself under the Kiln Group's insurance, Gottfried would be unable to do the same for his personal brand.

Most companies are making the liability possible by not establishing clear written policies for social networking. With policies not in place, incidents with liabilities attached are far more likely to occur. There are countless examples of poor decisions made on social media sites requiring later apologies to attempt to prevent financial and reputational harm. Consider designer Kenneth Cole and his tweet about the civil uproar in Cairo actually being about the release of the designer's spring collection online. Singer Courtney Love faced financial repercussions (upward of $500,000) for posting negative, disparaging comments about a fashion designer in 2009. These are only two of numerous cases in which tweet insurance could be useful.

It should be noted, however, that most insurance analysts do not believe that their companies will be willing to provide coverage to everyone who asks for it. Brokers will likely be far more selective in deciding who is eligible for tweet insurance. Brokers will want to see clear evidence of self-control. Including attorneys, self-monitoring preposting, and examination of all pending posts will lead to better odds of being covered (along with lower premium amounts).

For the political world, tweet insurance is a distant possibility. For now, only corporations are eligible, and even they are under close scrutiny when applying. The difficulties in insuring politicians include how to assess value for things like lost voters or decreases in donations. Likewise, how will media coverage be assessed? These are just a few of the many questions that will need to be considered and answered before political figures can look toward Lloyds of London for help in recouping losses from accidental keystrokes and mistimed tweets broadcast for the world to see.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Communication; Dooced; Social Media Career Wreckers; Twitter.

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Twestival

Largely attributed to the ongoing efforts of lead founder Amanda Rose, Twestival is a grassroots movement that entails the uniting and mobilization of otherwise dispersed global and local communities via Twitter. Additionally referred to as Twitter Festival, Twestival refers to tweeters' strategic use of the microblogging platform Twitter to organize festive, recurring, offline, one-day social fundraising gatherings on short timelines. Twestival's infrastructure provides a virtual rendering of traditional grassroots movement procedures by crowdsourcing tweeters, tech-savvy practitioners, and sponsors for the purpose of running a virtual online campaign with a two-fold objective of transforming virtual tweeter relationships into real-world social gatherings, and using the gathering to raise awareness about and donations for a specified social cause. The active reinterpretation of traditional offline grassroots communication tactics, paired with a short timeline, enables Twestival to successfully facilitate recurring opportunities to "collaborate on a global scale from the local level." Twestival's success to date demonstrates how grassroots movements have evolved to be effective in time-conscious, virtual-relationship-driven contexts.

Twestival, originally a one-day event called Harvest Twestival, was founded in late summer 2008 by Amanda Rose, Ben Matthews, Tim Hoang, and Tom Malcolm, a group of friends interested in using the microblogging site Twittter to bring together PR practitioners for a night of fun. Organized in under two weeks and attended by 250 people, Harvest Festival operated as an event solely funded by donations of time, money, technology, and technological expertise.

The 2008 Harvest Twestival's innovative social-media-driven infrastructure was comprised of two central complimentary objectives. As a primary objective, Harvest Twestival enabled Twitter users to meet face-to-face in a fun social setting, transforming virtual relationships and interactions into real-world ones. As an auxiliary objective, Twestival provided an event that facilitated the collection of both monetary and food donations for the nonprofit organization The Connection. The success of the Harvest Festival event, held on September 25, 2008, demonstrated the ability to effectively leverage a social media platform to facilitate a fundraising event in support of a nonprofit organization while encouraging festive social interaction. As such, Harvest Twestival served as a model and evolved into Twestival Global and Twestival Local.

Twestival Global

Twestival Global was established on January 8, 2009. Using the Harvest Twestival model, Twestival Global expanded to include 202 cities around the world, mobilizing over 1,000 volunteers through Twitter crowdsourcing. The recipient of Twestival Global's efforts was the nonprofit organization charity Water.org, an organization located in New York that executes projects to build sustainable clean water sources in developing countries. Twestival Global culminated in a series of one-day events around the globe that took place on February 12, 2009. In all, 202 cities participated, raising in excess of $250,000. In line with Twestival's mission, 100 percent of the proceeds were used to create 55 sustainable wells in Uganda, Ethiopia, and India, the first of which was built in Ethiopia.

In 2010, the nonprofit organization Concern Worldwide, an organization focused on global education, was the focus of Twestival Global. On March 25, 2010, over 175 cities worldwide participated in Twestival Global and raised over $400,000 in support. The proceeds were used to fund projects in Malawi, Liberia, Haiti, and Burundi.

Twestival Local

Twestival Local provides opportunities for individuals to fundraise for a nonprofit and cause that impact one's community. During the September 2009 Twestival Local campaign, a total of 133 cities around the globe raised over $478,000 for 135 nonprofit organizations, such as Discovering Deaf Worlds and Khushboo Welfare Society. During the March 2011 campaign, 150 cities

participated worldwide and raised $565,000 for select nonprofit organizations.

Twestival Now

In all, over 200 cities and 45 countries have raised $1.75 million in donations by holding Twestivals for more than 275 causes. Twestival, as of 2012, is on an indefinite hiatus, as per lead founder Amanda Rose's July 2011 final blog post concerning the future of Twestival. Ultimately, Twestival attests to the rapid assimilation of social media for social action purposes.

Nicole E. Snell
Bentley University

See Also: Cause-Marketing Campaigns; Crowdfunding; Crowdsourcing; Twitter.

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Twindex

Measuring individuals' intentions to vote in American elections can be traced back to the early days of the Republic. Historically, this task was largely a function of political parties and journalists. However, in the early 1900s, professional polling firms began using scientific methods to predict election outcomes. During the 2012 U.S. presidential election, a new election prediction mechanism joined the fray. The Twitter Political Index, nicknamed the Twindex, provided a daily gauge of Twitter users' opinions about presidential candidates Barack Obama and Mitt Romney. According to Topsy, the index was not conceived to replace traditional polling, rather it was built to "reinforce it" by providing "a more complete picture of the political forecast."

The Twitter Political Index was conceived out of a joint venture between four separate entities: Topsy, Twitter, the Mellman Group, and Northstar Opinion Research. According to its corporate information, Topsy is the "world's only index of the public social Web." Headquartered in San Francisco, the service analyzes the universe of daily tweets in a way that allows users to predict outcomes of events and discover trends. Twitter was officially launched in 2006, with a unique construct of limiting conversation to only 140 characters. Also based in San Francisco, Twitter claims users in "nearly every country in the world," and is available in more than 20 languages. Both the Mellman Group and Northstar Opinion Research are recognized public opinion research firms with strong ties to the American Association of Political Consultants, both U.S. political parties, and candidates for office throughout the country. The index was built using Topsy's analytical platform and Twitter's content. The public opinion research firms helped refine and then validate the methodology used to measure daily changes in Twitter users' sentiment toward the two presidential candidates.

The index sought to rank the positivity of sentiment expressed in tweets on each day of the 2012 presidential campaign, beginning on August 1, 2012, when it was officially launched. Each tweet that mentioned a candidate by last name or specifically mentioned either candidate's official Twitter account was analyzed. Tweets were then compared to the entirety of the day's tweets to determine which candidate received more positive tweets, and how much more positive the nature of the content was than all other tweeted content on that day. Results were then charted on a scale of 0 to 100. On this chart, 50 is considered neutral. Therefore, anything above 50 could be considered positive, and below 50 is negative. Barak Obama was represented with a blue line, and Mitt Romney with a red, following the media's accepted color categorizations of the two major political parties.

In addition to the positive versus negative daily ranking, the index measured tweets about each candidate through the geographic categorization of red, blue, and swing states. Red states were defined as those states the index considered "solid Republican." Blue states were considered "solid

Democratic," and swing states were considered a toss-up. By using GPS geotagging, the index tracked and charted tweets originating from each state, and ranked the candidates using the same 0 to 100 scale. This methodology allowed users to view how each candidate was faring in each state on any given day, and to follow the trends over time. Another major component to the index included the measurement of sentiment based on issues. Three specific topics were initially chosen by the organizations to gauge candidate approval. These included the economy, health care, and defense and foreign policy. Candidates again were ranked comparatively based on tweeted sentiment on those specific issues. Over time, the index added abortion, education, energy and the environment, gay rights, immigration, retirement, taxes, and terrorism to the list of monitored issues.

As a corollary to the extensive analysis of voter sentiment, Twitter added a political engagement map to help users better visualize sentiment. The map was based on responses by users to individual tweets originating from the candidates' official Twitter accounts, rather than that of the index, which measured organic content directly generated from users. In addition, the results of this measurement were broken down by state and added to an interactive map. Twitter selected tweets from each candidate and ranked the level of engagement by users surrounding that tweet. The results were graphically charted, using a bar that changed in size—the higher the engagement, the longer the bar. When broken down by state, users could see the top five issues positively associated with the tweets from each candidate. For example, energy and the environment, the economy, taxes, retirement, and foreign affairs were the top five issues for candidate Romney in Ohio. Conversely, gay rights, taxes, the economy, education, and retirement were the issues on which candidate Obama had the highest level of engagement in the same state.

Prior to Election Day 2012, most major media outlets considered the race too close to call. Traditional polling seemed to show Obama as the clear favorite. A week before November 6, 2012, the Twitter Political Index showed Barack Obama with a rating of 32 to Mitt Romney's 28, suggesting that the media's assessment of voter sentiment was more accurate. However, by the time voters went to the polls, Barack Obama's rating had jumped to 74 and Mitt Romney trailed with a rating of 59. Barack Obama won the election with 51 percent of the popular vote to Mitt Romney's 47 percent, a margin much closer than that of the Twindex. The Twitter Political Index ended direct comparisons between President Obama and Mitt Romney on December 4, 2012. However, individual measurement of sentiment of each political ticket and sentiment surrounding major political issues continue to be assessed and ranked. The consortium has not announced plans to change or end the index at this time. Given the steady rise in the use of social media, it is realistic to expect this index, or an evolved version of it, to continue well into the future.

Katherine R. Fleck
Ohio Northern University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Geotagging; Polling; Twitter.

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Twitter

Twitter is a Web application for microblogging, or publishing miniposts called "tweets," that are limited 140-character messages. Users of Twitter, or "tweeters," tweet text as well as pictures and links to relay information. They can include keywords, called "hashtags" and indicated with the "#" sign (with no space) before a keyword. This hashtag allows anyone using Twitter to find any tweet that contains the hashtag for which they

search. Twitter is accessible through Twitter.com and through mobile media applications on smartphones and tablets.

Twitter has its own language; a tweeter creates and manages a tweet in the following way:

- *@username*: Tweeters use the symbol "@" followed by a Twitter username to direct a tweet to another tweeter.
- *RT*: A tweeter can "retweet" or repost tweets that other tweeters have posted.
- *Quote tweet*: This action will put quotation marks around a tweet for a tweeter to repost or add to the message.
- *DM*: Tweeters can "direct message" or privately message each other through Twitter.
- *#keyword*(s): Tweeters can use a hashtag and a keyword within a message to help categorize tweets and help other tweeters to see these tweets.
- *Favorite*: By clicking a star icon in another tweeter's post, a tweeter can bookmark, or save, a specific tweet. This tweet is then saved in a personal "Favorite" feed.

These actions can help a tweeter create more effective messages and communicate with targeted audiences. Tweets are public by default and are published in follower's Twitter "feeds," or a list of tweets published by the tweeters that an individual is following. Tweeters can also set their accounts to private so that they approve their followers and thus protect who sees their tweets. Tweets can also be directly sent from the tweeter to one follower as a direct message; this acts like a 140-character e-mail system.

In March 2006, software engineer Jack Dorsey sent the first official tweet from the podcasting company Odeo, where Dorsey had developed the concept with support from Noah Glass, Florian Weber, and others. Soon thereafter, Dorsey, Evan Williams, and Biz Stone created Twitter.com and hired other social media experts to establish and expand the new San Francisco–based social media company. In April 2007, users of Twitter published more than 2 million tweets a day, and by January 2010, tweeters were publishing more than 10 million tweets a day. Twitter had 200 million active users by March 2013, and is now a medium for tweeters to virtually gather during iconic and memorable moments, such as the passing of Apple cofounder Steve Jobs, or to mobilize for political activity, such as the U.S. political movement called the Tea Party.

Beneficial Uses

Twitter has allowed tweeters to create virtual relationships with individuals with whom they might not otherwise communicate. Twitter is used by social movements to allow the once voiceless to publish their opinions and communicate with others. Twitter also allows for international communication during events. For example, individuals involved in the revolution in Egypt, elections in Iran, and riots in London tweeted about what they were seeing, becoming citizen journalists who reported what they witnessed to anyone who accessed their Twitter feed or who searched for their hashtags. Twitter is also being used during natural disasters, such as Hurricane Sandy, which hit the east coast of the United States in 2012; individuals who did not have access to the Internet and were geographically confined because of flooding used the Twitter application on their mobile phones to connect with others and thus access information and call for help. For example, former Newark Mayor and New Jersey Senator Cory Booker (@CoryBooker) used Twitter to respond to citizens who needed help during the hurricane and to keep Newark citizens informed after the storm. On November 2, 2012, after the hurricane hit, Booker tweeted, "Delivering blankets and came upon a house with a carbon monoxide detector going off. Called fire dept. Please don't use stoves to heat."

Because of their public status and the number of individuals using Twitter, most news stations and journalists tweet, sending out headlines and breaking news. In fact, celebrities and politicians also tweet to communicate with their fans and followers. Social, political, and medical advocates use Twitter to publish information like events and research findings, as well as daily tips and briefs that these advocates believe will benefit their followers.

Twitter and U.S. Presidential Elections

Twitter is an important tool for U.S. political communication. Through Twitter, candidates can

engage the electorate in political discussions and U.S. citizens can voice their opinions. In addition, candidates provide their followers a firsthand report of current events related to their campaigns when they tweet pictures, links to speeches, and information regarding their views on issues. Twitter has become an organizational tool to gather political support.

In 2008, then U.S. presidential candidate Barack Obama began to use Twitter as a social media tool for his campaign. Obama's campaign team created a social media network that linked all major social media accounts to publicize activity on his campaign Web site. Obama's tweets included pictures of campaign activities and of him with his supporters, links to Web sites about his events, and text-based messages about campaign events and progress. His Twitter feed helped to provide information for a grassroots social media campaign and to move people to action on his behalf, such as to encourage supporters to donate, vote, and retweet his messages. As a result, Obama's campaign raised significant amounts of money from a large number of people who made small contributions. His campaign credits Twitter as one of the essential social networking tools to help inform followers on how to donate and to recruit supporters to further Obama's campaign messages.

In 2012, both candidates for the U.S. presidency, incumbent President Obama and Republican nominee Mitt Romney, maintained Twitter accounts as part of their campaigns. Obama's campaign team used @BarackObama, and Romney's campaign used @MittRomney. Both @BarackObama and @MittRomney's tweets included comments from the candidates, pictures of the candidates at events and with their supporters, links to online articles and campaign Web sites, and messages with campaign appearance information. Both candidates also used Twitter to indirectly debate with each other through pointed messages. For example, on October 22, 2012, Romney tweeted "Attacking me is not an agenda. #CantAfford4More." Obama tweeted on October 25, 2012, "RT if you agree: Mitt Romney's severely conservative views are a disaster for women that we can't afford in the White House."

Both campaigns tweeted throughout the campaign and gave readers messages that they could then retweet to their followers. The retweet reaches many more people than just the followers of the candidate. In fact, the viral capacity of a tweet far outreaches the days of traditional word-of-mouth because it exceeds geographical boundaries and allows tweeters to forward messages around the world.

Twitter also allows the electorate to catch glimpses into the candidate's lives. A tweet may contain information about @MittRomney watching the Superbowl, or it may contain a photograph of @BarackObama with First Lady Michele Obama on a date. Twitter is useful for politicians to share information that traditional media outlets cannot report or to which they do not have access. Also, politicians can speak directly to the audience before speaking to the media. For example, on November 6, 2012, the day before the U.S. election, President Obama tweeted, "We're all in this together. That's how we campaigned, and that's who we are. Thank you. —bo." On November 10, 2012, three days after the election and his loss of the U.S. presidency, Governor Romney tweeted, "From the bottom of our hearts, Ann and I thank you for your support, prayers, efforts, & vote. We are forever grateful to every one of you."

During the 2012 presidential election, participation during the televised presidential debates increased and tweeters began to analyze what each candidate said. One example of this is the response to Governor Romney's comment that, during his term as governor of Massachusetts, he wanted to hire qualified women and he was handed "binders full of women," meaning binders of resumes of women who were qualified to serve on his cabinet. After he said "binders full of women," the hash tag #bindersfullofwomen started trending. Related memes, or cultural references or items (such as photographs, video clips, or sayings), passed virally from one person to another. Similarly, Twitter allowed users to spread information in real time as the candidates debated. Twitter proved to be an organizing tool for both supporters and critics to publicize rhetorical blunders and successes.

Twitter and Politicians

During President Obama's first term at the White House, his staff organized a Twitter town hall meeting that was moderated by Twitter founder

President Barack Obama tweeting his responses in a live Twitter question-and-answer session conducted from the White House on December 3, 2012. He is surrounded by members of his staff, including Director of Online Engagement Kori Schulman, Director of Digital Strategy Macon Phillips, Press Secretary Jay Carney, and Senior Advisor David Plouffe. During the 2012 presidential campaign, Obama had more than 20 million Twitter followers, compared to 1.2 million for Mitt Romney.

Jack Dorsey that established the White House Twitter feed (@WhiteHouse) as a source of information for U.S. citizens. @WhiteHouse tweets information about upcoming legislation, links to more information about legislation, pictures, and text-based messages that help to promote transparency from the White House.

Congressmembers are also tweeting. For example, on August 28, 2012, Congresswoman Michele Bachmann (@MicheleBachmann) tweeted, "Congress returns from August Recess/district work on Sept 10. What do you feel is the most pressing issue for the rest of the 112th Congress?" Similarly, on November 25, to encourage interaction from constituents, Congressman Steve Pearce (@RepStevePearce) tweeted, "Remember to contact my office if you're interested in inauguration tickets!" Congressman Gregory Meeks (@GregoryMeeks) also tweeted, "Remember to tune into @meetthepress today for my thoughts on the #Sandy recovery effort and other important topics. DC/NY time 10:30–11:30 A.M." On November 8, 2012, in response to the re-election of U.S. President Obama, Congressman and Speaker of the House John Boehner (@SpeakerBoehner) tweeted, "ObamaCare is law of the land, but it is raising costs & threatening jobs. Our goal has been, and will remain, #fullrepeal."

Congressional use of Twitter is important because these tweets encourage communication and interaction between representative and citizen and the transparency of Congress. Through Twitter, U.S. citizens can follow the daily official business of the U.S. government and can respond to their representatives if they are unhappy with the representatives' stance or vote. In return, representatives can concisely share links, promote

ideas, and alert citizens to events. Most congressional tweets are informational, but Congress will also promote their positions in hopes for support from their constituents and other party members. Twitter is not a perfect place to directly contact Congress, but the venue serves as a starting place to develop ideas, gain support, and lead citizens to additional information about issues and events.

A Web site was established by a grassroots effort to encourage Congress to tweet. The Web site, Tweet Congress (tweetcongress.org), helps constituents find their state representatives and senators. If a senator or representative is not tweeting, the Web site allows a person to sign a petition to encourage that representative to communicate via Twitter.

Tweeters must be careful to know how to use Twitter. An uneducated or careless individual may regret accidental and inappropriate tweets. One of the most infamous examples came from former Congressman Anthony Weiner. While tweeting sexually motivated photographs to a follower, he accidentally tweeted publicly instead of privately, and a photograph was published to all of his Twitter followers. Since the incident, Weiner has resigned. His mishap reminds public figures to be careful about what they tweet because inappropriate tweets could end their public service careers.

International Political Use

International government leaders also use Twitter to communicate. Two of the most notable world leaders who use Twitter are United Kingdom Prime Minister David Cameron (@David_Cameron) and Chile's President Sebastián Piñera (@sebastianpinera). Piñera also commissioned his cabinet members to create Twitter accounts to help inform Chileans of government actions and events. International leaders must be careful of what they tweet. In May 2012, Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez verbally attacked Colombian President Alvaro Urbe Velez, tweeting that he was an "assassin." These tweets can create trouble for diplomats, and tweeting harsh sentiments is a concern for foreign relations. Some foreign ministers may not follow each other because of diplomatic differences.

Foreign leaders are also using Twitter to inform other leaders of their opinions about a decision. For example, on September 19, 2012, the U.S. ambassador to the Russian Federation tweeted, "We regret this decision. MT @MFA_Russia has notified the US that USAID must stop operating in Russia from October 1." The Russian Federation government did not respond well to this tweet because it does not like the public display of criticism. The use of Twitter in foreign relations is new for many governments who may censor their citizens' use of media, including access to social media outlets like Twitter.

Tweet for Change

As governments tweet more information, their citizens are using Twitter to organize social movements to change their political lives. Twitter and other social media venues have been used to create social change, for example, by citizens in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Algeria, and Bahrain. Many countries followed via Twitter when Egypt experienced revolution on January 25, 2011, and some researchers credit Twitter and Facebook as tools that helped citizens organize the revolution. In Egypt's revolution, citizens contacted other people via social media to spread their dissent, and interpersonal relationships increased between Egyptian revolutionists and people outside Egypt. In this way, Twitter helped Egyptian citizens communicate to the world and to each other to build trust and confidence. They created political change and overcame government suppression. In the end, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak resigned.

Twitter is changing the political landscape all over the world and is giving public opinion leaders and ordinary citizens a new outlet to express their sentiments in 140 characters or less.

Janet Johnson
University of Texas at Dallas

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; American Debt Crisis and Twitter; Campaigns, Grassroots; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Egypt; Facebook; Feb 17 voices; Hashtag; HootSuite; International Social Media and Politics; Microblogging; Moblogging; 140ELECT.com; Real-Time Communication Nodes; Social Media Networking Web Sites; Speak2Tweet; Trending Topic; Tumblr; Tweet Insurance; Twestival; Twindex; Twitter

Archiving Project, Library of Congress; Twitter Diplomacy; TwitVid.com; YouTube.

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Twitter Archiving Project, Library of Congress

The online social messaging system Twitter was founded in 2006, and has significantly grown since that time. With nearly half a billion registered users and hundreds of millions of tweets sent each day, the service has become one of the most popular Web sites and social networking systems in existence. From its verified accounts for public figures to the role it has played in social upheaval, most notably major elections and the Arab Spring and its use as an identity authenticator for Web sites of all stripes, Twitter has become more than simply a way to share 140-character messages. The service has become an integral part of public relations and marketing campaigns, an organizing tool for groups and individuals, and a daily routine for millions of people around the globe.

The significance of Twitter was recognized early on in the popular press. Academic circles developed software designed to mine tweets for socially significant patterns and business purposes. The U.S. Library of Congress' mission is to acquire, preserve, and provide access to knowledge and the record of America's creativity for Congress and the American people. In support of this goal, in April 2010, the Library of Congress signed an agreement with Twitter that would archive tweets posted between the network's inception in 2006 through April 2010. Only tweets marked public would be included. Twitter accounts default to displaying tweets publically, and early users were often less savvy about issues of privacy. This meant that early on, the majority of tweets were public, with users increasingly making use of private tweets and private accounts (permission is required to follow or view the tweets of a private account).

The agreement stipulated that Twitter would donate all public tweets from Twitter services, representing approximately 21 billion total tweets. The collection of tweets is bound by a set of rules that attempt to prohibit commercial use or that significantly impinge on the loose level of privacy that might reasonably be expected by Twitter users. Among the stipulations are that the Library of Congress agreed to make portions of the collection available to "bona fide" researchers six months after the material was transferred to the Library of Congress. Researchers who are given access to the collection are required to sign an agreement stating that they will not redistribute the information or use it for commercial purposes. Further, the library agreed not to post significant amounts of tweets to a Web site or in a format that

is easily downloaded to guard against commercial harvesting of tweets and related information.

The original agreement for tweets between 2006 and 2010 was fulfilled on February 28, 2012. The data was compiled by a third-party company called Gnip, and was delivered in three compressed files totaling 2.3 terabytes of data. Besides the text of the tweets, there were over 50 fields of metadata for information such as time and location. The agreement between Twitter and the Library of Congress continued beyond 2010, and starting in February 2011, current tweets were also transferred. According to the Library of Congress, as of December 1, 2012, the library housed over 150 billion more tweets, for a total tweet count of over 170 billion, comprising more than 133 terabytes for two compressed copies.

Different from its other digital collections, this is the only set that the Library of Congress receives in a live, continuous stream. As of May 2013, Gnip is still the primary agent responsible for delivering tweets to the Library of Congress. Gnip receives the tweets in real time, but segments the data and organizes it, delivering segments consisting of one hour of tweets at a time. In October 2012, the Library of Congress received nearly half a billion tweets per day, and utilized a number of platforms and software to organize, store, and back up the information. The library was also converting the 2006 to 2010 data into the same one-hour format currently used for accepting tweets. The Library of Congress does not yet provide traditional access to the collection, but is attempting to avoid the overhead of even simple searches (a basic text search can take over 24 hours) by employing parallel computing approaches.

As of January 2013, the Library of Congress had received over 400 requests from researchers seeking access to the collection for a variety of purposes, including the study of citizen journalism and elected officials' communications, tracking vaccination rates, predicting stock market activity, and how hashtags are used and mutate over time. Spurred by interest in the Library of Congress project, Twitter announced that it would make Twitter users' tweets available by search, a difficult technological goal.

Some have argued that the agreement between the Library of Congress and Twitter is at least in part the result of a push by American President Barack Obama's administration to increase transparency in government and politics, to promote social awareness via popular outlets, and as a pilot project for making the archives of various government agencies available. Others have noted the inherent violation of personal privacy that occurs when personal communication content is reframed as widely available public property, without the knowledge or the permission of those who generated it. Researchers seek ways to leverage the collection of tweets to track the movement of political and popular ideas through social networks, including the study of marketing, political communication, interpersonal relationships, and a vast array of other subjects ripe for data-mining projects. The full possibilities that a collection this size provides may not be known for years.

Gordon S. Carlson
Fort Hays State University

See Also: 140ELECT.com; Social Networking Web Sites; Twindex; Twitter; Web Metrics.

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Twitter Diplomacy

Twitter diplomacy refers to the use of social media by nations as tools for furthering diplomatic and foreign policy goals. This term is also commonly referred to as e-diplomacy, twiplomacy, and digital diplomacy. The use of social media by diplomats has opened communication between policymakers and citizens. These tools, especially Twitter, provide diplomatic missions

The U.S. Department of State held its first Tweetup at the 2013 International Women of Courage Award Ceremony at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., on March 8, 2013. In attendance were U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, First Lady Michelle Obama, and Mrs. Teresa Heinz Kerry, pictured here together with participants in the event.

with direct access to citizens, both inside and outside of their countries. This communication often bypasses state and media filters, potentially enabling countries to more effectively influence foreign audiences and achieve diplomatic objectives. Likewise, citizens are afforded the ability to interact with diplomats in a two-way Web 2.0 fashion. The U.S. State Department describes this evolution of diplomacy in the social media age as having advanced "state-to-state diplomacy" to now include "state-to-people, people-to-state, and people-to-people."

Twitter diplomacy is an international phenomenon. According to the July 2012 Twiplomacy Study, 264 heads of state and government in 125 countries around the world had an active presence on Twitter in 2012. Although the use of e-diplomacy by the United States is said to have begun during the second Bush administration, the use of Twitter diplomacy was greatly advanced through the 21st Century Statecraft initiative during the first Obama administration, under Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Currently, the State Department purports to have more than 2.6 million followers across its 301 official Twitter accounts that tweet in 11 languages. As of May 2013, the department's official Twitter page (@StateDept) had posted about 29,000 tweets and was followed by more than 520,000 people. These numbers are likely to keep growing because social media continues to be employed by U.S. ambassadors such as Susan Rice and John V. Ross, who together have close to 400,000 Twitter followers.

Twitter diplomacy has been prominent in a number of recent events around the world, notably the protests that occurred in the Middle East between 2009 and 2011. For instance, seeing the importance of Twitter and its use by protesters during the 2009 summer protests in Iran, the U.S. State Department asked the social-networking site to postpone a previously scheduled routine

maintenance of the site, which would have rendered it unavailable for 90 minutes. Similarly, U.S. Ambassador to Syria Robert Ford kept the public informed about happenings during the Syrian protests of 2011 by posting images and messages on Facebook, with messages reaffirming that the United States wholly supported Syrians' rights to protest. Ford's postings were directly followed by real-time public reactions from citizens from the Middle East and around the world. Diplomats from other countries, such as Italy's Foreign Minister Giulio Terzi, used Twitter to condemn violence in Syria. Other nations employ digital diplomacy in proactive, not reactive ways, such as the extensive use of online and social media employed by Queen Rania of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, who has been inviting both citizen and visitor social media engagement for several years as a strategy for preventing sectarian division within the kingdom, and outsider misunderstanding of the country.

Challenges

As with any new communication technology, the use of social media for foreign diplomacy has spurred concerns and risks. Challenges diplomats face with Twitter diplomacy are similar to those confronted by mainstream journalists. While social media enables speedy, transparent, and dynamic communication that presents new opportunities in the diplomatic arena, information transmitted via social media may involve sensitive diplomatic negotiations between delegates of nations. This information may be factually inaccurate, culturally insensitive, or may discuss issues traditionally kept to behind-the-scene official channels. Furthermore, comments made by diplomats and ambassadors may contain their subjective or personal opinions on foreign issues and policy, rather than the official positions of their countries. These comments can adversely affect how parties settle or mediate disputes and make arrangements, and result in unnecessary misunderstandings between nations.

For example, in April 2013, the Twitter account of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Egypt, tweeted a link to a clip of the *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart* that mocked Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi and his administration's actions regarding the arrest of an Egyptian satirist. Following a complaint from the office of the Egyptian president on Twitter, the U.S. Embassy's account, which had a track record of controversial Twitter postings, was temporarily shut down.

Another challenge is a lack of training in proper use of social media for diplomacy. In particular, some leaders may not recognize the rules of conduct of Twitter diplomacy. These could include proper etiquette for sending information, and effective techniques for listening to, and engaging with, the public and foreign nations. Some leaders may fail to recognize the power of social media and the Internet.

With social media features such as hashtags, "likes," and shares making it easy to encounter and find information, inappropriate and careless posts made by government authorities can be instantly shared with millions of users or retrieved by the press. Social media could continue to improve the efficiency of communication between diplomats and citizens. However, the potential benefits of these tools are not without limitations and potential drawbacks.

Francis Dalisay
University of Hawai'i, Manoa
Matthew J. Kushin
Shepherd University
Masahiro Yamamoto
University of Wisconsin–La Crosse

See Also: Arab Spring; Clinton, Hillary; *Daily Show, The*; Digital Diplomacy; DipNote; Foreign Policy; International Intervention; Syria; Twitter.

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TwitVid.com

While Twitter, as a microblogging service, has already played a big role in social media in politics, it has limited users to 140 characters in each tweet. TwitVid.com offers a social video-sharing network connected to the real-time and up-to-date power of the Twitter network as a means of sharing visual material such as video and screenshots from mobile media like iPhones, Androids, and BlackBerrys. It may play an increasing role in the kind of citizen journalism and user-generated content activities that make social media such exciting and unpredictable players in emerging political and cultural arenas.

Because TwitVid.com only needs a Twitter account to log in, the video-sharing service already has a head start on its competitors. TwitVid allows users to upload videos over one gigabyte; there is no restriction on the running time of the video. TwitVid instantly displays all tweets credited to a particular video. Other common Twitter features such as retweeting (forwarding a tweet or the video), sharing, and replying to a video are supported by TwitVid. It is possible to share videos from all mobile devices and computer interfaces, and TwitVid has the ability to share videos in real time. In recent years, other functions from well-known social networking sites have been included in the TwitVid interface. These functions include Facebook "likes," video statistics, categorizing, and recommendations as seen on video platforms such as YouTube or Vimeo. TwitVid runs mobile versions of its app on Android, iPhone, and BlackBerry. This service makes it easy to upload and share both videos and photos from any device to the TwitVid service, but also to Twitter and Facebook, sharing both existing content and real-time feeds.

After launching in 2009, Twitvid saw its service grow in 2011 to 12 million monthly unique users, and more than 30 million unique video views per month. After TwitVid.com replaced 12Seconds.tv as TweetDeck's default video platform in 2010, TwitVid announced growth of 100 percent a year. TweetDeck is a dashboard application for managing social media accounts or platforms like Twitter and Facebook. In 2012, Twitvid had more than doubled the number of video views it served over 2011. The video sharing network counts views in the range of 70 million, over 15 million unique visitors, and had 200 million active users by March 2013.

In the first half of 2012, the social video network made several acquisitions, indicating a possible strategy change or product announcement. The first acquisition brought the team from Frugalo to TwitVid. This daily deals aggregator was acquired to use its know-how and knowledge, not necessarily for the platform. The second acquisition was treated the same way. Cull TV, an independent music video-sharing site, offers a catalog of approximately 3 million music videos. TwitVid is mostly interested in the work Cull TV did in figuring out how to prioritize and recommend content out of long-tail video, and their combination of manual curation and algorithms to find the most relevant content.

In June 2012, TwitVid announced its rebranding as Telly. In its announcement TwitVid explained the rebranding in light of the abundance of video that TwitVid and many other video platforms offer. Telly gives the TwitVid platform the possibility, after providing a video upload and sharing service for Twitter through mobile apps, integrations, and the Web, of offering a place to collect and share videos, and to discover new videos to watch through seeing what social connections watch, talk about, and like.

Telly will be a hybrid platform, spun from a number of recently acquired technological threads, all helping to make video data more accessible and more useful, and will provide recommendations and personalization. Telly will include all features and concepts that were included in TwitVid, such as uploading and sharing videos. However, the new platform will also offer more video creation and editing tools to add filters to videos or include soundtracks.

Stijn Bannier
Maastricht University

See Also: Streaming Media; Twitter; Vlogging.

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Ubicomp

Ubicomp (ubiquitous computing), also referred to as pervasive computing or ambient computing, is a model of human–computer interaction involving information and communication technologies (ICTs) woven into physical and social environments. The term *ubiquitous computing* was originally coined by Mark Weiser in the 1980s when he was leading the Computer Science Laboratory at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC). Weiser envisioned computers that are integrated "seamlessly into the world" and thereby can become a natural part of everyday life. In 1991, Weiser presented his vision of ubiquitous computing in the article "The Computers for the 21st Century" published in *Scientific American*. More than 20 years have passed since the publication of the seminal article, and the conceptual model of ubicomp has been actively deployed, with important implications for political behavior.

Weiser questioned whether "personal computers" were truly "personal," noting that they fell short of blending into people's everyday lives. Weiser analyzed the problem at two levels: intrapersonal and interpersonal. First, at the intrapersonal level, those computers were "approachable only through complex jargon that had nothing to do with the tasks" that users would want to achieve. Weiser observed that such a condition was "analogous to the period when scribes had to know as much about making ink or baking clay as they did about writing." Noting that when people learn about and know something very well, it is natural for people to "cease to be aware of it," Weiser argued that computing should free users' attention from the machine and allow the users to better focus on the task. At the interpersonal level, Weiser emphasized how personal computers, dominating the center of users' attention and posing barriers to interpersonal interaction, introduced "unhealthy centripetal forces" into human collaboration. Weiser predicted that computers vanishing into the background would "make individuals more aware of the people on the other ends of their computer links" and thereby enhance the socialness of computer-based collaboration.

It is important to note what technological practices do or do not qualify as ubicomp. Making computers portable (e.g., laptops) does not necessarily integrate them into the environment seamlessly, as articulated in Weiser's statement: "Even the most powerful notebook computer, with access to a worldwide information network, still focuses attention on a single box." Emphasizing that technological practices based on mere enhanced portability would not constitute ubicomp, Weiser specified the basic requirements for ubicomp (namely, technological

practices that can make computers invisible and "disappear into the background") as follows: (1) low-cost, low-power computers that people can use anytime, anywhere; (2) software applications that can track people's locations and allow people to collaborate on shared tasks; and (3) a wireless network that can accommodate and integrate the multiple computers and applications as an organic whole.

Weiser further noted that ubiquitous computers should be embedded in "artifacts for use in everyday life." While acknowledging that such devices should be able to come in assorted forms and sizes, Weiser proposed three prototypes for ubicomp devices: tabs (inch-scale machines), pads (foot-scale machines), and boards (yard-scale machines). Tabs, as the smallest of the three, were modeled after "tiny individual notes or PostIts." Pads, on the other hand, were conceived as "something of a cross between a sheet of paper and current laptop and palmtop computers" that could be easily grabbed and used, just like "scrap paper." Boards, the largest of the three, were envisioned as a digital equivalent of a whiteboard. As Maria R. Ebling and Mary Baker note, these three scales of computing machines have been embodied in "smart" devices such as smartphones (tabs), tablet appliances (pads), and interactive whiteboards (boards).

Ubicomp practices enabled by smartphones, pad-like appliances, and their applications (abbreviated as apps), as Weiser envisioned two decades ago, allow people to use computing devices without being dominated by them. This trend has important implications for political life. With enhanced capacity of sensing/tracking/recording time and location, these technologies enable users to instantaneously search, create, organize, and share various modes of information. In line with Clay Shirky's argument, ubicomp can provide platforms for mobilization of collective action and stimulate political participation by allowing people to "share, then gather," as opposed to the "old order of group activity" in which people used to "gather, then share."

Jong-Eun Roselyn Lee
Ohio State University
Sung Gwan Park
Seoul National University

See Also: Geo-Locational Enabling; Innovation and Technology; Mobile Apps; Moblog.net; Web Mapping and Online Politics.

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Udall, Mark

Mark Udall is the senior Senator in the U.S. Congress from Colorado. He was first elected in 2008 to the Senate. He is a member of the Democratic Party. Mark Emery Udall was born July 18, 1950, in Tucson, Arizona, to Patricia J. Emery and Morris "Mo" Udall. His father served in the U.S. House of Representatives from the 2nd District of Arizona (1961–91), and was a candidate in 1976 for the nomination to the Democratic Party ticket for the presidency. The Udall family has been very involved in politics. Beside his father, Udall's first cousin is Thomas "Tom" Stewart Udall, junior U.S. Senator from New Mexico. His second cousin is Senator Mike Lee of Utah, and his uncle was Stewart Udall, the former secretary of the Interior. While all of these political relatives are Mormons, Udall does not list a religious affiliation.

In 1968, Udall graduated from Canyon del Oro High School in Tucson, Arizona. He then entered Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts. He completed a B.A. in 1972. Udall married University of North Carolina graduate Maggie L. Fox, with whom he has two children. Their home is in Eldorado Canyon, Colorado. She later earned a masters in education from the University of Colorado, and a J.D. from the Northwestern School of Law with an emphasis in environmental law and Native American natural resources law.

Her early career was teaching on Navaho and Hopi reservations in Arizona and New Mexico. She worked with the Colorado Outward Bound School, where Udall also served 10 years as the school's director. She later worked for the Sierra Club, serving as its deputy executive director for five years. She has been actively involved in issues such as climate change, energy, western public lands and water, Native American resources, and agricultural reforms. Her other positions have included former president of America Votes and president and CEO of the Alliance for Climate Protection.

U.S. House of Representatives

In 1996, Peggy Lamm, a Democrat, resigned her seat in the Colorado House of Representatives. Her district was the 13th district, which encompassed the community of Longmont and parts of southern Boulder County in which Udall was living. Udall ran and won the seat. In 1998, he won the Democratic Party nomination for the 2nd Congressional District of Colorado. He had previously served a single term in the Colorado House of Representatives. The nomination was for the seat of incumbent David Skaggs, who was retiring. The general election became a tight race that Udall barely won. His opponent was Bob Greenlee, the Republican mayor of Boulder, Colorado. The final vote put Udall over the top with 50 percent of the vote to 48 percent for Greenlee.

In the elections of 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006, Udall won re-election without significant opposition. Political scientists who studied his district found that he was very representative of the overwhelming majority of the people in the district.

Udall's record in the House of Representative is solidly liberal to centrist on some issues. In 1998 he voted against barring transporting minors to have an abortion. In 2000, he voted to allow partial birth abortions. In 2001, he voted not to make it a federal crime to harm a fetus while committing other crimes. He also voted in 2001 to support funding for family planning through U.S. foreign aid. In 2003 he voted to allow human cloning for reproduction and medical research. In 2004, he again voted against federally criminalizing harming a fetus during the course of committing a crime. In 2005, he opposed attempts to outlaw transporting minors to an abortion clinic. In 2005, he also voted in support of human embryonic stem cell research from fetal material. His voting record on abortion and environmental issues has put him into a category that many would call staunchly liberal.

Others who have examined Udall's voting record see him as more mainstream, especially on economic and defense issues. He has supported the military and defense industry. He was able to acquire research money for Colorado defense companies. On the environment his positions reflect those of his wife. He has been an advocate for alternative fuels and for strong protections for the environment. In 2000, he proposed turning the former Rocky Flats nuclear weapons facility into a wildlife refuge, and the Rocky

Senator Mark Udall (left) stands atop a prototype wind turbine during a visit to the National Wind Technology Center in Louisville, Colorado, in March 2013. The visit was documented in a number of photographs posted on Senator Udall's Flickr account.

Flats National Wildlife Refuge Act became law in 2001. He also supported renewable energy initiatives. After 9/11, he opposed the USA PATRIOT Act as a threat to personal liberties. He has also opposed indefinite detention of American citizens. His amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012 was rejected.

Udall served on several committees and joined a number of caucuses while serving in the House of Representatives. He was also a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, which brings together members of parliaments (and the U.S. Congress) from NATO member countries in order to promote support and understanding of NATO. He was also a member of the Democratic Homeland Security Task Force.

U.S. Senate

Wayne Allard, the incumbent Senator from Colorado, announced on January 15, 2007, that he would not seek a third term. His retirement from the Senate and refusal to seek a third term was to fulfill a pledge he had made when first elected that he would only serve two terms. Udall entered the Democratic primary for the nomination. He gained the nomination unopposed. His opposition in the general election was Republican nominee Bob Schaeffer, a former U.S. Representative.

Schaffer had been defeated in his 2004 bid to win the Republican nomination for the U.S. Senate seat held by Ben Nighthorse Campbell, who was retiring. In a brutal primary, Schaefer was overwhelmed by Coors Brewing magnate Pete Coors. In the general election, Coors was defeated by Democrat Ken Salazar.

Clearing the air about anything that could be an "October Surprise," Udall told the *Rocky Mountain News* in January of 2008 that he had been found in possession of marijuana in 1972. He had subsequently pled guilty to possession, and his sentence was a year's probation. The revelation was not enough to prevent either his nomination or his election.

During the election, in which over $10 million was spent attacking Udall, Schaefer was tarred with the Jack Abramoff scandal, President Bush's energy plan, and accusations from environmental groups that he was in favor of polluting the environment. These and other accusations aided Udall, who won the seat with 53 percent of the vote.

During his time in the Senate, Udall has attempted to solve problems by reaching across the aisle to Republicans. This reflects his willingness to work with others for the good of the country. Among his environmental achievements have been bills to address beetle infestations in western forests and the fire hazards that the beetles create. He has also promoted clean energy legislation, high technology and the aerospace industry, consumer credit protection, and heath care for workers and retirees who worked at U.S. nuclear facilities. Udall has promoted with other Senators the adoption of smart budgeting tools and a pay-as-you-go rule for federal spending. He has been opposed to the easing of the national debt ceiling.

Since entering the Senate in 2009, Udall has served on a number of Senate standing committees. Among the "little legislatures" to which he has been assigned are the Committee on Armed Services, which includes serving on its Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support, and Subcommittee on Strategic Forces. His service on the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources has included serving as Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks, the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests, and the Subcommittee on Energy. He is also serving on the Special Committee on Aging.

Caucus memberships held by Senator Udall include the Congressional Fitness Caucus, Sportsmen's Caucus, Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus (of which he is the cochair), and the Parkinson's Disease Caucus, which he also cochairs. His membership in this latter caucus is doubtless due to the fact that his father, "Mo" Udall, died from Parkinson's disease. He is also a member of the International Conservation Caucus, which was founded in September 2003 in the Senate as a bipartisan organization. It is based on the conviction that the United States needs to promote the conservation of natural resources both at home and abroad.

Social Media

During his 2008 Senate campaign, Udall used a campaign Web page to enlist supporters, who would sign in with their e-mail and zip code. Links to volunteering and contributing to his campaign were made readily available to visitors

to his campaign page. Other links took visitors to his biography, his "bipartisan record," and a blogging and media center. Photos and videos were also available to be used as campaign tools.

Since being elected to the Senate in 2008, Udall has increasingly used social media. He has a Web site with links to blogs, news sites, e-mail, audio, video, and op-eds. In addition, there are links to Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn, Digg, Tumblr, Reddit, StumbleUpon, and Google+. There is a search function for the Web site, as well as a search function for legislation. Another link allows for e-mail contact. Another link is to a "news room," which leads to both news items and blogs.

The Senate page Udall uses (markudall .senate.gov) is loaded with links to his biography, issues, matters of concern to his Colorado constituents, and another "news room" with links to blogs, news, video, audio, op-eds, and a press kit. The page can be shared with Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn, Digg, Tumblr, Reddit, and StumbleUpon. Individual icons allow a visitor to use RSS Feeds, YouTube, Flickr, and Facebook. All of these links help people interact with Udall to inform him of their views or support him in his legislative work.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2008); Hoyer, Steny; Pelosi, Nancy; Polis, Jared.

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Underbloggers

See Ghost Bloggers

Unemployment

During the period of recession from 2008 to 2011, many countries worldwide were faced with a shortage of jobs and growing unemployment. Many people lost their jobs and experienced a drop in income. Social media played an important role, both as a channel of sharing information about job openings, and as a means of earning money.

Social Media and Job Searches

A considerable part of job searching now takes place online via social media platforms, where job seekers can interact with employers and vice versa by sharing a profile or posting a vacancy. In social media platforms, the flow of information about vacancies is faster. A human resources specialist in a company or agency may post a relevant message to their "friends," who then spread it to their contacts. Thus, information about a vacancy is quickly distributed and may experience a snowball effect. However, the structure of connections of recruiters and human resources specialists might limit the possible circle of recipients to friends, friends of friends, and perhaps a few more. It means that those who do not see information about these vacancies are excluded from the discourse, and they have lower chances of finding out about a job.

Wide use of social media platforms expands networks of connections, but can determine who receives information about a vacancy and

when; this in turn may determine who gets a job and who is left unemployed, which will have an impact on the distribution of earnings and overall inequality in a society. Economic sociologist Mark Granovetter, in his writings on the strength of weak ties, emphasized their importance for the job search. His research proved that weak ties work better for getting a job than strong ties, meaning that "friends of friends" would receive a job offer from a company they are indirectly connected with through their contacts with higher probability than close friends or relatives of current employees.

In his recent public lectures, Granovetter claimed that social media are attractive to people because comprehensive knowledge of their social networks is limited by time constraints. On one hand, people are more connected to larger communities through weak than strong ties because one's close friends know each other, forming a closed circle. Weak ties are less likely unacquainted between each other, thus they move in different circles from the circle of close friends and from one another's. Social media in this respect can foster reviving, maintaining, and creating weak ties.

A vital resource for the job search and posting vacancies is LinkedIn, where people create profiles with information about their education, employment history, skills, awards, honors, hobbies, and publications, and all other information that might be relevant to the potential employer. A huge number of companies and staffing agencies also have profiles on this social media platform, and are able to approach candidates with required qualifications using filters. LinkedIn also provides opportunities to join various communities and groups related to professional interests and industry sectors, which may also increase chances of getting a job offer.

Because it has become so easy to find suitable candidates through social media, search costs for companies and recruitment agencies have been reduced. This also means, in some cases, that there is a reduced need for long-term full-time employees, because employers may react to the economy's ups and downs by offering more short-term project employment. This makes people on the labor market more vulnerable, and is likely to increase the number of days between jobs.

Social Media as Employment

Using social media as an environment for earning money is rather recent, and may be related to such work as social media marketing and journalism. Social media marketers are used by producers of fast-moving consumer goods or durables and by service providers (such as banks, insurance companies, and tourist agencies) for communicating their brands and goods with customers. Social media marketing specialists should be experts in creating and supporting the Facebook page of the brand or company, know how to attract and keep more followers of the page, and what news should be posted on it. This range of duties is comparatively new for marketing specialists who gained their experience working with traditional communication channels (television, printed media, and below-the-line activities), so companies often hire new specialists to take care of social media marketing and public relations. This work may provide opportunities for employment for younger workers who are often active social media users.

Social media journalism is another new type of occupation in the digital age. Most print publications or television channels worldwide have blogs, pages in social networking sites, or online forums, and they have employees whose duties are to support the online version of the edition and communicate with readers and viewers.

Drawbacks

Despite the above-mentioned positive impacts, social media can also bring some negative effects for job seekers. Recruiters warn candidates that they should be careful about postings on the Internet. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or personal blogs may reveal much about a possible candidate and his or her private life. This may create numerous opportunities for damaging a job search or affecting a promotion. Hiring people with particular public online records may also put a company in legal jeopardy. Some employees have even been fired for something they wrote on Facebook or posted on Picasa. Thus, it can be assumed that unemployment might increase because of the incautious use of social media tools by employees, on one hand, and the strict policy of a company toward its reputation and image in social media, on the

other hand. The importance of connections on social media platforms is obvious, though online communication, interaction, or activities might be at risk of becoming less transparent because of the employers' hiring policies and corporate culture.

Psychological Impact

Another angle on the links between social media and employment is the combination of the real and the virtual in people's lives. One of the life satisfaction studies within the World Values Survey revealed that the users of virtual worlds are more satisfied with their virtual life than with real life. The unemployed and people with other challenges in their lives gain more life satisfaction from switching to the virtual world than from changing their real-life circumstances. In other words, an unemployed person may become happier by visiting a social media platform than from finding a job. Thus, problems in real life can cause more intense use of virtual platforms.

United Nations Global Pulse Project

According to recent studies, chatting online can assist in predicting the rise or fall of unemployment in real time. Many online users complain in social media about their financial situation, from cutting back on health care to deciding not to buy a new car. Such discussions can provide data on employment conditions before traditional government statistics.

The United Nation's (UN's) data initiative UN Global Pulse is a project for exploring innovative methods for combining new types of digital data with traditional indicators to track global development in real time. The project aims to provide economic information while it is happening to governments, social service groups, and policymakers so they can immediately respond to drops in employment, not months afterwards. This initiative of the UN is conducted in collaboration with the software firm SAS. The main idea is to define how social media and online user-generated content can be used to enrich understanding of changing job conditions. The project initiators aim to analyze the moods and topics present in unemployment-related conversations from the open social Web (blogs, forums, and news) and relate them to official unemployment statistics.

This exploratory project was conducted using the data on the United States and Ireland through analyzing online discussions over a two-year period, from June 2009 to June 2011. In both countries, social media were widely used and the economic crisis had a considerable impact on employment rates. According to the data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, the unemployment rate in the United States reached double digits for the first time since the 1980s, dropping slightly from that peak to around 9 percent by 2012. According to EuroStat, the unemployment rate in Ireland was 5 percent in 2000, but it has risen since the economic crisis of 2008 to 15 percent.

Two specific research questions were raised in the study: (1) whether online conversations can provide an early indicator of impending job losses, and (2) whether user-generated content can help policymakers enrich their understanding of coping strategies employed by individuals. For answering these questions, the researchers used SAS's tools and technologies for the analysis of job-related, user-generated, unstructured text data. The methodology included assigning a mood score based on the tone of the conversations, for instance, anxiety, happiness, or depression. A number of unemployment-related documents dealing with other topics like housing or transportation were also quantified. It allowed for gaining insight into coping mechanisms.

This data was analyzed in two steps. First, the quantified mood scoring was correlated to the unemployment rate to discover main indicators that assist in forecasting changes in the unemployment rate. Second, the documents related to coping mechanisms also showed a significant relationship with the unemployment rate, providing some insights into the possible reactions of populations dealing with unemployment. Thus, the sentiments and topics were gathered from social media content, and then they were quantified and correlated with the official statistics on unemployment.

The researchers defined the relevant data from the various public Internet sources if they contained references to terms or phrases related to unemployment, such as "unemployed, fired, on the dole, and collecting unemployment." Then, the documents passed through a filtering process in order to clean the data of noise and to sort

documents by topic. The following topical categories related to coping mechanisms were used: housing, transportation, entertainment, consumer spending, bills, financial distress, nutrition quality, borrow/save money, education, health care, unemployment claims, and travel.

After conducting all steps of the analysis, the research team created "dashboards" for two countries with a visual representation of the findings. Such representation of the results allowed seeing and comparing the volume of conversations around unemployment, and coping mechanisms discussed with regard to unemployment. Also, time relationships between unemployment, conversation moods, coping mechanisms, and macroeconomic indications were included on the dashboards, showing patterns and predictions for the users. The dashboards contain over 28,000 documents for Ireland and 430,000 for the United States, covering the period from June 2009 to June 2011. Over a half of these documents were classified with regard to coping mechanisms.

The analysis has discovered that increased social media talk about various employment-related things, like postponing vacations, predicted growth of the unemployment rates in both countries. Correlation coefficients of mood scores with unemployment rates allowed for several predictive statements. For example, in the United States, depressed moods increase four months before a spike in unemployment (correlation coefficient is 0.489, with 95 percent significance level), and talk about loss of housing increases two months after an unemployment spike (0.634, 95 percent significance level). In Ireland, confused moods increase three months before a spike in unemployment (0.675, 95 percent significance level) while confident moods decrease two months before an unemployment growth (-0.407, 95 percent significance level), along with the increase in talk about travel cancellations three months after an unemployment spike (0.450, 95 percent significance level).

Conclusion

The initial project demonstrated the high potential of using social media data in addition to official statistics. Online conversations can complement the statistical indicators, showing how people perceive employment status and what coping strategies they apply during times of uncertainty.

Tetiana Kostiuchenko
National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy
Hanna Söderbaum
Uppsala University

See Also: Advertising and Marketing; American Debt Crisis and Twitter; Digital Revolution; Dooced; Economic and Social Justice; LinkedIn; Poverty; Social Media Career Wreckers; Strong-Tie Social Connections Versus Weak-Tie Social Connections; Youth Engagement.

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United Nations Global Pulse Initiative and Big Data

The United Nations (UN) began in 1945 with the purpose of promoting world peace and promoting the well-being of all people by lessening hunger, disease, illiteracy, and human rights abuses, especially in developing nations. Over time, the overall mission has remained the same, but some of the methods for achieving those goals have changed. Recently, as the private sector has found value in using big data to understand its customers, the UN has also seen the value in big data. In 2009, the UN started the UN Global Pulse initiative. The initiative brings together international development experts with big data scientists and

open source experts to develop a means of using big data to better understand and more quickly respond to humanitarian needs caused by natural disasters, socioeconomic crises, and other incidents, especially in locations with the world's most vulnerable populations.

Global Pulse has been investigating the use of big data from a variety of data sources, including physical sensors, private sector sources, crowdsourced reports, and online sources. As for physical sensors, satellite imagery and traffic sensors can be used. Private sector data would be, for example, anonymized mobile phone data and search data. Citizen-produced mobile phone surveys are an example of crowdsourced data. Online sources consist of online news stories, obituaries, birth announcements, job announcements, and social media posts on blogs, Facebook, and Twitter.

Tools

A variety of public-domain, open source, big-data tools already exist to gather and analyze the data coming from a variety of sources. Global Pulse has aggregated the tools into the Global Pulse Toolset to assist its mission. The toolset allows users to gather, analyze, and visualize big data related to their development projects.

One specific set of tools that Global Pulse continues to develop is HunchWorks. HunchWorks allows researchers and in-the-field development workers to view possible trends in big data, confer with peers, and then act upon the data. The user and their peers will be able to communicate via social media, share data via data repositories, analyze the data with available online toolsets, and then share data and recommendations with policy and decision makers, all in a relatively short period of time. With HunchWorks and the other Global Pulse tools, the idea is to be able to react before a crisis (such as economic or natural) causes too many ill effects.

Pulse Labs

Along with its headquarters in New York, Global Pulse has begun establishing hubs or Pulse Labs in other world cities. At the Pulse Labs, local experts and government officials work with Global Pulse to develop local big data projects that serve a local humanitarian need. The first Pulse Lab, launched in 2012, is in Jakarta, Indonesia. Using social media data, mobile phone data, geospatial mapping, and other forms of data, the Jakarta Lab focuses on issues of food and fuel prices, unemployment, and poverty. Indonesia is an ideal location for the first Pulse Lab because it is a developing nation, but it is also an informationalized nation. According to Global Pulse, Indonesia has a large percentage of mobile phone users, and the people of Indonesia post 1.5 million tweets per day.

Other Projects

Global Pulse teamed with Crimson Hexagon, a social media analytics company, for a specific project that gathered and analyzed Twitter data to help better understand citizens' concerns about food and fuel costs and concerns about finances and housing. The project researchers found that, for example, in Indonesia, the number of tweets about the price of rice correlated with official food-price inflation statistics. In the United States researchers found, for example, that finance-related tweets increased during the U.S. debt ceiling debate in summer 2011. The researchers concluded that while Twitter data have limitations, they can be helpful in gauging a population's financial concerns.

In another project, Global Pulse used social media data to study citizens' moods related to unemployment in Ireland and the United States. Working with SAS, a business analytics company, Global Pulse used SAS analytical tools to determine the mood of social media posts. Based on the wording of the posts, each post was categorized as depressed, hostile, or confused. Researchers found that posts categorized as "confused" spiked three months before unemployment spiked in Ireland. Thus, the spikes in the confused mood serve as a predictor of unemployment spikes. In the United States, the researchers found that social media posts about the loss of housing increased two months after unemployment spikes. Such findings could help U.S. policymakers identify and deal with the more important consequences of unemployment.

Ethical Concerns

The use of big data by Global Pulse can provide helpful and actionable information. However,

ethical concerns arise with the use of big data and individual privacy rights. Global Pulse addresses this concern by anonymizing the data (i.e., stripping the data of individual names and other identifying data). Global Pulse states that they are not monitoring individuals; instead, they work with large, aggregated, and anonymized datasets at the regional or national level. This may raise issues of national sovereignty, but if Global Pulse is collaborating with government officials, then this concern is lessened.

Conclusion

In the past few years, Global Pulse has organized experts, developed or aggregated needed big data tools, established Pulse Labs in other world cities, and has conducted over a dozen big-data humanitarian projects.

In the future, Global Pulse plans to continue establishing Pulse Labs around the world. It also plans to continue developing partnerships with businesses in order to access sales data, mobile phone data, and search data. This sharing of anonymized data by businesses is what Global Pulse calls "data philanthropy." In the next few years, Global Pulse will also continue sharing its big-data toolkits and its expertise with others interested in using big data to help in humanitarian efforts around the world.

William Hart
Norfolk State University

See Also: Big Data; Data Mining; Developing Nations; Indonesia; Informationalized Nations Versus Industrialized Nations; Unemployment.

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United States

Social media have transformed almost every facet of life in the United States. Social media are often referred to as "new media" or "alternative media." This terminology contrasts with the term *old media*, which means traditional media sources like television, newspapers, and radio. Social media utilize the tools and technology of the Internet, and are designed to be interactive, collaborative, and open spaces on the Internet. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Tumblr, YouTube, LinkedIn, Flickr, various social networking sites, blogs, Web forums, and wikis.

Social media can be used for professional and personal purposes. LinkedIn is a professional association networking site for adults, and Instagram facilitates the sharing of pictures and other images. Everything from institutions like education and business to civil society, politics, journalism, relationships, new forms of protest, and even how public opinion is constructed and disseminated has been impacted by the development of virtual communities that are largely free from the constraints of time and distance. Online communities like Facebook allow sharing of information, ideas, and opinions.

Occasionally, these networks focus on topics and stories that the traditional media has not highlighted or has discontinued discussing. Televised news channels may report a popular story that first made its way through the blogosphere, thereby increasing the visibility and credibility of social media sources. Or, the process may work the other way around, with social media focusing on topics initially covered by traditional media outlets. Social media communities weighed in on the 2012 presidential election in the United States, even prior to the official announcement on mainstream media. Newspapers reported their opinions.

Social media's relationship to traditional media and other technologies is complex, with a gradual pace toward integration. Yet, social media is more than a tool for marketers, politicians, protesters, and organizations. How people live their everyday lives has been impacted, both positively and negatively. Concerns for privacy, abuse, and censorship have been reported. Communicating

in a wireless world has been revolutionized, as well as how Americans work, play, and understand the world. Sociologists are researching the impact of the new media on class, race, ethnicity, gender, and other facets of human diversity. Recognizing that an increasing number of users are female and minorities, feminists argue that even childrearing has not been spared from the tentacles of social media. Social media have changed the way Americans interact with the rest of the world, communicate and share information, and live the American dream.

Social Media and Relationships

According to users, what social media do best is redefine and sustain social relationships among people. A 2011 survey conducted by the Pew Internet and American Life Project found that communicating and maintaining social ties with friends and family were the primary reasons that many adults used social media. Younger users also enjoyed staying in touch, but used social media more broadly for sampling music, following their favorites, and tweeting. The transformative aspects of social media may not be the technology, but what these interactive technologies can enable and enhance.

In the social media sphere, Facebook rules the roost with more female than males using one of the most popular social media technologies created, according to the Pew Internet and American Life Project. The sexes are equally divided in the use of other social media technologies, but young people between the ages of 16 and 29 still dominate the social media scene, although by a somewhat shrinking margin.

What do users do on Facebook and other social media sites that create value in developing new relationships and sustaining old ones? Users can create or share content in the form of pictures and videos of themselves and family and friends, or share Web sites and other information found on the Web. The Pew Internet and American Life Project found that most adult users (46 percent) created and shared content in the form of videos and photographs, rather than relying on Web-created material. These individuals are referred to as "creators." "Curators" are individuals who select to repost or retweet information or images from already existing Web sites. Approximately 32 percent of social media users are both creators and curators. They create content and repost existing content while reconnecting with family and friends.

The rise of social media is correlated with the development of other supportive technologies that enhance the capabilities of social media. For example, the creation of content is enhanced by smart technologies, such as the smartphone. These multifaceted and multifunctional mobile phones have built-in cameras and video capability. These smartphone technologies are relatively easy to use, and make sharing and creating digital content easier than sharing data or content between multiple devices and mediums, such as cameras and computers. The evidence is in the use. In a 2012 survey of 3,014 adults, the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project discovered that smart technology is popular among 18- to 29-year-olds who own 66 percent of smartphones. In 2012, nearly half of adults in the United States owned a smartphone. This enabled them to have ready access to social media applications through their phone. Taking pictures and sharing them was found to be one of the most popular activities for smartphone users.

A high level of engagement with social media, either as a creator or curator, is translated into having a high level of social currency or online social status and presence. Not all social media use is related to social engagement or consumerism. During the recession, social media users networked with others as a way of relaxing and relieving stress brought on by a bad economy, according to a 2009 Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project report.

Social Media and Protest

Social media are powerful instruments for social change. The events surrounding the Arab Spring are often cited as an example of how these virtual communities can coalesce around causes that lead to action. Social networkers in the United States have pooled their collective voices to protest polices, practices, and power arrangements. These seemingly leaderless forms of unrest played a role in the Occupy Wall Street Movement that called for an end to the unsavory practices of Wall Street and the Trayvon Martin case, among other cases not mentioned here.

Displaying the #IAmTrayvonMartin Twitter hashtag on a t-shirt at a "Justice for Trayvon Martin" rally in Oakland, California, on July 20, 2013, after the announcement of a Florida court's not guilty verdict for Martin's killer, George Zimmerman. The Trayvon Martin case and resulting protests were widely discussed on social media networks, drawing a high level of awareness to the case.

There are many more subtle ways in which social media lend themselves to protest and social change in the United States. Comparing the old media (radio and television) with new media (social media, such as Facebook and Twitter) is a means of comparing a more familiar revolution with ongoing or emerging ones. Comparing the relationship between the old media and unrest is instructive in better understanding the role of social media and protest today.

Television coverage of the civil rights movement contributed to the demise of legally sanctioned segregation in the United States. In similar ways, continual social media coverage of the Trayvon Martin case led to mounting social pressure on both sides to either bring a killer to justice or release an innocent man. Mark O'Mara, the criminal defense attorney for the accused, embraced social media to clear his client's name. The accused created a Web site to raise funds for his defense. After the shooting, protesters used Facebook and Twitter to organize and stage protests throughout the United States to raise awareness of the killing of an unarmed young black man in 2012. Until the Martin case, social media were not typically used in criminal cases, and this development raised the visibility of how the medium might be used in the legal profession and law enforcement.

From the 1955 Montgomery bus boycotts to the 1964 Democratic National Convention in Atlantic City, old media such as radio and television brought the nonviolent civil disobedience campaign of the civil rights movement and the violent responses of law enforcement to a shocked audience of television viewers. Old media played a similar role to new media that broadcasted footage of Tahir Square in Egypt on YouTube and

Facebook, and of police arresting youth during the Occupy Wall Street movement that began in Zuccotti Park in the financial district of lower Manhattan and spread to cities across the United States. While the movement was criticized for an overemphasis on physical space due to the erection of physical camps, it also had a strong online presence with social media.

Protesters during the 1950s and 1960s did not have Facebook or Twitter to get their message out or as an organizing tool to rally the masses. What they did have was the gradual emergence of the television in American living rooms. First in black and white and then in color, the percentage of homes in the United States that had television almost doubled in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Television earned its place in the psyche during the civil rights movement in similar ways that online virtual networks and communities like Facebook and Twitter are earning their places in the practices of the legal community. The ascendancy of television, like the ascendancy of social media, is increasingly becoming the new mediator of public opinion.

The multidirectionality of the old and new media becomes more apparent over time as both sides in protest movements and social unrest use the old and new media in multiple ways for multiple purposes. When the printing press was invented, word of mouth was the old media, and newspapers were the new media. When television was invented, newspapers were the old media, and anchorman Walter Cronkite was the new media. The Internet and social media have augmented, not usurped, the role of traditional media.

Social Media and Business

Social media have changed the way business is conducted in the United States. Both producers and consumers, as well as those who broker sales and services between them have seen massive changes. Virtual online communities such as Craigslist and Angie's List are two online buying and selling communities that have rivaled traditional advertising venues for used and new goods. Other social media outlets support Craigslist and Angie's List by offering venues to not only communicate with friends and families, but also comment on the quality of the goods and services auctioned in these and other similar outlets. Customers can tweet good deals—and bad ones too. They can gather and share information from Facebook friends before making major investments and purchases. Consumers can also conduct research on products and services with online advice from any number of professional communities.

Businesses interact with customers in ways that were not possible before social media. Previously, businesses might use the postal service or elevated billboards to reach customers. They might buy expensive advertisements in newspapers, trade magazines, and television to reach consumers in larger markets. Today, businesses and organizations leverage a variety of social media tools to reach customers, enhance marketing, and increase brand visibility. In 2012 the U.S. Department of Education launched a new Web site and several redesigned social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to facilitate additional venues for students to learn about financial aid options and college admissions.

Many companies have created special positions designed to interact with and oversee their social media infrastructure. Marketers in these positions focus on emotion and engagement as part of the overall customer experience. They hope to use social media to increase their Twitter following and enhance brand loyalty. Consumers are empowered with access to the social network, but also exposed to spam, fraudulent claims, and educational and literacy concerns.

Social Media and Literacy

How have social media impacted education and literacy in the United States? What does it mean to be a literate person in the 21st century with the proliferation of social networks? According to a 2010 Pew Research Center report, the number of teens in America using social networking Web sites such as Myspace, Facebook, and Twitter has increased from 55 percent in 2006 to 73 percent in 2010. Myspace was the most popular networking Web site reported among teens in the 2012 report. Twitter is the most popular among teenage girls of high school age. Almost all youth in this age group use e-mail, cell phones, and the Internet on a regular basis. Blogging, an activity that requires lengthier and more complete prose, has sharply decreased among teens and young

adults. However, the use of shortcut emoticons like smiley faces, such as ":-)" to communicate on social networking Web sites has increased due to software that requires brief responses.

Worried by this preoccupation with technology, James Billington, the librarian of Congress, expressed concerns about what he called the gradual deterioration of the sentence. Billington was referring to the increasing number of young people who composed their thoughts in disjointed prose suitable for small gadgets and short attention spans. Twitter only allows 140 characters for each message.

Social Media and Minorities

Some researchers and academics have argued that social media may have a negative impact on the academic performance of underserved minority youth in the United States. They ask how disenfranchised students who may already possess skill deficits in traditional reading and writing formats will be affected by technologies that could care less about diagramming a sentence or verb and subject agreement. Others ask if these skills are relevant in the age of spell check and editing software.

Many young people and their parents contend that these skills are not only relevant, but also need further emphasis, according to the National Commission on Writing. Furthermore, a 2008 Pew Research report found that parents and their children still value traditional reading, writing, and grammar, and believe it to be important to their success. However, the report also found that forms of visual rhetoric like shortcut text emoticons and acronyms like "LOL" (laugh out loud), "CYO" (see you online), and the ubiquitous smiley face that are normally reserved for chat rooms and online conversations had crept into teens' school writing assignments, and even their speech.

African American and Hispanic teens reported greater usage of these shortcut icons in their speech and school writing assignments than their white counterparts, according to the National Commission on Writing. They also reported writing in journals and composing rap lyrics more often than their counterparts. While reading and writing scores for African Americans and Hispanics have risen in the last 10 years, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), stubborn gaps still persist.

In the wake of emergent social media technologies like Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, how might the literacy traditions of minority groups change, and what might these changes mean for them and the larger society? Minority or ethnic rhetorical literacy traditions can be challenged and delegitimized if more dominant traditions serve as the model to be emulated. Adam Banks's discussion of the rhetorical traditions of African Americans and their technology access is helpful. Banks argues that addressing issues of social justice is an important rhetorical tradition of African Americans that impacts their access to technology as well as legitimizing how they use it. Whatever the culture, social media literacy is a dynamic concept. This means that social media literacy practices evolve with society.

Social Media Concerns

In addition to the unintended consequences of social media, other concerns have been raised. Some researchers of public interest and public policy have noted that social media's ability to democratize or provide a public commons or square may be overstated. Social media's capacity to remain free and unfettered of politics and the market remains uncertain, and many suggest that more regulation is needed. Regulatory concerns have been raised over intellectual property, copyright infringement, censorship, defamation, trademark and patent infringements, and invasion of privacy. A lawsuit resulted in 2003 when pictures of Barbra Streisand's mansion were posted on a Web site. News of the celebrity lawsuit resulted in a spike of hits to the Web site, thwarting efforts to decrease or prevent viewing of the award-winning actress and singer's private home before the material could be removed. This has been referred to as the Streisand effect. State and federal governments are finding it difficult to pass legislation in this rapidly changing environment.

Using a Creative Commons license is one way that social media outlets disseminate and share copyrighted materials in an ethical manner. There are several types of Creative Commons license. This license provides both user and creator with rights to the of the content protected under law.

These rights allow for sharing and modification of content, depending on the type of Creative Commons license.

Even with a flexible license on how social media content may be used, parents of children and teenagers who use social media have expressed concerns for safety and privacy. In addition to worrying about what their children are doing online, parents are also concerned with who their children are doing it with. A 2012 Pew Internet and American Life Project report found that 72 percent of surveyed parents of teenagers who use social media expressed concern about the nature of their children's behavior on social networking sites. However, their concerns did not end there. Parents also expressed concerns about the impact of online advertising, the divulging of confidential information, sexual predators, and how their child's online behavior might impact their reputation and future standing for college admissions and employment pursuits.

Several recommendations have been offered to parents, caretakers, and schools concerned about safeguarding their children's social media use. Recommendations included limiting their child's Internet time and regularly monitoring the digital footprint of their children. This can be done by participating in the social media sites that their children use. The U.S. federal government also enacted the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 (COPPA). This act places restrictions on persons, organizations, or Web sites collecting sensitive information from children under the age of 13. The act also provides guidelines for seeking parental consent, and places restrictions on pandering and marketing to children under the age of 13. In response to COPPA, Facebook requires that users be over the age of 13 before they can participate on Facebook.

Social Media and Politics

Social media, with their ability to reach and influence millions of people in low-cost and efficient ways, have increasingly been used in political campaigns. The 2008 and 2012 Obama-Biden administration maintains a White House blog that discusses various events taking place in the United States. The blog is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License, allowing more flexibility in how the posted content can be shared or used.

Yet, social media is more widely known for how politicians have leveraged these tools to win elections, advance their agenda, and communicate with constituents. In a March 18, 2008, speech titled "A More Perfect Union," then presidential candidate Barack Obama discussed his views on race. According to the Pew Research Center, the speech received 2.5 million hits on YouTube within the first 72 hours of its delivery. It also generated 4,000 comments in the blogosphere. Obama's 2008 election team heavily utilized social media as a campaign and re-election strategy.

Political commentators and authors Chuck Todd and Sheldon Gawiser attributed the effective use of social media in reaching young voters as one strategy that the Obama campaign team used to win the 2008 presidential election. The 2012 presidential campaigns of President Obama and Governor Mitt Romney, and the 2008 campaign of Senator John McCain also used social media in their outreach efforts. Social commentators reflect on how social media is increasingly being used to reinforce existing political ideas, rather than exposing users to a variety of viewpoints.

Users of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter identified social networking sites as important places for their political and social activism in 2012, according to a report published by the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project. About 36 percent of social networking users identified these sites as very or somewhat important to them in staying informed on political issues. Approximately 26 percent of users felt that social networking sites were important to them in finding and collaborating with politically likeminded people, according to the report. Still others identify these sites as relatively unimportant in their political life.

Helen Bond
Alem Hailu
Howard University

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Canada; Civil Rights; Military-Industrial Complex; Occupy Movement; Social Media, Adoption of; Streisand Effect; Youth Engagement.

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U.S. Pentagon Social Media in Strategic Communications Program

The U.S. Department of Defense has struggled to effectively monitor, implement, and counter the use of social media by both military personnel and organizations, and by terrorist groups. Following a relatively restrictive approach to social media, the Pentagon increasingly acknowledged the importance of social media technologies and the changing nature of contemporary warfare. To this end, in 2011, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) solicited grant proposals for its Social Media in Strategic Communications Program.

Social media technologies are a central component of contemporary military communications. They allow for command-and-control capabilities; improve public relations that connect the Armed Forces with the public, journalists, and other constituencies; and offer a form of recreation for military personnel. The Pentagon has had a complex and consistently changing view of, and approach to, the use of social media by soldiers and the military establishment. In May 2007, following a number of controversial videos posted to YouTube, the Pentagon officially restricted access to social media sites, citing concern over security and bandwidth.

That policy remained in place until February 2010, when Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM) 09-026 increased access under restrictive conditions. DTM 09-026, called the "Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-based Capabilities," allowed for the use of social media by military personnel as long as they did not compromise operational security or access prohibited content. Commanders retained control over implementation of the policy, allowing for restrictions meant to preserve cybersecurity and/or mission readiness at the local level. As noted by Deputy Secretary of Defense William J. Lynn, the directive tried to achieve a balance between security and the benefits provided through "21st-century Internet tools." DTM 09-026 remained in place until August 2012, when it was amended to address the use of .mil e-mail addresses. In particular, a hack of a military dating site raised concerns about network security. Thus, the Pentagon requested that military personnel not use their official e-mail address in accessing commercial social media sites.

Within this fluid new media environment, Pentagon officials increasingly recognized that hostile groups were using social media for spreading misinformation and rumors that were detrimental to military and humanitarian missions. Daniel Bernardi and his colleagues at the Consortium for Strategic Communication at Arizona State University provide several examples of rumors initiated and spread by both insurgent groups and the U.S. military in Iraq, Indonesia, and Singapore in their book. These scholars suggest that rumors are like "narrative IEDs (improvised explosive devices)" that are locally constructed (and therefore highly symbolically potent), but are difficult to detect. More importantly, rumors are transmediated across multiple platforms—from face-to-face communication, to online message boards and social networking sites.

Strategic Social Media

Thus, the Defense Department began to explore strategic uses of social media. It had always used social media to provide information on military affairs, including a YouTube site dedicated to engagement in Iraq (MNF-Iraq), the use of Twitter for updating policies and procedures, and the use of video games for training and recruitment. However, the focus began to shift to uses of social media beyond public relations and information dissemination. The Pentagon's "Perception Manager,"

John Rendon, had at one point emphasized the Defense Department's effort to devise, implement, and manipulate Internet algorithms meant to help track and shape "belief sets."

Soon thereafter, the Pentagon's Social Media in Strategic Communications Program (SMISC) was revealed in July 2011. Sponsored and facilitated by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), it involved a call for sponsored research projects of $42 million over three years, and was intended to develop the use of social media tools more strategically in cyberwarfare and information-security endeavors. The program will focus on areas where troops are deployed, with an emphasis on quickly identifying and dispelling dangerous rumors or persuasive campaigns. The call addressed the creation and testing of algorithms and other applicable experiments such as massively multi-player online role playing games (MMORPGs).

Grant Solicitation

In the grant solicitation announcement, DARPA recognized the proliferation of social media and social networking sites, as well as the growing use of mobile devices and associated applications. The solicitation narrative also recognized that military operations and the "nature of conflict" more generally were rapidly changing in a digital media environment. Moreover, the solicitation acknowledged that the military must more strategically and methodically use social media. In particular, the military intended to privilege projects involving three areas: (1) the detection and tracking of misinformation and/or memes, (2) the identification of persuasive campaigns and their originators, and (3) the crafting of counterpersuasive messages.

The grant solicitation provided an example of a detrimental rumor that took place in a current war zone. Military officials happened to be monitoring social media, and were able to dispel the rumor before it compromised operational security. However, the incident highlighted that such methods and tools were currently "dependent on chance." Thus, new efforts must be developed that overcome a "reliance on luck" through systematized and/or automatic approaches.

In the grant solicitation, DARPA further stated that the program was meant to identify and track ideas and other risks spreading via online communities. Concurrently, the Pentagon planned to use such online communities to launch counter-information campaigns against groups like the Taliban. Such proactive responses helped to control rumors that functioned to prevent mission and/or humanitarian success.

According to the DARPA Web site, the program was meant to "prevent strategic surprise." DARPA officials noted that the goal was to develop a "new science" of social media technologies and networks, including tools meant to support "efforts of human operators" working to detect and counter deception and rumor campaigns by terrorists or other insurgent groups. Such efforts would focus on "linguistic cues," information and opinion generation and flow, notable memes, or cultural narratives. Successful research endeavors would allow military personnel to model and analyze both online communities and content, with the ultimate goal of launching timely and effective counterpersuasion.

DARPA also sought proposals to create an environment in which "controlled experiments" using big datasets could be explored and engaged by researchers seeking to test developmental software and/or tools. The organization noted that such environments could take the form of MMORPGs or "closed social media networks" of people who willingly participate in data acquisition and analysis procedures. The SMISC program identified four specific approaches: (1) detect, classify, measure and track the formation, development and spread of ideas and concepts/memes, as well as purposeful or deceptive messaging and misinformation; (2) recognize persuasive campaign structures in order to influence various operations across social media sites and online communities; (3) identify concept/campaign originators and their intent, and measuring the impact of a specific persuasive campaign; and (4) craft and disseminate countermessaging and/or campaigns.

Thus, the SMISC research program involved cluster areas around linguistic and narrative mining and analysis, meme detection, community modeling, and content generation. Specifically, three technical areas were identified in the grant solicitation. First, the algorithm and software development area sought proposals for the tracking of misinformation spread via online

A U.S. Army public affairs officer works with an enlisted soldier to add photos and news about a field exercise to a heavy combat brigade's blog in Korea in 2009. By February 2010, Directive-Type Memorandum 09-026, called the "Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-Based Capabilities" memorandum, allowed military personnel to use an increasing amount of social media with certain restrictions and under the control of their commanders at the local level.

sites and communities. This would allow the military to provide counterpersuasion to such campaigns. Second, the data provision and management area sought proposals for experiments on large amounts of data, with the ultimate goal of testing software developed in Technical Area 1. One such method involved the creation of MMORPGs to test the aforementioned tools. Third, the algorithm integration, test, and evaluation area sought proposals that would develop metrics for assessing the performance of tools and software.

Winners of the grant funding included the Center for Complex Networks and Systems at the University of Indiana, in partnership with the University of Michigan, who were awarded $2 million for their proposal "Detecting Early Signatures of Persuasion in Information Cascades"; the Information Sciences Institute at the University of Southern California, which was awarded $6 million for their study "Situational Awareness for Social Media: Theories, Models, and Algorithms"; and the University of California Riverside, in collaboration with Rutgers University and IBM for their proposal "Understanding and Utilizing Context-Aware Information Dissemination in Social Media." Overall, such programs will contribute to a more strategic, intentional, and successful use of social media by the U.S. Pentagon.

Christina Smith
California State University

See Also: Cyber-Jihad; Department of Homeland Security Media Monitoring Initiative; Meme

Mapping; Military-Industrial Complex; Pentagon Digital Engagement Team; Presidential Policy Directive 20; Terrorism.

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USAID Impact Blog

The USAID Impact blog is a social media initiative of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). the Web site is hosted and maintained by the U.S. government. As described and detailed on the blog, its main purpose is to create and share stories related to the success, failure, and evolving progress of individuals who are employed by and often conduct field work for USAID.

The blog is specifically designed to create, frame, disseminate, and detail the role of USAID in helping the world's poor through narrative and visual storytelling. The blog's aim to act as a means of U.S. diplomacy, domestic and foreign, also emerges as a prominent and salient purpose of using this medium of communication. According to USAID's overarching mission shared on the main Web site:

> The U.S. has a long history of working with individuals around the world that, among other things, are living in poverty, lack food security, do not have access to clean water, and struggle to prosper.

Providing aid to these individuals and communities by USAID reflects U.S. citizens' compassion and support of human dignity. USAID's Web site also acknowledges that aid in part advances U.S. foreign policy interests. However, as some scholars have noted, the furthering of policy interests and stakes by providing potentially lifesaving food, water, medicine, and related supplies in exchange for U.S. political gain and/or to protect national interests has been critiqued by development scholars and foreign governments alike for its potential for creating an unequal and imbalanced power relationship between the United States and the people and governments of developing countries.

In 1961, under John F. Kennedy's administration, USAID was created in part as a response to a consensus formed at the highest levels of the U.S. government that international development is integral to the shared and mutually beneficial interests of an interconnected planet. In 2013, spending less than 1 percent of the total federal budget, USAID worked to provide aid to over 100 countries worldwide. This aid is particularly important given that over 1 billion people live in poverty, and threats posed by climate change are mounting. USAID also carries out U.S. foreign policy, which is highly value laden, by promoting stable and free societies, creating markets and trade partners for the United States, and fostering good will abroad via activities related to economic prosperity, strengthening democracy, protecting human rights, improving global health, working toward food security, furthering education, and helping societies prevent and resolve conflicts.

The USAID Impact blog is designed to further the development of good will created around the work that is undertaken and completed in the developing world by USAID. Recent examples from the blog's homepage of issues covered include "What I Saw and Learned in Southeast Asia and Why I Left Inspired" by Chelsea Clinton (former President Bill Clinton's daughter), "MCHIP's Respectful Maternity Care Toolkit Promotes Positive Attitudes in the Care of Women and Newborns," "Proof That the U.S. Government, NGOs and Activists are Working Together on Nutrition," and the caption from the most recent "Photo of the Week" was "Nutrient-Rich Crops for Kenyan Children." The headlines generally appear to convey messages related to

underlying U.S. values, optimistic development progress, and encouraging outcomes—and all suggest a win-win approach to this form of international development and foreign policy.

It is unclear who specifically moderates the blog and/or who is the central party that oversees content and blog comment moderation, though it may be assumed that an employee in the Information Center (its contact information is listed on site) at USAID may direct it. The blog has a general disclaimer that states that the blog provides external links for the sole purpose of the readers' information and convenience. It further states that when readers select a link to an external Web site, they are leaving the usaid.gov site and are therefore subject to the security and privacy policies of the external Web site.

The homepage of the blog has social media links to Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, LinkedIn, and Twitter accounts, and an really simple syndication (RSS) feed page that when clicked on further state this disclaimer and make the reader aware that the content on these pages is not sponsored by the U.S. government or USAID. These links also help support ways in which the U.S. government has begun to understand the role of social media tools as providing important platforms for message framing, content disbursement, and online diplomacy action.

The blog also has a comment policy that states that it is a moderated blog, which means all comments will be reviewed before posting, which allows USAID to maintain some control over how their content is understood and interpreted. In addition, the policy puts forth an expectation that blog participants will treat each other, as well as the USAID Agency and their employees, with respect. They state that they will not post comments that contain abusive or vulgar language; offensive terms that target specific racial or ethnic groups; or personal attacks of any kind.

It is also made clear that all references to other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), products, services, or individuals that remain on the site are not intended to reflect the opinion of USAID, the United States, or its officers, and do not represent the significance, priority, or importance to be given the referenced entity. Finally, the blog states that its use policy is subject to amendment or modification at any time to ensure that it is consistently used with its intended purpose as "a limited forum."

Conclusion

USAID Impact blog is a reflection of the U.S. government's growing understanding that diplomacy, especially involving international aid and foreign policy, must continue to be created, framed, and moderated in a social media era, where information and images are often able to be mass produced and disseminated by anyone.

Courtney Vail Fletcher
University of Portland

See Also: Blogs, Role in Politics; Developing Nations; Digital Diplomacy; Disaster Relief; Foreign Policy; Human Rights.

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User-Generated Content

Over the past decade, new media technologies have allowed the general public to produce, publish, and disseminate content through increasingly interconnected Web services.

The term *user-generated content* refers generally to content that is produced and disseminated by unpaid nonprofessionals. Although there is no formal definition of user-generated content, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has written that user-generated content is creatively produced by active Web contributors, independent of journalistic practices and professional routines.

Types

User-generated content comes in a number of forms (e.g., text, video, audio, and mobile phone photography) and is disseminated through a variety of channels, including blogs, wikis, podcasts, news sites, social networking sites, customer review sites, and comment and discussion boards.

Despite their many forms, platforms for user-generated content are generally asynchronous and emphasize content and context over appearance and chronology. For instance, Facebook and Twitter users create personal profiles and share information on their own and each other's profiles, Flickr users document events by uploading and sharing photos with family and friends, and YouTube users freely upload, share, and provide commentary on videos, from a two-minute borough council speech recorded on a camera phone to a 150-minute self-produced documentary on the two-party system in American politics.

Growth

Before user-generated content became mainstream in the mid-2000s, political communication was primarily disseminated through professionally sponsored or journalistic outlets. These sites differ from traditional modes of dissemination in a number of important ways. First, they are easy to use and require little training. Second, they minimize the costs of and barriers to marketplace participation. Third, there are no space limitations on wikis and collaborative project sites. Fourth, as communication technologies such as digital cameras, digital video recorders, and smartphones have become more widely available and affordable to a larger percentage of the population, the number of American households with Internet access and broadband capability has exponentially grown in the past decade.

Recognizing these factors, many traditional media outlets have implemented interactive user-generated platforms, such as CNN's iReport, which often feature untrained, unpaid social media users and young people born after the advent of widespread digital technology ("digital natives") who are (1) more willing to share personal information and (2) prefer the colloquial and easily digestible information for which these platforms are known.

User-Generated Content and Politics

For many politicians and political campaigns, user-generated content is a cost-effective way to engage voters at the grassroots level. By encouraging citizens to contribute content, campaigns develop agendas and use the feedback to strategize more costly traditional techniques. Also, for many campaigns, the possibility of information "going viral," or multiplying quickly across many interconnected platforms, outweighs the unpredictability and questionable credibility of much user-generated content.

One of the highest profile examples of the influence of user-generated content occurred in the Arab Spring of late 2010 and 2011, in which widespread protests led to the overthrow of the ruling powers of several Middle Eastern and north African nations. Social networks such as Facebook and Twitter were used to announce protests and facilitate communication among protesters and the outside world. Content sharing of user-generated content became a source for news about and perspectives of the uprisings that were underreported by the mainstream media.

The reach of user-generated content is also felt in American politics. As a presidential candidate in 2008, Barack Obama used social media and user-generated content to an unprecedented extent, and according to YouTube Politics, only 5 percent of videos uploaded to YouTube about 2012 American presidential candidates Mitt Romney and Barack Obama were from official media sources. The remaining 95 percent were user generated.

David DeIuliis
Janie Harden Fritz
Duquesne University

See Also: Arab Spring; Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Virtual; Citizen Journalism; Wikis and Collaborative Project Web Sites.

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Ushahidi

Ushahidi is a Web site and software company that promotes social accountability via information gathering and interactive mapping. Named for the Swahili word for "witness" or "testimony," Ushahidi was developed in 2007 following Kenya's disputed presidential election. The Web site was first used to map incidents of violence as the Kenyan crisis unfolded. Ushahidi has since resulted in several additional products, and has been used around the world by social activists and citizen journalists.

Origins

Ushahidi was first proposed by Ory Okolloh, a Kenyan activist, lawyer, and blogger who had prior experience in the field of digital activism. In 2006, Okolloh cofounded the parliamentary watchdog site Mzalendo. Swahili for "patriot," Mzalendo systematically recorded bills and speeches in order to increase government accountability. The following year, violence erupted in Kenya following a disputed presidential election between incumbent President Mwai Kibaki and his opponent Raila Odinga. Odinga supporters alleged electoral manipulation, resulting in a political, economic, and humanitarian crisis throughout the country.

In response to the Kenyan crisis, Okolloh worked alongside three other Kenyan residents—Erik Hersman, Juliana Rotich, and David Kobia—to combine crowdsourcing with social activism. The result has since been coined "activist mapping": the ability for local citizens to create an interactive map or geospace by submitting firsthand reports and observations via their mobile devices.

The Kenyan crisis lasted a total of two months. During this time, Ushahidi was used to report and chart acts of violence throughout the country. Kenyan journalists and international media verified eyewitness testimony generated by Ushahidi. A subsequent study by the Kennedy School of Government determined that Ushahidi offered more comprehensive reporting than Kenya's mainstream media. Ushahidi was also found to be more reliable at reporting rural information and nonfatal violence.

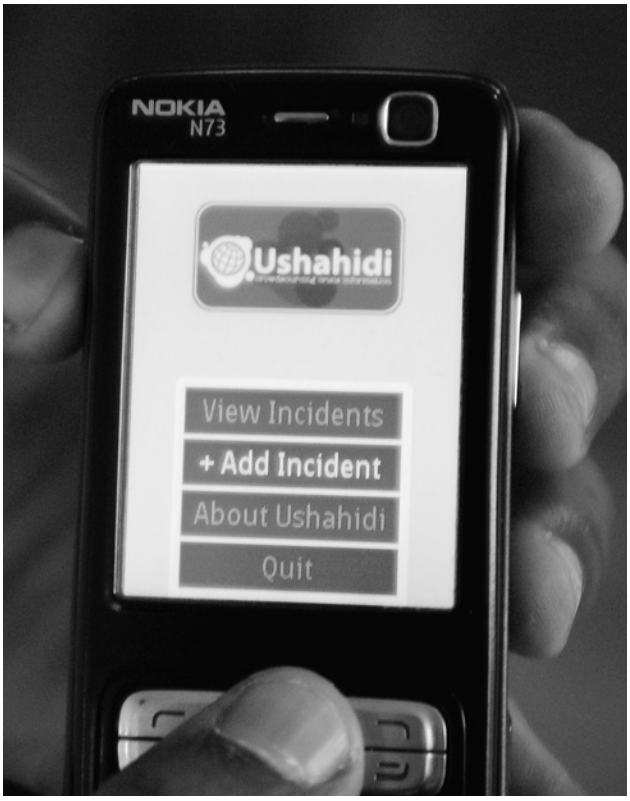
Products

Following its initial use in Kenya, Ushahidi has since been developed as an open source platform, resulting in a variety of additional products. One such product, SwiftRiver, is a collection of data-gathering products that complement Ushahidi's interactive mapping technology. The goal of SwiftRiver is to help people make sense of a large amount of information in a brief period of time. SwiftRiver does so by structuring data, filtering and prioritizing content, and adding spatial context to information.

A second product that has resulted from Ushahidi is Crowdmap. As an activist alternative to sites like Facebook and Foursquare, Crowdmap allows people to "check in with a purpose." Through Crowdmap, users can quickly indicate their location and add more detail about their check-in later. Following Ushahidi's success, cofounder Okolloh accepted a position as manager of policy for Africa at Google.

Use

In more recent years, Ushahidi has been utilized around the world to record acts of violence, upheaval, organized resistance, and even natural disasters. In 2008, Ushahidi tracked anti-immigration violence in South Africa that left 62 people dead. In 2009, Ushahidi chronicled pharmaceutical stockouts in East Africa, political elections in India and Mexico, and the Gaza war between Israel and Palestinian militants.



A smartphone app developed in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2008 for Ushahidi. It allows mobile phone users to view and report incidents directly from their phones, generating interactive maps.

In 2010, Ushahidi traced earthquakes in Haiti and Chile, as well as winter storms in Washington, D.C., and wildfires in Russia. Measuring 7.0 on the moment magnitude scale (MMS), the Haiti earthquake marked one of the first joint efforts made by Ushahidi. In cooperation with the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and the International Network of Crisis Mappers, the Ushahidi Haiti Project received nearly 40,000 eyewitness reports immediately following the 2010 Haiti earthquake. During Washington, D.C.'s, winter storms, Ushahidi was used to map road outages; during Russia's wildfire season, the technology was used to create a "map of help" for volunteer workers.

Finally, Ushahidi was used in 2011 throughout India, Japan, Libya, Australia, Macedonia, New Zealand, the United States, and the Middle East, among others. In New Zealand, Ushahidi used the #eqnz hashtag to indicate locations for food, water, toilets, fuel, ATMs, and medical care. In the Middle East, Ushahidi was used by prodemocracy demonstrators to communicate ground conditions.

Conclusion

Ushahidi was developed as an interactive Web site to map incidents of violence following Kenya's 2007 presidential election. Swahili for "witness" or "testimony," Ushahidi uses information gathering and interactive mapping to promote citizen journalism, digital activism, and social accountability. Since its initial development, Ushahidi has resulted in a variety of products, such as SwiftRiver and Crowdmap; it has been used around the world by "activist mappers" who submit their firsthand reports and observations via mobile devices.

J. Jacob Jenkins
California State University

See Also: Africa, sub-Saharan; Campaigns, Grassroots; Disaster Relief; Election Monitoring; Foreign Policy; Geo-Locational Enabling; Geotagging; International Social Media and Politics; Israeli–Palestinian Conflict; Mobile Connectivity, Trends in Politics and; Web Mapping and Online Politics.

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V

Value

Value is a generic term that may refer to a personal or cultural level, and may be used in domains such as ethics, sociology, and economics. In the context of social media and digital communication, however, it is interesting to think of values in terms of exchange and sharing. In other words, what values do people attach to the digital objects that they share via social mediating technologies? This question becomes increasingly pertinent with the potential convergence of producers and consumers that becomes possible with the dispersal of media technologies.

In an attempt to outline a typology of values, one may start with the notions of exchange value and use value. Exchange value, an idea used in both Marxist political theory and mainstream anthropology, refers to the value of a media object in terms of what it can be exchanged for (in monetary or trading equivalents). While the notion of exchange value could be dismissed in relation to the online sharing of digital media objects—on the basis that digital media objects are often not paid for—it can be argued that exchange value is still relevant in "microeconomic" terms in, for example, digital music stores and subscription services such as iTunes or Spotify. Also, the fact that digital media objects may not always be exchanged for money, but traded for other digital media objects in various types of peer-to-peer networks, also signifies the viability of exchange value as an analytical concept. Use value refers to the practical utility an object has to a person (i.e., what it can/will be used for). This may of course vary depending on what type of media object is transferred (e.g., a music file, program, or text document), but can still shed light on intentions and specific uses of digital media.

However, the sharing of media objects in social networking services is not always as immediate or contractual as use or exchange values imply. As shown in market research, consumer studies, and design studies, other values, often more interpersonal, convivial, or collective, come to play an important part in these contexts. Studies of sharing in "noncomputerized" social contexts (e.g., reciprocal or altruistic gift giving) emphasize a different type of value that people attach to objects, namely social bonding value. Social bonding value, which is often referred to as the most important value in gift-giving research, is concerned with the social ties between people and how these are managed and maintained through the exchange of goods and services. A question that has so far received fairly little academic attention is how these values differ when the shared object is a digital media object, and the context is a computer-mediated, semipublic social network. However, a growing body of research

is addressing social bonding values as important parts of mediated sharing.

There are also additional "soft" values to be discussed in relation to social media. Research in interaction design, economic anthropology, and sociology, has come to emphasize ethical and aesthetical values. An ethical value relates to the risks and responsibilities that a user may perceive when using or sharing a particular media object. It could relate to, for example, social justice, truth, democracy, or principles of equality. The aesthetical value relates to a sensory and immediate experience. Ideally, the aesthetical value is connected to an affective experience that brings about a sensation of beauty, fulfillment, and purpose.

By conceptualizing value as something that can be attached to media *objects*, new lines of inquiry are opened up. However, this is in no way saying that objects dictate the surrounding practices or values, or that media objects are blessed with a certain essence. Rather, the examination of them as central objects can help explore the *relation* between specific media objects and the surrounding values and practices. By including not only exchange and use values, but also the more soft values that people ascribe to media objects, one may further the analysis of media objects as "technology-mediated cultural containers." Accordingly, a careful consideration of such cultural containers has strong potential to shed light on issues and practices of social meaning.

In summary, value is an important concept in the critical study of technology, and social media in particular. Value is produced and negotiated in the intersection between producers and consumers, and is expressed in the way digital media objects are transferred and shared, for example. While the bulk of research has focused on use and exchange value, there are cross-disciplinary influences that have more recently emphasized the importance of social bonding, ethical, and aesthetic values.

Jörgen Skågeby
Stockholm University

See Also: Cyberculture; Economic and Social Justice; Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Social Media Sharing, P2P, Bit Torrent.

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Video Privacy Protection Act

The Video Privacy Protection Act (VPPA) protects against the collection and disclosure of information regarding an individual's records of video cassette rentals (it was later interpreted that the law included protection of DVD, video game, and on-demand video rentals). The U.S. Congress passed the law in 1988 in response to the congressional hearings for U.S. Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork. During the nomination process, a list of Bork's video rentals was published in a Washington, D.C., newspaper. Members of Congress were concerned about their records becoming public, and quickly passed legislation that made such information private. The leaking of such information can lead to both civil and criminal liability, including punishment of up to $2,500. There are several exceptions to the law. For example, an individual can consent in writing to the release of rental records. Companies can also access information about genre preferences to use in marketing efforts. Police can also access records with a valid warrant. Theoretically, the government's investigatory powers under the USA PATRIOT Act would allow it to circumvent the VPPA in cases of national security.

Some critics argue that the VPPA was a hasty, ill-advised overreaction to the Bork incident. Critics claim that in the process, the U.S. Congress singled out one industry without considering the consequences. For example, the records

of video purchases or rentals from public libraries were not protected. Such critics argue that the government reacts impulsively whenever there are such newsworthy controversies, and warn that the freewheeling Internet could suffer the same ill fate if users are not careful with rights to privacy and other civil liberties.

With the advent of social media and data-mining, new lawsuits have arisen under the once dormant VPPA. Judicial interpretations of the VPPA found it to be technologically neutral. This had prevented m-commerce providers from publically displaying an individuals' rental record online. As a result, several video streaming services and social media sites have been sued for violating the law. In 2008, a suit was filed against Blockbuster when it released rental records to Facebook. In 2012, Hulu also faced a class action lawsuit for violating the VPPA when it displayed rental records on similar social media sites.

In 2009, a suit was filed against Netflix after it released information through its Netflix Prize program. The costly lawsuits ($9 million in damages), in addition to its inability to use social media marketing, led to Netflix suffering a 14 percent decrease in net profits for the fourth quarter of 2011. As a result, Netflix started a campaign to get its customers to contact their congressional representatives about amending the VPPA. Netflix argued that people should be able to know what other social media users are renting and what they recommend, as is allowed in Canada and Latin America. Furthermore, this prohibition on sharing records was not equitable because music services, such as Spotify, could share records. In response, U.S. Representative Robert Goodlatte (R-VA) introduced a bill to amend the VPPA to allow for rental records to be released if any consent is given by a consumer, not a written consent that was needed under the original law. If the law was amended, then companies such as Netflix could share information whenever a consumer watches a movie, whereas currently, the onus is upon the customer to share the information. The new law would have made the rental of a movie on Netflix the equivalent of a "like" on Facebook. Critics of the bill argued that large corporations would abuse the law by hiding consent in the terms of agreement, thus customers would unwittingly give up their rights to privacy.

In 2012, the U.S. House of Representatives drew up a new bill, H.R. 6671, and it passed both the House and U.S. Senate. It was signed into law by President Obama in January 2013. The new bill allows for video providers to gather consent through the Internet, and the consent is valid for up to two years (unless the consumer withdraws). Also, the consent must be conspicuous and cannot be hidden in the fine print of terms of agreement. Senator Paul Simon's words during the original hearings on the VPPA in 1988 echo the concerns still apparent today:

> There is no denying that the computer age has revolutionized our world. . . . Yet, as we continue to move ahead, we must protect time honored values that are so central to this society, particularly our right to privacy. . . . Every day Americans are forced to provide to businesses and others personal information without having any control over where that information goes. These records are a window into our loves, likes, and dislikes.

The new law is a response to ever-changing technology and privacy concerns. Laws regulating access to online information were slow to develop, and a disparate assortment of laws is now on the books. Unfortunately, many of them have been made outdated and ineffective by changing technologies. The question still remains as to what information should be made available to the public on social media, and correspondingly, what information government authorities should have access to without a person's knowledge or consent.

Jason Zenor
State University of New York, Oswego

See Also: Electronic Privacy Information Center; Federal Privacy Act; Privacy; Search and Seizure Law and Policy.

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Viral Marketing

Viral marketing refers to the application of traditional word-of-mouth marketing to the online environment. Originally developed by Steve Jurvetson and Tim Draper in 1997, the term is used to describe online techniques designed to generate peer-to-peer conversation and buzz about a company, brand, product, or service. A message that contains something of value or appeal is diffused throughout members of a given social network, and ideally across networks, in an exponential fashion, much like the spread of a virus in medical parlance. The rapid adoption of digital and social media tools by politicians has led to an increased visibility and impact of viral marketing efforts in political campaigns, particularly since the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign. Common viral marketing techniques include, but are not limited to, a systematic and strategic deployment of viral e-mail messages, YouTube videos, blogs, microblogs (such as Twitter), social networking Web sites, podcasts, online games, and text messages.

While word-of-mouth marketing, broadly defined as the sharing of information about a product between a consumer and members of their social network, has been an important topic of research for several decades, the interest and application of viral marketing rapidly grew in recent years with the emergence of Web 2.0, social media, and the diffusion of mobile or handheld devices. These technological evolutions not only fostered a consumer culture that encourages peer-to-peer sharing and participation, but more importantly, they created an online environment that allows individuals to transcend any geographic and time constraints to interact and maintain relationships with friends, family members, or other members of their social networks.

Viral marketing can be characterized as enhanced word-of-mouth communication that has several advantages. First, viral marketing has a much higher diffusion reach and speed. Traditional word-of-mouth marketing relies mostly on face-to-face communication with close friends, and is therefore limited by the size of a person's social network and physical boundaries. In contrast, viral marketing can instantly reach a much larger group of people, one can easily tap into his or her strong-tie and weak-tie social connections with the push of a button on his or her computer or smartphone.

Second, success in viral marketing is easier to monitor. Whereas the spread of information or messages in traditional word-of-mouth is difficult to measure because interpersonal conversation leaves little to no tangible records, one of the biggest advantages of online marketing is its tracking ability. Digital transmission of information leaves a digital trail that can be documented by social media monitoring or search analytic services. Ultimately, the data collected during the viral diffusion process leads to better analysis and evaluation of a viral campaign on tangible communication (such as awareness and attitude change) or business (such as sales and referrals) outcomes.

Finally, viral marketing creates added value for the brand or product. While traditional word-of-mouth marketing generates conversation about a brand or product, a person's engagement with the brand or product may come to a stop once the face-to-face communication ends. The nonlinear nature of the Web and the interactive capability of social media that viral marketing relies on can create opportunities for brand engagement and consumer interaction well after the viral message is received. Further, because journalists and news organizations are increasingly turning to social media for information, viral marketing campaigns can also generate additional coverage and publicity in traditional mass media.

Characteristics and Advantages

A successful viral marketing campaign shares two important characteristics. First, the initial "seeding" of the virus must be done with the right people. Consistent with Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld's two-step flow theory of communication, ideas flow from a source (including brands, media, or celebrities) to opinion leaders, and from them to a wider population. In the context of viral marketing, the opinion leaders could be active media users who have strong professional expertise or reputation. Otherwise, they could also be individuals with a large number of social connections who also tend to act as connectors between different social groups. As opinion leaders exert influences on their networks to share the viral message, its dissemination is amplified and can exponentially grow.

The second critical factor lies in the viral message. In order to prompt the forwarding or sharing behavior, the message must present some value to the receiver. Such value could manifest in the forms of information, functionality, entertainment, or emotion. The classic example that Steve Jurvetson and Tim Draper cited in 1997 was the initial growth of Hotmail.com, which included free e-mail, account offers on all outgoing e-mail and thus spread the message within the sender's social network. More recent examples of viral marketing tend to contain humor, sexuality, violence, or interactive elements that are used to add a sense of value to the receiver.

When successfully done, viral marketing can provide a number of advantages to an organization. First, it incurs very little expense because peer-to-peer sharing is free. Therefore, viral marketing may significantly reduce or even eliminate the need to buy media space for promotional purposes. Second, since viral messages come to individuals from their friends or family, they may be viewed as more credible than traditional marketing messages. Finally, individuals forwarding viral messages are more likely to know the interests and preferences of the recipients, thus making the targeting more effective and allowing the message to better break through the media clutter.

Use in Political Campaigns

There have been numerous instances where viral marketing messages or campaigns became an important part of the contemporary political process. The political use of viral marketing can be approached from three perspectives: (1) viral marketing efforts implemented by politicians, particularly during electoral campaigns; (2) viral marketing efforts implemented by civic organization

Posters promoting the viral video campaign Kony 2012 *in Warsaw, Poland, in April 2012. This 30-minute documentary film was produced by Invisible Children, a nonprofit charity that sought to bring to light the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and its leader Joseph Kony in Uganda. It broke all viral viewing records with more than 100 million views in less than a week, and raised $20 million.*

or grassroots groups to advocate certain policies or causes; and (3) user-generated content that has "gone viral" with the implicit or explicit intent to influence politics.

One of the earliest examples of politicians tapping into the power of viral marketing was Howard Dean. In his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination during the 2004 presidential primary campaigns, Dean utilized Meetup.com to organize scores of passionate supporters, who went on to spread the word and recruit their friends and families to Dean's campaign. The campaign gained momentum on the ground, and received more mainstream media coverage. Eventually, Dean failed to win the Democratic primary, but his campaign made political history. In subsequent political races, politicians adopted and improved upon various aspects of Dean's Web strategy. For example, nearly every e-mail message that George W. Bush's campaign sent out in 2004 provided recipients a way to forward the content to other people.

The second way that viral marketing efforts may influence politics is when they are used by civic organization or grassroots groups to advocate certain policies or causes. For instance, one of the most popular videos to go viral on the Web in recent years was the *Kony 2012* short film produced by Invisible Children, a nonprofit charity aimed at bringing awareness to the activities of the Lord's Resistance Army and its leader Joseph Kony in Uganda. The 30-minute documentary incorporated elements of information, human interest, and emotional appeals. It took only six days from its initial release to reach 100 million viewers, making it the most viral video in history. Despite success on the Web, the organization failed to create much offline activity in its "Cover the Night" event, and the campaign got lost in the media clutter. Other examples in which viral marketing became an integral part of social movement or advocacy efforts include the Arab Spring and Occupy Movement; both took advantage of the reach and effectiveness of viral techniques in social media in their push for social change.

Finally, in contrast to the two scenarios descried above where viral marketing messages are purposefully designed and distributed by an organization to achieve a strategic purpose, the last category can be attributed to the Web 2.0 culture of user-generated content and the incessant passion to "upload" and share everything. With the proliferation of camera phones and video recording and editing devices, many political spectacles on the campaign trail, such as speeches, rallies, or even television and radio interviews all become potential viral materials when political gaffes, missteps, and embarrassing political moments are digitally captured and uploaded by audience members.

These amateur videos may originally be intended for viewing by friends or family. However, the viral elements that these messages contain (such as humor, surprising information, and ridicule) allow them to become viral in an unexpected and accidental fashion, creating real political consequences for candidates. Some examples that fell in this category include Senator George Allen and his "macaca" comment in the 2006 Virginia Senate race, and Governor Rick Perry, who forgot the name of the federal agencies he wished to cut during a televised debate of the 2012 GOP presidential primary. A video of Governor Mitt Romney's unscripted "47 percent" comment in a fundraiser created a firestorm for his campaign.

Conclusion

Whether used in the context of electioneering or facilitating social movements and carried out in a strategic or organic fashion, relatively low-cost and high-impact viral marketing messages represent an "equalizer" that could potentially level the playing field for many political actors. However, as seen in numerous examples in the past, effective viral marketing alone does not necessarily lead to success, suggesting that ultimately politics occur on the ground, not on the Web.

Politicians and organizations must find ways to translate the publicity and passion generated online into meaningful and significant offline actions. One of the many reasons that Barack Obama won the 2008 presidential election was his campaign's ability to convert online followers into donations and votes. Similar arguments can be made about the success of the Arab Spring revolutions and failure of Invisible Children to create turnouts for offline events. An actual organizational network is the critical factor that carries the success of viral marketing efforts to the next level.

Although viral marketing is a promotional technique once primarily used in the business realm to promote a brand, product, or service, the adoption of social media tools by politicians have made them important communication and strategic tools. With the rapid growth of social media and digital communication technologies, one can expect that viral marketing will continue to shape the contemporary political process in different shapes and forms.

Kevin Y. Wang
Mark A. Rademacher
Butler University

See Also: Arab Spring; Campaigns, Presidential (2004); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Meetup.com; Occupy Movement; Peer-to-Peer; Podcasts; Social Networking Web Sites; Strong-Tie and Weak-Tie Social Connections; Web 2.0; YouTube.

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Viral Seed/Viral Lift

Viral seed/viral lift refers to a ratio between total and paid clicks on an online media asset. Viral seed refers to paid clicks, or clicks coming from advertising that a campaign paid for. Viral lift is the total number of clicks on the asset. As a ratio, lift is described as the total number of views divided by the number of paid views. A ratio of one would suggest that there was no viral lift. Viral lift is used to understand the placement of a story on a Web site and the propensity for that information to be shared by others. This is important for understanding social media and political communication because it provides a clear way of relating paid content to word of mouth. In this sense, the viral lift-seed ratio is not an approach to purchasing advertising but is a specific metric that can be used to evaluate the diffusion of information.

A popular form of online advertising pricing is cost-per-click, or CPC. This only charges an advertiser when a user clicks, which is distinct from impression- or CPM-based pricing, where an advertiser pays for the number of times their advertising appears on a Web site, regardless of user activity. The viral lift ratio provides a way of evaluating the number of clicks that a media element has received, and the propensity for that media to generate additional unique impressions outside the context of other conversion goals.

Often, conversion goals involve tracking a user's progression through a Web site experience until they reach a particular point, such as a donation receipt page. In many political contexts, the goal may be to spread information, without necessarily tracking a particular form of conversion task. In this sense, the benefits of the number of views that a campaign is paying for, through clicks, can be refined into a relatively simple number.

The viral lift-seed concept is situated between impression- and click-based pricing, depending on the pricing scheme employed for planting the viral seed. Effective use of analytics is critical for calculating viral lift; sources of traffic to the advertisement or post need to be documented for further analysis. Calculating viral lift can be done using a number of analytics platforms, or even by hand, given the basic data. Multiple links can be placed on different paid media platforms pointing toward a single content element, which would require that a campaign independently track their viral lift among multiple seed location vendors.

Seeding Strategy

An important lesson from other marketing areas that can be applied to social political communication is that the quality of seeded content is more

important than the quantity of content. Depending on the seed venue, it is possible or even likely that users will hide or block the seed advertisement if it is of inferior quality or oversaturated, defeating the purpose of the campaign. Unlike short advertisements on microblogging sites, content delivered via viral seed Web sites is typically longer, including more rich content elements. The more engaging and creative the experience, the more likely it will achieve lift. Given the dramatically different aesthetic potentials of different viral seed points, correctly tuning a campaign for a particular audience segment and medium is important. For example, a popular culture aggregator site would be ideal for a collage or stream of images into which an advertisement is embedded. This same strategy would be impossible with a microblog such as Twitter.

There are a number of possible viral seeding strategies. Generally, the best strategy for paid diffusion utilizes a hub of online social activity, often an aggregator or similar Web site, which has regular traffic and is suited for delivering information in a style suited to the campaign. Seed strategies are very similar to conventional social advertising strategies, using paid inclusion on pages or feeds. Seeders attempt to target persons who are important within their social networks, as well as individuals who are likely to push information between networks, or "bridges." Selecting the correct sites for seeding is critical to the success of a viral advertising campaign. It is important to note that if the seed is widely deployed or broadcasted, the efficiency and word-of-mouth gains of the lift-seed model will be substantially diminished.

The concept of viral seed and lift runs counter to approaches to viral diffusion that would see viral spread as a spontaneous phenomena. Viral information spread is posited through the lift ratio as the reaction of publics to exposure to high-quality content. This can be useful in communication contexts where a clear return on investment is critical, and can counter the idea of online viral communication as a perpetual motion machine or source of free money or publicity. It is also important to note that the success of analytics and campaigns based on viral lift could increase the propensity of sites to curtail the use of free features, which might displace paid viral seed. In this sense, access to appropriate viral seed is a prerequisite for effectively using the viral lift ratio to evaluate the success of an advertising campaign.

If adequate documentation has been produced, a user can effectively look for trends in the lift of the information. This allows fine tuning of the deployment of the viral seed. In an ideal situation, the lift would continue long after the seed had ended, because of the quality of the message and distribution to relevant members of the public: in this sense, the information can truly be considered viral. Continued access to the message or advertisement after the seed period is genuine word-of-mouth, which is the ultimate goal. This conception of the viral as the result of an effective seeding strategy is significant for understanding effective marketing through social media because it demystifies the process for evaluating the success of social advertising.

The viral lift/seed ratio offers an important vocabulary for discussing the use of paid media and providing a clear way of understanding the viral spread of information as existing in a direct relationship to the paid diffusion of information. Refining the particular viral seed strategies employed and the quality of seeded texts will be critical for campaign success using the viral lift ratio as an analytical tool.

Daniel C. Faltesek
Oregon State University

See Also: Aggregation; Algorithmic Authority; Buzz Creation; Campaigns, Digital; Click-Through Rate; Going Viral; Microtargeting; Network Influentials; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; Viral Marketing.

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Virtual Environment Technology, Immersive

Immersive virtual environment technology (IVET) is a collection of computer hardware and software used for the design of immersive environments (IVEs) that cause its users to perceive themselves as existing in and interacting with real-time, real-life surroundings. Immersion in an immersive virtual environment (IVE) results in a psychological state in which an individual believes him or herself to inhabit a setting that provides constant stimulation to which it is possible to respond.

IVET can also provide users with vivid sensory stimuli that allow them to access others' perceptions through simulation. Today's IVEs are primarily visual, auditory, haptic (involving touch), or a combination. User movement and speech are possible. IVEs are individual or collaborative. In such a shared IVE, multiple individuals are surrounded by the same IVE and are represented by virtual figures, also known as avatars. Because of the enabling features it provides, IVET is proving useful for many applications within an increasing number of domains. It brings 3D immersive visualization capabilities to the entertainment, architecture, engineering, and construction industries. Its use is also advantageous for research and training applications in education, health, and behavioral and social psychology. While a learning curve is necessary to acquire the skills to productively implement IVET, technology providers are increasingly providing training and costs are decreasing, making this technology accessible to an increasing number of institutional users.

IVET is still relatively early in its technological development. As digital computer, tracking, and rendering technologies have advanced and become relatively inexpensive, IVET systems have become more plentiful. Some users take a do-it-yourself approach to assembling the needed computer facilities, while others work with vendors who supply professional turnkey solutions capable of customization. World Viz is a provider of state-of-the-art IVET configurations that support complex interactive simulations. The configurations they provide are examples of standard applications. Some of the most common forms that IVETs take today are 3D immersive and semi-immersive display technologies using head-mounted displays and motion tracking systems. Among the systems provided by World Viz are an immersive Wide Area Walking System, Seated Virtual Reality, Viewable Projection Walls, and Multi-Screen Projection.

Virtual Environment Systems

The Wide Area Walking System is an advanced application providing the highest level of immersion that allows users, after putting on a head mounted display, to walk around an environment in full scale and naturally explore, making adjustments to features in their surroundings with a data glove or remote handheld device called a wand. An automatic motion tracking system synchronizes movement in the real world with that in the virtual world, creating the Holodeck illusion. Essential components are a stereoscopic head-mounted display, an automatic motion-tracking system synchronizing real-world movement with virtual-world movement, and hardware consisting of a configured workstation with graphics. Optional components that can be implemented as needed include a sound system, data glove or handheld input device to interact with virtual objects, an eye tracker, an appliance for biofeedback, a plug-in for avatar animation and interaction with motion capture, and augmented reality solutions overlaying video feeds with computer-generated imagery.

Seated virtual reality (VR), in contrast, is similar to the Walking System and utilizes the same features, including the Stereoscopic Head Mounted Display, but because it does not enable walking, a motion tracking system is not required. The Projection Walls System, like Seated VR, enables viewing without ambulation, but fulfills more demanding imaging quality requirements with equipment that continually responds to the viewer's head movements to provide a stable visual simulator while making it possible to interact with floating 3D virtual objects. This system, which offers only partial immersion, uses very different hardware. It does not use a heavy head-mounted display, but instead relies on a projector, projector screen, rendering machine, eye tracker, and optical motion tracker. Multiscreen Projection, like the Walking System, supplies an environment in which a user can move:

Marines training with a virtual reality system in a simulation center at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in February 2010. The system allows the soldiers to operate in a realistic virtual world displayed in a helmet mounted display while wearing a self-contained virtual reality system. The setup has no external tethers and a small joystick is mounted on the weapon.

It provides a cubical, room-sized, fully immersive visualization system for multiple users. This collaborative environment provides a complete sense of presence and interaction with virtual objects. It does not require heavy headgear or tethers. The system is extremely hardware intensive, and needs dedicated space. Choice of configuration is determined by the purpose of the application.

Applications

A major benefit of IVET is in the degree of realism it offers that is unequalled by other mediums. IVET allows users to experience intense sensory input firsthand. Researchers conclude that the mind accepts the illusion of realistic experiences for a temporary period of time because with IVET, virtual stimuli digitally recreate and extend human sensory capabilities. IVET provides users with dense layers of auditory, visual, and tactile information, giving them a strong sense of "presence," a perception that the simulated virtual environment is real. IVEs can also provide a far stronger sense of social presence than other telecommunications media because within IVEs, signals can be conveyed among multiple actors via verbal and nonverbal communication channels. Virtual social interactions can closely resemble face-to-face contact because of nonverbal information that can be conveyed, including physical proximity, facial expressions, and other contextual clues including setting. That is why some researchers are forecasting a marriage between social media and IVETs, but this is not yet an important trend.

IVET has many applications including the architecture, engineering, arts and entertainment, and construction industries where the 3D immersive visualization technologies it provides make it possible to walk through a full-scale digital model to understand layout and design features, enabling informed choices in early stages of design and preconstruction. IVET simulation capabilities are useful in the domains of education and training. They are also used for research, particularly in the areas of health and social and behavioral psychology.

Persky and McBride point out that IVET contributes three main benefits to traditional research settings. With IVET, it is possible to conduct experiments and simulations in true-to-life environments while maintaining the tight

control so vital for validity and generalizability. In other research settings, there is usually a tradeoff between realism (which usually introduces numerous extraneous variables) and experimental control. IVET also makes it possible to present and manipulate objects and elements that are not available in real life because they are invisible, intangible, or immutable. They can dynamically represent objects and concepts that don't actually exist in the real world. It is possible in an IVE to change any physical or behavioral characteristic of a person, making it possible to maintain or isolate the effects of a particular variable. Implicit and covert behavioral measures for social and behavioral experimentation have traditionally been difficult to design and administer, but IVET makes it possible to expand them.

S. J. Ahn, M. T. Le, and J. Bailenson describe interesting social psychology experiments based on the embodiment of others' experiences made possible by IVET. Examples include the simulation of schizophrenic experiences; investigations into the changes in behavior that can occur when embodying other's physical traits, resulting in what is termed "the Proteus effect"; and a phenomenon called "perspective taking," a phrase for "walking in another's shoes," which can lead to an increase in concern for others in need by adopting another's state of mind. This last function may well turn out to be the most applicable to issues-based politics, advocacy, and social justice campaigns because it would permit actors in the political arena to "experience" the implications of public catastrophic events such as oil spills or nuclear meltdown, as well as private disasters like rape, poverty, bullying, sexual harassment, and other forms of social and political discrimination.

Developing and implementing a new IVET application is a major project requiring a significant expenditure of time, energy, and skill. Cost has now decreased to the point where it is in reach of many institutions that have budgeted for or have received special project funding for this type of application. IVET can run on PCs, but other hardware is necessary, depending upon the types needed for the configuration to achieve the particular purpose. A number of commercially available VEs are available for common uses, but original applications require custom programming work. Software packages to create VEs are available, and costs are diminishing as the sophistication increases with the acceleration of computer power. Creating effective simulations and studies to use with IVET requires creative facility and pilot testing. The extent to which a naturalistic verbal give-and-take with virtual humans is possible is still limited with today's technology, and requires voice recognition and artificial intelligence programming. But with skill and planning, it is possible to create a scenario delivered with IVET resulting in a psychologically natural exchange. Such a scenario, once created, can be repeated as often as possible in the same facility, or others with the required equipment.

Deborah Elizabeth Cohen
Sogang University

See Also: Avatars; Education, Issues In; Immersive Journalism; Social Issues and Augmented Reality.

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Virtual Private Networks

A virtual private network (VPN) is an extension of a local network that safely connects two or more points. It is a network technology that allows an extension of the local network secure over a public network such as the Internet. A

VPN permits computer users to send and receive data on the VPN network in the same way as they would by using smaller, shared systems (similar to local access networks, or LANS) or large public networks like the Internet. In both cases, people making use of the VPN enjoy the same set of options as those who plug into non-VPN networks, including operations that relate to functionality, security, and efficient network management. The key difference is that VPN-transmitted content is encrypted, making it an easy way to extend secure operations, even if they are overlaid onto a public network. On the surface, VPNs look like a purely technical workaround for extending Internet content privacy onto public transmission systems—a kind of privacy overlay into the riotously public Internet.

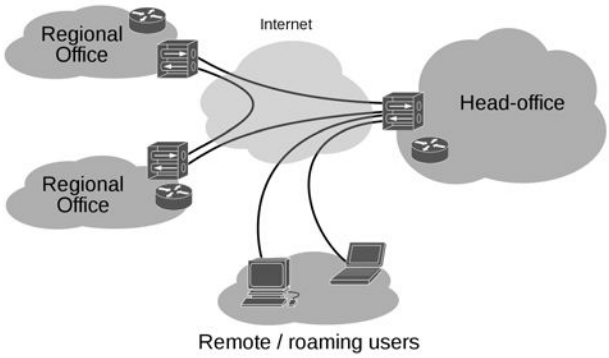
In this sense, VPNs have sometimes been described as "anonymity networks," although post-9/11, the degree to which even VPN services supply true anonymity is increasingly debatable, as accusations of VPN service provider logging of network usage continue to escalate. Regardless of possible monitoring, the downstream applications of VPNs are becoming increasingly important in the political arena. In great part, this is because the second unique characteristic of VPN architecture is that much of the user's identifying metadata is cloaked by the VPN's operating structure. Although not 100 percent foolproof, especially in light of the technical capabilities of monitoring programs like Prism, in a VPN network, geolocational data and the Internet Protocol (IP) address of the originating user are not readily available to spyware, cookies, and most everyday forms of electronic surveillance. This is because the IP address that shows up is that of the VPN's remote transfer location, usually found in a physically distant area from many of its network users. By looping their Internet traffic through a remote third-party player, VPN users can circumvent regional blocks, restrictions, or localized paid-for-content offerings because no one can tell where they are in the physical world.

The political dimension of VPNs, riffing off this commercial workaround, manifests in three interlocking ways. The first relates to press freedom and the timely coverage of breaking events, as well as the ability of both journalists and nonjournalists to access Web-distributed information of political, cultural, and/or social relevance. Oppressive governments of all descriptions have developed methods for blocking certain types of Internet content from Internet users within their boundaries. This practice is called "geoblocking." VPNs offer a way to sidestep geoblocking because there is nothing about the VPN user's apparent IP address that identifies that particular computer as physically located within the blocked boundaries. This is an absolutely crucial technique for journalists working in areas of political and social unrest, as well as for the political activists on whom they often report.

The second way in which VPNs can be applied within a political context is as an enabling mechanism for character assassination, reputational harm, or malicious intrusion. This relates to the cloaking mechanism that comes as part and parcel of the VPN's nonpolitical, everyday architecture. Those wishing to circulate injurious commentary on public figures and institutions, including political ones, can hide behind VPN systems to avoid the legal consequences of their actions, even if they go as far as posting outright false and libelous assertions. The third politicized use of VPNs, however, has to do with hacking into high-level sites such as the White House through a series of VPNs, making it extremely difficult for law enforcement officials to trace the hacker via an originating IP address. This chain-link process also creates jurisdictional complications that can further slow or even stall detection, remedy, redress, and apprehension of suspects because each VPN site is located in a different physical place that requires a separate warrant, court order, subpoena, or similar document authorizing entry into that electronic domain.

VPN Requirements

The basic requirements of a VPN are: user identification, data encryption, key management, and multiple protocol support. VPNs must verify the identity of users and restrict access to those who are not authorized. Data transmitted over the public network (Internet) must first be encrypted so that they cannot be read. This is done with encryption algorithms such as DES or 3DES. VPNs should update the encryption keys for users, and should handle common protocols such as Internet protocol (IP) and packet exchange interred (IPX).



The only metadata that show up when searched by spyware, cookies, or electronic surveillance are from a virtual private network's remote transfer location, usually nowhere near its network users. For this reason, geolocational data and the Internet service provider address of the user are not traceable.

VPN uses a technology called "tunneling" when establishing communication between two points. The tunneling simply uses a special protocol (usually SSH) to create a tunnel along which all data move, from one end to another. This tunnel is actually the same information sent by the action, but encrypted with a secure communication protocol, which makes sure that the data cannot be seen by outsiders.

Another advantage of the VPN is to facilitate remote access to a local network. A classic example is employees who need access to the work network from their laptop when they are displaced. In his or her notebook, the employee has a VPN client program installed, and after entering a user name and password, connects to a VPN server located in the offices of the company, and thus has access to the network. Currently, because of its effectiveness and low cost, VPN technology is virtually used to allow remote access and connectivity between different actors and segments of the same local network, if the distance between it is too large to opt for a physical and real connection. If a home user would also like to have safe access to his or her home network from outside the home, he or can opt for VPN, but it can be a somewhat cumbersome and excessive solution. Organizations can use a VPN to reduce costs of WAN bandwidth while increasing connection speeds when using Internet connectivity high bandwidth such as DSL, ethernet, or cable.

VPN Types

Remote access VPN is perhaps the most used model, and is currently used by suppliers who are connected with the company from remote sites (e.g., commercial offices, homes, or hotels) using the Internet. Once authenticated, the remote user has an access level that is similar to the company's local network. Many companies have replaced dial-up (modems and telephone lines) with this technology infrastructure, although for reasons of contingency, they still retain their old modems. VPN point to point is used to connect remote offices to an organization's headquarters. The VPN server, which has a permanent link to the Internet, accepts connections from the sites and establishes the VPN tunnel. The branch servers connect to the Internet using the services of a local Internet provider, typically with broadband connections. This eliminates costly traditional point-to-point links, particularly in international communications.

Internal VPN is less widespread, but is one of the most powerful tools for use within a company. It is a variant of remote access, but instead of using the Internet as a means of connection, it uses the same LAN of the company. It serves to isolate zones and internal network services. This capability makes it very convenient to improve the safety performance of wireless networks (Wi-Fi). A classic example is a server with sensitive information, such as payroll, located behind VPN equipment that provides additional authentication and encryption, enabling only HR staff to access information.

Uses and Abuses of the VPN

VPN encrypts data that one sends and receives over the Internet, preventing another person who stands between sender and receiver from intercepting that information. The first uses of virtual private networks were primarily for business. The main advantages offered by this technology to companies are remote offices, connection between offices, connecting servers, connecting public servants and local network servers, security mechanisms, improving business processes, and traffic filtering.

One of the main uses of VPN is the creation of remote offices. This allows geographically distant users to make local network connections safely

and have all or part of the benefits of locally connected users. Thus, one can have access to shared file servers and network applications. One can also connect two offices (or more) so that all belong to the same network. Servers can be connected together through a permanent VPN for secure information sharing. VPNs allow public and internal servers (without access to the Internet), maintaining communication in all directions to securely exchange information. A VPN can significantly promote the agility of internal processes, improving competitive capacity in the industry. The traffic traveling through the VPN can be filtered and continuously monitored, as in traditional networks.

However, virtual private networks can also be used as a means of evading censorship by dissidents, or by countries prohibiting access to certain areas of the Internet or delivery of certain information. Using a virtual private network, users can skip Internet access restrictions imposed in some countries, and these networks provide users with full Internet access, simulating that the connection is occurring from abroad. They are a way to avoid censorship in a country. In addition, the ability to connect anonymously and securely via VPN is used to control and exchange critical files, business databases, and criminal files. Some countries, like China, Iran, and Pakistan, have proceeded to lock VPNs and communication encryption systems to prevent network users access or submit information not controlled by the government abroad. This ability of the VPN to encrypt data is what has allowed it to become an incredibly useful tool to bypass government firewalls in these countries where citizens cannot freely browse the Internet.

Natalia Abuín Vences
Alberto García García
Complutense University of Madrid

See Also: Deep Packet Inspection; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Gate Keeping Theory and Social Media; Geotagging; Privacy.

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Vitter, David

David Bruce Vitter is the Republican Party junior U.S. Senator from Louisiana. In 2012, he was finishing the first third of his second six-year term in the Senate. His use of social media is expanding, but is far less than the use of other politicians.

Senator Vitter was born on May 3, 1961, in New Orleans to Audrey Malvina (née St. Raymond), who was a homemaker with a social work degree, and Albert Leopold Vitter, Jr., an electrical engineer, physicist, and ultimately a petroleum engineer. Both of Senator Vitter's parents were Catholic. Vitter attended De La Salle High School in New Orleans, from which he graduated in 1979. He then earned an A.B. in liberal arts from Harvard, which was followed by another undergraduate degree from Oxford University, which he obtained as a Rhodes Scholar. He then returned to New Orleans, where he entered Tulane University Law School. He graduated in 1988 with a J.D.

Entering into the practice of law,Vitter occasionally taught as an adjunct professor at both Loyola University in New Orleans and the Tulane University Law School. In 1990, Vitter married Wendy Baldwin, then a local prosecutor in New Orleans. They had four children—three girls (Sophie, Lise, and Airey) and a son (Jack). Their home is in Metairie, a New Orleans suburb.

Political Career

In 1991, Vitter was elected to the Louisiana Legislature's House of Representatives. Taking office in 1992, he served until 1999. While in the legislature, he fought for ethics reform and for term limits. He was successful in implementing term limit legislation, which had a strong impact on incumbent Democrat politicians.

A change of direction came in 1999, when Vitter ran for the 1st District Congressional seat vacated by Republican Congressman Robert "Bob" Livingston, Jr. Late in 1998, Livingston resigned his seat in the U.S. House of Representatives following an adultery scandal. The scandal surfaced during impeachment activities related to President Bill Clinton. Larry Flynt, publisher of the pornographic magazine *Hustler*, offered $1 million for every scandalous sexual story that was sent to him about every Republican member of Congress. At the time, Livingston was the Speaker of the House elect, and was scheduled to replace Newt Gingrich; however, he resigned when the *Hustler* story of his affair broke.

In the May 1, 1999, special election to fill the Livingston vacancy, David Conner Treen, Sr. (1928–2009) received the most votes. Treen was a former Congressman and governor. In the first round of voting, he finished first with 36,719 votes (25 percent). Vitter was second with 31,741 (22 percent); David Duke, famous for his activities as a Ku Klux Klansman, came in third with 28,055 votes (19 percent); Monica L. Monica, an ophthalmologist, garnered fourth place with 16 percent of the vote, while a conservative Democrat, State Representative Bill Strain, came in in fifth place with 11 percent of the vote. In last place was the owner of New Orleans's minor league baseball team and an attorney, Rob Couhig, with 6 percent of the vote. In the special election runoff on May 29, Vitter received 61,661 votes (51 percent) to Treen's 59,849 (49 percent).

During the special election, Vitter refused to pledge himself to a voluntary term limit if elected. He refused on the grounds that, unless term limits were universal, they would only rob the district of effective leadership. His opponents characterized his stance as hypocritical. Following the special election, Vitter was sworn in as the 1st District of Louisiana Representative in Congress. The district is a suburban district of New Orleans that includes Metairie, where the Vitters live. It has increasingly become a safe Republican seat. Vitter handily won re-election in the 2000 and 2002 elections.

While serving as a member of the House of Representatives, he supported anti-abortion bills that included the 1999 bill prohibiting transportation of minors to receive an abortion; the 2000 bill banning partial-birth abortions; the 2001 and 2003 bills making it a federal crime to harm a fetus while committing another crime; a 2001 bill prohibiting using U.S. aid money to assist family planning funding in foreign countries; a 2002 bill to support health agencies that do not provide abortion information; and a 2004 bill to make it a federal crime to harm a fetus in the act of committing other crimes. He has supported many other bills on topics from oil drilling to education and civil rights from a conservative position.

In 2002, Vitter was considering running for the Louisiana governorship in the 2003 election. Term limitations stopped incumbent Republican Governor Mike Foster from another term. Vitter looked like a good prospect until June 2002, when a story about Vitterm and his involvement with a prostitute was published in the *Louisiana Weekly*. A small newspaper with a circulation of only 5,800, it covered stories of interest to the African American community in south Louisiana and New Orleans. The story allegated that Vitter had a relationship with a prostitute. The reason for Vitter's withdrawal was the announcement that he and his wife were having marital issues.

U.S. Senate

In 2004, Vitter won the U.S. Senate seat that had previously been occupied by John Berlinger Breaux, a Democrat. Most political observers believed that Breaux could have easily won re-election. Instead, Breaux endorsed Chris Johns,

the Democratic candidate who was from Breaux's home district. Vitter's campaign was managed by Daniel Wesley Richey, a political consultant from Baton Rouge. In addition, Louis E. "Woody" Jenkins, also of Baton Rouge, joined the campaign. Jenkins had run for the Senate three times, in 1978, 1980, and 1982. Together, Vitter's advisors had significant political understanding of what it would take to win the Senate seat.

Consorting with a prostitute from New Orleans again emerged during the campaign as an accusation against Vitter. This time, Vitter denounced the accusation that he had a lengthy affair with a prostitute as just dirty Louisiana politics. He categorically denied the allegation. The accusation came from a member of the Louisiana Republican State Central Committee. This kind of accusation against a member of one's party seemed somewhat treasonous, because one party member was betraying another party member; however, the election was the "jungle primary." In Louisiana, the nonpartisan blanket primary is called the "Cajun primary" or the "jungle primary." A blanket primary election allows voters to choose between candidates from different parties. As a consequence, two candidates from the same party may be running against each other.

The scandalous accusation against Vitter did not prevent him from winning. His Democratic opponent lost with 29 percent of the vote to Vitter's 51 percent. The remainder of the vote was divided between the other candidates. The election made Vitter the first Republican from the state to be elected to the U.S. Senate since the Reconstruction election of William Pitt Kellogg in 1876.

To run his home office in Louisiana, Vitter recruited Michael Futrell of Baton Rouge to be his state director. Futrell, a lawyer and politician, was a former officer of the U.S. Navy who served as a commander on nuclear submarines. He managed the local and statewide "case work" or constituent service for Vitter until 2008.

In Congress, Vitter had developed a reputation as a "wonkish" conservative who was a champion of family values. Members of Congress play different legislative roles. Those like Vitter, who bury themselves in legislative routines and detail, are usually called "ritualists" by political scientists; in contrast to the "tribunes," who spend time with reporters preaching up their issues.

Legislation he sponsored included a 2005 "lock box" on Social Security; several offshore oil exploration and production bills; an alternative energy resources bill; pharmaceutical bills; and others including the post–Hurricane Katrina Louisiana reconstruction bill. Among his foreign policy positions were support for Israel, keeping a ban on travel to Cuba, support for India's nuclear program, and support for trade with China. As a senator, he also championed a constitutional amendment for term limits three times.

After Hurricane Katrina wreaked havoc on wide areas of Louisiana, Mississippi, and other parts of the Gulf Coast, the storm was followed by Hurricane Rita, which contributed even more damage to Louisiana. Vitter, along with the other members of the Louisiana congressional delegation, sought a wide variety of governmental aid to restore the state and region and provide assistance to victims of the storms. Historian Douglas Brinkley describes Vitter's legislative and political efforts to aid the people of Louisiana in his book on Hurricane Katrina, *The Great Deluge* (2006).

After months of keeping a low profile, Vitter was exposed in a scandal involving the "D.C. madam," Debora Palfrey (1956–2008), who operated an escort service. Convicted of racketeering and other charges, Palfrey committed suicide shortly before her prison term was to begin. Among her list of prominent clients was Senator Vitter. On July 9, 2007, he admitted that he had been a client of her escort service. The scandal ruined his chances for higher national office, but it did not end his political career.

Returning to Louisiana to meet with his constituents, Vitter denounced the practice of bailouts that were proposed to aid the big three automobile manufacturers in Detroit. The price tag of $15 billion was opposed by Republican senators in "right-to-work" states where automobile assembly plants were likely to move. Since then, Vitter has opposed other bailouts.

In 2008, Vitter began assembling a campaign war chest for the 2010 election. In 2009, he raised $750,000, and in 2010 $2.5 million. Because of the D.C. Madam scandal, a number of people were proposed as candidates, including the stripper Stormy Daniels. However, despite possible minor opposition, all went well for Vitter.

To win a second term in the Senate, Vitter first had to block Republican Party opposition. His Republican challenger was Chet D. Traylor of Monroe, a retired associate justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court who was engaged in private practice. Vitter emerged the winner in the August 28, 2010, primary election with nearly 90 percent of the vote. In the general election, he faced Democratic Party nominee Charlie Melancon of Napoleonville.

Holding the Louisiana 3rd Congressional seat in the U.S. House of Representatives, he supported conservative issues, opposed some of President Obama's legislative proposals, and was the leader of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition in Congress. He captured just 37.7 percent of the vote, whereas Ernest Wooton and half a dozen other candidates garnered about 6 percent of the vote to 56.6 percent for Vitter.

Social Media

Vitter's campaign media has until recently been traditional. Yard signs and other physical media for campaigning have been standard. However, since well before 2010, Vitter has been using social media. His Senate office Web page encourages supporters to sign up for e-mailed newsletters. Video feeds are also available. He has a Facebook page, and uses Twitter and Ustream. His Twitter account was used in August 2012 to send an inappropriate tweet late at night to a 20-year-old college woman. It was quickly deleted, but still made the news. He has also appeared on Internet radio talk shows and writes on his "Bayou blog." His use of social media is expanding, but not as rapidly as other politicians.

Andrew J. Waskey
Dalton State College

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2004); Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Candidate Image; Fleming, John; Privacy.

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Vlogging

Video blogs ("vlogs") enable people to express themselves on a global scale in a relatively low-cost way. From stylized montage to direct camera address, video bloggers have discussed issues, participated in debates, supported candidates, engaged in political parody, and tracked candidates to capture gaffes during campaign speeches. Politicians have used video blogs and distribution sites such as YouTube to announce their candidacies and to broadcast traditional media content such as political ads. Candidates have also used video to share their private lives. The pressure for candidates to publicize aspects of private life is reinforced in socially networked, online environments.

Video makers have used official campaign footage in mashups and remixes to create persuasive political commentary. In addition, "trackers" (also called opposition videographers) working for candidates may bring cameras to live events and record an opponent's gaffes. Such mistakes may have serious consequences on a political campaign.

A well-publicized example involves the so-called macaca incident in which Senator George Allen uttered a racial slur toward S. R. Sidarth, an Indian American campaign worker who had brought a camera to a rally during the 2006 Virginia Senate election. Calling him a "macaca" and "welcoming him to America and the real world of Virginia," Allen later claimed that he did not know the meaning of the word. His gaffe was captured on video and uploaded to YouTube, where it received more than 400,000 views, and

is believed to have played a role in him losing the election and derailing his presidential aspirations. Another tactic includes surprising candidates on the street and asking them questions about past actions, such as attending high-profile parties, to hold them accountable for their behavior.

Although some scholars believe that the democratized and low-cost aspect of video is changing the landscape of civic discourse, others remain more skeptical. The balance between official candidates and individual citizens posting on political matters is difficult to assess because ofYouTube's everchanging set of videos. Recent studies suggest that "macaca" or "gotcha" moments comprise only a small fraction of the political content posted to YouTube. One study of the 2006 and 2008 Senate races showed that the majority of political content posted to YouTube was repurposed traditional political ads, rather than citizen discourse.

Studies suggest that video bloggers participate in political debates. Research on nearly 8,000 videos submitted to a 2007 CNN–YouTube debate revealed that many videos contained questions that, although simply phrased, demonstrated knowledge of political issues and pushed candidates to articulate a response to a question, rather than relying on talking points. Another YouTube study showed that during the 2008 U.S. presidential election campaign, numerous videos appeared that included commentary, discussion, and debate, as well as official campaign materials.

Video bloggers may discuss civic concerns in ways that connect personal experience to politically relevant discourse. Several factors are considered important for understanding the potential of video blogging on civic discourse. The first factor concerns the need to develop media literacies in order to craft substantive messages, rather than relying on spectacle. Some scholars believe that citizen journalism through video has not lived up to its potential and remains mired in "gotcha," celebrity stalking, and video bystander behaviors during crisis moments. Others claim that video bloggers have successfully focused attention on key problems and personal experiences in their community that connect to larger debates and policies on issues such as environmental concerns, network neutrality, teen suicide, and neighborhood development. Further study is needed on YouTube and personal video blogging sites to determine the extent to which the medium is used for substantive civic discourse and how it connects to political action.

In addition to the need to improve media literacy skills, other factors required to assess video blogging's potential include commercial and governmental support of video exchange. Individual videos and YouTube as a whole have reportedly been blocked for various lengths of time in countries such as Afghanistan, Armenia, Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Iran, Libya, Morocco, Pakistan, Syria, Sudan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates.

The bans have occurred in response to controversial videos containing inflammatory religious material or political protests. Commercial concerns include the viability of distribution platforms that rely on advertising. Advertisers are often hesitant to display ads next to uncontrollable vernacular videos. Although video blogging has been used to connect personal experience to political action, numerous factors including media literacy skills, computer and network access, governmental bans, and commercial restrictions are important factors for assessing the potential of video blogging in political and civic arenas.

Patricia G. Lange
California College of the Arts

See Also: Blogs; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, Virtual; Citizen Journalism; Opposition Videographer; Streaming Media; TwitVid.com; YouTube.

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Vote Different

Vote Different is a political remix video (PRV) that was created in light of the 2008 U.S. primaries by an individual not connected to any of the formal political campaigns, a form of user-generated content (UGC). This video mixes the 1984 Apple launch commercial of the Macintosh computer with images and sounds of Big Brother replaced with material from a Web video of Hillary Clinton, who at that time was a U.S. presidential candidate. The video is regarded as one of the first successful PRVs distributed via social media. Characteristic for most PRVs is the relative ease of creating such a video because it was created in a few hours using software accessible to everyone on a regular computer. The video was shared via YouTube and reached an enormous audience (2.5 million views within the first six months; by the time of the election in November 2008, it had received 5 million views). Furthermore, this phenomenon exemplifies the power of PRVs regarding their potential to voice social and political commentary via the remixing of popular culture.

Philip de Vellis created the *Vote Different* political remix video, also known as *Hillary 1984*, in 2008. By creating the video, uploaded to YouTube under the pseudonym ParkRidge47 on March 3, 2007, he voiced his opinion about the U.S. primaries that year. According to an interview with *First Monday*, he chose the PRV format because it was easy, and he could address those who were already interested in politics and felt an affiliation with Apple. Another motivation was born from his frustration about the way that politicians were using broadcasting media like YouTube. Peter Leyden concurred with this view when stating that this video signaled the end of the broadcast era.

De Vellis was active in the political field as a strategic communicator at Blue State Digital. He was irritated that the political field kept using sites like YouTube as broadcasting machines when these media had so much more to offer. De Vellis felt that the political body did not take its audience, or rather citizens, seriously. A dialogue should exist between the politician and the citizen, but instead the one-way communicative street of the political machine kept itself alive via a different medium, social media. De Vellis resigned from his position at Blue State Digital after it became known that he had created the video.

The success of the video, according to de Vellis, was because it was truthful. Furthermore, the use of material from popular brands such as Apple and images and sounds taken from popular culture meant that many people could instantly relate to the imagery. In order to understand the video, the viewer was required to know who Hillary Clinton was and her role in the political arena. Furthermore, the viewer needed to at least know of the original Apple advertisement in order to fully appreciate and understand the political commentary offered by de Vellis in *Vote Different*. The *Vote Different* video inspired others to create PRVs, and opened up a new dialogue.

This showed the potential of such forms of political commentary by instigating discussion in the political arena and the public sphere. This also relates to de Vellis's key argument, as he stated more than once that he was convinced that politicians could inspire good debate. The format of the PRV then allows the political field and the public to interact with each other via that material. In this way, de Vellis argued, the political game has changed forever: The old political machine is over, and politics are now in hands of the ordinary citizen. Everyone can create something in their living room and send it out to an audience that potentially amounts to millions of viewers. This view is shared by others. Chuck Tyron argues that remixing popular culture offers the means to the general public to offer commentary on politics in general, and political campaigns specifically. He also adheres to the notion that the use of images and sounds from popular culture allows for a new form of intertextual parody. Jonathan Gray refers to this as critical intertextuality. While *Vote Different* is not a parody per se, de Vellis used the techniques of critical intertextuality to challenge the mainstream political argument that Hillary Clinton's nomination for presidential candidate was inevitable.

Joyce Neys
Erasmus University Rotterdam

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); User Generated Content; YouTube.

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VoteBuilder.com

VoteBuilder is the Democratic voter database used to keep track of volunteers and voters so that local parties can communicate with constituents and encourage them to vote on Election Day. VoteBuilder is supported by NGP VAN, the leading technology provider to Democratic and progressive campaigns and organizations. NGP VAN serves thousands of campaigns and organizations, including all national Democratic committees, thousands of Democratic campaigns, and hundreds of labor unions and progressive and nonpartisan PACs.

Beginning in 2002, the Democratic Party developed two databases—DataMart, containing the records of 166 million registered voters, and Demzilla, a smaller database used for fund-raising and organizing volunteers. In early 2007, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) replaced these with VoteBuilder. Described as a "state-of-the-art nationwide voter file interface," the Web-based tool is designed to ensure that Democratic candidates from the national party to the state parties have access to the tools needed to help them win elections. As Howard Dean said at the time, "VoteBuilder will enable users to more easily and effectively sync data automatically, and facilitate the swapping of data between state parties and the DNC, thereby providing state parties and candidates with the most up-to-date and accurate voter data available. As an example, the DNC will be able to create an updated nationwide list of voter contacts on a daily basis."

VoteBuilder is based on the precinct as the basic building block because speaking to neighbors is viewed as an effective way to turn out and win elections. Effective precinct organizing has the most potential to increase votes and win elections. The basic idea of precinct organizing is to recruit about five volunteers in each precinct. Over the course of the campaign, those volunteers identify about 100 voters who are likely to vote for the candidate, but may not be reliable voters. On Election Day, each of the five volunteers are responsible for making sure that about 20 of those voters go to the polls on Election Day. This is also known as flushing, and can add up to about 100 extra votes per precinct. In a U.S. congressional district with 200 precincts, that is 20,000 extra votes, which will make the difference in most elections. There is a great deal of work that goes into recruiting volunteers and identifying voters, but this is the most effective way to win elections.

VoteBuilder contains information on all voters in a state, including name, voting and mail address, party, age, phone number, and voting history. Some states include other key targeting data, including likely occupation, ethnicity, religion, and marital status. The voter lists and other information are updated three or more times a year using voter registration data from the state's secretary of state. Additionally, the basic voter registration information is enhanced with data obtained from other sources (including campaign activity), such as additional phone numbers, address corrections, certain consumer information, issue or candidate support tags, and other targeting data. VoteBuilder can be used to create lists of likely volunteers and then call or knock on their door to recruit them to attend events and help contact voters by phone banking or knocking on doors. The system can be used to create walk, mailing, and phone lists for subscribing campaigns. Data can be entered by logging into VoteBuilder through a regular computer and Web browser, or through applications run by handheld devices such as iPhones, iPads, iPod Touches, or Palm Pilots.

MiniVAN Touch is a smartphone app that currently works with Apple iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch, and is under development with other platforms like Android. MiniVAN Touch allows Democratic organizers to contact potential volunteers and voters, record the results of each contact, and upload that information to the central voter database, without the need to pick up printed walk sheets. It also eliminates manual data entry. One may download the free MiniVAN Touch app from iTunes. Qualified Democratic candidates for any office in a state, whether statewide, congressional, countywide, or smaller, may access VoteBuilder if they sign an agreement with the state Democratic Party and pay the scheduled fee (in accordance with FEC guidelines).

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Microtargeting; Voter Demographics; Voter Turnout; VoterVault.com.

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Voter Apathy

Voter apathy is a the notion that some eligible citizens choose not to exercise their legal right to vote in elections. For a number of different reasons, these individuals willfully abstain from their democratic civic duty by not voting. A lack of trust in government and elected officials, cynicism toward the voting process, the inability to perceive meaningful social and economic change, a lack of political knowledge, media influence, and a growing disinterest in political issues are just a few of the explanations attributed to the growth of voter apathy. Statistics from the past few years show that the number of eligible voters who have abstained from voting has remained stable.

Statistics provided by the U.S. Census Bureau reveal that from 1968 to 2008, less than 70 percent of all eligible voters in the country voted for president. Of those eligible to vote, less than half of 18 to 24 year olds voted. Similarly, according to Elections Canada, voter turnout in Canada has been under 70 percent for nearly 20 years, reaching an all-time low of 58.8 percent during the October 2008 election. As in the United States, less than half of those between the ages of 18 and 24 voted: 37 percent in 2004, 43.8 percent in 2006, and 37.4 percent in 2008. As indicated by the statistics, voter apathy appears to be an issue for Western youth; particularly those in North America. Many primarily associate democracy with the act of voting. However, despite the widespread concern of voter apathy among young people, evidence of the political use of social media is evident.

During the November 2012 presidential election in the United States, many citizens, varying in age and gender, used Facebook to indicate which candidate they preferred, in conjunction with their political affiliation. Those who were behind Mitt Romney and the Republican Party were displayed in the following Facebook pages: Mitt Romney (12,109,198 "likes"; 2,521,110 talking about); Mitt Romney Central (107,186 "likes"; 59,270 talking about); and Vote Mitt Romney (12,500 "likes"). Likewise, President Obama had his share of supporters on Facebook: Barack Obama (32,191,139 "likes"; 2,628,859 talking about); Barack Obama 2012 (51,439 "likes"); and Vote for Barack Obama in 2012 (85,142 "likes"). While it is impossible to determine whether or not all of the eligible voters that participated in Facebook actually voted, the results are somewhat indicative of the actual election results, because President Obama was re-elected, winning both the electoral college and the popular vote. These results mirror suggestions that the political use of social media was eveident during the prior U.S.

Voters in line at a polling location in La Crosse, Wisconsin. In November 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that only 21 percent of 18-to-24-year-old U.S. citizens voted, compared with 61 percent of people 65 years and older.

presidential elections in 2008, and helped galvanize Obama's eventual victory that year. Empirical evidence gathered by Derrick L. Cogburn and Fatima K. Espinoza-Vazquez, including qualitative data analysis from a number of social media Web sites, such as Obama's 2008 Web site, Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, and his Change.gov site, in addition to e-mails and iPhone applications, illustrates the successful use of Web 2.0 and social media by the 2008 Obama presidential campaign. Their analysis affirms that social media and new technologies help to increase political participation, including voting.

While many critics remain unconvinced, a number of scholars believe that social media have the potential to increase political participation and democracy. As a means to help counter voter apathy among young people in Canada, countless young Canadians took to the streets and social media and became involved in the "vote mob" during the 2011 federal election. Vote mobs derive from flash mobs, where groups of people use social media to organize a physical event. Primarily as a response to Canadian television comedic personality Rick Mercer's challenge to young Canadians to vote in the election, students from the University of Guelph created a vote mob and posted the video of their event online, likewise challenging other young people to vote and other universities across Canada to create their own vote mobs. The vote mob videos went viral and galvanized the creation of numerous vote mobs across Canada. Even younger Canadians in grade school and high school created more vote mobs. Effectively, the main purpose of the vote mobs was to encourage and challenge eligible young Canadians to exercise their right to vote. Despite their efforts, in the 2011 election, the percentage of eligible voters aged 18 to 24 rose only minimally, to 38.8 percent. Ian Reilly suggests that although Canadian youth may like online campaigns, these actions have yet to translate to actual votes.

In both the United States and Canada, government studies into voter apathy among young people display a strong concern for this phenomenon. This concern is shared by many outside of the government, including countless youth who have turned to social media as a tool to help combat voter apathy. A short video made by Oscar-winning filmmaker Errol Morris titled *11 Excellent Reasons Not to Vote* addresses the issue of voter apathy and highlights the importance of voting as expressed by a number of young Americans. On a similar note, the group Apathy Is Boring, claiming to revolutionize democracy through art and technology, was created to counteract voter apathy among young Canadians. Many more examples reveal the growing use of social media in the fight against voter apathy.

Rhon Teruelle
Leslie Regan Shade
University of Toronto

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Canada; Change.gov; E-Voter.com; Flash Mobs as a Political Tactic; Rock the Vote; Voter Turnout; Youth Engagement.

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Voter Demographics

Voter demographics have always been a key element of American politics. The 2010 Census made abundantly clear that racial and ethnic minorities, women, young voters, and gay people are dominating national growth and will for decades to come. Studies have shown that younger voters have tended to vote for Democratic candidates in recent years, galvanized in part, perhaps, by both Obama campaigns' direct appeal to that age bracket, since growing support for conservative candidates is also evident among campus populations, as demonstrated by social media content and traffic.

According to the Pew Research Center Internet Report (2013), as of December 2012, 67 percent of online adults use social networking sites. Women use social media 9 percent more than men and people living in cities have the most social media activity, at 70 percent of the population. Furthermore, 83 percent of people aged 18 to 29 are social media users. In terms of racial and ethnic groups online, Hispanics lead with 72 percent engagement, and African Americans trailing at 68 percent, who are ahead of Caucasians at 65 percent. Despite being somewhat economically disadvantaged, 72 percent of adults with annual household incomes below $30,000 use social networks, more than those with higher wages.

The most popular social network is Facebook, with 67 percent of adults using the Mark Zuckerberg–founded service. A distant second is LinkedIn with 20 percent, with Twitter coming in third at 16 percent, Tumblr falling last at 6 percent. The growing ubiquity of cellphones, especially the rise of smartphones and tablets, has made social networking omnipresent. A total of 40 percent of cellphone owners use a social networking site on their phone, and 28 percent do so on a typical day. Young people, blacks, Hispanics, the highly educated, and those with a higher annual household income are more likely to use social networking sites on their phones than other groups.

Social media activities are more likely to be pursued by younger users compared with social media users who are 50 years or older. Younger users are more likely to post their thoughts about issues, post links to political material, encourage others to take political action, belong to a political group on a social networking site, follow elected officials on social media, and "like" or promote political material that others have posted.

Gender Gap

According to the 2010 census, there were 155.6 million females in the United States. The number of males was 151.4 million. Although the gender gap has changed over the years, women of all ages are more likely than men to identify as Democrats. Recent polls have indicated that 41 percent of women identify as Democrats, whereas only 25 percent of women identify as Republicans and 26 percent as independents. In contrast, 32 percent of men identify as Democrats, 28 percent as Republicans, and 34 percent as independents. Therefore, the gender gap continues as a significant factor in U.S. presidential elections, and the preferences of men and women have never differed more than in the 2012 election: Barack Obama won the two-party vote among female voters by 12 points, 56 percent to 44 percent, over Republican challenger Mitt Romney. Meanwhile, Romney won among men by an 8-point margin, 54 percent to 46 percent. That total 20-point gender gap is the largest that Gallup has measured in a presidential election since it began compiling the vote by major subgroups in 1952. Notably, Obama's 12-percentage-point advantage among women is slightly less than the 14-point advantage he had over John McCain in 2008, while Romney improved on McCain's performance among men by 8 points. Thus, the narrowing of Obama's winning margin between the two elections, from 7 points to 2 points, can be ascribed mainly to men's shifting more Republican.

The gender gap has been evident in presidential voting since at least 1952, though it tended to be somewhat muted in the 1960 to 1972 elections, averaging just 4 points. Prior to 2012, the largest gender gap in Gallup polling history was 18

points in the 1984 election, which saw Republican Ronald Reagan win a second term in office. Majorities of both men and women voted for Reagan in that election, but he won among men by 28 points (64 to 36 percent) and among women by 10 points (55 to 45 percent). It is unclear to what extent the presence on the Democratic ticket of Geraldine Ferraro, the first woman to be a major party's vice presidential nominee, had on the vote of women that year. Women have supported the Democratic candidate in each of the last six elections. Men favored the Democrat in only two of the last six, 1992 and 1996, and in only four of the 16 elections since 1952. Overall, since 1952, men and women have differed as to the party's candidate they favored six times, including 1960, 1968, 1976, 2000, 2004, and 2012. In 2008, McCain ran even among men, whereas women preferred Obama by a large margin.

At 85 years and older, there are more than twice as many women as men. People under 20 years of age made up over a quarter of the U.S. population (27.3 percent), and people 65 years and over made up one-eighth (12.8 percent). The median age is 36.8 years (male: 35.5 years, female: 38.1 years). Younger voters have tended to vote for Democratic candidates in recent years. Despite supporting Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, the young voted in favor of the Democratic presidential candidate in every election since Bill Clinton in 1992, and are more likely to identify as liberals than the general population.

In 2012, young voters represented a greater share of the national electorate than four years earlier, once again voting for President Obama by a huge margin, boosting his re-election. Voters 18 to 29 years old represented 19 percent of all who voted. Obama captured 60 percent of the youth vote, compared with Mitt Romney's 36 percent. Headlines suggested a lack of enthusiasm among college students in the 2012 election, and polling showed, fewer were registered or planning to vote. That is one of the reasons why Obama's victory was smaller than his 66 to 31 percent win over John McCain in 2008. However, it is still the highest that any Democratic presidential candidate scored in 30 years among 18 to 29 year olds. John Kerry, for instance, only won the youth vote by 9 percentage points in 2004 (in that election, young people made up 17 percent of the electorate). So, more young people turned out for the 2012 election, despite new voter ID laws and challenges by lawmakers to college students' ability to vote, and widespread confusion about state voting laws.

In general, new technology is making it easier for candidates to reach youth, and in turn, more young people are voting. Web sites such as Facebook and YouTube not only allow students who do not subscribe to newspapers or watch the evening news to stay on top of the polls, but also allow them to share their excitement over the polls and candidates. While voters under 30 years old respond to turnout tactics at the same rates as older voters, in some communities they are more difficult to reach, so targeting must take this into consideration. Efforts in ethnic communities found young people as easy to reach as older voters, and student areas and apartment building have dense residences that lead to very high contact rates.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Voters

A 2011 report by the Williams Institute estimated that 4 million adults identify as gay or lesbian, representing 1.7 percent of the population over age 18. It should be noted, however, that pinpointing the precise size of the actual LGBT population is, and has always been, a difficult proposition, since many factors encourage its members to remain unforthcoming about their identities. In addition to the chronic under-reporting that this engenders, operational challenges associated with arriving at a consistent and comprehensive definition of the term abound, eventually generating estimates by well-respected sources that range from 3.4 percent of the American population on the low end (reported by Gallup in 2011) to the traditional 10 percent calculation based on the 1948 Kinsey Report, up to 11 percent if sexual identity is regarded as a same-sex attitudinal attraction, in addition to being "counted" as actual sexual behavior and/or permanent social identity. Part of the reason that there is such a wide range in statistics about the LGBT population is due to the challenges of defining "sexual identity," per se.

The recognition of LGBT status can hinge on an attitude, a behavior, and/or on the maintenance of a core social identity, resulting in a definitional issue that has always plagued social science's ability to quantify LGBT. Most

statistics are based on data from respondents who acknowledge being LGBT as a permanent and primary social identity. This excludes from the final tally those for whom same-sex relationships occur as part of their overall sexual history, but for whom it is not a central component of their overall social identity—for example, people who experimented with LGBT relationships at some time in their life and/or those who continue to engage in LGBT relationships, but for one reason or another self-identify as heterosexual. As Gary Gates notes in his report for the Williams Institute: "An estimated 19 million Americans (8.2 percent) report that they have engaged in same-sex sexual behavior and nearly 25.6 million Americans (11 percent) acknowledge at least some same-sex sexual attraction."

Bearing in mind the likelihood of severe underreporting, estimates of same-sex-experience and/or attraction in the U.S. population, contained in the Gates report alone, range from 3.4 to 25.6 million Americans. Researchers on both sides of the gay rights issue have noted that the measurement procedure for determining the percentage of LGBT-identified Americans has not been significantly updated since the watershed Kinsey Report more than 60 years ago. Kinsey's classic 10 percent rule, now being re-evaluated, would have calculated the current American LGBT constituency at approximately 31 million.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans mostly vote Democratic within the 70 to 77 percent range in national elections, according to national media exit polling. In heavily gay precincts in large cities across the nation, the average is higher, ranging from 85 to 94 percent. This trend has continued since 1996, when Bill Clinton won 71 percent of the LGBT vote, compared to Bob Dole's 16 percent. In 2000, Al Gore won 70 percent to George W. Bush's 25 percent, in 2004 John Kerry won 77 percent to George W. Bush's 23 percent, and in 2008 Barack Obama won 70 percent to John McCain's 27 percent. In 2012, Obama won 76 percent to Mitt Romney's 23 percent.

Minority Voters

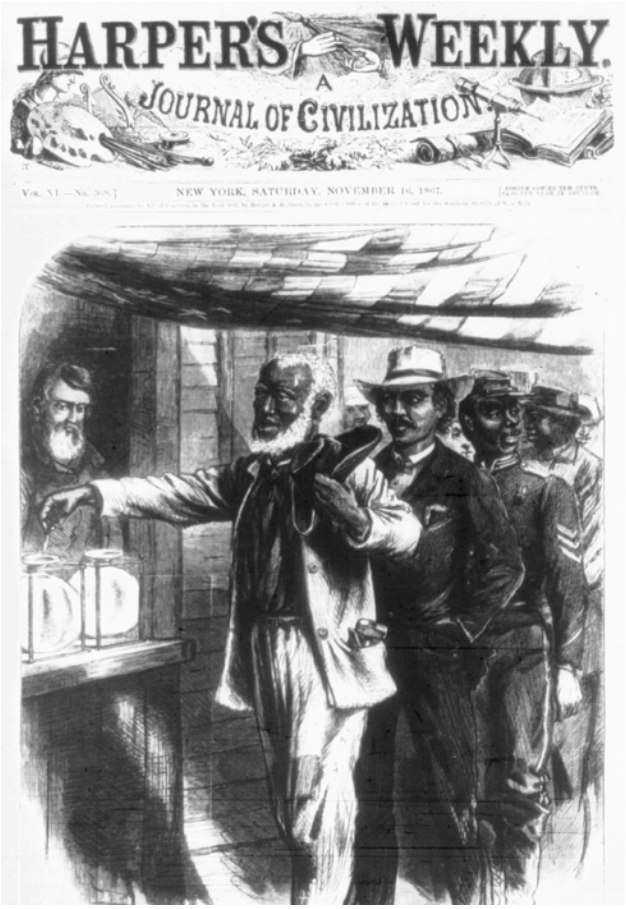
The United States is a diverse country, both racially and ethnically. Whites constitute the majority of the U.S. population, with a total of 223,553,265 in 2010. White Americans are the majority in 49 states, with Hawai'i the exception. The non-Hispanic white percentage tends to decrease every year, and this subgroup is expected to become a plurality of the overall U.S. population after 2050. Reports foresee the Hispanic or Latino population rising from 16 percent today to 30 percent by 2050, the African American percentage barely rising from 12.9 percent to 13.0 percent, and Asian Americans upping their 4.6 percent share to 7.8 percent. The United States had 310 million people in October 2010, and is projected to reach 400 million by 2039, and 439 million in 2050. It is further projected that 82 percent of the increase in population from 2005 to 2050 will be from immigrants and their children. Of the nation's children in 2050, 62 percent are expected to be of a minority ethnicity, up from 44 percent today. Approximately 39 percent are projected to be Hispanic or Latino, and 38 percent are projected to be "single-race," non-Hispanic whites.

The minority representation in the total population overstates its presence among eligible voters because the fastest growing minorities are either too young to vote, or are less likely to be citizens, even when they are in the United States legally. For every 100 Hispanic residents in the United States, only 44 are eligible voters 18 years and over and U.S. citizens. In contrast, 78 of every 100 white residents are able to vote. So, even though minorities are growing faster than whites overall, the latter are more heavily represented among eligible voters (71 percent) than in the total population (63 percent).

This disparity is even more relevant in many fast growing "new minority" states. In Nevada, whites comprise 51 percent of the population, but fully 61 percent of eligible voters. Other states where minority voters are strongly underrepresented include Arizona, California, Texas, and Florida. Further diminishing minority electoral clout is lower voter turnout. Usually, the share of eligible minority voters who voted was 15 to 20 percent less than for whites. Turnout rates were smallest for the fast growing Hispanic and Asian populations. As a consequence, the white share of actual voters is even larger than it is among eligible voters. Whites traditionally favored Republicans. The last Democratic candidate who was supported by the majority of whites was Lyndon Johnson in

1964. In recent elections, Republicans have found their greatest support among whites from married couples with children living at home.

African Americans make up about 12 percent of the American population (38.9 million). Fifty-five percent of them live in the south. From the end of the Civil War, African Americans primarily favored the Republican Party due to its overwhelming efforts in achieving abolition, particularly through Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. The south had long been a Democratic stronghold, favoring a state's right to legal slavery. However, as years passed, African Americans began voting for the Democratic Party, as Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs gave economic relief to all minorities, including African Americans and Hispanics. Support for the civil rights movement in the 1960s by Democratic Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson helped give the Democrats even larger support among the African American community, which consistently voted between 85 and 95 percent Democratic. Barack Obama managed to net over 95 percent of the African American vote in the 2008 election and 93 percent in 2012.


HARPER'S WEEKLY.
A JOURNAL OF CIVILIZATION.
NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1867.

The November 16, 1867, cover of Harper's Weekly *was illustrated with a drawing titled "The First Vote." "All persons born or naturalized" as citizens were granted the right to vote with the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868.*

Hispanics or Latinos constitute 16.7 percent of the total U.S. population, or 52 million people, forming the second-largest ethnic group. The Hispanic population is young and fast growing because of immigration and higher birth rates. For several years it has significantly contributed to U.S. population increases, and this is expected to continue.

The Census Bureau projects that by 2050, one-quarter of the population will be Latino. The Hispanic population, particularly the large Mexican American population in the Southwest and the large Puerto Rican and Dominican populations in the northeast, have been strong supporters of the Democratic Party. In the 1996 presidential election, Democratic President Bill Clinton received 72 percent of the Hispanic vote. In following years, however, the Republican Party gained increasing support from the Hispanic community, especially among Hispanic Protestants and Pentecostals. With his much more liberal views on immigration, President George W. Bush was the first Republican incumbent to gain 40 percent of the Hispanic vote (in the 2004 presidential election). Yet, the Republican Party's support among Hispanics suffered losses in the 2006 midterm elections, dropping from 44 to 30 percent, with Democrats gaining in the Hispanic vote from 55 percent in 2004 to 69 percent in 2006. Democrats increased their share of the Hispanic vote in the 2008 presidential election, with Barack Obama receiving 67 percent. According to exit polls by Edison Research, Obama increased his support again in 2012, winning 71 percent of Hispanic voters.

A third significant minority is the Asian American population, comprising 18.2 million in 2010, or 5.8 percent of the U.S. population. They are by no means a monolithic group and had been a Republican voting bloc through the U.S. presidential election of 1992, in which George H. W. Bush won 55 percent of the Asian American vote. That is because, originally, the vast majority of Asian

Americans consisted of anticommunist Vietnamese refugees, Chinese Americans, Korean Americans, and socially conservative Filipinos who fled Ferdinand Marcos in the 1960s through the 1980s.

The Democratic Party made gains among the Asian American population starting with 1996, and in 2006, won 62 percent of the Asian American vote. Exit polls after the 2008 presidential election suggested that Democratic candidate Barack Obama won 62 percent of the Asian American vote nationwide. In the 2012 presidential election, 73 percent of the Asian American electorate voted for Obama's re-election. This is because of demographic shifts in the Asian American community, with growing numbers of well-educated Chinese and Asian Indian immigrants who are usually economic centrists and social progressives. The Asian American community's increasing number of young voters has also contributed to eroding traditionally reliable Republican voting blocs such as Vietnamese and Filipino Americans, leading to an increase in support for Democrats.

Marco Morini
Macquarie University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Campaign, Presidential (2008); Gender; Immigration; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Rights; Political Parties; Voter Apathy; Voter Identification; Voter Turnout; Voting, Global.

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Voter Identification

Political campaign professionals often use practices and strategies reinforced by past experience and anecdotal data. New approaches to voter identification (including data mining and microtargeting) use a more scientific approach that utilizes statistical analysis to pinpoint voters. Advances in voter identification technology mix science with the art of politics. Combining new voter identification strategies with social media allows campaigns to find persuadable voters and tailor communication directly to them. This strategy is commonly referred to as microtargeting, allowing political strategists to understand individual voters outside of the confines of traditional voter labels (i.e., voting blocs based on geography, party, and demographics).

Voter identification using data-mining and microtargeting marks a change in the way that campaigns can be run. The presidential campaigns during the 2012 election season were the most successful in adopting this new strategy. There are a number of important distinctions between an advanced voter data-driven strategy and more traditional campaigns. First, these campaigns use large and complex databases of voter information and use a technique called data-mining to identify voters who are persuadable. Second, data-driven strategies shift communication from mass media to more specific forms of media (primarily direct mail and social media). Third, these strategies are

more concerned with voter mobilization, rather than mass voter influence.

Voter Databases

Voter identification information, at the most basic level, is a list of registered voters. The official public lists are maintained by each state's office of the secretary of state and affiliated election boards. In most states, voters will claim a political party (Democrat, Republican, or independent are most common). The length of time a voter has been registered and voting history are listed, although how they voted is not listed. Address, age, sex, and other basic demographic information is also listed. Public voter identification information is then supplemented and managed in large databases by campaigns and political parties. Strength of party affiliation, voting history (including who they supported), issues of importance, and constituency affiliations (like union or interest group memberships) are added to the voter identification database.

Large campaigns and political parties are often tasked with updating and maintaining voter databases. The Obama for America campaign, for example, used data from the 2008 election (including information from the Democratic Party and coordinated campaign field offices), and added to the database for the four years leading up to the 2012 campaign. Within the past decade, with the help of new technology like mobile devices and Web-enabled database interfaces, the national parties have taken greater interest in cultivating information and resources down through the ranks. Both the Republican and Democratic parties coordinate with field workers and campaigns at all levels to consolidate data obtained through direct voter contact (i.e., canvassing and mobilization efforts). Candidates at all levels can access database information through collective agreements with their respective political parties. In 2012, Republicans used a network called the GOP Data Center, and Democrats used the Voter Activation Network (also known as VoteBuilder.com).

Information is also acquired from government sources like the U.S. Census Bureau and third-party organizations like the National Committee for an Effective Congress (a progressive political action committee). More recent campaigns have also added psychographic information from consumer marketing databases. Consumer data, including information on life stage and consumer confidence, adds depth to basic voting-behavior data. In addition, a new type of third-party data gathering harvests contact and descriptive information about a social media user's circle of friends as a built-in, but deeply buried, component of the terms of agreement service contract for some mobile applications.

The privacy implications of this are large because it means that one's personal information can be contributed to political datasets, without one's knowledge or permission, as a side effect of someone else's choice to contribute their information. At its essence, voter identification is a list and a database, but what is important and rapidly changing is how this information is used. For the 2012 campaigns, huge databases were compiled to understand each voter at the most complete level possible. Data-mining is the practice of pinpointing and segmenting potential supporters, beyond traditional targeting practices of precinct location and voting bloc affiliation. For example, Barack Obama's campaign used data-mining to successfully target specific households in the swing state of Ohio. In order for a data-driven strategy to work, however, campaigns are forced to adjust time-honored communication tactics.

Communication Strategy

The need for extensive voter rolls is a relatively modern concern for political campaigns. Elections in early American history dealt with only a small fraction of the population. Subsequent decades gave rise to a strong political party system, whereby voters were identified based on neighborhood and party affiliation. Modern campaigns must contend with growing diversity of the electorate, the increasing isolation of the American lifestyle, and the decline in the political party system. Collectively, voters who may have traditionally aligned with a political party or interest group or community are becoming more autonomous in their interpersonal communication and voting habits. Because of these changes, innovative campaign professionals are adapting their communication tactics and strategies to adjust to the changing political landscape. Political practitioners have traditionally lauded the ability of mass mediated campaigns to win

elections. If a politician wanted to win, he or she would need a strategy that emphasized buying television advertising and attaining earned media coverage. As such, the primary focus on the campaign was to raise enough money to pay for more television advertising than the opponent.

Social media and new technology are facilitating a change in this strategy, however. While television advertising is still an important component, the 2012 campaign marked a significant transformation in how voters were identified, persuaded, and mobilized. Mass media was used for overall messaging; social media was used to specifically target voters on issues important to them. Traditionally, microtargeted message strategies utilized direct mail. This medium allows for more complex messages that can be directed at small segments of the voting universe. Social media builds on what political strategists have learned using direct mail, and puts it in a faster, less expensive, shareable medium.

Candidates at all levels used social media to supplement their media plans. At the presidential level, both Romney and Obama used e-mail to send personalized messages, posted shareable pictures on Facebook, posted campaign updates on Twitter, and maintained YouTube channels featuring campaign ads. Obama hosted an interactive campaign event on Reddit. Social media was also used to create communities of support, utilizing a mediated version of interpersonal influence. Voters could see which of the candidates their friends supported, or could retweet candidate messages on their Twitter feeds. Obama and Romney sent out appeals through social media to get people active in the campaign. For example, appeals beckoned people to "like" the campaign on Facebook, talk to friends about the candidates, and drag people to the polls. Social media had the added bonus of creating excitement and accountability in supporters. Social media, combined with voter identification, aids one of the most critical components of every campaign—mobilization.

Mobilization

All indications from the 2012 election season suggest that social media is not taking the place of mass media; rather, it is serving a very different purpose. Data-driven campaigns and social media are used as mobilization tools and as extensions of campaign field activities. While both Obama and Romney were spending millions on maintaining a presence on television, each campaign was also strategically targeting voters, down to the individual precinct. Mass media was used to guide the big picture message of the campaign, to maintain an air of legitimacy (in terms of competitiveness), and to raise money. Social media was used to mobilize supporters.

Campaign strategies focusing on mass media (using television advertising and earned media coverage) are most efficient at the highest level: in presidential races, and some high-visibility gubernatorial and Senate races. Lower-ticket races, from untargeted congressional races down to the state house races, can neither depend on saturating the airwaves with television advertising, nor attract much interest from the news media. These candidates focus on affordable advertising (usually direct mail and social media) and volunteer mobilization efforts. For the 2012 presidential election, the combination of voter identification and social media created a localized campaign strategy within the larger campaign structure for both Romney and Obama.

Before technological advances, campaigns would institute get out the vote (GOTV) strategies that focused on base groups and safe voting districts. With social media, targeted voters can be directly e-mailed to remind them to vote. They can also be tracked as they use social media to check in at polling locations and update their statuses to reflect their vote. Social media does not replace a well-organized field strategy; however, it makes GOTV efforts more efficient. It also allows networks of friends to encourage each other to vote (even if they are not directly targeted by the campaigns), thereby pushing turnout for candidates up and down the ticket.

Normative Implications

Evidence from the 2012 election suggests that there are positives and negatives in using data-mining, microtargeting, and social media. The intimacy of social media as a communication medium has the potential to motivate voters who would otherwise be disinclined to participate in an election. Both the Romney and Obama campaigns used social media to mimic interpersonal appeals for support. E-mails were designed to appear to

be sent from the candidates, campaign officials, or other high-profile surrogates. Messages were addressed to voters by their first names, and made personal appeals to the importance of their individual actions. Facebook and Twitter referenced friends who also supported candidates and issues. In 2012, the strategy helped candidates connect with those who appeared to be unlikely voters. These included young people and emerging demographic groups (like Obama's appeal to the Hispanic vote).

More precise targeting and bespoke messaging may also have the unintended effect of turning off voters. Relying on data-mining can be viewed as intrusive by the electorate, and seemingly personalized messages may be perceived as contrived and fake. Campaigns must also address privacy issues and the ethics of data-mining techniques. Additionally, attempts to mobilize voters can be matched by more nefarious attempts to suppress the vote. Another normative implication is the expense of acquiring and maintaining databases. The tactics are still the domain of big, well-funded campaigns and parties. Small campaigns or third-party candidates with few resources have limited access to databases, and rarely have the expert technicians to run the data.

Last, social media is potentially filling in where the news media is leaving off in terms of informing voters. Many factors, including the culture of news, are contributing to greater emphasis of horserace coverage of elections. This type of coverage is considered negative by some media scholars because the news is not functioning as a true information source or gatekeeper. The news media in the 2012 campaign season became obsessed with the notion of candidate momentum. Obama was perceived to have the momentum through summer and the conventions.

Obama's momentum was abruptly stopped at the first debate when Romney was judged to turn in a stronger performance. Obama's momentum was never really regained, but the Obama campaign team seemed relatively unconcerned. Both Obama and Romney believed that their data-driven campaign strategies utilizing social media would be the keystone to victory. Social media and microtargeting voters theoretically make momentum less important because the micromessage balances out attacks on the macromessage. Speaking to people through social media allows campaigns to circumvent media frames.

Gwendelyn S. Nisbett
University of North Texas

See Also: Data Mining; Get Out the Vote; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; VoteBuilder.com; Voter Demographics.

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Voter Privacy

The Voting Rights Act was signed into law in 1965 to ensure the protection of voting rights of Americans, giving minorities better representation in the polls. The United States has made tremendous progress in ensuring that every person's voting rights are guaranteed. However, in more recent times, a major concern of the public is that voter privacy is not as protected as it was in the past. Cracks have opened in the system of protections, in part because of the increasing use of new technologies.

The lack of privacy has been brought up by many different facets of the public, and affects both voter and candidate. This means that voters are not treated like people with rights to privacy in the details of their lives, but as numbers and statistics deemed either as an ally or threat to different campaigns and groups. The major organization that has been working to defend the Voter Privacy Act is the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), although the Electronic Frontier

Foundation (EFF) and others, especially the Electronic Information Privacy Center (EPIC), are also active in this regard.

From the time the Voting Rights Act was passed as legislation into law, minority voter registration and accompanying voter turnout sharply increased. The increase in voter turnout has been because of the greater access granted first by the removal of insidious state laws that prevented an extension of the franchise guaranteed under the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, and by the adoption of access laws such as the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (Motor Voter Act).

As the franchise has expanded, the predictability of voter behavior by traditional means has fallen. Empowerment of disparate groups such as Evangelicals (brought en masse into the electorate by the Pat Robertson campaigns of 1984 and 1988) and the recruitment and registration of the Latino community have led to a much wider and more unpredictable electorate. Those whose livelihood depends on their ability to predict voter behavior have adopted new and sometimes questionable strategies to identify voters, create records of private information in large databases, and mine data for information about individual voters.

Secret Ballot

From the beginning of American democracy and the electoral system, the simplest way to ensure voter privacy was through secret ballots at the polls. The early system of balloting in the United States was very simple. In the two-party system, a ballot was reserved and color-coded for each party, and the ballots were dropped by the voter into separate boxes in the presence of the election officials (often party officials), who could easily see who was voting for whom or what. This system made recording votes by person possible, and was a huge support to the system of patronage and favoritism that made up the material benefits of the political party machines. Ward bosses would canvass precincts for voters for a particular slate of candidates, individual candidates, or political parties, offering jobs and benefits, or even bribes to those who supported the precinct or ward boss's agenda. To verify a vote, one simply watched the voter cast a ballot, and wrote down the person's name.

Opposition to the party machines led to a number of systemic reforms during the Progressive Era. These reform movements eventuated the nationwide adoption of the "Australian" or "secret" ballot for national elections, although primary ballots (because primary balloting was a function of the political parties, and then a "private" affair") still often took the old, openly public form. The introduction of the secret ballot was complete in the United States by the end of the 1890s. It was intended to preserve the right of any citizen to vote as their conscience dictated, without fear of retribution by an entrenched power structure. The assumptions/requirements of the secret ballot in the United States were, roughly an official ballot printed at public expense, on which the names of the nominated candidates of all parties and all proposals appear, distributed only at the polling place, and marked in secret. Several new practices in voting in the United States are in violation of one or more of these practices. Postal voting and electronic voting both violate the distribution clause, and there is no guarantee of secrecy for these methods of voting.

Political Databases

Under the system of a required secret ballot, the only person who could ever know their political opinions, beliefs, and values were the voters. In recent years, databases have been created from public voting records. While databases have helped in creating a streamlined system of voting, making it faster and easier to count votes, they have also created uneasiness among the public. Some of these databases include how one voted, whether one owns a gun, and even what medical procedures one may have had, providing massive statistical data on everyone who votes. Probably the most powerful, yet lowest key of these databrokers is Aristotle. Such information databases and companies have been powerhouse sources for strong political masterminds such as Karl Rove. According to numerous articles throughout the media, voter privacy is dead and gone.

However, the invasion on voter privacy is not limited to their check in at the voting booth; it also lies within the social media surge that has occurred over the last 10 years. Voters all over America are linked into various social Web sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, all of

which give the ability for large database and statistical companies the opportunity to obtain very precise readings of voters' likes and dislikes. Not only do they get public information that users allow anyone to see, but when a person "likes" an application or a certain page, they are handing over tons of private information without even realizing it. Though technically, user agreements include warnings that the data may be used by the first party for purposes other than the application, or even sold or used by third parties, few users read these "terms of use" notices and simply click "okay" to move to the application.

This does not even cover how Web sites can track a user's search history, but instead relies heavily on the problem of the public placing their private information on the Internet, making it easier for them to become a part of the voter statistical surge. It is no longer necessary to embed a crude keyboard marker or keystroke reader—the application can automatically mark site visits. If voters only knew how the information they were posting on social Web sites could be used and is used, they might not be so forthcoming with their private information. Although the argument for this is that people willingly put their information on the Internet knowing the risks that come with that decision, there is still a line to be drawn on methods of getting that information so that lives can be used for gain and profit. Because user profiles are private, companies and campaigns have to create applications or pages in order to gain access to a user's private page, therefore gaining the ability to know whatever they want about a person and use that information for their marketing strategy.

Another tool used to gather information on voters is by getting access to simple public records. The commercial use of voter registration records has become a very common tool for campaigns and large voter database collecting companies. Although the Freedom of Information Act has created clearer guidelines for who and how people can gain access to public records, these vary by state, and although one state may have more restrictive laws on gaining access, another may make it relatively easy. Even so, the collection of information through voter registration records has not been challenged, and cannot be dealt with accordingly until it is challenged. This can become a problem because campaigns are able to dig deeper into the voters in their area through information that could be viewed as private. Many voters have no idea that items such as their race, gender, age, current and past addresses, and possibly even where they went to school are all available in public records. For many of these sources, the data builder need not array the delicate and complex programs needed to source social media. However, this information and access to it is useless if the majority of the public does not care that these details are available to just about anyone. The access to public records has been what political database systems thrive on to support broker organizations such as Aristotle.

The past 15 years have proven the effectiveness of these kinds of strategies in campaigns for those seeking office, as well as for those in the marketing and advertising world. The Internet has made their personal efforts far easier and more efficient. Now, campaigns have better access to voters and can find more content that will boost their political candidate. In addition, marketers are able to better target the demographic that is interested in their product. They can gain more details about their voters and consumers.

Through the use of typical Internet ploys such as cookies, donation forms, and mailing lists, campaigns and companies now have the ability to gain private information by using people. E-campaigning is another way for companies and campaigns to mine a wealth of personal information from their demographic of voters, including which Web sites they visit, which for a lot of people is extremely private information. "Electronic monitoring" is an off-putting term and concept to many voters, and could result in an even larger number of people who do not participate in the democratic process. Recent revelations about data-mining under the USA PATRIOT Act have heightened paranoia and insecurity.

Cookies

To fully understand the length to which voter privacy is threatened, it is important to know what methods are used: "Cookies," or "HTTP cookies," are tiny bits of data that are stored by the user's browser when a computer user accesses a Web site. When the user returns to the site, these data are sent to the server on which the site resides to record the visit. While many cookies

perform useful tasks, misuse, particularly in the area of recording a given user's browser behavior, is possible. Use of cookies is a tactic used by many different companies in order to gain more information on the people that visit their site. However, it is not cookies that track users, but specific "tracking" cookies and cookies that serve third parties, offsite data gatherers with no necessary connection to the site.

Because third-party cookies and tracking cookies collect information about what other Web sites that user is visiting, they are particularly useful to data gatherers. The information they gather is then sent back to the Web site database and used to help navigate and profile what other things people are interested in, besides their product or Web site. Not only do they collect where a user is going on the Internet, but they can also identify the user in order to improve their targeting for marketing, which is called building a "user profile." While this may seem an obvious violation of privacy, many Web creators argue that users are allowed to delete cookies through a simple process, or even turn off cookies altogether. Not all cookies are bad; some are very helpful for keeping user information safe, and to initiate authentication processes.

The commercialization of the process of profiling Web surfers based on what they click on has become a 21st-century phenomena. Companies have been built in order to track, through cookies, where a demographic of people visit and how often they do so, in order to build complex and definitive profiles on which people go where on the Web, and what they are typically (or in the case of individuals, specifically) interested in. In addition, these companies merge with other companies in marketing and campaigns in order to provide them with solid information on their demographic of people. For campaigns, this provides a way to target those who would vote for their candidate, as well as to find out how to convince people not on their mailing list why they should vote for their candidate. The result of this usage has been to unsettle some in the public and has led some to question the ethics of people who use these strategies. The counterargument is that this is simply an extension of the political research that campaigns have always done, and that better knowledge of the preferences and demographic profiles of constituents (or potential constituents) leads to better service and representation.

Privacy Policies

The issue of voter privacy has not only been acknowledged by voters, but also by political candidates; it is an issue that is now used to bolster their campaign platforms. However, before candidates were held accountable for their part in violating voter privacy, there were a lot of unanswered questions, including what candidates did with all of that information once their campaign ended, including e-mails, names, and data on their voters.

Some campaigns handed over their voter information to other candidates, without any permission from the people whose information was collected. The presidential campaign of Newt Gingrich, for example, has not only used the information gathered during the campaign for private enterprises of the former candidate, but has also been sold to or shared with other causes and campaigns close to the position of the former candidate. The process of gathering raw data, "massaging" it into a useful array, and setting up targets (individual and collective) within these data is a long process, and it is less so when the data is simply shared by those seeking to achieve similar ends.

With respect to the growing skepticism of some voters, many campaigns and political candidates have developed privacy policies, clearly stated on their Web sites, which warn visitors of the data gathering practices used by site creators. However, these policies often do not reveal what third-party Web sites may be linked to the campaign Web site through donation links, or what might become of the data after it is gathered. So, the candidate may have attempted to create transparency and a guarantee that the voter's information would be kept private, but they often cannot control the eventual use, or may not even be aware of the pitfalls. This is still a gray area in terms of protecting the privacy of voters.

The future of voter privacy is up in the air. The lines between legitimate use and violations of privacy are not clearly drawn. The area of Internet use is a legal and statutory minefield for legislators, as they attempt to balance privacy concerns with freedom from unnecessary regulation. Items

that lie within the public domain are fair game for campaign profiling: Technology has simply made gathering it and making it useful far easier than before.

The questions that surround usage really focus on data that is not in the public domain, and that which is surreptitiously gathered without the user's knowledge. One argument is that when users knowingly place items on the Internet, particularly via Facebook and other social media sites, they do so with the understanding that these data may be vulnerable to outside use. Facebook has made great strides in keeping users informed of the dangers, and it is not the fault of the site if users choose to ignore the warnings. The counterargument is that where use is hidden, or warnings are deceptively worded, the site has not been diligent in preventing abuses.

R. Bruce Anderson
Madison Nickell
Gage Nicholas
Florida Southern College

See Also: Carnivore; Data Mining; Geo-Locational Enabling; Voter Identification; Voter Turnout.

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Voter Turnout

Scholars of communication and politics, professional political campaign practitioners, political candidates, and other observers of democratic activity have had a sustained interest in the factors that impel citizens to cast their votes on Election Day. As political communication and campaign messaging becomes increasingly digitized, however, attention has shifted to the role of social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, and Friendster) and the influence these communicative platforms have on voter turnout—the percentage of eligible voters who actually cast their votes in an election. Political campaigns that are operated on behalf of all parties, causes, and levels of office engage their constituencies through social media for an array of communicative purposes, including fundraising, sharing "unfiltered" information that bypasses news media and opponent framing, creating name recognition, and clarifying positions and stances. The influence of social media on citizens' voting behavior, either directly or indirectly, has been more recently discussed in popular media commentary to the extent that voting may now be considered a social political behavior, rather than merely an individual activity.

Among the most well known social media applications with respect to voting intentions and voter turnout efforts is Facebook's Polling Place Locator app and "I Voted" digital button and banner graphic. Each of these features have appeared on Facebook users' "news feeds" on election day to provide a convenient reminder to vote on that day, as well as information on where to vote. Facebook's data scientists claim that approximately 5.4 million citizens clicked the "I Voted" button in the 2008 election cycle, and thereby indicated their intention to vote; for the 2012 election cycle, that estimate grew to 9 million users.

Some social media users also talk about and display their voting activities on social media platforms by, for example, posting pictures of themselves wearing an "I Voted" sticker after leaving a polling station, announcing that he or she participated in the act of voting for or against a particular candidate or cause, offering reasons or justifications for why someone is or is not voting, and even taking a picture of their completed ballot and sharing it with their online social network (this action is actually illegal in many states). In other words, the impact of social media on voter turnout is not just on the number of people voting because of social media use, but also the perception and symbolic uses of social media for this act of democratic expression.

Users posting photos of themselves on social media wearing "I Voted" stickers and buttons and millions of people clicking on "I Voted" digital buttons and banners heightens perception of this democratic act.

There are numerous acts of political expression, but voter turnout is often connoted as being a barometer of the health and responsiveness of the body politic. Low voter turnout is generally seen as malaise and public disengagement from public affairs, whereas high turnout tends to be associated with an active and well functioning democratic system. That turning out to vote is normative is not only reflected in academic and popular press commentary, but also from anecdotal evidence from social media users on Election Day.

Many Americans do not vote, and social media can be utilized to convey this lack of action. This includes expressing disapproval toward individual candidates, more generalized critiques of the two major political parties and lack of viable third-party candidates, apathy and malaise toward the political process, and the attitude that one's vote does not matter. Moreover, just as social media modalities allow users the opportunity to communicate voting intentions with others, users can similarly opt out of voting-oriented messages by blocking or hiding friends and political topics. As such, the impact of social media on voter turnout may be more indicative of offline political communication: those who are already interested in politics and intending to vote have yet another means to communicate this information to others, whereas those who are indifferent or not politically inclined can remain separated from messages about voting and the social elements created by social media platforms.

The relationship of social media and voter turnout entails some important caveats. First, social media's impact must be understood relative to other communicative modalities to which voters attend in the course of a political campaign and deciding to vote. Citizens can receive appeals to register and vote from a variety of information sources, such as people whom a voter encounters in offline contexts (e.g., a petitioner or pollster encountered in a public space), "conventional" get-out-the-vote efforts such as canvassing and phone calls, and mass appeals such as political advertisements and yard signs. Voter engagement initiatives such as National Voting Registration Day and MTV's Rock the Vote not only use social media sites but also on-the-ground volunteers who sign up individuals in public venues using paper and clipboards, celebrity appeals on television advertisements, and a variety of face-to-face activities by local nonprofit organizations and campaign staff.

Second, voter turnout is affected by a number of legal and regulatory factors that can overshadow social media effects. Most nations have certain age and citizenship status criteria that define their voting populations, including those that actively suppress the voting rights of certain religious, racial, ideological or partisan, and gender-based groups. Some countries enforce compulsory voting among their citizens, and others strongly encourage their citizens to cast their ballots based on social and collectivistic norms. As such, the impact of social media on voter turnout must be understood in terms of the political context in which such modalities operate.

Empirical Evidence

Empirical evidence suggests that voter turnout is associated with social media use. Self-report data from a variety of academic and nonpartisan research organizations describes many citizens announcing their vote choice on election day for candidates at all levels of elective office via social media, that they received persuasive appeals from their friends and family on a social media platform to vote a particular way, and that they had attempted to get others to vote in a particular way using social media tools.

Testing the direct influence of social media on voter turnout is a more challenging task. Recent undertakings provide some estimates about the direct influence of social media on voter turnout. Secondary analysis by the Pew Research Center about the 2008 election cycle, for instance, noted that citizens' use of Facebook and Twitter to read, discuss, and share political content with others was associated with higher turnout.

Systematic efforts to measure the direct influence of social media and voter turnout are also emerging. A collaborative undertaking between academic researchers and Facebook's data scientists has provided one of the most integrated efforts to date—one that has been widely reported in news media coverage. In testing the effect of Facebook use on voter turnout in the 2010 election cycle, Robert Bond and colleagues placed 61 million Facebook users into one of three randomized groups: (1) a social message condition (that is, users' news feeds provided a short message encouraging the user to vote, a hyperlink to find their local polling station, a clickable "I Voted" button, a counter showing how many other Facebook users reported that they had voted, and several thumbnail photos of their friends' profiles who had already clicked "I Voted"), (2) an informational message condition (such as a vote encouragement message, poll locator, button, and counter, but no thumbnail pictures or references to any of their friends), or (3) a control group (no messages or graphics about voting or polling station location or friends' voting activities).

The two treatment conditions were assessed in terms of whether and how users interacted with the graphics and message features provided by Facebook; users in each of the groups were also compared in terms of indicating on Facebook that they were going to vote, and their actual record of voting from publicly available records. Their results demonstrated that voter turnout was highest for the social message group. Notably, a contagion effect was described in which users in the social message group were more likely to vote when their "close" Facebook friends had previously expressed their intention to vote, and that information was conveyed in the thumbnail photos or "'x person' has already voted." Although results yielded a small effect size, the statistical equivalent of Facebook's social message condition resulted in an additional 340,000 votes. A replication of this research design and assessment was implemented for the 2012 election cycle, although the results were not publicly available at the time of this writing.

Empirical assessments about the impact or effect of social media on voter turnout merit some caveats. First, social media may provide helpful voting information for those who are already active and registered, but current social media applications and practices have largely overlooked the process of registering new or disenfranchised voters. Facebook's polling place locator and "I Voted" digital button, for instance, do not provide users with information or functions for registering before a primary or general election deadline. Although it is plausible that social media platforms might collaborate with state and local officials and major party campaigns to increase the total number of registered voters and potentially increase voter turnout, such efforts are presently rare.

Second, measuring social media's impact on voter turnout necessitates that social media messages are examined over a period of time, not just on election day. In addition to absentee voting, many states allow their residents the option of early voting, sometimes almost a month before election day. If a substantial proportion of citizens are casting their ballot via early voting, without needing to be prompted by others in their online social network, estimating the effects of social media becomes more convoluted.

Finally, the measurements of social media use could also be problematic. Users could inadvertently indicate their intention to vote through clicking a graphic or posting a message through simple misuse of technology; users indicating that they intend to vote, but then not actually voting; or users indicating that they intend to vote or that they actually did vote at a point when it is too late to influence their peers' behaviors. Many voters come to the polls later in the day or early evening after they finish their workday, and they might not be telling their social network friends about this until some point later, when they have also gone to the polling place.

Darin Gully
Ithaca College

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Get Out The Vote Drives; Project Vote Smart; Rock the Vote; Voter Apathy; Voter Demographics; Voter Identification; Voting, Global.

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VoterVault.com

Known as "microtargeting," voter databases are central to voter contact activity, including fundraising, recruitment, issue tracking, and "Get Out the Vote" drives. This technique has long been used by businesses to target consumers, and the Grand Old Party (GOP) was credited with first using this technique in 2000, when Alexander Gage convinced the Bush campaign to implement it as a way to contact individual voters. Subsequent presidential races saw both parties become increasingly entrenched in microtargeting techniques, with the Obama 2012 campaign possibly setting a new benchmark for the technique. Voter Vault was born from the 2000 presidential campaign success as an Internet-based database management system, and was used by the Republican Party from 2002 until 2012, when it was finally replaced by Data Center in 2012. Data Center was maintained by FLS Connect, which had also worked on Voter Vault.

Reince Priebus, Republican National Committee chairman, published the Growth and Opportunity Project in December 2012, to report on the committee's data management platform. Data Center will either be revamped or replaced by Liberty Works in 2013, a firm run by Richard Boyce, an associate of Karl Rove, though it is reported that Rove has no ownership or interest in Liberty Works. Data Trust, a separate company with close ties to the Republican National Committee (RNC), will exercise control of the list. Unlike the Democrats, who have centralized the processing of data through unofficially endorsing (since 2004) the company's Catalyst and Voter Activation Network (NGP VAN) with the program Vote Builder that now houses information on 180 million registered voters, the Republicans have splintered into a variety of data management providers, eliminating a central database, which some claim gives the Democrats an advantage.

For example, Steve Adler, a Rhode Island programmer who helped start NGP VAN, has switched sides and developed a system for Republicans called rVotes, which competes with Voter Vault/Data Center. Allegations over Voter Vault editing access misuse by party leadership led to the creation of the new Data Center. Complaints ranged from mining of newly acquired personal data for monetary solicitations to the state and national party, to poor voter updates in municipal elections. A major difference between Voter Vault and the new Data Center is no direct manipulation

of data. A candidate can download a list and manipulate information on it, but the modified list cannot be reuploaded for other candidates to use. However, the new Liberty Works agreement allows access to voter files, on the condition that they update the data they use.

The Data Center system works similarly to Voter Vault. Applicants are screened by the respective State GOP, then the GOP candidate (or local chairman) is provided a user name and password that allows them to log into the Data Center Web site and access registered voters in a county or district. It provides for individual voter lookup, change of information, and the generation of reports and downloadable lists. According to Republican National Committee spokesman Sean Spice, the GOP Data Center contacted about 80.5 million voters in the 2012 election. Personal data frequently included in both Voter Vault and the Data Center database consists of: name, physical address, mailing address, phone number, party membership or affiliation, voting history (including federal, sub-national, primary, municipal, or special election voting history), absentee or military voter designations, source of voter registration, ethnicity or race, gender, and birth date or age range.

The new Data Center was redesigned as a big data warehouse by cross-matching the following public and consumer information: vote frequently, homeownership, hunting or fishing license holders, boat owners, occupation, charitable or political contributions, magazine subscription status, veteran records, property records, census results, the results of past telephone surveys, and the Postal Service's national change of address system.

These database systems are different from the Romney campaign's Election Day voter mobilization program (ORCA). ORCA is an application programming interface (API) for smartphones and tablets that directs users to a mobile-enabled Web site that does not require additional software to use. It is not an app available from the iOS App Store or Google Play. As opposed to the Data Center, ORCA enhances poll watching, where volunteers monitor polling stations tracking who voted in order to focus efforts on getting out the vote later on Election Day.

ORCA was conceived by Rich Beeson, the campaign's political director, and Dan Centinello, Romney's director of voter contact. ORCA crashed on Election Day because of a variety of factors. It is unclear what effect, if any, it had on the "Get Out the Vote" effort of Romney, but the perception created frustration for volunteers. The Democrats used a system where volunteers would report voting information to a centralized national hotline called Houdini in 2008, and implemented a similar program called Project Narwhal in 2012.

Spencer H. Kimball
Emerson College

See Also: Get Out the Vote Drives; Microtargeting; Voter Demographics.

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Voting, Global Electronic

In many areas of the world, electronic voting or e-voting systems have been tried, and in some cases they have been successfully adopted; whereas in other cases, they are still being tested, have been delayed, or have been rejected. While experimentation with electronic voting continues globally, there is no consensus on whether e-voting technologies and systems are a step forward or backward in the election process, and even

among supporters of e-voting, there is debate about whether the degree of improvement is enough to justify the cost. Meanwhile, scholars and activists are striving to provide guidelines and procedures for safe and fair electronic voting.

Electronic voting is the casting of electoral ballots through electronic systems. Technologies employed in electronic voting have included: optical scanning voting systems, which use optical scanners to read marked paper ballots and tally the results; and direct recording (DRE) voting systems, which provide an electronic display for vote casting accessible by the voter through a button or a touch screen, and which also allow the electronic transmission of completed ballots to a central location for tallying and reporting. The management of electronic voting has included e-voting that is physically supervised by electoral authorities, such as machines at polling stations; and e-voting that is not physically supervised by electoral authorities, such as remote electronic voting. A voting machine is a combination of mechanical, electromechanical, and electronic equipment used to cast and count ballots, display and report election results, and produce and maintain audit trail information. Voting machines have different levels of usability, accuracy, and security. Remote electronic voting can be done from a personal computer connected to the Internet, a television device with an Internet connection, or a mobile phone.

Early Adopters

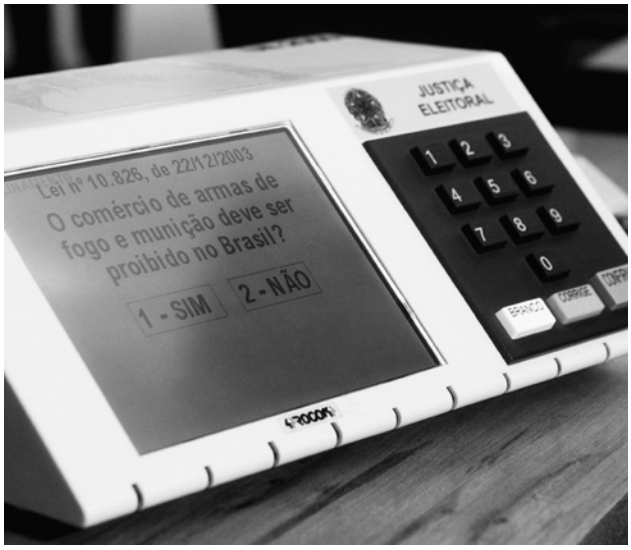
Brazil, the largest nation in South America, is a pioneer in electronic voting because since 2000, all votes in Brazilian elections have been cast through electronic voting machines. The Brazilian Supreme Electoral Court authorized the use of electronic voting technology in the 1996 municipal elections. The Brazilian government fully converted to electronic voting by means of over 400,000 kiosk-style machines in the 2000 national elections. Voters in Brazil use an electronic voting device with an integrated screen and keyboard that displays choices and prompts the voters to cast a ballot for each office. Voters need to press the number designated for a particular candidate on the keyboard. The candidate's picture then appears on the screen. Voters can confirm, reject, choose another candidate, or start the selection process again. The voting machine tallies the votes, producing both digital and printed reports of the number of votes given to each candidate. Machines also produce a paper ballot that the voter can deposit in a box for a recount. Following the example of Brazil, other South American nations such as Argentina and Venezuela have implemented similar electronic voting systems.

No other country in the world has used electronic voting on as large a scale as India, although not all voting in India is electronic. With an electorate of more than 668 million, India would require over 1 million electronic voting machines (EMVs). Electronic voting was introduced in India in 1982, when it was experimentally used in the Parur assembly constituency in the State of Kerala. However, the Supreme Court of India struck down this election as illegal. Further legislative measures adopted in 1989 reopened the possibility for EVMs in elections. In 2003, all state elections were held using EVMs. In 2004 and 2009, EVMs were also available in the national elections for the Indian Parliament, and because a record 400 million voters cast their ballots electronically in the 2009 national elections, the tallying of results took just several hours. The EVMs built by the Electronics Corp of India and Bharat Electronics consist of two units, one for control by the polling staff, and the other for the use of voters. Voters press a button next to the candidate's name and symbol, and the polling officer records the vote. A light next to the button glows, and a short beep sound follows, indicating that the vote has been cast. The polling officer then presses a switch to clear the machine. The EVM comes in a reusable carry pack, and can operate on a battery power source in remote areas. Each EVM can record five votes a minute, or nearly 3,000 votes a day.

Estonia, a former Soviet republic and now a member of the European Union, has advanced the farthest in remote electronic voting. Since 2005, Estonia has conducted local elections as well as national parliamentary elections in which all voters can use Internet voting. Remote electronic voting in Estonia occurs during a three-day period, within the broader early voting period. Any Estonian voter who wishes to cast a ballot over the Internet needs a national identification card, the personal identification numbers (PINs)

associated with the card, and an Internet-accessible computer with a working smartcard reader. The Estonian Internet voter goes to a designated Web site and proceeds to authenticate the system. The person is prompted to insert the national identification card into the reader and write a first PIN. The voting server queries the voter registration database, and the person is then sent to a page providing a list of candidates.

The voter selects a candidate from the list, confirms the choice, and writes a second PIN. The completed ballot is encrypted, and the voter signs a digital version of an absentee ballot "envelope"; this "envelope" containing the voter's identity is disassociated from the actual ballot when it is confirmed that the signature is correct and the voter has not also cast a paper ballot. A voting server verifies the digital signature, and if it is correct, it passes the encrypted ballot to another server, where it is stored for tabulation. If an Internet voter has also cast a paper ballot, the voter's Internet ballot is electronically tagged so that it will not be counted on the night of the election. This complicated, but secure remote voting system is trusted by Estonians, but there is doubt that it could be replicated outside of this small and highly centralized eastern European nation.



An electronic voting machine used during the 2005 Brazilian elections. Brazil was one of the first countries to vote electronically, and had fully converted to electronic machines by the 2000 national elections.

Experimentation

Experimentation with electronic voting systems has been widely pursued on the European continent, yet in most European countries, such systems are not sufficiently accepted, too cost prohibitive, or not safe enough for overall adoption. In Germany, electronic voting machines were tested in the 2005 Bundestag elections on over 2 million voters, but the lack of public confidence in the Nedap machines, produced in Netherlands and already challenged in that country, led to a decision to discontinue their utilization. An electronic scan voting system was also tried in the 2008 state elections of Hamburg, but while its usability was demonstrated, surveys found public distrust, and plans for its further implementation were abandoned.

Italy, Spain, England, Ireland, Finland, and Norway have also piloted electronic voting systems at various levels in the past decade, but such systems have proven too expensive and not high enough in voter satisfaction to further proceed to widespread implementation locally and nationally. In Belgium, electronic voting was approved by law in 1994, and electronic polling booths were put in place for the general elections of 1999 and 2003, and municipal elections in 2000. However, electronic voting provoked delays in voting operations in many localities in 2003, causing long lines at the polls and the absence from the polls of an estimated 10 percent of the electorate, in spite of Belgium's compulsory voting system and fines for failing to do so; electronic voting has since not been expanded in this country. From the late 1990s to 2007, electronic voting machines were extensively used during elections in the Netherlands, although their effectiveness was contested by various groups.

After the 2006 parliamentary elections, a group called Wij vertrouwen stemcomputers niet ("We do not trust voting machines") showed on Dutch television how the voting machines utilized in these elections, and produced by an autochthonous company named Nedap, could be manipulated in five minutes through a software exchange unnoticeable by either officials or voters. Subsequently, a Dutch court declared the use of Nedap e-voting machines unlawful, and the Netherlands returned to paper voting. In spite of such problems with e-voting in Europe, some partial successes have

been recorded in European countries with remote electronic voting. Elections in France utilized remote electronic voting for the first time in 2003, when French citizens living in the United States were given the option to vote for their representatives in the Assembly of French Citizens Abroad through the Internet. Over 60 percent of French voters in the United States chose to use the Internet, rather than paper ballots, and as a result of this success, all French citizens living abroad were able to use remote electronic voting in the 2009 elections. However, in the territory of France, local and general election voting is still done through paper ballots. Following France, Switzerland has also adopted remote electronic voting for citizens who live abroad, while maintaining paper voting for citizens living in its territory.

The several countries that have experimented with electronic voting systems in other regions of the world have encountered the same mixed results as in Europe. Australia has been testing various electronic voting possibilities for over two decades, including a successful open source Electronic Voting and Counting System (eVACS) in the Australian Capital Territory (one of the eight territories of this country). EVACS has been commended for its increased potential for voter participation for offering ballots in 12 languages, as well as its higher reliability for vote tallying than hand-counting of votes, although it is said to also have some minor problems such as difficult-to-use barcode readers and minor delays in displaying results on and after election night. Although generally trusted by the Australian public, electronic voting is still used by only approximately 10 percent of the Australian electorate.

In the Central American nations of Panama and Costa Rica, EMV systems with complex voter identification and ballot casting procedures were tested at local levels at the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, but they were not nationally adopted because of lack of consensus among political actors and fear of electoral fraud. In North America, Canada and the United States have both tested electronic voting systems. Canada has employed electronic voting technologies since the early 1990s, but these have remained confined to the municipal level, and have more recently expanded partially at the provincial levels, while national elections remain paper based. In the United States, both electronic voting machines and Internet election practices have been attempted since the early 2000s; however, controversies surrounding the use of electronic voting machines and problems with Internet voting in several presidential primaries have delayed their spread. In both Canada and the United States, civil rights concerns regarding the potential disenfranchisement of minority groups because of the digital divide, as well as security threat concerns regarding the possibility of denial of service attacks and voter identity theft have been expressed by opponents of electronic voting.

Electronic Voting Potential

Direct Democracy: Progress and Pitfalls of Election Technology (2010), published by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems and edited by international expert in election technology and administration Michael Yard, asserts that the mixed results of electronic voting systems are because of the difficulty to balance the benefits and the shortcomings of such systems. According to the report, benefits can include increased accessibility that e-voting machines can offer to persons with disabilities, a possible increase in voter turnout, and decreased opportunity for fraud or error by election workers who count votes and fill in counting and tabulation forms.

However, shortcomings can include the potential for lack of transparency, the difficulties in creating bug-free software, security vulnerabilities, and opportunity for an election to be manipulated by a small number of persons, or even by a single individual. In less developed countries, there are also concerns about lack of adequate infrastructure to support electricity and communication requirements, and improper storage facilities that subject equipment to environmental extremes. Given the intricacy of the issues related to electronic voting globally, this report and other research have provided guidelines for selecting an appropriate system and procedure to follow.

In terms of selection criteria, systems should be accessible, or with capability to enfranchise various voters while operated without long-term outside assistance; secure, or with capacity to provide protection from unauthorized access and from excessive loss from disaster or malice; accountable, or with the ability to ensure that all

data is recorded, modified, or managed according to legal guidelines, with clear documentation of who did what; auditable, or including capabilities to independently verify that the output of the process is logically consistent with the input; transparent, or including capacities to be easily understood in terms of how the technology works and what its implications for the electoral processes are; and sustainable, or including the ability to be repeated without depleting available resources.

Among procedures, the most important are the introduction of a new voting system in the post-electoral period, rather than a pre-electoral one, because this allows more time for feasibility studies, pilot projects, system modifications, and operator training; and the operation of an electronic voting system with the awareness that there are no one-size-fits-all solutions to problems that might occur, and these need to be contextually resolved after broad discussion involving implementers and stakeholders. If electronic voting systems are selected and operated appropriately, with sensitivity to the diversity of voters and the variety of electoral situations, electronic voting has a good chance of becoming the future of voting globally.

Sorin Nastasia
Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville

See Also: Digital Government; E-Democracy; E-Voter Institute; Voter Demographics; Voter Turnout.

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W

Warner, Mark

Virginia's junior Democratic Senator since 2008, Mark Robert Warner has been described as a centrist and one of the fastest rising stars of the Democratic Party. Warner is a multimillionaire who made his money as a venture capitalist in the telecommunications field; he founded the venture capital firm Columbia Capital Corporation. From 2002 to 2006, Warner served as the 69th governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia. He is married to Lisa Colis, who he met in 1984; Warner and Collis have three daughters: Madison, Gillian, and Eliza.

Warner earned a B.A. in political science from George Washington University in 1977; his educational career was notable as he was valedictorian, graduating with a grade point average of 4.0. While in college, he worked on Capitol Hill, in part to pay for his tuition, serving in U.S. Senator Abe Ribicoff's office. Upon graduation, he attended Harvard Law School, attaining his J.D. in 1980; however, Warner has never practiced law. Following Harvard Law, he served as a staff member for U.S. Senator Christopher Dodd. Prior to serving as governor, Warner amassed a fortune as a venture capitalist who organized investor groups to apply for licenses for radio frequencies for mobile phones when the Federal Communications Commission started giving out cellular licenses. He founded Columbia Capital in 1989, the largest technology venture capital fund in the mid-Atlantic region. Warner was an early investor in several new technology companies that created thousands of private sector jobs. These funds provided Warner the wealth needed to pursue public office. Also in 1989, he managed Democrat Douglas Wilder's successful gubernatorial campaign for Virginia. He then served as chair of Virginia's Democratic Party in 1990.

In 1997, Warner developed and launched the Virginia High Tech Partnership, which helps students from Virginia's five Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) pursue technology careers through a summer internship and job placement program with more than 75 high-tech businesses. While managing director of Columbia Capital in 2001, he worked with the Virginia Foundation of Independent Colleges to develop Tek.Xam, a four-hour certification assessment that measures computer-technology and problem-solving skills. Meant for liberal arts students to demonstrate their grasp of technology and computer applications, it was designed to provide employers credentials that a college transcript might not show. Tek.Xam tests many broad technology skills, including Web page design, Internet research and evaluation, Internet legal and ethical issues, analyzing and presenting data in a spreadsheet, and creating word processing documents. The test is now extensively used in

colleges and universities and has received endorsement from many corporations.

As a private citizen, Warner helped create the Virginia Health Care Foundation, which has provided health care to more than 600,000 underserved Virginians in areas such as a health safety net, mental health services, medication assistance, and child health insurance outreach. He also launched SeniorNavigator.com, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides free information about health and aging resources available to Virginians, after his own frustrating experience with the health support system when his mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. SeniorNavigator links the Internet and a network of volunteers to help older Virginians and their caregivers find answers to medical questions and to identify local resources and services.

Warner conducted an unsuccessful U.S. Senate run in 1996 against long-time incumbent Republican John Warner (no relation). The outcome of the race was closer than expected, with Mark Warner doing well in rural parts of the state, where he sponsored a NASCAR driver and supported gun rights, as well as in Northern Virginia, the tech corridor. He reportedly spent $10 million on the race, much of it his money. Although a losing effort, the close election provided Mark Warner the boost to run for Virginia's governor five years later.

Governorship

In 2001, Warner was elected governor of Virginia, winning 52.2 percent of the vote over the Republican opponent, former Virginia governor, Mark Earley. Given his Democratic Party affiliation, Warner was assumed to be on the unpopular side of most economic and social issues in conservative Virginia. Instead, he successfully reconnected with rural citizens, focusing on their unemployment rates and pro-gun stances. He organized a "Sportsmen for Warner Group," and a bluegrass song written for him termed Warner "a good ol' boy" who would work for mountain people, "from their coal mines to the still," hailing him as the "hero of the hills." With these efforts, Warner was able to garner a few more percentage points in rural cities and counties, reducing the Republican stronghold in these most conservative part of the state. His victory count also included a substantial gender gap in Warner's favor (53–39 percent women), and Warner outspent Earley $19.9 to $11.5 million. However, Warner's win did nothing to impact the Republicans' strong sweep of House seats, where they captured 64, leaving him with a statehouse controlled by Republicans. Given Warner's victory, though, it demonstrated that a Democratic candidate could successfully run in a conservative, Republican state.

Warner entered the governorship facing a statewide $6 billion budget shortfall, but he left office four years later with a budget surplus. With overwhelming GOP majorities in the House and Senate, he worked to overcome bipartisan differences, including naming three Republicans to his cabinet. This bipartisan legacy would become part of his radical centrism, as he called it. His term also suffered several crises, such as an avian flu epidemic, the Washington, D.C., area sniper attacks, and a state-wide drought. The revenue shortfall forced Warner to seek a $1.4 billion tax increase, and to order severe state government cuts. He also modernized Virginia's entire tax code to promote long-term fiscal integrity and the preservation of core services. These financial measures would result in signature achievements, among many initiatives.

Governor Warner promoted a progressive agenda based in the importance of the information age, with priorities in education, technology, health care, and workforce development. He began a $12 million fund that allowed broadband to stretch 700 miles through some of the most economically distressed areas of Virginia, beginning to bridge the digital divide. Warner started TechRiders, an innovative program at work that partnered with Virginia churches to teach basic computer skills. He initiated the Virginia Health Care Foundation, which has provided health care to more than 400,000 underserved Virginians in rural and urban areas. Warner's workforce development initiatives added 150,000 jobs by reeducating citizens with insufficient education, most in new technology fields, and in areas hit by manufacturing and tobacco job losses. He also established four regional investment funds (in the Southwest, Southside, Richmond, and Tidewater areas) to attract businesses. He ensured community college affordability, and worked to strengthen public education by making business-like reforms to public schools.

From 2004 to 2005, Warner chaired the National Governors Association, which improved his national profile. He began a leadership political action committee, Forward Together, committed to helping elect individuals focused on bringing commonsense solutions to government by supporting candidates not bound by ideology or agenda. He still serves as its honorary chair. Virginia was rated "the best managed state in the nation" in January 2005, after a two-year study by the Pew Charitable Trust. The same year, *Time* magazine named Warner one of America's "Five Best Governors," declaring the Commonwealth the country's best state for business. In 2006, *Newsweek* named him in the "Who's Next" issue, and he was featured on the *New York Times Magazine* cover as a bright new Democratic star destined for higher office.

Warner left the governor's office four years after election (as required by law; in Virginia, there is no second term) with a 70 percent approval rating, despite the tax hike and cuts. He established a budget surplus out of an initial enormous shortfall while creating major investments in K–12 education and college and university systems, increased workforce development, enhanced technology, and cleaned up the Chesapeake Bay. Warner's name was often floated as a potential candidate for the 2008 presidential race, but in October 2006, he removed his name from contention. Warner was a keynote speaker at the 2008 Democratic Convention that selected Barack Obama.

U.S. Senate

On November 4, 2008, former Governor Warner was elected to the U.S. Senate, defeating former Governor Jim Gilmore with 65 percent of the electorate supporting him (more than 1 million votes). The Senate seat became open when five-term Senator John Warner chose not to seek another term. Warner's victory was the most lopsided win for a contested seat in 20 years. Warner led the polls from the start, often by a 2–1 margin. Governor Warner was popular due to his exceptional record of bipartisan successes, centrist stances, and fiscal management skills. He outspent Gilmore nearly 10–1. Gilmore's attacks (primarily on the less expensive Web), tried to cloak Warner as someone who violated his promises for raising taxes while governor. However, Warner's popularity carried over (and Gilmore had not enjoyed such popularity during his gubernatorial term), and the push by Barack Obama's candidacy accelerated the trend toward electing Democrats. Warner also promised to be a radical centrist, working to create bipartisan coalitions. That pledge has remained a hallmark of his time as senator.

Warner serves on the Senate Banking, Budget, Commerce and Intelligence committees. He has become a national leader in efforts to reduce the federal debt, as well as a leader in promoting innovations that will encourage small businesses and startups. Among his initiatives are efforts to improve the lives of military families, including upgrading older military housing and Veterans Administration services to female military veterans. His technology background helped him to bring in several leading technology companies to produce a comprehensive, free plan to correct mismanagement at Arlington National Cemetery. He leads a bipartisan task force focusing on the elimination of waste in the federal bureaucracy. He was part of a bipartisan congressional super committee that was responsible for compromising on cuts topping $1 trillion under a last-minute deal that proposed to raise the federal dept ceiling proposed in August 2011.

Their efforts failed, leading to the threat of the fiscal cliff (severe cuts to programs and raising taxes) by the end of 2012. Warner voted in favor of the 2010 health care reform bill (Obamacare), and he played a leading role in drafting the Wall Street reform bill that became law in July 2010. He cosponsored the Fair, Accurate, Secure and Timely (FAIR) Voting Act of 2012, which provides incentives to stakeholders who collaborate on election reforms such as flexible voter registration, improved training of election officials, reducing waiting times at polling stations, no-excuse-needed absentee voting, and assistance to voters who do not speak English or those with disabilities.

Perhaps Warner's most recognized bipartisan activity is his leadership of the Senate's bipartisan Gang of Six, begun in 2011 to produce a comprehensive plan on the long-term deficit. Three Democrats and three Republicans collaborated to propose a $3.7 trillion deficit reduction, which included entitlement and spending cuts, along with $1 trillion in new tax revenue. Their proposal failed to garner enough support in Congress, attributed to a lack of House representative membership, no

party leadership, and Republican unwillingness to consider tax increases. The group (now joined by two other senators, making it the Gang of Eight) continues to meet, and their symbolic value lies in bipartisan attempts to solve the growing debt crisis, even if their proposals are turned away.

From January 2009 to December 2012, Warner missed 32 of 1,157 roll call votes, which is 2.8 percent, slightly more than the median of 2.0 percent among the lifetime records of senators currently serving. Senator Warner announced in November 2012 that he will not seek election as Virginia's governor in 2014, stating that his role is in the Senate.

As of November 2013, Senator Warner had a Twitter account with more than 43,000 followers, an active Facebook page with more than 25,000 "likes," and regularly updates his YouTube page and Flickr photo stream. He has also held Twitter and video town halls.

Beth M. Waggenspack
Virginia Tech

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2008); Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaign Strategy; Candidate Image; Influence on Elections; Spending and Debt, Government; Taxes.

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Water.org

Water.org is a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that focuses on water and sanitation in the developing world. Founded by Gary White and actor Matt Damon by merging their organizations in 2009, Water.org uses diverse approaches to addressing water issues by categorizing the population in need into two groups: those who have an income, and those in absolute poverty. Using social media to raise awareness, requiring local participation and decision-making from recipient communities, and facilitating a new focus in microfinance called WaterCredit are three characteristics of Water.org that distinguish it from other NGOs in this sector.

Water.org uses social media to increase public awareness and decrease the distance between donors and local recipients. Even small-time donors can now contribute online and add their voices by sharing the news with friends through online social networks, making Water.org in many ways a grassroots-to-grassroots operation. Donors can also be connected to the communities they are supporting through real-time updates of project progress. Water.org states that its purpose is to be transparent and accountable to both donors and recipient communities. By using social media, Water.org allows even the smallest donors to see where their money is going.

Founders White and Damon have also been active in using media to bring attention to the water and sanitation sector by encouraging everyone to make water and sanitation the main humanitarian focus of the world. They say that they have made it easy, and that donating a voice may be more important than donating money. Voices matter politically because White and Damon also attempt to persuade policymakers to direct more government aid to this sector, and have been critical of the lack of attention given by President Obama.

Water.org's approach to water needs in developing areas are meant to be driven by local participatory efforts and input. Participation is expected at every level of projects. Ownership among the recipient communities is seen as a necessity, and Water.org requires the use of local skills and materials to ensure continued use and sustainability. Having learned from the shortcomings of other organizations over the years, projects are designed to include only technology that is sustainable and repairable by recipient communities.

Recipients are expected to bear some of the cost of projects, either through financial contribution

The cofounder of Water.org, Gary White, visits a neighborhood water pump in Mereb-Meatie, Ethiopia, in July 2009. Water.org has facilitated the development of microfinancing focused on water and sanitation. Reducing the time spent acquiring water in the developing world has been found to allow for more entrepreneurial activity and for the repayment of WaterCredit loans.

or physical labor. In addition to these initial contributions, users are required to pay for the new water services to sustain the maintenance needs of equipment. Too much dependency on international organizations can often result in short-lived fixes. The problem returns and goes unaddressed until a new international organization comes along to repeat the process. By requiring local participation and ownership, Water.org believes that individuals and communities will be invested in sustaining these water solutions on their own.

A unique feature of Water.org is its innovative merging of the water and sanitation sector with microfinance. They have distinguished between people who are working and able to sustain themselves and those who are in desperate need and cannot make any contribution to water solutions. The day-to-day lives of this working group are afflicted by difficult conditions caused by inadequate infrastructure and resources. Accessing water for much of the world's population is a time-consuming and labor-intensive process. Time spent fetching water is time not spent earning income. Building on the assumption that time is valuable to this working population of the developing world, WaterCredit makes small loans available to people who can then solve their water problems.

Water.org is not a bank but a facilitator of a new relationship, turning microfinance institutions on to a new era of water and sanitation. These institutions formerly focused solely on income generating efforts. WaterCredit demonstrates that providing for basic water needs indirectly supports such efforts by eliminating the time-consuming

effort of obtaining water. The time and energy formerly spent on water can be dedicated to employment, often entrepreneurial, thereby enabling economic growth and the repayment of the WaterCredit loans. More money is therefore reserved by Water.org for grants to those who cannot take out loans or afford contributions.

This use of microfinance principles permits Water.org to do more with less in addressing the world's water needs while generating public support through social and political channels. Water.org's objective is to help more people address their water needs by empowering them to solve their water problems in sustainable and participatory ways, and they invite donors to participate in this cause.

Brett J. Craig
Nazarbayev University

See Also: Economic and Social Justice; Microfinance Initiatives; Nongovernmental Organizations; ONE Campaign; Poverty.

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We the People

"We the People" is the name given to a section of the White House's official Web site that allows citizens to create and sign electronic petitions. It is White House policy to respond to all petitions that reach 100,000 signatures. The subject matter of submitted petitions varies from serious political concerns to lighthearted forays into popular culture. The page has generated substantial discussion regarding the role of new media technology in democratic processes. The idea for an online petitioning system came from Macon Phillips, the White House's director of digital strategy. A similar platform had already been in place in the United Kingdom at this time (HM Government e-petitions). Barack Obama's senior advisor, David Plouffe, liked the idea and moved the project forward. We the People officially launched on September 22, 2011. The name of the Web site was taken from the preamble to the U.S. Constitution. The subtitle of the page is "Your Voice in Our Government." Numerous areas of the Web site remind visitors of Barack Obama's commitment to democratic principles such as openness, public trust, transparency, public participation, and collaboration.

The We the People Web site describes its procedures in three steps. First, users are instructed to browse We the People in order to locate petitions that address their policy concerns. Once a user locates a petition relevant to their concerns, they should add their signature. The second step suggests that users should create a petition if they do not see their policy concerns represented in any already existing petitions. The third step places responsibility on the White House for responding to petitions that meet a predetermined signature threshold. Newly created petitions are not searchable until they collect at least 150 signatures in 30 days. The threshold to have a petition addressed by the White House is much higher. Petitions must receive at least 100,000 signatures within 30 days to earn a response from the White House. The subject matter referenced in each petition determines which agency will be assigned the task of responding to it. When the project launched, the threshold for earning a response was originally set at 5,000 signatures, but the ease with which several early petitions reached that mark encouraged officials to increase the threshold to 25,000 on October 3, 2011. The threshold has remained at its current mark of 100,000 since January 16, 2013. As of May 1, 2013, We the People boasted more than 8 million users, 200,000 petitions, and over 13 million signatures.

The content of We the People petitions significantly varies. Marijuana legalization requests are among the most popular petitions at the site. A petition titled "Legalize and Regulate Marijuana

in a Manner Similar to Alcohol," along with seven similar petitions, earned a response from Gil Kerlikowske, director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Kerlikowske opposed the petition, arguing that marijuana use has negative effects on human health. Another petition called for the abolition of the Transportation Security Administration. Numerous petitions filed on behalf of individual states have requested secession from the United States. One petition that has been credited with effectively getting the attention of government officials aims to reverse a law that makes it illegal for cellphone users to unlock their devices in an effort to change service carriers. Some petitions that have fallen roughly in line with President Obama's agenda include those that seek to reduce gun violence and improve the United States' immigration system.

We the People has produced a bevy of petitions that focus on issues not typically addressed in mainstream political discussions. In fact, many of these petitions may seem unusual or humorous to some political observers. For instance, when Twinkie, a brand of American snack cakes, was forced to stop production, citizens filed a petition with We the People that sought to nationalize the Twinkie industry so that Americans would not have to live without the popular snack. One of the more peculiar petitions to earn a response from government officials called for the construction of a Death Star—an enormous fictional space station that is capable of destroying planets and was made popular by the film *Star Wars*.

Paul Shawcross, chief of the Science and Space Branch at the White House Office of Management and Budget responded to the petition by noting how expensive the project would be, and reminding citizens that the Obama administration does not support blowing up planets. Shawcross's response included numerous *Star Wars* references, indicating that he recognized the humor in the petition, and was likely a fan of *Star Wars*. Other lighthearted petitions that garnered media attention sought to create a reality television program starring Vice President Joe Biden, and to create a trillion-dollar coin featuring an image of actor Henry Winkler, famous for his work as the Fonz in *Happy Days*.

We the People has had its share of detractors, many of whom point to frivolous petitions as evidence that the site is unlikely to generate real political change. Other critics have argued that the site is an attempt by the Obama administration to earn public relations points by appearing to care about citizens' concerns. Some have found fault with the quality and quantity of the administration's responses to petitions. Still others have pointed out bugs in the site's mechanics.

Champions of We the People have observed that it uses new media technologies to make good on American's constitutional right to "petition the government for a redress of grievances." Ethicist J. H. Snider has praised We the People for giving political minorities the opportunity to mobilize themselves and place their issues on the public agenda.

Mark Glantz
St. Norbert College

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Change.org; Constituency; Gun Control; MoveOn.org.

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Web Mapping and Online Politics

Web mapping refers to the process of collecting, delivering, and sharing geospatial data online utilizing geographic information visualization technologies. While the technologies were not invented purely for political empowerment, in the past decade, Web mapping started to show its potential for influencing politics through facilitating information publicity and sharing, encouraging public participation, and offering platforms

for grassroots activism in both democracies and authoritarian regimes across the globe.

Technologies

In the early 1990s, Web maps were mostly static, which means that the maps were created as picture files (such as JPEG, GIF, TIFF, and PDF). Xerox PARC Map Viewer, developed by Xerox Corporation in 1993, generates GIF images with limited interactive information retrieval features. A map (that is, a picture) will need to be redelivered every time new information is requested. Today, most Web maps are dynamically created with the help of geographic information systems (GIS), a system designed to capture, manage, and present geographical data. For example, animated Web maps, usually implemented in Flash, Java, or QuickTime, could show changes in a map over time. Dynamic Web mapping can be highly interactive. Google launched its searchable, pannable, and zoomable Google Maps in February 2005. Google Maps heavily relies on JavaScript, a scripting language capable of creating dynamic Web sites. Users can be selective and choose to view the area they are interested in. When users zoom in on a map, there is no need to reload the whole page. Instead, new information will be downloaded from the server and inserted into the page. If data are collected continuously, a real-time map can show the developing pattern of a distributed geographically phenomenon. The "1 million tweet map," for example, visualizes the number of tweets posted across the world.

The advent of Web 2.0 further complicated the scenario by amplifying the role of the masses in Web mapping. The server-to-user unidirectional map viewing experience is now supplemented by a bidirectional collaboration process in which ordinary users are able to upload information to the server, which in turn makes aggregated data available to others. This is facilitated by the quick spread of mobile devices from which geographic information can be collected, such as smartphones, Internet tablet computers, Wi-Fi-enabled digital cameras, and handheld GPS (global positioning system) navigators, and an explosion of mapping applications such as Google Maps, Bing Maps, MapQuest, OpenStreetMap, and Apple Maps. Individuals with nontechnical backgrounds can not only interact with a map, but also have personal maps. Using Google Maps API (application programming interface), one can integrate Google Maps into one's Web site and overlay customized data onto the map.

Another noteworthy trend for Web mapping is the phenomenon of collaborative mapping, making maps with user-generated content. Inspired by the success of Wikipedia, Steve Coast, the founder of OpenStreetMap, began his project by making a neighborhood map with GPS and a laptop computer, and invited more people to join in 2004. Each individual contributed a small piece of map, which was later assembled into a single patchwork. Eventually, this led to the birth of one of the first royalty-free, open source maps of the world through volunteer effort.

Web Mapping and Information Sharing

Maps are good storytelling tools in news media. The emergence of dynamic Web mapping makes maps more interactive and thus informative, better fitting the needs of online news readers in the 21st century. One of the most frequent instances of news media using Web maps concerns the coverage of elections. During the 2012 U.S. presidential election, the *New York Times* published a series of maps tracking the distribution of election votes across the country in real time.

By clicking on different parts of the map, readers could review the breakdowns of vote percentage by states and counties, and the change in vote share compared to the 2008 election. Web maps were also used for covering non-election-related news. Al Jazeera, a media corporation owned by the state of Qatar, has an "Interactive" section on its Web site, featuring political news utilizing geographic visualization techniques. One recent project tracks the number of social media posts from Israel and Gaza during violent times in 2012, and another shows the death toll by province during the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad's rule in Syria.

Other than the news media, governments around the world learned to use Web mapping for more effective communication with the public. The Obama administration recently posted on the White House Web site an interactive map visualizing more than 10,000 federal government-owned properties that are designated as excess. The urgency and the scale of the issue was well

communicated with the help of a map. In the United Kingdom (UK), a radioactive waste inventory was hosted on the Web site of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA). Using maps, comprehensive and up-to-date information on radioactive waste in the country is presented to the public.

Web Mapping and Public Participation

In addition to catering to the informational needs of the public, Web mapping offers a special means to public participation in community planning and decision-making processes. In this context, the technology has been closely associated with the notion of cyberdemocracy. The ability of the public to effectively participate in neighborhood planning processes largely depends on the answers to three questions: (1) whether the public can have access to detailed planning information; (2) whether the information delivered is easily digestible; and (3) whether communication between different stakeholders is free and equal. Well-designed Web public participation GIS system (PPGIS) can substantially reduce the ambiguity in communicating geographic information. Community members may make spatial searches and queries, pinpoint a location on a map, directly interact with spatial objects on a map, build scenarios with online editing functions, evaluate different plans, and voice their opinions.

The UK has made important headway in utilizing the tool. The Slaithwaite Public Participation Geographic Information System is an early effort made to involve people in local planning and decision making for the village of Slaithwaite in West Yorkshire, England. The site was first developed in 1998, but was rehashed in 2003. The main interface of the system is composed of two components: a dynamic map implemented in Java, and a text input box for user communication. Users can move the cursor over the objects in the map (e.g., buildings, roads, railway lines, rivers, and playing fields), highlight the object of interest, and submit their ideas and comments using the text input box. Other examples of PPGIS include deciding the location of woodland regeneration projects, wind farms, and models of urban change. PPGIS provides a tangible means to engage citizens in the consultation process to build consensus for planning.

Web Mapping and Grassroots Activism

In contrast with the public participation GIS model, which was more or less promoted by local or regional government bodies through a top-down approach, the phenomenon of crowdsourced mapping is more grassroots-oriented. Crowdsourcing is to take a job usually performed by a designated agent and to outsource it to an undefined large group of people, according to Jeff Howe, the contributing editor at *Wired Magazine* who coined the term. Although different from PPGIS, crowdsourced mapping also holds potential for a vibrant citizenship and democracy.

One trailblazer in the development of crowdsourced maps is Ushahidi, a nonprofit Kenyan open source software company focusing on interactive Web mapping. In January 2008, while government's control of traditional news media prevented timely coverage of postelection riots and violence that broke out in Kenya, a prominent local blogger, Ory Okolloh, proposed to build a Google map showing the locations where violence was witnessed (Ushahidi, in Swahili, means "testimony" or "witness"). Considering that Internet penetration in Kenya was below 10 percent at the time, software developers turned to mobile phones as a solution. Ushahidi.com was created as a platform allowing people with a mobile phone to send SMS text messages to a central database. The information is posted onto a live map once it has been verified.

The power of grassroots Web mapping is by no means limited to reporting and broadcasting violence in Kenya but is widely used across the world for different causes such as crime prevention, environmental protection, human rights enhancement, and disaster relief. However, not all grassroots Web mapping is crowdsourced. A broader term to describe the use of Web maps to garner attention on social or political issues is *maptivism*, the combination of mapping and activism. Using Google maps API, a Tunisian human rights activist blogger, Sami ben Gharbia, put together a prison map when such information was kept secret by the government. The "HarassMap" from Egypt mapped the location of women protesters who were harassed or attacked in the streets during the country's protests through SMS reporting. Jeff Warren and volunteers from the United States used camera-equipped balloons and

Members of the grassroots mapping group mapping the 2010 BP oil spill by releasing a camera-equipped balloon in the Chandeleur Islands of Louisiana to take aerial shots of the spill.

kites to collect aerial photographs of the Gulf Coast to track the spread of the 2010 BP oil spill. In China, a blogger named Guo Baofeng maintains a "China Pollution Map" that documents nationwide pollution instances by aggregating information from both news coverage and individual witnesses. Crowdsourced mapping also demonstrated its power in disaster relief after the 2010 Haiti earthquake. In 2011, the United Nations (UN) held an expert meeting on crowdsourced mapping and decided to establish the UN Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER). Finally, big corporations also use mapping to support causes. Google started a campaign in late 2012 to promote a free and open Internet by soliciting Internet users to sign a pledge letter and express their thoughts on the issue of Internet governance. Whenever an individual submitted his or her pledge, a colored circle would be added onto a world map in real time. A map filled with circles demonstrated that Google had amassed a substantial amount of support from Internet users around the world.

Criticisms and Concerns

Despite the influence of Web mapping on politics, Web mapping does receive criticism of various types. Among others, three concerns seem to be most prominent. First, Web GIS has primarily been criticized as an elitist technology because there are many people not connected to the Internet. Even for those who are online, the voices of a few will dominate cyberspace. Second, many Web maps, in particular grassroots maps, are of poor quality. Information presented in the maps is not accurate enough. The third issue concerns privacy. When massive amounts of user-generated information is presented in Web mapping through location-based services, the personal information of individuals is sometimes made publicly available, thus putting privacy in peril.

Fei Shen
City University of Hong Kong

See Also: Crowdsourcing; Foursquare; Geo-Locational Enabling; Geotagging; Infographic; Near Me Tabs and Political Protest; Ushahidi; Web 2.0; Wikis and Collaborative Project Web Sites.

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Web Metrics

Web metrics are the tools for collection, measurement, and analysis of Web data. Metrics are often provided in the form of statistical data about an organization's performance on the Internet, including Web usage and patterns, usability of

the online platform, individual transactions, user supplied data, and overall Web site performance. Web metrics, also known as Web analytics, allow one to produce numerical reports of Internet usage, with the purpose of understanding online behavior of target publics and optimizing Web content and Web site effectiveness. Before the invention of Web analytics, Web site design was mostly seen as a creative process, and its structure and organization were solely based on the subjective judgments of creative minds. Today, metric data allow analysts to determine usage patterns and trends over time, identify which sections and features of a Web site users most frequently visit and consider most useful, and discover what type of information is most often sought and accessed. Web metrics also measure how much time each visitor spends on a page and record what path he or she takes to find that information. For example, using metric data, a nonprofit organization may want to optimize its Web site structure and content to increase donations.

Web metrics operate with the data collected by software that tracks and records mouse clicks and information requests (e.g., uploads, downloads, and picture or video views) from browsers. The initiation of Web usage data collection requires the embedding of a computer code into each of the Web pages that need to be analyzed. The data then is collected using either server log files or via page tagging, producing Web site traffic reports, often with geographical locations of visitors. The data are stored on remote servers, and theoretically do not contain user identifiable information. The data can then be accessed and used for business and market research, effectiveness assessment, and research on users, user habits, and traffic trends.

Units

Metrics for Web analytics usually employ three common units of measurement: counts, ratios, and key performance indicators (KPI). Count is the most basic unit of measurement that records a simple number, such as number of visits/sessions, unique visits, Web site hits and click throughs, pageviews, "likes," downloads, and visit duration. Ratio is a more advanced unit of measurement, comprised of a count divided by a count, or a count divided by a ratio. For example, page views per visit are measured as the number of page views divided by number of visits within a certain period of time. Other ratio-based metrics include page exit ratio, bounce rate, and click-through rate.

Strategy

However, these units of measurements remain just numbers if they are not strategically used. Web metrics provide little knowledge and value to an organization if they are not tied to its strategic goals. KPIs are considered the most advanced Web metrics because they are infused with an overall organizational strategy. KPIs are quantifiable (can be both a count and a ratio) measures that allow one to define, evaluate, and track progress toward organizational goals. Using simple outcome indicators, KPI metrics break down complex measures to help those not involved with Web site operations to analyze Web site performance and evaluate whether and how the Web site facilitates the achievement of organizational goals. In this sense, KPIs make Web metrics a strategic tool that drives organizational development.

The choice of key performance indicators depends on the industry and purpose of the Web site. However, there are a number of KPIs that provide good intelligence across the board. For example, the content-focused Web sites of organizations such as MoveOn.org have the goal of keeping visitors longer on the Web site and making them come back. To help the organization achieve this goal, the use of KPIs such as traffic concentration, single access ratio, depth of visits, returning visitors, new visitor percentage, page/content depth, and top internal search phrases can be beneficial.

Traffic concentration KPI allows one to determine which areas of the Web site generate the most interest. Single-access ratio measures the effectiveness of landing pages, when people find the desired content without entering the homepage. Depth of visit measures engagement and level of interest in the content provided by dividing page views by visits—the more engaged visitors are, the more pages are viewed. Page/content depth measures interest in certain content areas over time, and is critical in determining functionality and navigational effectiveness of the most visited sections of the Web site. Lengths of visit

measures how quickly and easy it is for users to find the information they are looking for. Top internal search phrases provide insight for identifying areas that may require better navigation or more content to meet customer demands.

When a KPI is appropriately chosen, it is capable of revealing a meaningful change in user activity and Web site performance in a given period, such as data on landing pages (where people come in), exit pages (where people leave from), and content drilldown (which site sections do best). For example, a sudden spike in traffic, when put in context of the event that caused it, provides ideas on potentially effective strategies for driving traffic to the organization's Web site. If a new blog post causes an increase in traffic, then blog posts have to be regularly updated, and the content should be engaging in order to maintain the traffic rate.

Anna Klyueva
University of Oregon

See Also: Bounce Back; Click-Through Rate; Engagement Features; Keystroke Logging; Proxy Measurements; Traffic Analysis.

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Web 2.0

Web 2.0, also called the participatory Web, refers to a conceptualization of the Internet as a platform in which users are the primary engineers of information. Through Web 2.0 technologies, individuals, many of whom have no specialized training, are able to write, develop, and create videos, applications, and Web sites. Web 2.0 most often refers to rapidly expanding and evolving platforms such as social networking sites, user-contributed sites, self-publishing platforms, and social bookmarking sites. These platforms may include social networking, wikis, blogs, podcasts, RSS (really simple syndication) feeds, and other media sharing sites that are characterized by masses of users participating in content creation.

Web 2.0 has ushered in dynamic changes in Internet content creation and has capitalized on collaboration, tagging (assigning a nonhierarchical keyword or term to a piece of information), and viral marketing. These characteristics have substantially impacted political communication, campaigns, and governance by helping to create an interactive, content-rich architecture of online participation and by delivering a richer and more user-focused political experience.

Attributes of Web 2.0

There are many attributes of Web 2.0 that add to its participatory nature. Web 2.0 makes it possible to combine data and information from various sources and to build content through the collaborative use of online spaces, thus changing the process of creation and distribution in online environments. A focus on collaboration allows interested parties to add value to the applications that they use and to create dynamic content and metadata.

Web 2.0 has changed the structure of the Web by allowing users to generate and add new content and sites, and to create fluidity in categorizations through hyperlinking and tagging. These activities allow for multiple overlapping associations, rather than rigid categorizations, and permit other users to alter the structure of the Internet by discovering, commenting, editing, and linking to content.

Through the expansion of Web 2.0, a social Web has emerged, creating a fundamental expansion in the ways in which people communicate. Through the use of online tools, users interact to share perspectives, opinions, thoughts, and experiences. This shift has also allowed users to

become prosumers of information; users have become active participants in the development of content, and are no longer simply passive viewers of Web site content.

Web 2.0 and Politics

Web 2.0 has significantly impacted political communication, campaigns, and governance. This environment has changed the traditional top-down direction of political communication. Political parties, campaigns, and politicians are no longer the primary creators and disseminators of political messages; Web 2.0 allows the public to also participate in the creation and distribution of political information. This shift has created communication structures that are more horizontal and focused on engaging and building relationships with constituents and potential voters. In the Web 2.0 environment, it has become requisite for parties, candidates, and government officials to have profiles on multiple platforms in order to facilitate communication with the public and engage voters.

Web 2.0 has fundamentally altered political fundraising and mobilizing efforts. These platforms have created new avenues to reach targeted groups for financial and volunteer support. Campaigns have been able to connect with supporters who have historically not responded well to offline methods of fundraising and mobilizing, such as those in younger demographics. Leveraging the Web 2.0 environment for these purposes has allowed campaigns to raise vast sums of money in $5–$10 increments, to organize volunteers, and to gain access to specific groups of supporters.

Web 2.0 has altered the distribution of inexpensively produced, targeted political advertisements, and has created emphasis on viralbility (the ability for videos to go viral). Via Web 2.0, campaigns can distribute agenda-driven advertisements and measure, almost in real time, the success of campaign messages; messages that do not achieve viralbility can be quickly and cheaply altered and redistributed. Viralbility, however, can positively and negatively impact campaigns. Web 2.0 supports an active audience, where users seek out information and videos to share and repost. This can significantly increase the circulation of campaign messages, but because many online political messages are not engineered by campaigns, viralbility can have negative results.

Web 2.0 has also impacted how elected officials conduct business. Government officials use Web 2.0 platforms to inform constituents, engage in policy discussion, and provide rebuttals to negative or inaccurate information. In the Web 2.0 environment, constituents expect elected officials to maintain a level of visibility and transparency not previously expected through other communication mediums.

Concerns Regarding Web 2.0 and Politics

The evolving nature of the Web 2.0 environment has also raised some concerns, especially when considering its impact on politics. The user-generated nature provides the opportunity for anyone to share and place value on their opinions, to distribute potentially uninformed political commentary, and to conceal biases or hidden agendas.

Additionally, the environment has heightened the entertainment value of politics and allowed individuals with limited knowledge and credentials to participate in the creation and dissemination of political information. These factors can create collateral damage for parties, politicians, and campaigns if they are not able to quickly and effectively rectify and correct inaccurate viral messages. Concerns regarding the erosion, redefinition, or outright loss of citizen privacy are an increasingly important issue because the harvesting of social media data and metadata without citizen knowledge or permission has become increasingly routine. High-speed, high-volume cross-tabulation software can aggregate that information into a comprehensive and often deeply personal digital profile that is useful to both commercial and political interests, but it is often invasive to the people on whom it is collected.

Conclusion

Web 2.0 has significantly changed the ways in which individuals interact with the Internet in general, and with politics specifically. As technology continues to evolve, new Web 2.0 tools will provide users with new and emerging ways to engage with and understand politics.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Campaigns, Digital; Campaigns, Grassroots; Crowdsourcing; Evolution of Social Media; Social Media, Definition and Classes of.

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Weibo

Weibo is the Chinese term for "microblog." *Wei* is the literal translation of "micro," whereas *bo* comes from the abbreviation of *bo-ke,* a phonetic translation of "blog." Broadly speaking, weibo refers to a host of Chinese social media platforms and applications bearing technical similarities to their American counterpart Twitter, which has been blocked by Chinese authorities since 2009. Because Sina (a Chinese online media company) takes the lion's share of the market, "weibo" sometimes specifically refers to Sina Weibo.

As of December 2012, there were a total of 309 million people, about 54.7 percent of all Chinese Internet users, using weibo services. Early microblogging services in China can be traced back to 2007, when a group of domestic sites such as Fanfou, Jiwai, Digu, and Zuosa quickly gained popularity. Fanfou became the most influential site when its users exceeded one million in 2009. However, immediately after the July 2009 Urumqi riots (a series of violent ethnic conflicts between Han Chinese and Uighurs), the government blocked Twitter, Facebook, and two foreign-based social media services, and shut down most domestic weibo services, including Fanfou, Digu, and Jiwai.

The demise of small domestic microblogging sites paved the way for Internet giants' decision to fill a government-manufactured void. At a time when microblogs sounded sensitive to Chinese authorities, Sina took a daring move and launched its Sina Weibo in August 2009. Sohu, NetEase, and Tencent followed suit in early 2010. The current weibo market is dominated by three NASDAQ-listed Web portal companies: Sina, Sohu, and Netease, along with Tencent, known for its instant messenger service QQ. According to a recent blue paper from Data Center of China Internet, the penetration rates (number of users divided by all weibo users) of Sina, Tencent, NetEase and Sohu's weibo services are 87.7, 84.7, 56.1, and 35.6 percent, respectively.

The basic functions of weibo resemble those of Twitter. Each weibo post is usually allowed to contain 140 Chinese characters. Users can choose to make a post publicly visible, or restrict the post to a small group of selected followers. Users may subscribe to other users' posts ("follow" them) so that real-time updates will appear in the follower's timeline. The follower-followee relationship does not have to be reciprocal. Users can address a specific topic by using hashtags, words or phrases bracketed by two "#" signs (different from Twitter's single "#" hashtags), use the "@" sign followed by a username to mention other users, and repost a message from another user and share the content with their followers (i.e., retweeting or forwarding).

Starting out as Twitter clones, Chinese weibo service providers added a variety of features to their products. The most common add-on functions are that users can upload images, graphical emoticons, and videos in their posts; users can initiate customized opinion polls; users can "like" or archive a post; users can directly comment on a post, formulating a threaded discussion, as in online discussion forums; and users are given symbolic rewards, consisting of "medals of honor" to encourage frequent and active use of weibo services. To compete with Sina, the dominant player in the market, unique weibo features were developed by Sina's major rivals. For instance, Tencent integrated its weibo service with its QQ messenger to entice more users,

NetEase expands the length of a post to 163 characters, and Sohu does not place any word limitation on its weibo posts. As a result of these innovations, the user interfaces of Chinese weibo are much more complicated than that of Twitter, and functionally, weibo is akin to a hybrid of Twitter and Facebook.

Censorship of weibo is severe and prevalent. Chinese authorities use various means at different levels to ensure that the new technology will not threaten their authoritative rule. Researchers from Carnegie Mellon University found an overall message deletion rate of 16.25 percent on Sina Weibo. The most commonly seen weibo censorship techniques are automated keyword filtering, manual deleting, active monitoring of selected users, and account suspension/deactivation. Filtering algorithms can detect blacklisted keywords contained in a submitted post, and users will be prompted with a message like "Sorry, the content violates the rules of Sina Weibo or relevant regulations and policies. The system cannot process your specified operation. If you need help, please contact our customer service staff." To survive in a regime with harsh Internet controls, almost all weibo companies have to comply with government request and employ censors. Manual checking is needed when automatic keyword filtering becomes futile. When post hoc censorship happens, users will receive a system notification such as "Sorry, your post has been blocked/deleted by system administrator. This post is not suitable for being made public."

Weibo accounts of selected dissidents, reporters, activists, and opinion leaders with a large amount of followers can be actively monitored. If serious or continuous inappropriate expression is noticed, users may face account suspension, account deactivation, or even detention. On March 31, 2012, the commenting function of Sina and Tencent weibos were suspended when rumors about Bo Xilai and Wang Lijun's political scandal ran rampant on weibo. In addition to these measures, the government implemented a weibo real-name-registration system in major cities on March 16, 2012. To be able to post content, users need to provide their real names and national identification numbers or mobile phone numbers to service providers, however, their screen names can be different from their real names.

Despite heavy-handed censorship from the government, the rapid growth of weibo use has led to the liberalization of public discourse and has provided Chinese people new venues for political advocacy. Chinese people use weibo to expose corrupted officials, find abducted children's parents, run for the local People's Congress, and discuss breaking news. To a limited extent, weibo has pushed the Chinese government to respond to public opinion.

Fei Shen
City University of Hong Kong

See Also: China; Countries Banning Social Media for Political Reasons; Great Firewall of China; Microblogging.

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Weiner, Anthony

Anthony Weiner became embroiled in scandal in 2011 when he used Twitter to send a sexual photograph of himself to a young woman from Seattle. When claims were first made that the photograph was sent by Weiner, he said that his account had been hacked and he had not taken or sent the picture. However, after a few days of denial, he chose to come clean and admitted to the error in judgment. Further, he acknowledged that this was not the first time that he had distributed explicit messages or photographs (including numerous times after his marriage).

He stated that there was never a physical relationship with any of the online women. While he

initially fought off calls seeking his resignation, he ultimately resigned on June 23, 2011.

Weiner will long be remembered for utilizing poor judgment and for not correctly navigating social media when he made the photograph retrievable by individuals other than the intended recipient. The Weiner scandal has opened the doors to new questions about what constitutes sex (after all, Weiner did more than President Jimmy Carter's lusting in one's heart, but less than the activities of President Bill Clinton) and further questions about the blurring line between public and private life for politicians.

The transgression of most notoriety occurred on May 27, when Weiner sent a photograph of himself aroused in boxer briefs to college students in Seattle. What made the error noticeable to the general public was that he sent a link to the photograph (hosted by yfrog). While the link only remained live and available on his Twitter account for a few minutes, that was long enough for another Twitter user to capture a screen shot of the image and forward it on to well-known conservative blogger Andrew Breitbart, who then shared it with the world.

Initially, Weiner opted to deny everything about the photo, and instead claimed that a hacker had created the link. He claimed that the image was not even of him—instead saying that someone had doctored another photograph of him. Unlike most elected officials in a similar situation, Weiner opted to not ask the FBI to investigate the alleged hack.

A few days later, Breitbart located and shared a second picture of Weiner (shirtless this time) that was sent to a young woman in Texas. She later claimed that she had also received additional photographs from the Democratic congressman that could be considered sexually graphic. With the evidence mounting, Weiner took to the press and announced that, "I have not been honest with myself, my family, my constituents, my friends and supporters, and the media… to be clear, the picture was of me, and I sent it…[I] engaged in several inappropriate conversations conducted over Twitter, Facebook, e-mail and occasionally on the phone…[and I exchanged] messages and photos of an explicit nature with about six women over the last three years." While he had come clean, he claimed publicly that he still had the support of his wife, Huma Abedin, who, ironically, had been an aide to Hillary Clinton. Adding to the irony was the fact that former President Bill Clinton had officiated his wedding.

Former Congressman Anthony Weiner at New York City's Gay Pride march in June 2009 before a series of revelations of sexting, especially on Twitter, became public.

History of Problems

For those who had followed Weiner's career, these allegations and admissions were not surprising. Prior to being married, the congressman was well known for his dating exploits throughout New York City. He had lived the life of a playboy, and now was facing serious consequences, both professionally and personally. Even after his admission, he was hounded by the media for details of previous transgressions—including a sexting relationship with a woman in Nevada. The media angered both Weiner and Breitbart throughout

the entire ordeal. For Breitbart, the major media anger was raised in early June when he appeared on a Sirius XM radio show and showed the hosts a photograph of what he claimed were Weiner's genitalia. Unknown to Breitbart, a camera had been set up in the studio, and it was used to capture a shot of Breitbart's screen, allowing the radio hosts to publish the alleged picture on numerous social media sites, without Breitbart's permission. Given his previous admissions, this particular incident did little to elicit any response from Weiner or his team.

What seemed to upset Weiner the most was the regular publishing of information about the identities of his social media contacts. In an acknowledgement of the trouble he had caused, he seemed to show remorse for causing the media frenzy around these women. First, Lisa Weiss (a casino employee from Las Vegas) was relentlessly hounded by the media.

She was followed by Ginger Lee (an actress in pornographic films). Lee went as far as to have a press conference in an effort to end the media circus, and disclosed that Weiner had previously told her to just be quiet, and that the scandal would quickly disappear. Not all of Weiner's online flings were as opposed to media attention as Weiss and Lee, however. Traci Nobles, a high school cheerleading coach, went on a national media tour (including a stop at the *Today Show*) and published a book about her relationship with Weiner.

Resignation

The political battle for Weiner gained traction on June 6, when Nancy Pelosi (the top-ranking Democrat in the House of Representatives) asked the House Ethics Committee to open an investigation into whether Weiner was in violation of any rules. The media had begun reporting that one of the now-famous Weiner photographs appeared to have been taken in the House of Representatives gymnasium, which could possibly equate to a misuse of congressional resources. Both Democrats and Republicans were calling for Weiner to resign from the House to protect the body from unnecessary time spent discussing his personal life while the nation was still at a critical point on numerous policy discussions. Rather than resign immediately, Weiner first responded by taking an approved short leave of absence in order to receive professional treatment for his behavior.

While other members of Congress were fairly uniform in looking for Weiner to remove himself from Congress, New York City residents (and his constituents) were not nearly as decided in their thinking. Two surveys conducted on June 6 showed differing results. The first poll suggested that over half of respondents believed that Weiner should resign his spot, whereas a second poll said that 46 percent of New York City residents felt that the congressman should resign. A follow-up poll three days later and consisting of only respondents from his congressional district showed that more than half wanted him to remain in office—demonstrating again American favoritism toward their Ccngressman. By June 13, the polls seemed less relevant. First, President Obama strongly suggested that Weiner should resign, for the good of the institution, country, and party. Three days later, Weiner agreed. On June 20, he provided his formal resignation letter to the House, and was out of Washington, D.C., just a day later.

While Weiner was out of the House, he was not out of politics for long. On May 22, 2013, he announced a bid for the Democratic nomination for mayor of New York City. Originally, he was viewed as a strong favorite in a field that included Bill de Blasio, William Thompson, John Liu, and Christine Quinn. Yet his past seemingly became his future when it became known that he had again been exchanging inappropriate messages via sexting under the alias Carlos Danger. This time it was with a 22-year-old woman and he admitted that it had continued after he left Congress. In all, he admitted to continue to sext with three women after the initial scandal broke. Weiner refused to drop out of the race, however, despite experiencing a 20-point drop in the polls. By the time all was said and done, Weiner finished fifth in the primary, receiving less than 5 percent of the votes cast. Weiner showed that old habits die-hard.

Conclusion

Anthony Weiner will go down in the history books as a warning to others. Prior to his scandal, there were no national-level sexting issues. Now, the country has shown its feelings and opinions toward such activities by elected officials. Once a

Democratic politician with a promising political future, Weiner will forever be known as the perpetrator of yet another famous scandal in American political history.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Dooced; Sexting; Social Media Career Wreckers; Tweet Insurance; Twitter.

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West, Allen

Allen West is a former Republican member of Congress who represented Florida's 22nd District from 2010 to 2012. Although he served only one term in Congress, West gained a national profile as a spokesperson for the Tea Party movement. While in office, he was a frequent guest on TV and radio political talk shows, as well as a prolific user of social media. West was born in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1961. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Tennessee and joined the military in 1982. West served in Kuwait during the Persian Gulf War, and then returned to the United States to work as a ROTC instructor at Kansas State University. By 2002, he had achieved the rank of lieutenant colonel, and he deployed to Iraq, serving from 2002 until 2004. West received a master's degree in political science from Kansas State University, as well as a master's degree in military arts and sciences from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. He is married and has two children.

West earned many honors during his 22-year military career, including a Bronze Star and an Army Commendation Medal. In 2003, however, he was disciplined after he participated in the interrogation of an Iraqi police officer. In an attempt to elicit information about a planned attack, West fired a gun near the Iraqi's head. As a result, West was charged with violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and was eventually fined $5,000; he was allowed to retire with honor in 2004. Despite the punishment, many on the right supported West's actions, with 95 members of Congress writing a letter to the secretary of the U.S. Army commending him. Conservative activists also succeeded in raising enough funds to cover his legal defense, and the conservative *FrontPage Magazine* named him "Man of the Year." After retiring from the military, West moved to South Florida and worked as a high school social studies teacher before going to Afghanistan to work as a private contractor. West, who did not register to vote until retiring from the military, made his first foray into politics in 2008, running in Florida's District 22 against Democratic incumbent Ron Klein. West lagged behind his opponent in fundraising, raising only $585,000 compared to Klein's $4 million. West lost the election by a margin of more than nine points.

2010 Campaign

In the 2010 midterm election, West again challenged Klein. This time, however, West benefited from the wave of Tea Party enthusiasm. West launched his campaign in a video posted on YouTube. The video, titled *The Revolution,* showed West speaking to a 2009 Tea Party meeting in Ft. Lauderdale. Using allusions from the Revolutionary War, he implored his supporters to "get your musket, fix your bayonet and charge into the ranks," to stand up to the Obama administration. The video quickly garnered a million views, and triggered a flood of fundraising dollars. The largely unknown West gained further prominence after his February 2010 speech at the Conservative Political Action Committee. In the speech,

West emphasized his military service, and charged that the president and congressional Democrats were attempting to implement Marxist policies.

This speech garnered West several high-profile endorsements; former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin endorsed him on her Facebook page, and former College Football Coach Lou Holtz made a YouTube video supporting West. Because of his growing profile, during this campaign, West outpaced Klein's fundraising, with the Republican challenger raising $6.5 million, compared to Klein's $3.7 million. West won the election with 54 percent of the vote, compared to 46 percent for Klein. The election made West the first African American since Reconstruction to represent Florida in Congress. Moreover, West and South Carolina's Tim Scott became the first African American Republicans in Congress since 2003.

Congressional Career: 2011 to 2013

Once in Congress, West was assigned to the Armed Services Committee and the Small Business Committee. West also made headlines by joining both the Tea Party Caucus and Democratic-dominated Congressional Black Caucus. According to Govtrack.us, during his term, West sponsored 11 bills, none of which became law. He cosponsored 313 pieces of legislation. An analysis of his voting behavior showed that he tended to vote along party lines, voting with other Republicans 93 percent of the time. During his term, West was a frequent guest on talk radio and television, especially Fox News, where he was interviewed 17 times while in office. West often garnered headlines for his controversial remarks targeted at Democrats. For instance, in an August 2011 appearance on the *O'Reilly Factor,* he accused Democrats of shortchanging black voters and running a "21st-century plantation." He compared himself to a "modern-day Harriet Tubman," who could lead them to the GOP. Earlier, in April 2011, when appearing on the conservative radio program the *Laura Ingraham Show,* West argued that Obama was behaving like a "low-level socialist agitator." Later, in December 2011, when asked about a poll unfavorable to Republicans, West told a reporter "if Joseph Goebbels was around, he'd be very proud of the Democrat Party because they have an incredible propaganda machine."

Democratic Members of Congress were also a frequent target for West. He engaged a public feud with Debbie Wasserman Schultz, a fellow representative from Florida. The dispute dated to June 2010, when Wasserman Shultz organized a protest outside of West's campaign office, objecting to his affiliation with a biker magazine. Subsequently, in July of 2011, Wasserman Shultz made comments on the House floor criticizing West's support of a bill containing Medicare cuts. In response, West wrote an e-mail to the congresswoman, stating that she was "the most vile, unprofessional and despicable member of the U.S. House of Representatives." The e-mail, which was copied to Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, concluded by asserting that Wasserman Schultz was "not a Lady." The e-mail was subsequently obtained by the Web site Politico, and circulated widely on conservative blogs.

In addition, during a January 2012 appearance on *The Shalom Show,* West criticized Michigan Representative Keith Ellison, a fellow member of the Congressional Black Caucus. West charged that Ellison, who is a Muslim, represented "the antithesis of the principles upon which this country was established." West stood by this comment in a Facebook posting, noting that he was referring to Ellison's association with the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR).

He made another controversial remark in April 2012, during his re-election campaign. At a town hall meeting, West told the audience that there were "78 to 81 members of the Democrat Party who are members of the Communist Party." After video of the statement circulated on the Internet, West took to Facebook to defend his comments. He noted that he was referring to the House Progressive Caucus, who he argued endorsed a Marxist economic view.

In addition to his media appearances, West also used social media to bolster his national profile. He was especially active on Twitter, with nearly 40,000 followers during his term. In February 2012, OhMyGov.com, a Web site that tracks social media usage, ranked West as the number one "most engaged Tweeter" in Congress. Although he typically sent out only one or two tweets per day, West had the highest retweet rate, averaging 112 retweets per tweet.

Former Congressman Allen West raised his profile with a February 2010 speech at the Conservative Political Action Committee (CPAC) of Florida. He is shown here at CPAC 2011 in Washington, D.C., on February 12, 2011.

2012 Election

Because of redistricting from the 2010 census, West's district was redrawn; the new district incorporated more Democratic-leaning areas, making his re-election unlikely. Subsequently, West decided to switch districts, running in the nearby 18th District. His Democratic opponent was 29-year-old political newcomer Patrick Murphy, a former Republican who worked in his family's construction business. National Democrats indicated that defeating West was a priority, with Representative Steve Israel, the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, arguing that the defeat of West would constitute a serious blow to the Tea Party movement. Murphy, a little known candidate who initially trailed in the polls, focused his campaign on West's past statements, attempting to paint him as divisive and unproductive. West characterized Murphy as inexperienced and elitist. His campaign released an ad titled *Decide*, which went viral, quickly garnering more than 250,000 views on YouTube. The ad highlighted Murphy's 2003 arrest for public intoxication, and contrasted this with West's actions in 2003, as he prepared to deploy to Iraq.

The race was one of the most expensive House races in the cycle, with West vastly outperforming his opponent in fundraising. West raised $19.3 million, compared to Murphy's $9.7 million. Approximately 60 percent of West's donations came from outside of Florida, compared to 27 percent of Murphy's donations. West's national profile was also demonstrated by the fact that he received donations of at least $1,000 from all 50 states. During the campaign, West spent $7.4 million on media, and a key component of his media strategy was his online presence. During the election cycle, OhMyGov.com ranked him in the top five in social media usage among all the 2012 candidates. In August 2012, West had 190,000 Facebook fans. He had a similarly strong presence on Twitter, with 83,000 followers.

West's campaign used social media to promote its message and turn out supporters at the polls. For example, West's official Facebook page featured an app that allowed supporters to create customized bumper stickers and yard signs. The Facebook page was frequently updated, with posts regularly receiving more than 1,000 "likes" and hundreds of shares. In addition, the West Campaign used a separate Twitter feed, @ElectAllenWest, to remind supporters to vote. The feed, which had more than 13,000 followers, also featured links to video clips of voters explaining their decision to vote for West. Supporters of West were also active in social media. The Web site and Facebook page Allen West Republic was started in 2011; according to its founder, the Facebook page received between 65,000 to 1.5 million page views per week. Another Facebook page, Allen West for President, had 9,000 "likes" in August 2012, and frequently posted clips of West's speeches and media appearances.

Despite West's fundraising advantage, on election night, the results showed that Murphy had won the election by a margin of approximately 2,500 votes; this was less than 1 percent of all votes cast. West, however, refused to concede, asserting that some ballots from early voting in St. Lucie County may have been erroneously double

counted. A subsequent recount, however, increased Murphy's lead, and West decided to abandon any further legal challenges. West eventually conceded the election on November 20. In a Facebook post that morning, he informed followers, "I will take no further action to contest this election."

Career After Congress

After leaving Congress, West continued to be a prominent spokesperson for the Tea Party. In January 2013, he accepted a position with PJTV, an offshoot of the conservative Pj Media Web site. West was hired to be director of next generation programming; in this capacity, he participated in creating Internet TV episodes about contemporary political issues such as taxes, patriotism, and terrorism. Subsequently, in May 2013, Fox News hired him as a contributor. In addition to his media appearances, West continued his active social media presence. Although he initially lost Facebook followers after his defeat, by late April 2013, these numbers had rebounded, and he had more than 314,000 "likes." He experienced similar growth on Twitter, with more than 151,000 followers in May 2013. As a result of this growth, in May 2013, OhMyGov.com found that among all the 2012 election candidates, West was still ranked number three in social media fans. This included a ranking of number six in Twitter mentions, as well as a ranking of number one in Facebook "likes."

West's use of social media caused controversy in February 2013, when he used his Facebook page to chastise Florida Atlantic University students; he alleged that they were harassing his wife, a member of the board of trustees. In the post, he warned the protesters to stop contacting his wife, or they would "face me, the side of me that you do not want to see." In late May 2013, West indicated that he was interested in returning to politics, possibly in 2016. His political action committee, the Allen West Guardian Fund, exceeded its fundraising goal, raising $479,000 in the first quarter of 2013. The PAC focuses on supporting minority Republicans and military veterans who are running for Congress.

Kelly McHugh
Gage Nicholas
Florida Southern College

See Also: Campaigns, Congressional (2010); Campaigns, 2012; Ellison, Keith; Tea Party Movement.

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West Wing Week

When Barack Obama became president, Americans knew the country would experience change. He had utilized social media in a way never seen before in American politics during his presidential campaign, and promised a new level of transparency never experienced before. During the second year of his first term (in April 2010), the Obama White House released the first episode of *West Wing Week*. This online video series was initially created by the first White House videographer in history (and new media road director) Arun Chaudhary before he left and was replaced by Adam Garber. The series is narrated by Joshua Earnest, Obama's deputy press secretary. To this day, the White House has yet to release information about the cost of the series.

The series is released weekly at midnight on Thursday night. It focuses on the week's events in the White House and for the president of the United States. In an effort to make the videos accessible to as many Americans as possible, they are posted on YouTube, the White House Web

site, and can be downloaded for free on iTunes. While the typical episode follows a fairly stable format of tracing the president's activities each day, there are special episodes that feature President Obama answering questions from citizens or focus on a particular issue of interest to the American public.

Anything shown in an episode of *West Wing Week* is watched by the Obama Press Office, and it has the right to refuse any material from airing. Critics have jumped on this as proof that the series is nothing more than official propaganda portrayed as genuine uncensored footage of the president at work. Others find the series interesting, but many critics believe that it is unnecessary since tax payers are paying for footage that the press corps is perfectly suited to cover. Further, the press corps does not have the ability to edit information in the same manner that the administration does. Some members of the press corps have complained about the access that *West Wing Week* receives. They are especially dissatisfied when events appear on the series that they were not permitted or invited to attend.

Looking at cost per view, the average episode of *West Wing Week* sees between 7,500 and 15,000 total views. While official costs have never been released for the series, given the low view count, one might question whether the production is necessary. Because much of the information presented in the series is already publicly available and known prior to the weekly release, some critics maintain that *West Wing Week* seems to be running more as a campaign tool than a governing tool. While there is unquestionably merit in showing the busy weekly schedule of the president through video instead of reported narrative, the cost-benefit analysis is yet to be completed. While *West Wing Week* is innovative and informative, viewership suggests that the American public is not responding to approximately 10-minute videos as much as they do a Facebook post or a tweet—at least not yet.

William J. Miller
Flagler College

See Also: Campaigns, Presidential (2008); Campaigns, 2012; Podcasts; Streaming Media; TwitVid.com; Vlogging; YouTube.

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WhoIs

WhoIs is a search tool for gathering information about particular Internet domain names. Queries can be conducted using either a domain name search or using an Internet protocol (IP) address search. Results include the IP addresses and server information associated with a site, along with contact details for the person or company that registered the domain. In fact, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) requires that registrants provide accurate contact details for every domain they register, and that they update this information should it change. WhoIs databases date back to the earliest days of the Internet, and in its original 1980s incarnation, it allowed for free searches of information and easy data-mining.

As the number of domains and privacy concerns exponentially increased during the 1990s and after, queries were restricted in volume and required greater specificity or used CAPTCHA technology to limit abuse. In terms of social media and politics, WhoIs has played important roles in law enforcement and transparency, but has also created significant challenges for privacy advocates. As one of the earliest and longest-lived

aspects of the Internet, it encapsulates much of the tension between privacy and transparency that characterizes many other debates about the role of technology and information in a highly networked world.

Use

WhoIs has served a wide variety of functions for different users, including government and law enforcement. For authoritarian regimes, the ICANN registration requirements provide a potentially potent tool for tracking down political dissidents, assuming that people are accurately registering their details. A less well-known function associated with WhoIs relates to Regional Internet Registries (RIRs), which can use information from WhoIs to track IP addresses associated with not just those who own a domain, but also those who visit a given Web site. This same functionality is beneficial, even in more politically open societies, for law enforcement personnel. It has been especially useful in tracking down crimes associated with online fraud, spamming, hacking, online abuse, and child pornography.

Many law enforcement agencies would not only like to see WhoIs continued, but also strengthened to legally require accurate information that could be punishable if ignored or violated. Major holders of copyrights and trademarks in the arts, music, film, and other intellectual property industries also see a great deal of value in maintaining these capabilities and ensuring that the database is as accurate as possible. They can use it to track down people who pirate their property or who upload it to the Internet for pirating by others.

Privacy Concerns

While WhoIs is typically seen as beneficial in enforcing various criminal and property laws, it has been a major concern in the opposite direction for privacy law. The laws protecting the privacy of Internet users and domain name registrants vary between states, but WhoIs has been contentious for both Canada and the European Union, which have stronger privacy rights for the information contained in its database. There is a considerable body of opinion that contends that its existence is actually against the laws of these entities, and that it therefore requires substantial reformation.

A host of proposed reforms have been aired regarding WhoIs since the dotcom boom of the 1990s. Among the most popular and frequently mentioned reforms is allowing private registrants to hide their personal contact information from public display, much as people may choose to have a landline telephone number be unpublished in order to protect privacy. This reform has already been partially achieved through marketplace pressures and user demands because several domain name registration firms offer private registration services at an additional cost. These list the registrar, rather than the registrant, on the WhoIs database, thus protecting private address, phone, and e-mail data. However, when registrar services face difficulty or go out of business, this can make it difficult for users to prove their ownership of the domain and to have a record of their use of it. This is a rare, but not unknown occurrence, and so is a genuine concern for some users whose domain names are valuable business or personal assets.

A counter-reform movement has come from intellectual property activists and law enforcement, who want governments to enforce the requirements for accurate contact information in the database. These ends can be achieved without making the information public to the entire Internet, opening the possibility of preserving privacy in the general sense, while still allowing the information to be accessed by authorized personnel in the event of a suspected crime. Another significant concern from the "hidden WhoIs" service is that it makes it easier for profit-seeking individuals and companies to squat on domain names. Because a domain name can be an essential part of branding for a public individual or company, the prospecting for and purchasing of popular derivatives of common domain names, simply to charge high sums of money, is an expensive problem. Even more concerning for major firms is the inability to track down trademark violators for prosecution or civil lawsuits because it is much more difficult to trace information for registrants who use hidden WhoIs.

Scholars have suggested that WhoIs actually represents not just a tool for law enforcement and political control, but rather a real challenge to the state's ability to govern. This is because its origin in the birth of the Internet created an

international norm of open access to information and transparency that has proven transformative to global political values. The continuation of WhoIs is a signal that these values are lasting and will continue to challenge state efforts to control information for the foreseeable future.

Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St Andrews

See Also: Data Mining; Domestic Surveillance and Social Media; Findability; Open Data; Privacy; Traffic Analysis; World Wide Web, History of the.

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WikiLeaks

WikiLeaks (WL) is a nonprofit organization launched in 2006 that publishes information that governments and corporations have deemed secret or confidential. WL both conducts investigations and accepts information (or "leaks") from other sources, granting those sources anonymity. WL publishes its information—usually, original documents that it has found or been given, accompanied by its analyses of those documents—on its site, and also regularly provides its information to major media organizations around the world (including the *New York Times* in the United States, the *Guardian* in the United Kingdom, and *Der Spiegel* in Germany), typically under the condition that those outlets wait to release such shared material until or shortly after WL's moment of publication.

WikiLeaks classifies the materials it has published under 10 categories: war, killings, torture, and detention; government, trade, and corporate transparency; suppression of free speech and free press; diplomacy, spying, and (counter-) intelligence; ecology, climate, nature, and sciences; corruption, finance, taxes, and trading; censorship technology and Internet filtering; cults and other religious organizations; and abuse, and violence, violations. Among the most discussed WL releases since the organization's founding are the *Collateral Murder* video (footage taken from inside a U.S. military helicopter showing the shooting of two Reuters journalists in Baghdad in 2007), the Iraq War Logs and Afghanistan War Logs (collections of hundreds of thousands of classified Pentagon documents about U.S. handling of those two wars), a cache of more than 250,000 diplomatic cables (e-mails, memos, and other internal communications between the U.S. State Department and its embassies worldwide), a set of over 700 secret files concerning the Guantanamo Bay prison, and the contents of Governor Sarah Palin's Yahoo! e-mail account.

In addition to information disseminated on its site, WikiLeaks has inspired a dedicated networked community of WL supporters and followers that regularly communicate on Twitter. Tweets published with the hashtag #WikiLeaks discuss issues of censorship and democracy broadly, promote WL and solicit donations, discuss specific WL leaks and the reactions to them, provide links (retweets) to news items, and provide calls to take political action around issues of concern to WL.

Operational Challenges

WikiLeaks was founded by Julian Assange, an Australian journalist and political activist, and a small group of like-minded journalists and computer experts, mostly unpaid and unwilling to reveal their identities. The group uses servers in Sweden, Germany, and the United States, among other locations, but has no official headquarters. While very active and frequently in the news in 2010 (the year that the *Collateral Murder* video, war logs, and diplomatic cables were released), WL has been relatively quiet since that time for a number of reasons. Chief among these was the arrest in Britain of Assange, who was accused by the government of Sweden of rape and sexual molestation involving two Swedish women. In summer 2012, Assange, hoping to

The WikiLeaks Mobile Information Collection Unit truck was stationed in lower Manhattan in New York City in November 2011 during the Occupy Wall Street protests.

avoid extradition to Sweden as well as possibly the United States, was granted political asylum by Ecuador, which allowed him to live in its embassy in London.

Further hampering WL's efforts are a financial embargo against the organization by VISA, MasterCard, Amazon, PayPal, and other companies that had previously allowed the organization to use their Web sites to solicit and accept donations, and the defection of several former WL employees. Among the most prominent defectors was Daniel Domscheit-Berg, a German journalist and computer expert who, after leaving WL, launched a whistle-blower site (OpenLeaks) and published a book exposing Assange's reportedly difficult personality and WL's questionable practices. Despite these setbacks, in summer 2012, WL released the "Syria Files," a set of more than 2 million e-mails between Syrian politicians, government officials, and corporations written over a six-year period, documents that WL believes will embarrass the Assad regime and its supporters.

Controversies

WL has been embroiled in controversy since its founding. The debates about WL begin with the organization's very definition. On its home page, WikiLeaks describes itself as a "media organization" and its members as "journalists." Individuals and groups critical of WL's existence, methods, or effects have described WL as a "treasonous," or "cyber-terrorist" organization.

WL and its supporters argue that the organization provides transparency about government and corporate policies and practices, and as a result protects democracy, makes possible free speech, exposes government and corporate corruption, and allows citizens of countries around the world to know what their governments are doing. Journalists, media activists, and scholars claim that WL therefore serves the public interest and good, because the group exposes deception and counteracts government and corporate propaganda. At the same time, WL also has many detractors: a wide range of academics, social critics, and government authorities who have called WL's personnel (and their sources) traitors, threats to freedom and democracy, and perpetrators of terrorism.

They see WL as a threat to national security and international relations, as well as a danger to active-duty military, and have called for Wiki Leaks to be silenced and its organizers prosecuted. Other ethicists, while not questioning the right of WikiLeaks to exist, have raised questions about the organization's tremendous political power, yet lack of political authority, about whether WL undertakes journalism or mere data dissemination, and about acceptable limits to the notion of free speech. What is beyond debate is the fact that WikiLeaks has changed the face of investigative journalism, brought into the open issues of government and corporate secrecy, and shed light on the impacts, both positive and negative, of the concealment and revelation of sensitive information.

David Weiss
University of New Mexico

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Anonymous; Arab Spring; Cloud Protesting; Egypt; Ethics of Social Media and Politics; Hacktivism; Palin Phenomenon; Freedom of the Press and National Security; Privacy; Syria; TuniLeaks.org; Tunisia; Twitter; WikiLeaks/Arab Spring.

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WikiLeaks/Arab Spring

The Arab Spring refers to the revolutionary period of protests, demonstrations, and civil wars that spread across the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) beginning on December 18, 2010. For many, the Arab Spring connotes a democratic awakening in the Arab world. WikiLeaks is frequently credited as having a substantial role in the development of this civil unrest. On November 28, 2010, WikiLeaks released over 250,000 logs and cables providing insider information about many Western governments' secret dealings in financial and war matters in the MENA. "Cablegate," as the release became known, publicized the information and provided citizens tangible evidence to spark real political debate in the countries.

Using technology to incite political change is not a new phenomenon. For instance, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points speech in 1919 fostered uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya after word of the address spread via telegraph. However, WikiLeaks offers a unique way of using information and communication technologies (ICT). Its functionality marks a period in history wherein media outlets can provide unrestricted access to an unedited dataset, which is available for download to anyone with computer access. Although it does not provide the public a space to discuss the documents, WikiLeaks offers citizens a tool to safely share potentially sensitive information with the world. At least in part, the WikiLeaks phenomenon offers the chance to fulfill the utopian vision of the Internet: Knowledge is power, and individuals can begin to influence major systems by overwhelming it with information.

Editor-in-chief Julian Assange helped launch WikiLeaks in 2007 with such a plan. The primary objective of the nonprofit media organization is to give world citizens access to news and information that would otherwise remain hidden. In order to encourage citizens to submit sensitive documents for public display, WikiLeaks provides an anonymous dropbox for users on its Web site. WikiLeaks gained notoriety after publishing its first major set of governmental documents, including detailed information about the Iraq and Afghanistan wars culled from confidential communications among 274 embassies around the world. Of the initial 251,287 cables released on November 28, 2010, 15,652 were classified as secret documents, 101,748 were listed as confidential, and 133,887 were categorized as unclassified. Private Bradley Manning (now Chelsea Manning) of the U.S. Army eventually pled guilty to providing WikiLeaks with most of these materials. Manning claimed that it discomforted him to know that certain information was withheld from the public, such as a video depicting U.S. helicopter pilots shooting down unarmed Iraqi civilians. He hoped that by releasing this information, the American public could engage in a vigorous debate on the military and foreign policy.

Mohamed Bouazizi and the Arab Spring

One of the more memorable dispatches released in Cablegate was from Robert F. Godec, the U.S.

ambassador to Tunisia. In the dispatch, Godec details his lavish stay at a Tunisian seaside resort owned by the son-in-law of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Within the resort were many luxuries, including pet tigers and ice cream flown in from Saint-Tropez. Although many Tunisians knew about the extravagances of the president's family, many report becoming embarrassed that their secret was revealed to the world. Two weeks after the WikiLeaks release, 26-year-old street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi self-immolated in front of his governor's office after officials unfairly confiscated his wheelbarrow of produce. The dispirited university graduate likely knew about the leaked reports because Tunisia has one of the highest percentages of Facebook users, which probably compounded his frustration. Consequently, many associate Bouazizi's outrage over his treatment with the larger socioeconomic inequities in Tunisia that Cablegate publicized. On December 17, 2010, another two weeks after Bouazizi's self-immolation, the Tunisian Revolution began.

During the initial stages of the Tunisian Revolution, images of a hospitalized Bouazizi circulated the Web, inciting discussion among the citizenry. As news of the act spread, the government attempted to shut down citizens' Internet access. Hacker organizations such as Anonymous and Telecomix executed denial of service attacks to help protesters circumvent the blocks deployed by the Tunisian government. Moreover, news outlet Al Jazeera contributed to citizens' knowledge of the WikiLeaks reports, Bouazizi's death, and the revolution. The Tunisian movement inspired many other uprisings, which represented the largest protests in the MENA for over 30 years. For instance, protesters gathered in Cairo on January 25, 2011, Egypt's Police Day, to protest President Hosni Mubarek's regime, including its high unemployment, emergency law, and overall poverty. As the protests spread throughout the country, Mubarek cracked down on the uprisings.

However, much like Tunisia, Egypt has a very active online community full of dissidents and activists, who were organizing and mobilizing citizens against the purportedly oppressive regime. Such widespread and decentralized social support hindered the state's ability to shut off citizens' access to the Internet and information about the protests. Moreover, many ISPs were slow or unresponsive to Mubarek's call to restrict service to citizens. At this point in the uprisings, both the revolutionaries and governments were discovering ways to control the political uprisings with social media. On the one hand, social networks helped dissenters by distributing PDFs to Egyptians detailing the injustices disclosed by WikiLeaks and describing how to assemble a successful protest. However, in spite of protesters' attempts to protect their communications with Tor and Anonymous, the Egyptian government was able to use social media to track who was speaking out. Social networks also allowed the government to infiltrate the networks to spread misinformation. Although protesters could use Google Maps and other social media to verify sources, social networks became less safe for open dialogue.

Colonel Muammar Qadhafi warned the people of the MENA in mid-January that they should not be tricked by WikiLeaks or listen to lying ambassadors. However, despite this warning, Libyan citizens began a series of peaceful protests on February 15, 2011. Qadhafi tried to quickly disperse the crowd, as well as shut down the country's Internet access. However, major media outlets had already picked up the story, such as the *Guardian*'s reprinting of the WikiLeaks cables, which were seen by many in Libya. Consequently, the revolts continued to spread across the country. The civil unrest further spread into Jordan, Bahrain, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen. Similar to Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, most of these dissenters began their organization online. Social media outlets and traditional media sources worked in harmony to stoke the flames of dissent by continuing to publish articles from WikiLeaks' site and spread information about the protests. Although the unrest in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya led to the successful ousting of their corrupt presidents, countries like Jordan and Saudi Arabia merely wanted their leaders to address a broken economic system. As of late 2013, Syrians are still engaging in a civil war to determine the outcome of their revolt.

Social Media as Revolutionary Tool

As witnessed in the Arab Spring, the structure of ICTs have changed the way that social movements

operate, especially in regard to organization, communication methods, and the speed of their transmission. Many researchers currently describe the potential use of social media as both a space and a tool to organize and discuss issues. Social media as a space allows for discussion, focusing on the communal and decentralized sharing of information. In order to create such Internet spaces, users employ tools such as Twitter and Facebook to share information. Thus, one major change of ICTs is the way they provide tools to facilitate the horizontal spread of information among users.

During the Arab Spring, social media also functioned as a method of organization. Although many protesters during the Arab Spring claimed that "the social network is us," Facebook and Twitter offered citizens a space to discuss meeting times, generate plans for action, and compose a cohesive message, without the help of the mainstream media, by using resources such as WikiLeaks. Online collaboration revealed that there was a critical mass for collective action not seen in previous attempts at revolt in the MENA. For instance, although uprisings arose in Egypt in 2007, many major media outlets did not cover the events. However, with the help of WikiLeaks, Facebook and Twitter made it easier to recruit members and share information focused on a central issue.

This neatly packaged uprising provided major media outlets with a clear group message and substantial research to support claims, emphasizing the importance of the social unrest and making the news easier to publish. Also, the mass of public unrest publicized among a host of social network users forced elites in the region to stop propping each other up. It forced places like the United States to support the side of democratic choice, not the political class, who ruled with power and an iron fist. Once the countries' issues went public, protesters had the tools to provide enough penetration to quickly send the information to less politically active citizens.

Social media also hindered some citizens' efforts during the revolutions of the Arab Spring. Although social media allowed citizens to bypass traditional gatekeepers, many found themselves confronted with new gatekeepers, usually Internet censors with more dangerous potential. Governments and businesses dealt with new types of information sharing on the Internet as dangerous because it compromised both types of organizations' secrets.

WikiLeaks and the Arab Spring taught the world several things about social media and political movements. First, knowledge is power. Although WikiLeaks did not provide citizens with much new information, once the world was forced to publically recognize these acts and the regimes in the MENA tried to block access to the information, citizens had more leverage to revolt. Second, as social media use increases, citizens are able to collaborate with traditional media to fan the flames of a successful revolution, which gives citizen activists and journalists more power in world affairs. Third, WikiLeaks demonstrates that social media and new media outlets have the power to lift the metaphorical veil that covers the public's eyes from understanding the intricacy of events around the world. Although Wiki Leaks faces various legal, ethical, and moral issues, the organization's biggest opponents are major governments, military outfits, and corporations, which shows the power that such a Web site can have in political affairs.

Jeffrey Delbert
Lenoir-Rhyne University

See Also: Africa, north; Al Jazeera Effect; Anonymous; Arab Spring; Egypt; Libya; Middle East; Tor; TuniLeaks.org; Tunisia; WikiLeaks.

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Wikipedia Misuse

At Wikipedia, a free, nonprofit, online encyclopedia staffed primarily by volunteers, anyone can be an article contributor. There is no screening process in selecting who becomes an (often anonymous) contributor, and only rarely is a peer review process held before the entry is made public. While technically, anyone can publish an article about anything in Wikipedia, it has a rather intricate set of rules about what can be written about, with articles not meeting the criteria of being encyclopedic facing deletion within days of being posted. Articles are also subject to various forms of peer review over time, particularly if they are to be featured on Wikipedia's front page.

Wikipedia uses the "bazaar model" of knowledge production, or what has been described as "commons-based peer production" and "good faith collaboration." Ideally, in a community where creating good, reliable content is the easy and rewarded norm, malicious contributions are eventually going to be spotted and stomped out. According to Wikipedia, one of the most effective techniques for policing the site's content vulnerability is something called WikiScanner. Invented in 2007 by Virgil Griffith of the California Institute of Technology, this is an online tool that traces the edit history of Wikipedia articles and links them with IP addresses. It is effective with all "volunteer editors" except registered Wikipedia editors, who remain anonymous to all but the inner circle of the Wikipedia administration. As a means of ferreting out inappropriate changes made to Wikipedia entries by corporate and political vested interests, WikiScanner has detected hundreds—if not thousands—of blatantly self-serving edits made by political spin doctors and strategists, politicians, government organizations, corporate marketing/PR professionals, and ideologically overzealous members of the Wiki community.

Wikipedia's "anyone can edit" model allows for much more misuse than traditional encyclopedias. Of serious concern are hoaxes and deliberate pushing of a certain point of view—on Wikipedia colloquially known as "POV-pushing." Since the beginning, Wikipedia has struggled to make itself more robust to such abuse, yet it can never fully eliminate it without going against its very nature as a site that "anyone can edit." Thus, while a randomly sampled Wikipedia article should be reasonably well written and neutral, it is also a good bet that in the millions of its articles, at any given time, Wikipedia sports a hoax, an advert, a vanity autobiography, political propaganda, and other "exceptions to the rule" that have slipped through the cracks of its volunteer-run quality control. Most such pieces are deleted or fixed within a matter of weeks, if not days, and a casual reader is unlikely to ever run into one—but they always lurk. Of course, the fact that many if not most errors or deliberate distortions in Wikipedia material are corrected eventually does not protect against the dissemination of inaccurate material during the period between when it is posted and when it is fixed.

The most famous example of misuse of Wikipedia remains the Seigenthaler controversy. In 2005, some defamatory claims were introduced into a biography of noted American journalist John Seigenthaler. After a few months, the errors came to public attention and were removed; however, Seigenthaler vocally criticized Wikipedia for allowing such false information to be publicly displayed for several months. Wikipedia's response to this is enlightening: in the months following the incident, a new set of policies was introduced, with much more stringent screening for biographies of living persons.

Since then, Wikipedia has been subject to a number of other incidents. U.S. congressional aides tried to remove undesirable information from biographies of certain congressmen. Companies and individuals have offered money to editors to create or edit various entries. Controversies have erupted over Wikipedia's hosting of Muhammad cartoons or pornographic images. Wikipedia volunteers had to create a "court" to preside over cases of biased editing in a number of topics, from Scientology to fusion power. A number of debates have been going on for years, with editors constantly debating issues such as the naming of articles (e.g., "pro-life" or "anti-abortion").

Conclusion

Wikipedia represents a new type of information resource, one where the line between providers and consumers of information is blurry. While it is

open to forms of misuse to which more traditional media are immune, it is also much more transparent, and potentially democratic than old media.

Piotr Konieczny
University of Pittsburgh

See Also: Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Online Smear Campaigns; Wikis and Collaborative Project Web Sites; WikiScanner and Political Spin Doctoring.

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Wikis and Collaborative Project Web Sites

Wikis and collaborative project Web sites are Web-based, hypertext-authoring systems that allow for collaborative production, modification, and maintenance of content. They allow users, most often anonymous or pseudonymous, to add, edit, delete, or hyperlink content directly from a Web browser, without learning HTML. Wikis (*wiki* is the Hawaiian term for "quick") and collaborative project Web sites provided an easy-to-use alternative to text-only and unidirectionally hierarchical Web sites accessible only to the most technologically literate. Wikis are used for a variety of purposes, including textbook production, software documentation, and political and other specialized community-based discourse. They are often part of a larger Web site, allowing organizations or political campaigns to engage geographically dispersed customers and constituents.

The interfaces of wikis and collaborative project Web sites widely differ. Because they are driven by collaboration and participation, wikis often feature a minimalist design with linked pages. While some limit access to these pages, others allow direct content production with little to no editorial oversight or password protection. A high-profile wiki is the online encyclopedia Wikipedia. Wikipedia is a free, open-access, Web-based encyclopedia with editions in nearly 300 languages. Its 23 million articles are written by over four million active contributors and read by over 360 million people worldwide.

Users can edit content simply by clicking on the "Edit This Page" button displayed on the interface. The edits are then reviewed by the site's administrators to ensure accuracy and appropriateness. The success of Wikipedia—it competes with *Encyclopedia Britannica* for visitors—is largely because of its low cost and user friendliness, combined with a minimally hierarchical structure that ensures accuracy. Recently, with its user-generated coverage of news events such as the 2012 U.S. presidential election and the Virginia Tech massacre, Wikipedia has also become a news source that competes with traditional outlets.

Wikis and collaborative project Web sites provide new and varyingly nonhierarchical venues for interaction with and among voters. By engaging voters at the grassroots level with a direct and reciprocal link to policymakers, wikis appeal to digital natives comfortable and competent with new media technologies. The low production costs of wikis and collaborative project Web sites can also provide a sense of agency and engagement for the disenfranchised. Wikis and collaborative project Web sites have been employed by cities, organizations, and political parties and campaigns to spread information and encourage political participation, with mixed results. The Green Party of Canada's Living Platform and its successor, OpenPolitics, feature brief, short-lived, and interconnected descriptions of issues and candidates. The City of Pittsburgh's Platform Pittsburgh and Utah politician Pete Ashdown's 2006 and 2012 campaigns for U.S. Senate allow voters to discuss

issues and organize rallies. Finally, NOLA-Intel was set up by the City of New Orleans to spread information to citizens after Hurricane Katrina.

David DeIuliis
Janie Harden Fritz
Duquesne University

See Also: Social Media, Definition and Classes of; Transparency; User-Generated Content; Wikipedia Misuse; WikiScanner and Political Spin Doctoring.

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WikiScanner and Political Spin Doctoring

Released to the public via the Internet on August 2007, WikiScanner was a program that allowed users to trace the possible editors of Wikipedia articles by determining the location and owner of the computer that had generated the edit. Wiki Scanner caused considerable controversy by allegedly exposing a range of instances of spin doctoring on Wikipedia, where articles had been modified by both corporate public relations and government staff to create a positive or negative spin or attitude on particular brands, persons, and organizations. Academics, politicians, and media activists have argued that WikiScanner is one of a range of technologies that have highlighted possible problems with a lack of credibility in collaborative, user-led information sites like Wikipedia.

Wikipedia operates on the principle of a global digital democracy in the generation of knowledge, in which, as the site states, "each new editor can offer new insights on how to enhance the content" of Wikipedia at "anytime." Contributors to the online information database, referred to as Wikipedians, can either login to the site with an established username, or can anonymously offer material and edits. It has been argued that it is the capacity for anonymous edits on Wikipedia that generates the possibility of spin doctoring on the Web site by users with vested interest in the content of Wikipedia pages. Wikipedia has clear policy guidelines on the need to maintain a "neutral point of view" in online submissions to its database, and strongly discourages conflict of interest (COI) edits on its site, meaning that users with a personal, political, or corporate stake in specific Wikipedia content should not be involved in the creation or editing of that content. However, because there is no single editorial body overseeing Wikipedia, the site maintains no guarantee of the validity or truth of its material. In the early 2000s, these issues with credibility were exposed in a series of reports that U.S. congressmen were editing their Wikipedia pages in order to enhance their public profiles, and that Wikipedia's cofounder, Jimmy Wales, admitted that he had edited the content of his Wikipedia page.

It was out of this context of concern over the possibility of doctoring content on a purportedly neutral Web site that U.S graduate student Virgil Griffith created WikiScanner. A major in computation and neural systems, Virgil decided to use his skills to build a program that would remove the possibility of anonymity in the Wikipedia editing process, and thus potentially expose instances of deliberate spinning of Wikipedia material. He created WikiScanner by listing all anonymous edits from Wikipedia (sourced from a publicly available database) and tracking the Internet protocol (IP) addresses of the edits using a program called IP2Location. While this tracking process could not determine the identity of the person who had created the edit, it could identify the geographic location and company or department name of the source, and thus reasonably conclude that the edit came from someone with access to the source's network.

WikiScanner evolved into a database of 34.4 million edits, carried out by 2.6 million individuals or organizations across the political, social, and corporate spectrum. The program demonstrated

that while many forms of editing occurring on Wikipedia were legitimate, three key types of anonymous editing were directly related to political spin doctoring: the removal of paragraphs of information containing negative content, white washing or replacing negative adjectives with positive ones, and adding negative information to a competitor's page.

Soon after its release, WikiScanner became the topic of a number of news media articles and blog posts on the issue of political spin doctoring on Wikipedia. In 2007, the *New York Times* reported that WikiScanner had shown that U.S firm Diebold Election Systems had removed 15 paragraphs on industry concerns over the integrity of its voting machines and on the close relationship between the company CEO and President George Bush. The same year, Australian media outlets alleged that WikiScanner had detected more than 5,000 edits made by employees of the Australian Defense Department, and a total of 126 edits by the Australian Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet on material potentially damaging to the reputation of the Australian government. It was also purported that a Vatican computer had removed Wikipedia references linking Ireland's Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams to a historical murder, and that CIA employees had changed entries on the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, and that the agency had enhanced the Wikipedia portrayal of Pope Benedict XVI.

Instances of spin doctoring were reportedly not limited to the political domain. Users of WikiScanner used blogs and social media sites to allege that a number of corporations had been actively engaged in editing Wikipedia content. It was charged that Pepsi, for example, had removed content on the long-term health effects of its product, that ExxonMobil had removed content on the scope of the environment impact of its 1989 *Exxon Valdez* Alaskan oil spill, and that the Dow Chemical Company had deleted part of an entry on Union Carbide and the Indian Bhopal disaster of 1984. It was also alleged that U.S. retail firm Walmart changed an entry on the wages of its workers, removing a claim that its wages were significantly less than those of other retail stores, and replacing it with one that read that Walmart employees earned almost double the minimum wage.

WikiScanner appears no longer to be in operation; however, it played an important role in bringing the issue of spin doctoring on Wikipedia to public attention, and rose the issue of reliability and credibility on "neutral" user-led Web sites in the collaborative environment of Web 2.0. A number of sites that operate on the same principles as WikiScanner have been developed in the early 21st century, including WikiTrust, released in by the Online Collaboration Lab of the University of California, Berkeley, in 2009; and WikiWatchdog, released by Italian researchers Frederico Scrinzi and Paolo Massa in 2012.

Rebecca Bishop
Independent Scholar

See Also: Ethics of Social Media in Politics; Hacktivism; Social Media Strategies and Tactics; Web 2.0; Wikipedia Misuse; Wikis and Collaborative Project Web Sites.

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World Can't Wait

The U.S.-based organization the World Can't Wait was founded in January 2005, following the 2004 election. The World Can't Wait campaign challenged the idea that the only way to combat what they viewed as the ongoing ills of the George W. Bush/Dick Cheney administration was to recruit a new form of voice for the American electorate.

This notion was that a counterforce could originate as a mass movement of people who were educated on the crimes and manipulation of the U.S. government, rather than a more traditional

movement with roots in the Democratic Party. Since its inception, the World Can't Wait has held numerous demonstrations, beginning with the Call to Drive Out the Bush Regime, and moving on to more recent projects, focusing on putting an end to Guantanamo Bay prison.

The first demonstration, nicknamed The Call, was a written statement of a list of grievances created by the organization's followers. Some of the grievances included in the document were the suppression of science in favor of religion, and the American lifestyle of bigotry and nationalism. World Can't Wait began by handing out millions of copies of the list of grievances, which supplied thousands of supporters for the brigade. Later, the *New York Times* and *USA Today* published the full statement, which eventually included 40,000 signatures of approval. Some of the signatures included former California Senator Carol Midgden, actress and activist Jane Fonda, and author Gore Vidal.

One project that the World Can't Wait campaign has worked on is an attempt to close the U.S detention camp Guantanamo Bay. In the last few demonstrations regarding the prison, volunteers rallied together wearing orange bracelets and t-shirts to represent the orange jumpsuits of prisoners. May 17, 2013, marked the 83rd day of a prisoners' hunger strike. Of the 166 prisoners detained at Guantanamo Bay, only nine of them have been charged with a crime relating to terrorist activities within the United States. The others have been held for the last 11 years without a trial. The hunger strike is the prisoners' way of defending their rights while hoping to draw attention to their plight.

World Can't Wait volunteers demonstrating for the closure of the Guantanamo Bay prison during the George W. Bush administration. They wore orange jumpsuits and black hoods during this protest in Upper Senate Park in Washington, D.C., on January 4, 2007. The organization also makes use of social media, video conferences, audio tapes, and public service announcements.

The primary concern of the World Can't Wait foundation is that traditional media are not accurately portraying the crimes of the government. Currently, they claim that news and media outlets focus on terrorist attacks in the Middle East, the economic crisis in Europe, or shootings and robberies here in the United States. However, the information that is not shared via news Web sites and conferences is the direct role of government in the social and political troubles of the world. Media outlets, they claim, do not spread objective knowledge, but rather entertainment. The World Can't Wait campaign attempts to combat this through the use of social media, issuing press releases, video conferences, audio tapes, and even public service announcements. The drive to keep America informed about governmental action, whether constructive or deleterious, is the sole motivation of this foundation.

R. Bruce Anderson
MacKenzie A. Gailey
Florida Southern College

See Also: National Freedom of Information Coalition; News Media; Social Media, Alternatives to Commercial.

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World Internet Project

The World Internet Project (WIP) was created in 1999, with the intent to collect data about the uses of the Internet and views of users and nonusers across the globe. Founded by the Center for Communication Policy at UCLA (now the USC Annenberg School Center for the Digital Future under the continued directorship of Jeffrey Cole), the WIP believes that "the effects of the Internet may surpass those of television and could someday rival those of the printing press." Because it deems the Internet "the most important technological development of our generation," the WIP chose to document the Internet's "evolution," rather than provide backward-looking "postscripts." It provides up-to-date global snapshots of Internet usage and attitudes, rather than conducting after-the-fact historical analyses in labor-intensive work. Thus, the WIP expanded from a collaboration of three universities (UCLA in the United States, NTU School of Communications in Singapore, and Bocconi University in Milan) to one that includes 37 countries. Such expansion enables robust international comparative study of the Internet.

Partnering with universities and research centers worldwide, the WIP has produced four research reports. Drawing on face-to-face interviews and telephone surveys, the most recent report, the fourth edition of the International Report for the World Internet Project, was published in 2012. The report includes 11 national status reports that describe the history of the Internet in corresponding countries, as well as its cultural significance and regulatory framework.

The 11 nations represented in the report are: Australia, Canada, Colombia, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. National status reports identify key trends, including the finding that 45 percent or more of Internet users go online to find health information on a monthly basis, with the exception of Colombia, where only 19 percent of users have searched the Internet for health information.

The 2012 report also provides comparative data on topics such as freedom of expression, news content, social networks, and online purchasing. Previous international reports published by the WIP contained data on similar topics. Additionally, such reports have found an inverse relationship between Internet use and age (the younger the user, the more time he or she spends using the Internet on a daily basis). Findings also point to a trend related to Internet adoption across income levels: Individuals in the bottom half of household income scales are less likely to adopt

the Internet because it seems like an unnecessary expense for those who earn less. New findings have also emerged in the data. The latest report shows that in all countries except Poland, male users outnumber female users. Mexico and Italy report the largest gender gaps in Internet usage.

Addressing issues such as education, politics, consumption, interpersonal communication, freedom of expression, and privacy, the WIP generates data that may inform political, regulatory, educational, and corporate agendas. For example, the 2012 report found that in all of the project's participating countries except Poland, the Internet is used by at least 75 percent of students (age not identified) for school-related work on a weekly basis. This study informs discussions on accessibility of a technology and its potential for educational use. The 2012 report also investigated the Internet's perceived effects by users and nonusers on the political process. Users, unlike nonusers, viewed the Internet as a means to inform citizens about the political process.

In addition to compiling information on Internet users and nonusers around the world, the WIP expands upon such research by discussing broader relationships between Internet use and consumption of other media. For example, the 2012 report found that Internet users tend to rely on television and the Internet more than on radio and newspapers for entertainment. More Internet users in Australia, New Zealand, Poland, Sweden, and Switzerland value television as a source of entertainment, compared to users in Canada, Colombia, Mexico, and Spain, who prefer the Internet as a source of entertainment above other media. Thus, the WIP informs international comparative analyses of how Internet users consume and value other media.

By researching "reasons for not going online," the WIP also informs debates about barriers to Internet consumption. For example, the top reason that nonusers gave for not using the Internet was that they had "no interest" in going online and perceived the Internet as "not useful." The second and third most popular reasons for nonuse were participants' lack of understanding about how to access and use the Internet, followed by prohibitive cost.

One unique aspect of World Internet Project is its reach beyond academia. The WIP makes its findings available to communities, organizations, groups, and governments around the globe. For example, the project offers government officials access to its data online to share information that may boost citizens' understanding of voting processes.

Conclusion

The World Internet Project is a valuable research tool that provides overviews of Internet usage and perceived values with impressive breadth and depth. The latest report has something for every scholar, policymaker, educational leader, and Internet marketer to consider: It explores topics including consumer opinions, personal finances, politics, health care, gender equality, and education.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton envisioned a future of Internet freedom worldwide when she described the ability to connect to the Internet as a key component of freedom of expression, association, and assembly. In 2012, the United Nations concurred by stating that the Internet is a human right because of the medium's ability to promote innovation, expression, and free-flowing ideas around the world. The founders of the WIP foresaw the importance of the Internet back in 1999, and has been documenting its impact ever since.

Janelle Applequist
Michelle Rodino-Colocino
Pennsylvania State University

See Also: Association of Internet Researchers; Evolution of Social Media; Human Rights; International Social Media and Politics; Web 2.0; World Wide Web.

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World Press Freedom Index

The World Press Freedom Index is an annual ranking of countries by level of press freedom. It measures the degree of liberty that journalists enjoy and the efforts made by authorities to respect and ensure respect for this freedom. The index is compiled and published by the French nonprofit, nongovernmental organization Reporters Without Borders. To rank a country's press freedom, Reporters Without Borders uses a questionnaire that is filled out by partner organizations, 150 correspondents, journalists, researchers, jurists, and human right activists. Data are collected yearly, and the index measures the level of freedom that journalists, news organizations, and Internet users have in their countries by looking at six main variables: pluralism, media independence, environment and self-censorship, transparency, legislative framework, and infrastructure. Each variable comprises a set of "yes" or "no" questions, and/or questions with numerical scaling ratings. The answer can range from a score of zero (meaning no self-censorship) to five (strong self-censorship). Each variable receives a score from 0 to 100, with 0 being the best score and 100 the worst. The overall score is calculated on the basis of these six scores.

Pluralism measures the degree of representation of different opinions in news reporting. The more the news media report about different ideas, beliefs, and stances, the more a country is considered pluralistic and democratic. For many analysts, media pluralism is directly related to media concentration, that is, the status of news media ownership. High media concentration means that fewer individuals or organizations control news organizations and their news agenda, whereas low media concentration indicates the presence of diverse media owners in a country. It is believed that low media concentration points to more pluralistic media in a country because the presence of various media owners may guarantee a certain level of diversity of news. Globally, the top five large private media owners are the Walt Disney Company, News Corporation, Time Warner, Viacom, and CBS Corporation. These media conglomerates control the majority of news production across the world.

Media independence measures the extent to which media organizations are independent from political and economic powers. Political parallelism, that is, the political orientation of news media and the role of state intervention in media management, are two important dimensions that affect media independence. High political parallelism indicates a tight relation between those in power and news media, which could lead to some control on the type and form of content presented in the news. A low role of the state in, for instance, subsidizing media organizations, would suggest less freedom in media coverage because news organizations will be financially dependent on businesses and will focus on covering only issues that are economically convenient, instead of covering diverse opinions. Yet, state subsidiaries, when accompanied by specific political requests, may have the opposite effect.

Environment and self-censorship measure the settings in which journalists work. Respondents are asked to express their opinion on the news organization they work for, on whether they feel abuses of powers, receive bribes, or are told to censor activities. This variable is the most difficult to measure because of the subjectivity of responses. Different understandings of ethics and different standards make the measurement of this variable hard to compare across countries. Transparency measures the openness of the news organization and the procedures that affect the production of news and information, specifically in relation to how journalists obtain information and the extent to which they disclose the source of information and interests behind different news. This variable is tied to the environment and the presence of censorship, thus it bears similar reliability problems. To benchmark transparency, Reporters Without Borders looks at the level of professionalization of journalists, the existence of codes of ethics, and the procedures for obtaining a professional journalist's license and for receiving foreign journalists' accreditations.

Legislative framework analyzes media policy and legislation in each country, including the level of policy effectiveness and enforcement. There is no uniformity in legislation. In some countries, freedom of expression and press freedom are

guaranteed in constitutional specifications. These sometimes include governing laws on media operations; other times, media laws are confined to broadcast media. In these cases, broadcasting regulators are responsible for issuing licenses and enforcing compliance with license conditions, including ethical standards. More recently, across the world, a number of countries are starting to converge and integrate their media and communication policies. Convergent legislative frameworks typically include information on the objectives, regulatory principles, and role of regulators, the treatment of content regulation, the use of general competition law, and approaches to the Internet and online environment.

Infrastructure measures the quality of the infrastructure that supports the production of news and information. It is a variable assessing the structural conditions of media freedom because it also appraises the structure of the media market, such as newspaper circulations rates and readership. Media infrastructure often goes hand-in-hand with legislative framework and media pluralism variables because a country's media infrastructure is highly affected by legislation and the presence or limited presence of diverse media conglomerates.

While the index is not meant to assess the democratic status of a country, the World Press Freedom Index is tied to the political system of each country. In other words, the results often show that press freedom is challenged in political systems where authoritarian or controlling forms of governance exist. This means that democratic countries typically occupy the top of the index, whereas dictatorial countries occupy the last positions. The index has been criticized for offering biased evaluations of countries' press freedom because the questionnaire is formulated according to a view of media freedom that is inclined toward an understanding of the concept of "freedom" reflecting a specific region of the world, that of Western countries, according to John Burgess. Yet, the World Press Freedom Index is used to raise awareness on the working conditions of journalists across the world and to provide valuable information to regulators and policymakers.

Chiara Valentini
Aarhus University, Denmark

See Also: Freedom of the Press and National Security; News Media; Press Freedom and Online/Social Media Security; Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press; Reporters Without Borders.

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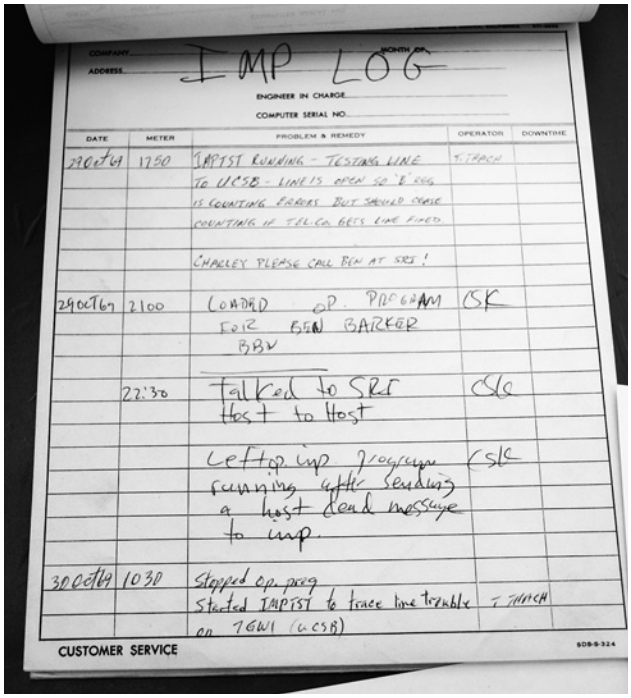
World Wide Web, History of the

The basic principles behind the World Wide Web (WWW) were developed in 1989 by Tim Berners-Lee while he was working at CERN, a physics research laboratory in Geneva, Switzerland. The following year, Berners-Lee and his colleague Robert Caillian presented a refined version of the concept in a paper that laid out the Web's basic components. The WWW is a software application that runs on the Internet, while the Internet is a network of hardware such as computers, servers, routers, switches, wires, cables, wireless transmitters, satellite connections, and the associated protocols for transmitting data across that network. However, once the WWW became the dominant platform for using the Internet, the two merged in their development and in the minds of most people.

The Internet is a network of networks that began as the ARPANET developed by the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA), a unit of the

U.S. Department of Defense. The ARPANET was designed to test the feasibility of distributed networking, combined with packet switching technology. A distributed network, as opposed to a centralized network, is not controlled in one central location, but contains many nodes and routes through which information can travel. Thus, if one node is inoperable, or one route is blocked, the information packet chooses a different route. Packet switching divides the message into numerous packets; each packet selects the most expeditious route through the network, and then it is reassembled at the destination, thus more efficiently and robustly utilizing the network than circuit switching.

Defense contractor Bolt, Beranek and Newman (BBN) received the contract to build the network, and in 1969 the ARPANET went online, connecting a computer at UCLA with a computer at the Stanford Research Institute. By April 1971, a total of 15 computers were on the network. Initially, the ARPANET was mostly used for file transfers and remote time sharing of computers, but in 1971, Ray Tomlinson, an engineer at BBN, developed e-mail, and by 1972, over half of the network's traffic was e-mail. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, more computer networks, mostly within the academic and scientific research communities, connected to the Internet, and by October 1992, over 1 million computers were online. However, Internet use was still mainly confined to government, academic, and scientific communities, and it was mostly used for e-mail, file sharing, chat rooms, forums, and games. More than 20 years after its beginning, the Internet was used by less than 1 percent of the world's population. The WWW popularized the Internet and turned it into a mass medium for communication and commerce.


IMP LOG

COMPANY
ADDRESS
MONTH OF
ENGINEER IN CHARGE
COMPUTER SERIAL NO.

DATE	METER	PROBLEM & REMEDY	OPERATOR	DOWNTIME
29Oct69	1750	IMPTST RUNNING - TESTING LINE TO UCSB - LINE IS OPEN SO 'E' EGG IS COUNTING ERRORS BUT SHOULD CEASE COUNTING IF TEL.CO. GETS LINE FIXED.	T. TRACH	
		CHARLEY PLEASE CALL BEN AT SRI !		
29Oct69	2100	LOADED UP PROGRAM FOR BEN BARKER BBN	CSK	
	22:30	Talked to SRI Host to Host	CSK	
		Left up imp program running after sending a host dead message to imp.	CSK	
30Oct69	1030	Stopped up prog Started IMPTST to trace line trouble on 76W1 (UCSB)	T. TRACH	

CUSTOMER SERVICE

This handwritten log notes the first message to ever be transmitted over the Internet, which was sent October 29, 1969, from a room at the University of California, Los Angeles, which currently houses the Kleinrock Internet Heritage site.

Development of the World Wide Web

Berners-Lee wrote his WWW software to provide a standardized method for members of the scientific community to share research and hyperlink to one another's documents. His original design for the WWW consisted of three main elements: universal resource identifiers (URIs, later changed to URL for universal resource locator), hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP), and hypertext markup language (HTML). The URI provided a unique address for every item on the Internet, HTML was the language for using and displaying Web pages, and HTTP provided the protocols that computers would use to communicate over the Internet when using the WWW. By the end of 1990, Berners-Lee had also developed the first Web browser, the program for accessing and presenting pages in HTML, as well as the first Web server, the software that stores Web pages on a computer, allowing others to access them. This system, allowing users to link or hypertext from any point on the network to any other, is the basis of the WWW as it exists today.

Berners-Lee had written his WWW software on a NeXT computer, and in March 1991, he released the program to a limited number of NeXT users at CERN. In August, he put it onto the Internet, although it had limited functionality for anyone not using a NeXT computer. Interest in the WWW gradually spread among academic and scientific communities, and in 1992, Web browsers were developed for the Unix and Macintosh operating systems. In April 1993, CERN officially announced that the WWW software could be freely used by anyone.

Early Web browsers all had shortcomings that made them difficult for the average person to use. Mosaic, released in 1993, was the first user-friendly and widely popular Web browser. Developed by a team led by Marc Andreessen at the National Center for Supercomputer Applications at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Mosaic was downloaded by more than two million people within a year of its release. Mosaic made the Internet easier to navigate and created a more graphically pleasing interface for users. By 1995, the WWW had replaced file transfer protocol (FTP) as the main software application, other than e-mail, used on the Internet. E-mail providers adapted by making their software compatible with the WWW, and by 1996, Web-based e-mail services such as Hotmail began to appear.

Dot-Com Boom

The dot-com boom (also sometimes called "the Internet boom" or "bubble") lasted from roughly 1995 to 2001, when the technology-heavy NASDAQ stock index rose 500 percent, and the widespread commercialization and popularization of the Internet took place. In 1995, the U.S. government transferred control of the Internet to the private sector, and the Telecommunications Act of 1996 created a favorable regulatory environment for the expansion of the Internet. The dot-com boom was kicked off by the Netscape initial public offering (IPO) in August 1995, when the company's stock price rose by over 100 percent on its first day of trading, and was 600 percent above its IPO price by December. The Netscape Navigator, a commercial version of the Mosaic browser, was developed by Andreessen and other members of the original team that had created Mosaic. Released near the end of 1994, Netscape Navigator had been distributed to over five million users by May 1995, giving it a 60 percent share of the browser market. In August, Microsoft also entered the browser market by releasing its Internet Explorer.

The dot-com boom ended in 2000, with the NASDAQ stock index peaking at over 5,000, then losing 78 percent of its value by 2002. However, the boom of 1995 to 2000 provided investment from the financial community that expanded the Internet and transformed the personal computer from a stand-alone computational and word processing device into a networked, mass-communication device for the delivery of media content. In 1995, there were fewer than 20,000 Web sites on the WWW, and only 16 million Internet users worldwide; but by the end of 2000, there were over 25 million Web sites and the number of Internet users worldwide had risen to 361 million.

Politics on the Web

The Internet was first used in presidential campaigning in the 1996 election as candidates created Web sites and used e-mail to communicate with their supporters. Bob Dole made history by being the first candidate to give out his Web site address during a presidential debate. The Web had little impact on the 1996 presidential election, but a few years later, it became apparent that the Web could radically alter politics by making it easier for nonestablishment candidates to bypass traditional media and the major political parties. In 1998, Jesse Ventura, a former Navy SEAL and wrestler running as a third-party candidate, shocked the political world by using e-mail and his Web site to generate grassroots support, raise money, and win election as governor of Minnesota.

In the 2000 presidential primaries, Bill Bradley used the Internet to raise over $1 million in his unsuccessful effort to take the Democratic presidential nomination away from vice president Al Gore. Also in 2000, John McCain made an unexpectedly strong bid for the Republican presidential nomination, driving traffic to his Web site to generate over $6 million in online contributions before finally losing to the more established candidate, George W. Bush. During the 2000 presidential election, Bush and Gore created Web sites, accepted online contributions, and communicated with supporters via e-mail, but still largely ran their campaigns in the traditional manner.

For the 2004 presidential primaries, Howard Dean used the Web to a greater extent and more effectively than any previous presidential candidate. Dean used blogging and social software tools to involve supporters in the campaign and create a loyal grassroots network and fundraising base, attracting over $20 million online before withdrawing from the race for the Democratic nomination. In the 2004 general election, John

Kerry followed a Web strategy similar to Dean's to bring in nearly $82 million in online contributions. The Bush campaign mainly used its Web site to organize and communicate with supporters, ultimately raising $14 million online. Both presidential campaigns created blogs, and both the Democratic and Republican parties invited bloggers to cover their conventions that year.

In his quest to win the 2008 presidential election, Barack Obama was able to draw upon the infrastructure for online campaigning that had been created by the Dean campaign. Obama broke all previous fundraising records by receiving over $500 million in online contributions from three million donors. The Obama campaign assembled an e-mail list of 13 million supporters, networked its Web site with popular online addresses, and used social media to develop numerous online communities. In 2012, the presidential campaigns of both Obama and Mitt Romney made use of social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook, as well as smartphone applications.

Web 2.0 and Social Media

By the early 2000s, the term *Web 2.0* was popularized to describe Web applications that allow users to create content and interact with one another. Social media sites (also called social networking sites) are a primary example of Web 2.0 technology because they allow users to interact, collaborate, build networks, microblog, and post comments, links, pictures, or videos. Precursors to social media sites existed in the form of chat rooms and Internet forums beginning in the 1970s, as well as dating and matchmaking sites that began appearing as far back as the early 1990s. However, Boyd and Ellison consider the first true social networking site to be SixDegrees.com, launched in 1997. SixDegrees attracted over a million users, but it failed to develop a sustainable business model, and it closed in 2000.

Numerous social media sites were established in the late 1990s and the early 2000s, but Friendster, started in 2002, quickly attracted millions of users and became the most popular social networking site before being overtaken in 2005 by Myspace (launched in 2003). In 2008, Facebook replaced Myspace as the world's most popular social media site, and in 2009, use of social media surpassed e-mail as the single most popular activity on the Internet. By 2012, there were hundreds of social media sites on the Web, many designed to appeal to users interested in specific topics such as arts, cooking, fashion, music, photography, politics, news, and religion, but the two most popular social networking sites were Facebook and Twitter. Founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook surpassed 100 million users in 2008, exceeded 500 million users in 2010, and by 2012 had over 900 million registered users worldwide and an estimated 750 million unique visitors a month, over half of whom accessed the site via a mobile device. Twitter, a social networking and microblogging site founded in 2006, had an estimated 250 million users by 2012, 60 percent of whom accessed the site via a mobile device.

With the release of Apple's iPhone in 2007, Google's Android operating system in 2008, and Apple's iPad in 2010, more people began accessing the Internet via mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. In 2010, for the first time, worldwide sales of mobile devices exceeded worldwide sales of personal computers (including laptops and netbooks), and two years later, almost five times as many mobile devices as personal computers were sold worldwide. By 2012, about one-third of the world's population was online, and there were at least 6.89 billion indexed Web sites.

David Bobbitt
Wesleyan College

See Also: Digital Revolution; Evolution of Social Media; Internet Forums; Social Media, Adoption of; Social Media, Definitions and Classes of; Web 2.0.

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World Without Oil

World Without Oil is an alternative reality game (ARG)—and a serious experiment—that took place on the Internet from April 30, 2007, to June 1, 2007. In *World Without Oil*, players from all over the world simulated the first 32 weeks of a global oil crisis. Its slogan was "play it before you live it." An Independent Television Service (ITVS) Electric Shadows project and Independent Lens Production funded by the U.S. Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Web presentation was designed and produced by the Writerguy Team, consisting of independent game writer and designer Ken Eklund, in collaboration with Participation Architect Jane McGonigal and Gamemasters Dee Cook, Marie Lamb, Michelle Sendergauf, and Krystyn Wells. The small staff provided a Web site platform and an ongoing backstory, injecting new circumstances and events into the ongoing narrative. They supported the contributions of user generated content by approximately 1,800 people in real time, and gained wide distribution, with over 60,000 viewers via the Web.

Alternative reality gaming is a genre that can be highly addictive to users, composed of an amalgam of interactive digital storytelling, online community, and treasure hunt. The Web site, live and continually refreshed for the duration of the game, featured a reality dashboard that was updated daily with socioeconomic metrics such as fictional gas prices and fuel shortages. The Web site linked to contributions by participant netizens, including videos, blog posts, Web comics, podcasts, and other user generated content documentation of their imagined life in the post-oil world. The gamemasters who solicited these contributions played characters featured on the Web site, and were also available to interact with game players via phone and e-mail. They curated the user generated content contributions and awarded prizes for excellence, ranking them to encourage participation and content quality.

The game was announced to the public on March 2, 2007, via a teaser Web site. A countdown appeared two weeks before the game began. When the game started, the Web site totally changed and provided broad-brush details of the peak oil crisis. Players from diverse backgrounds from all over the world were recruited from a solicitation that went viral. They represented a broad demographic of people interested in the issue for a variety of reasons. Players of all ages hailed from the United States, overseas, the oil industry, and grassroots communities. These producers filled in the details and shaped the game's direction, posting contributions using Web 2.0 tools and media. The gamemaster characters documented the lives of their characters and commented on player stories on a community blog and individual blogs, as well as through instant messaging, chat, and Twitter.

These producers, who formed for a time a social issue online community, initially provided letters, videos, and podcasts describing family disintegration, violent crime, government inaction, and rioting mobs. Eventually, with guidance from staff gamemasters, the focus shifted as contributors began to devise and contribute constructive ideas for living a less petroleum-dependent life. Designer Ken Eklund calls *World Without Oil* the world's first serious ARG. It was a serious game because its players focused on an issue of gravity, preparing for life after an oil crisis. As an ARG, it was open-ended, driven by human intelligence, and revolved around a splintered narrative that players worked together to solve. In ARGs, designers—often playing characters—create and guide the scenarios, but other participants often choose where to take the plot. This was the case for *World Without Oil*. Crowdsourcing thus played an enormous role in the success of the project.

ARGs usually not only involve the players with a Web-delivered narrative, but also connect them to the real world. They often result in community because many games can only be mastered through the collaborative efforts of multiple players who find it necessary to engage with the real world to find clues and other materials. ARGs are usually free to play; they are notably not as profitable as many other digitally delivered games. Thus, ITVS's sponsorship of *World Without Oil* was crucial to its success. Reciprocally, *World Without Oil* helped ITVS to meet its mission of developing exemplary interactive digital media productions through its Electric Shadows Initiative. Electric Shadows projects present independent media makers' visions related to arts, culture, and society to the public via the Web. Meeting the ITVS goal of advancing civic participation and creative risk taking, the Electric Shadows Initiative has funded six online projects since it began in 2002. These projects, which have garnered a number of national and international awards, utilize innovative forms to elicit interaction from its viewers. Personifying innovation in nonlinear storytelling, and a collaborative learning experience and social issue game, *World Without Oil* serves as a model for digital public media.

The Writerguy Team that developed *World Without Oil* and harnessed the contributions of its producers included some of ARG's most experienced gamemasters. Ken Eklund, the project head, worked as a game writer and designer for over 20 years, with credits on over 24 games and many Internet-based educational projects prior to his work on *World Without Oil*. Jane McGonigal, participation architect, has been a game designer at the Institute for the Future in Palo Alto, California, and was lead designer at 42 Entertainment, notably for *I Love Bees,* an award-winning alternate reality game. In fall 2006, McGonigal was credited as one of the top 35 innovators changing the world though technology in the *MIT Technology Review*.

While the game finished in June 2007, its legacy continues. The Web site has been transformed into an immersive archive of the game, with substantial content repurposed for educational use. The Web site features guided tours of player-created content, lesson plans for teachers and students, and a seven-minute behind-the-scenes video. Designer Ken Eklund maintains a blog to provide project updates such as the awards that it has won. *World Without Oil* won the Award for Activism in the 2008 South by Southwest Interactive Conference, a Special Mention in the Environment Category for its contribution to humanity in the 2008 Stockholm Challenge, an Honorable Mention for the Prix Green Award for Environmental Art at the 01SJ 2008 New Media festival, and it was an awards nominee in the Games category for a 2008 Webby Award.

Deborah Elizabeth Cohen
Sogang University

See Also: Content Communities; Environmental Issues; Social Issues and Augmented Reality; User-Generated Content.

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Writers and Social Media in Politics

Political writers adjust to social media in adapting to new audiences, genres, media platforms, and ethical dilemmas. These are interrelated because audience expectations change as technology allows authors to publish more cheaply and frequently, with more audience participation, and more integrated media. This has allowed political writing via social media to become a widespread activity; however, scholars debate if this saturation has net positive or negative effects for social participation in politics. Adaptability is also essential in this regard, in that unevenness in skills and the capacity to adapt to online formats exacerbate inequalities

among writers, even as social media offer a possibility for widespread democratic practice.

Audience and Opportune Timing

Writing always engages the capacity to target an appropriate message to a particular audience. This rhetorical capacity—the ability to persuade a given audience by imagining and judging the artistic means to persuade—alters with social media. Audiences expect opportunities to participate in the message more directly, minimally through direct feedback and reposting. Thus, the proximity between authors and readers has greatly diminished. Following the Twitter feed of an author after sale of a new e-book, joining and participating in a Facebook group that engages a political celebrity, or simply commenting on a news story are among the most widespread of activities in the contemporary moment. Under conditions of proliferating texts, connecting and sustaining readership becomes a primary skill. Audiences can click down an endless road of links, and traffic starts and stops at only the most convenient of sites. Algorithms and search tools navigate to the most convenient, cross-listed, and relevant starting point. Thus, finding appropriateness often means an apt keyword, a previous fan base that checks regularly for updates, or a title that includes unique, yet comprehensive words to summarize the piece.

Scholars group the types of social action that take place online into three realms of digital participation. First, there is user-to-system activity, in which writers are interacting with the Internet as a system of catalogued resources: searching terms, clicking hyperlinks, or downloading and utilizing applications. Second, there is user-to-document activity, in which writers add content to the Internet—content that can be further subdivided into blogs, wiki or encyclopedia edits, news posts or essays, or any other content. This, of course, is what most people would consider as "writing," but it is important to remember that even historically writing was a human endeavor that could not be reduced to the moment of pen-on-paper, but also involved time in the archives or conversations of others. Third, there is user-to-user activity, such as chatting or exchanging comments on a post or news feed. The genres swiftly break down because documents are usually highly interactive, and audiences expect them to be so. Thus, encyclopedia entries will have forums to exchange comments about editing; blogs will have comment sections that will spur the writing of other posts in reply; and online polling will lead to the publication of an article with poll results.

These digital genres of writing form a continuum. On one end is the single comment made before moving on to other links or disengaging from the Internet and moving to offline activity. On the other end is the development of close knit networks or communities in which public discussion is sustained by sufficient emotion, forming long-term identities and relationships in cyberspace. Whichever of these one takes as the paradigm determines much about how one thinks about writing online. The fluidity between the two is a hallmark of digital writing. Never before could one have so many happenstance readers who stumbled upon a document or forum just by following a chain of references. On the other end, social media forge a unique capacity for a community to stay engaged against all barriers of place, disparities of living condition, and diversity of beliefs or demographic characteristics. Audiences often have the luxury of either, and writers adapt to those possibilities.

Privacy, Identity, and Public Attention

Even if the connection with audiences can sometimes be quite sustained and communal, users do not have access to each other's prior reputations in the sense of older communities of honor, in which ethos could be crafted throughout a lifetime of interaction by the constraints of geographical or familial ties. Rather, a particular text must, more than ever, create the web of culture, purpose, motivation, and reasoning processes for communicating that more bound cultures could take for granted.

One of the ways this happens is for writers to construct identity by means of character appeals. Identity is often enacted and leveraged in short, ephemeral online acts, but ethos extends beyond individuality and into structure of the Internet, formats, traditions of thought, and aspects of trope and genre. Users often judge site ethos by factors such as visual design and layout, information structure, and usefulness, rather than by who wrote site content. Powerful interests, whether

profit or vote seeking, can also craft better identity appeals by collecting data on individuals as discrete and quantifiable entities. Companies collect information from census and registration information, purchase history, shopping activity, or political donations to target very particular demographics. Writers with connections to these sources of data use such information to craft appeals to narrow target audiences, a practice sometimes called narrowcasting.

Online writing makes more acute the sense that one is weighing into a conversation already begun. Writers on comment forums will often write their way into conversations, marking their entry with an identity performance that precedes or encompasses public argument. Announcement or recognition of personal traits (e.g., partisan identification, shared health concerns, economic interests, or gender and sexuality concerns) can serve importantly as identity creation to position arguments. This digital constitution of ethos demonstrates awareness of authorial personas as shifting and never absolute or complete. This is an important move in an environment in which otherwise, appeals lack human embodiment and other markers of presence and social roles. Whereas in the past, this process would be mostly unconscious as one moves between the spaces of home and work, social media allow for the realization that such shifts can be rapid. In regard to politics, users can even take multiple positions on key issues and regulate what sorts of appeals go to which user groups. Somebody who is out of the closet to friends only might advocate for gay marriage by hyperlinking or making advocacy arguments on Twitter, even as the person remains closeted to family on Facebook.

In addition to the social work that such identification allows, it also helps to create rhetorical immediacy. Plato's call for soul-to-soul communication between friends as a political project takes the form of readers "friending" their favorite writers, knowing moment-by-moment their life routine, thoughts, or private escapes. Audiences can feel "in the room" as members of Congress tweet responses to a State of the Union speech. This simulation of intimacy has led to an erosion of previous decorum, as sound bites (audio and textual) flood media coverage for further circulation and generation of content for public judgment. Profane, bitter, or ironic comments circulate far and wide, creating a market for notoriety through quasi-offense. Thus, all of this circulation erodes previous barriers, as it creates a culture of spectacle in which one acts as if private comments mattered for the public good.

One unintended consequence of such an increase in circulation is the rise of irony, humor, and parody. The appeal of ironic political coverage in writings such as *The Onion* provides readers and political writers the type of discursive exchange necessary to distance from politics with comedic perspective while allowing tragic proximity through advocacy media at other times. Another unintended consequence is the movement away from on-site writing and reporting, or investigative writing sponsored by mainstream media. The circulation of sound bites, written or spoken, and punditry about meaning and contextualizing take the central national conversation. In such banter, the norms of objectivity also shift toward agonistic disagreement, rather than consensual reporting or balance. Mainstream news writing and reporting still set much of the agenda for political news, even as freelance and undercover journalists try to enjoy those profits or reputations. Partisans embedded in social activism or other news spectacles also try to frame the message more than in the past. These unedited accounts from the ground up form a new potential for writing from below. Protest leaders with a Twitter account or workers inside a firm or union boycott can achieve strong publicity through such writing, as long as interests in power do not cut off access, and the context for such writing has been set within a dominant news narrative that generates necessary attention.

Convergence

Good writers have always imagined audiences to hone their appeals. Writers of some regard even dealt with attracting the attention of geographically and culturally diverse audiences. The Internet expands that kind of thinking to nearly all Internet users. Richard Lanham, an important and influential expert on writing and rhetorical style in the digital age, argues that the Internet is a pure case of an attention economy. It is the chief resource cultivated, and its scarcity leads to all manner of persuasive negotiations. In the

realm of politics, campaigning is nearly incessant, issue advocacy creeps into every outpost of Internet activity, and politics news and opinion drives some of the largest numbers of online users of any sort. Attention is in such demand that writers often turn away from a general public as audience, instead seeking out counter-publics: groups positioned at odds to the dominant attention group. Communication in these counter-publics, either in content or mode, creates alternative beliefs, lifestyles, social activities, or online performances. This oppositional attention can be especially important and potentially liberating for minorities marginalized by dominant mass media.

With publics or counter-publics, writers must cultivate attention. E-mail lists, mass scheduling and reminders, and synchronous online events (such as live chat sessions or video conference) all help sustain participation. Some social media and portable devices help with this process by keeping users connected to a feed, subscriptions, or followers, preventing users from clicking a series of links that send them further and further into more particular and individualized paths of reading.

The word *public* is also worthy of consideration. Historically, spatial limits marked the realm of politics from that of private life or professional life. Political actors thought about entering legislative halls, courtrooms, or even taverns as public spaces. To do so, speakers would leave behind matters of merely personal interest, such as private finance or relationship advice. Never as tidy as this even in antiquity (see, for example, Cicero's private correspondence), one of the central aspects of political writing in modernity, after the establishment of printing press, was the slow collapse of any such divisions. Public letters, for example, were often printed with an explicit audience of a king, governor, religious leader, or other institutional figure. Yet, the intended readership could be vast, including what we think of as "the public," however constituted. In addition, the way such letters were signed is of interest. Some were anonymously written, some used pseudonyms, and yet others used names, titles, and official institutional affiliations. Each move could be incredibly significant rhetorically—often diminishing, highlighting, or concealing political agency or authority.

Social media follow in that rhetorical tradition. Writers can easily publish anonymously, offering protection for minorities and those dissenting from power, while also sheltering some from negative repercussions from their statements. Internet "flaming," the practice of writing incendiary comments, can mostly be done at leisure, without any worry about diminishing long-term ethos. It is sometimes possible to track down IP addresses, just like publishers and news editors can give names in extreme cases of danger. However, a set of safeguards put in place help protect that anonymity. Writers and society more generally will continue to struggle with what degrees of anonymity and pseudonymous publishing will be tolerated in regard to political speech. The central issue regards protection of dissent without slipping into intolerable shouting, or what many political elites today call more broadly "incivility."

Social media also confound notions of privacy and publicity. Partisan memes circulate to denigrate a party or perspective, build identification, and move opinions on an issue. But of course the audience for these are often friends and family, and such posting can be quickly alternated with family pictures, current status postings, or religious or philosophical proverbs. The idea of separating public, private, and professional activities as distinct quickly erodes in such spaces. This also has a reciprocal effect, on the heels of 24-hour news and other media changes, of making public scrutiny of political leaders very personal. Politicians' private actions and posts are open to public access and scrutiny, much like celebrities, whose lives are commoditized by revealing intimacy.

Hybrid Political Texts

In this environment of boundary blurring, writers respond by generating hybrid genres—forms of writing that garner attention by the skillful mix of previously distinct patterns of privacy, publicity, and sociality. Intimate campaign ads are made specific to a particular person. Political prose in blog writing integrates personal narrative and appeals to particular friends, like the public letter of years past. Anonymous comments take the form of oral deliberative rhetoric, enumerating argumentative points to weigh into controversy, but doing so privately, without the transparency of public action.

Such hybridity is also created by the integration of advanced Web platforms and design. The increasing ability to edit the visual seamlessly with text creates a world in which writing is rarely, if ever, a solely textual experience. With WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) technologies, clarity and sophistication through other media incurs very low technical barriers. Free software and editing tools available to most Internet users give results that are incredibly fast. Companies move into even more leading-edge technologies for design and publicity, generating a constant competition for upgrades and professionalism. Thus, even while there are radical advantages over just a few years previous in simple digital upload and development, revenue streams can still buy hits and generate ads that are essential to overcoming the clutter of most social media.

Henry Jenkins argues that this competitive environment for attention leads to "convergence culture," as boundaries blur not only between genres and modes of appeal (e.g., text, audio, and visual rhetorics), but also between content producers and receivers across media platforms. Writing, in this world, becomes co-creative design. Illusions of a stable and finished "text" by a solitary "author" become even more attenuated, bringing postmodern critiques of modern thinking and writing into reality.

Scholars of rhetoric in social media also note a return to classical notions of rhetorical invention, over modern ideas about new, original, or authentic writing or voice. That older rhetorical paradigm saw all writing as a productive recreation of other ideas, with knowledge content not the proverbial lightbulb in the mind of an author, but rather a careful set of choices regarding appropriateness for sampling and reusing content of previous writers. Style and delivery were also understood not as something absolutely unique and originating with the individual, but as communal and mixed from models and training. Form and content in social media are frequently constrained by the platform, but also share much from one another through clever borrowing, or witty and ironic appropriations of prior political texts.

Modern copyright laws struggle to keep up with this sea change. Especially in regard to private property and profitability, but even about ethos and reputation, questions continually arise as to what "counts" as intellectual theft and unreflective mimicry, or alternatively, educational enhancement (handled under "fair use" doctrines) or protected political speech (such as political dissent that borrows a political song, speech, or logo for new purposes). Within that continuum are grey spaces that call for legal interpretation and questions about the threat of this convergence culture to individualism, writers' ownership of their words, and private-property capital.

In short, writing for social media involves a series of collapses that lead to new demands on writers for hybridity, integration, and negotiation of reuse. As opposed to the public sphere premised on certain procedures and normative ideals separate from private or technical matters, this social media convergence culture thrives on destabilization of dominant written forms. This shifting is likely to diminish as the technologies age. For the foreseeable future, though, social media writing occurs at a cultural position that has the potential to destabilize settled political power, challenge older patterns of partisan relationships, and increasingly integrate and disintegrate alliances across borders.

The Ethics of Political Writing and Social Media

Chaïm Perelman, a Belgian Jewish philosopher writing on the failure of philosophical reasoning with Nazi Germany and fascism, predicted the need for a dual sense of audience for reasoned argument. One audience, Perelman claimed, persuaders had always taken as central: the particular audience for whom reasoning could be adapted to gain adherence to specific action. On the other hand, Perelman wrote, it would be necessary to imagine a universal audience of all reasonable people deemed fit to judge the text. This sort of imagining of intended audiences would help prevent the short-circuited reasoning that tried to appeal to universal political values (e.g., patriotism, solidarity, peace, progress, or prosperity) on the back of traditional or manufactured prejudices of the particular group.

The Internet, again, makes this to some extent a reality. The ease of copy-and-paste, circulation between points near and far, and news produced by hyperattention all drive a sort of universal check on speech. Diplomatic writers are

increasingly accountable to public scrutiny as secure documents leak. Posts intended to be limited to particular groups, such as neo-Nazi or neoconfederate groups, become condemned by a national audience who might have never seen such speech before. Even everyday political writing and speech can be held to a degree of scrutiny by nightly recirculation of sound bites, late night comedians, or satirical news or memes.

At the same time, dangers are more widespread. Racist propaganda in one nation can lead to crimes and mob action in a distant village or nation. More common than these chain reaction events are the millions of ways that writers fragment readers into narrower attention groups until less is left in common. Even beyond the "bedroom culture" of the 1990s, in which each member of the household might have his or her television with an increasing variety of channels, every family member might now have social media and mobile technologies. Writing on these platforms can be segmented to even more particular users. This fragmentation can lead to new tribalism. Fundamentalist religious groups, hate groups, and radical anti-authority groups can quickly and quietly gain adherents. Writers can quickly convince a particular audience that their particular view of the world is the only right one. Thus, while some writers pull toward "politically correct" speech that can appeal to a universal sort of audience, a backlash toward stylistic and ideological deviance occurs that takes advantage of split attention and the decline of conversations that might spur cognitive dissonance and moderate views.

Another danger at work is the sense that political writing through social media in and of itself is sufficient as political action. The possibilities at the dawn of this digital era are so great in regard to searching out, indexing, contributing, and reposting content that writers begin to feel that this intervention is sufficient. In some cases, with all the pressures of life, this may be true: in some controversies, a small shift in opinion among one's friends may be the endpoint for sustainable public action. On the other hand, scholars worry that this limited sense of political action erodes a broader set of strategies available to the public—especially those that involve physical intervention in the promotion of the public good. The integration and rapid spontaneity of writing with social protest, as happened in social movements from the Arab Spring to London and Wisconsin, show the potential of the productive uses of the technology and writers' capacities to spur action.

Canadian novelist Cathi Bond is an example of a writer who engages with her public using both old and new media tools, including radio broadcasting and cohosting podcasts focusing on trends and technology on a Web site called The Sniffer.

Those are fairly limited instances among otherwise strong forces toward the status quo, though, as well as increasing gaps between citizens and government officials. "Sharing" and "liking" suffice as the extent of Internet usage. Meanwhile, accountability becomes more diffuse and political leaders increasingly search for donors, rather than opinions in social media. In the disguise of potential emancipation, social media allow people with scarce time and energy to satisfy civic duty with momentary attention. This escapism allows one to sense that the agreement of small likeminded audiences results in meaningful change when in reality, a world of consultants, pundits, think tanks, and other writers continue to control the dominant political and media narratives. Quantity of texts can help, but offer little final cure when such power imbalances are at play.

Major questions arise as to the skill level, adaptability of typical citizens to this online writing environment, and education priorities. The Internet may pose a risk of excluding a few without access, and in the short term, form a type of age discrimination. As math and science education increasingly become the priority in a

technology-driven world, it is unclear that citizens will have similar access to education to sustain online arguments and become literate producers and consumers of convergent and hybrid content.

Writers have an obligation to take on these issues as they enter into political controversy. Most scholars are optimistic about the chances for robust deliberation through such writing and textual circulation, even while they realize that new versions of republican and consensual models will need to buffer against extreme agonism. New competition for attention and decentralized exchange through an unquantifiable number of texts will erode chances for compromise or consensus as a means to good governance. Transparency, accountability, and freedom of dissent will remain in a more tenuous balance as writers pursue their craft and increasingly set the agenda for national discourse. Writing and social media have the capacity to entirely change the political process, but that shift must be slow and careful, considered against technology breakthroughs that falsely seem to offer immediate intimacy and liberation.

Brandon Inabinet
Furman University

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Alpha Bloggers; Audience Fragmentation/Segmentation; Blogs; Blogs, Role in Politics; Campaigns, Digital; Citizen Journalism; Flaming; Identity Politics; International Online Communities; *Onion, The*; Public Intellectual; Social Media, Adoption of.

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Y

Youth Engagement

Youth engagement refers to the political and civic activities performed by young people, both online and offline, which connect them to various aspects of public life such as voting in elections, doing community work, joining social movements, and signing electronic petitions. Within the social sciences, 30 years old is generally accepted as the defining boundary between young and older. Thus, youth engagement refers to participation by teenagers and young adults. Because in most countries the diffusion of social media has been led by high school and college students, understanding the uses and effects of social media on youth engagement has become a hot topic for scholarly research on how to reconnect younger citizens with the public sphere of politics and civic activities.

An important attribute of youth engagement is that the types of activities that fall within the concept are constantly evolving. Thus, some scholars consider acts such as news consumption or informal political discussions with friends as important components of civic and political engagement. Others, however, prefer a narrower definition, exclusively equating youth engagement with behaviors that have the clear purpose of achieving a civic and/or political goal (e.g., voting). In this case, information consumption and public expression are regarded as antecedents, not components, of engagement.

Political Versus Civic Engagement

Regardless of the breadth of activities that fall under the rubric of youth engagement, there are important differences between political and civic forms of engagement. Political engagement refers to behaviors adopted by citizens aimed at shaping government and policymaking. While voting and participation in elections are regarded as typical forms of political participation, social media have expanded the array of political activities conducted by youth. For instance, contributing to political blogs, writing political messages in social network sites, and forwarding online videos of candidates have been identified as new forms of political participation.

The term *civic engagement*, on the other hand, denotes voluntary actions taken to assist people outside one's family and circle of friends, such as donating to charity, as well as activities to improve the conditions of the local community, such as joining neighborhood associations. Conceptual differences notwithstanding, civic and political engagement can influence each other. For instance, research on the civil rights movement of the 1960s in the United States has demonstrated that participation in civic youth organizations during adolescence can be a powerful

Students at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, taking part in the creation of "vote mob" videos to demonstrate their interest in politics on April 14, 2011, in response to low voter turnout rates among Canadian youth. The videos of hundreds of students rallying to show their interest in political engagement were then posted on YouTube.

predictor of adult political behavior 25 years later.

Youth engagement is regarded as a key element of the transition between adolescence and mature adulthood. During childhood and adolescence, people become aware of political institutions, social issues, and larger communities; learn facts and concepts related to politics; and begin to practice active citizenship by volunteering, belonging to groups, consuming news media, and discussing issues.

Compared with the older generation, youth engagement tends to focus on local projects instead of national causes; their activity is more informal; and their means of acquiring information are more Web-based. Therefore, many observers have noted that conventional civic and political organizations face shrinking memberships precisely because younger generations are not inclined to enter into formal membership relations. As for politics, it is argued that youth care more about specific aspects of politics, but less about general politics compared with older generations.

Differences in the ways that young and older generations engage have been at the center of a debate between the common view that advanced democracies, especially the United States, exhibit declining rates of engagement; and the alternative view that sees engagement as shifting from elite-driven activities (e.g., donating money to a candidate) to self-driven forms of participation (e.g., writing political comments on Twitter). Social media, with their emphasis on user-generated content and self-expression, are particularly amenable to the latter perspective of youth engagement.

The Affordances of Social Media

The literature on political behavior has demonstrated that, at an individual level, motivations, skills, and opportunities are necessary for teenagers and young adults to civically and politically engage. In this sense, social media can play a pivotal role in promoting youth engagement.

While young people may lack the psychological or material resources to engage in civic and political activities, using social media can promote participation by lowering the costs associated with acquiring mobilizing information and increasing youth's political efficacy. Social media has also broadened the ways by which youth can express political or civic concerns, such as when college students who belong to an on-campus student organization create a blog or Facebook profile for it and connect with similar groups from other universities or countries. Social media may also expand people's social networks because they provide additional opportunities to contact friends who are physically separated, and promote social interaction with acquaintances and strangers. Social media also influence the ability to express political views and build a political identity, such that members of less powerful groups can express views that might have otherwise been punished or sanctioned by more powerful parties. As political and civic organizations become more technologically savvy, many offline forms of political participation, such as donating money to organizations and petitioning authorities, can quickly and easily be conducted online.

Unlike traditional media, social media rapidly and efficiently distribute a high volume of information. Because easy access to information is an important, although not always sufficient condition for engagement, social media may facilitate news seeking for users and increase the possibility of political discussion and engagement. In developed countries, statistics show that although most young people encounter some online news, most come across it casually or accidentally in the midst of other pursuits.

Also, social media enhance young people's personal expression on individual bases. These civic trends include the rise of more personally expressive cause-oriented politics based on lifestyle concerns such as consumer behaviors, and the emergence of direct-action protest networks in a variety of local to global arenas. While time and place limit physical interpersonal communication, social network sites make it up as an interactive-based application for online discussion. This creates opportunities to learn mobilizing information, ponder news or public issues, and reach common understandings, all of which are key antecedents of active engagement.

In particular, the interactive feature of social media may amplify the effects of political expression because they readily allow one's expression to be viewed and shared with many people simultaneously. Young people's expressive potential has been transformed; individuals are now in a position to post, at minimal cost, messages and images that can be instantly viewed by global audiences.

However, not all groups of young people do benefit equally from the affordances of social media for engagement. There are important gaps in social media use and civic or political participation across socioeconomic status, gender, and racial/ethnic status. The existence of these gaps are a strong reminder that whatever the affordances of social media, the effects of these digital tools on youth engagement are contingent upon the specific ways that young people use them.

Existing research shows that using social media for surveillance and news acquisition is positively associated with various forms of political activity, whereas using social media solely for the purpose of private entertainment and diversion will most likely distract users from civic or political engagement. Certainly, social media can be purposefully used to search for news (e.g., becoming a "fan" of a news network on Facebook) as well as a source for incidental exposure to news (e.g., browsing the profile of a friend on Facebook, and stumbling upon a link to a story produced by a news network). In either case, learning can take place, which is an important antecedent for behavior.

Using social media for expressing political opinions can also lead to engagement if these opinions trigger online conversations about public affairs, which research has found to be as conducive to political engagement as interpersonal discussion. Also, the textual nature of most communications within social media may result in communications that are more goal-oriented than

face-to-face discussion. If this is the case, then discussions on social media may be quite efficient at mobilizing young people to participate in political and civic activities.

Social media can also lead to engagement when youth use these platforms to search for and join political and social causes. Once users connect to organizations online through social media, these organizations can then invite their followers to mobilize for a cause. This explanation focuses on the possibility of finding mobilizing information on social media platforms, either by direct exposure to messages and profiles of social movements, NGOs, and other interest groups, or indirectly through incidental exposure.

Thus, information, opinion expression, and joining causes are specific ways in which young people who use social media can become engaged. Then, again, absent these uses, the likelihood of social media use leading to engagement is diminished.

Alternative Sources of Engagement

Social media, of course, are not the only—or, for that matter, the most important—source of youth engagement. The literature on political socialization conceives youth engagement as the result of multiple influences operating simultaneously. Civic training in adolescence can influence adult behavior, within which school as an institution plays an important part. Civic instruction is commonplace at the high school level, though it varies from current events requirements in classes to mandated service work in the community. Existing evidence shows that young people who volunteer in high school and college are more likely than their nonvolunteering counterparts to engage in volunteering, community activities, and other forms of civic life as adults. Involvement in afterschool activities also plays a role. Individuals who were active in school organizations as teenagers are disproportionately more involved as adults, even when the impact of later influences such as marriage, children, and advanced education are taken into account.

Besides schooling, many of the important lessons for engagement are learned at home. Young adults who grow up amid regular political discussions are much more involved in a host of activities. For instance, evidence collected in the United States show that among young people who are eligible to vote, 38 percent of those from homes with frequent political discussions say that they always vote, compared to 20 percent of those without such dialogue. Similarly, more than one-third of those who often heard political talk while growing up are regular volunteers, compared to just 13 percent of those raised in homes where political talk never occurred. By talking about politics, families teach their children that it is important to pay attention to the world around them—and take action.

Parents and guardians, even siblings, also provide critical role models for civic behavior as well. Young people who were raised in homes where someone volunteered are also highly involved—joining groups and associations, volunteering, wearing buttons, or displaying bumper stickers at rates higher than those who did not grow up with such examples. Similarly, youth with engaged role models are also more attentive to news of politics and government, and are more likely to participate in boycotts or buycotts. Both of these influences are significant, even when demographic and other factors are taken into account. In addition, research has shown that attending religious services provides effective training for civic engagement, because youth come into contact with opportunities to volunteer and become involved with their communities. Therefore, the influences of social media on youth engagement can also indirectly operate by having an effect on these other, alternative sources of engagement.

Sebastián Valenzuela
Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Homero Gil de Zúñiga
Pei Zheng
University of Texas–Austin

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Age; Cloud Protesting; Engagement Features; Internet Gathering; Networks, Political; Social Capital; Voter Demographics; Voter Turnout.

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YouTube

YouTube, the video sharing Web site, was launched in June 2005. At the time, it was only one of a number of competing Web sites and services aimed at making it easier for users to participate in widespread content sharing, including images, photos, and video, which was proving to be an especially tricky type of material to efficiently send over the Internet. YouTube offered a free, simple, and integrated interface that minimized the level of technical knowledge required of users. The site also provided basic community functions, such as the ability to link to other users as friends and easy ways to embed uploaded videos to other Web sites; this allowed users to easily share videos across the Internet. In October 2006, YouTube was acquired by Google, and by early 2008, it was consistently rated by various Web metrics services as one of the top 10 most viewed Web sites globally.

As YouTube settled into the basic configuration it still uses today, it offered many key features that were appealing to users and have helped lead to its position of dominance in the digital video domain. One of the most important factors in YouTube's success came from the site's shift in concept, from that of a Web site for personal video storage and sharing, to that of a platform for social expression. This concept change positioned YouTube within the user-led revolution that was indicative of the emerging Web 2.0 environment. YouTube also capitalized on key user features, such as video recommendations, e-mail links that enabled easy sharing, an embeddable video player, and social networking functionalities such as commenting. These features helped YouTube to emerge into multiple roles in the digital video environment, including those of a high-volume Web site, a broadcast platform, a media archive, and a social network.

The YouTube Effect

YouTube is the premier video sharing Web site. Web metrics services estimate that the site accounts for roughly 37 percent of all Internet traffic, and its continued and rapid growth makes keeping up with usage statistics difficult. By early 2011, YouTube had reached more than 1 trillion views, equating to roughly 140 views for every person on Earth. By May 2013, the site boasted over 1 billion unique user visits per month, who spend an estimated 4 billion hours watching videos; the average user spends between 15 and 25 minutes on the site per day. Roughly 72 hours of video are uploaded every minute, and more video content is uploaded in a 60-day period than has been broadcast by the three major U.S. television networks in the past 60 years.

YouTube is localized in 43 counties and functions in 60 languages, with an estimated 70 percent of the site's traffic coming from outside of the United States. YouTube also has a significant social media reach, with roughly 500 years of video watched via Facebook every day and over 700 YouTube videos shared via Twitter each minute. YouTube is accessible on over 350 million mobile devices; more than 10 percent of global views come from these devices, and three hours of video are uploaded to the site through mobile devices every minute.

YouTube and Politics

YouTube emerged as a significant force upon the U.S. political scene in 2006, when a video featuring a gaffe by a senator seeking re-election was caught on camera, uploaded to YouTube, and went viral. The video quickly gained momentum as both online and mainstream media outlets picked up the story. The ability for this political misstep to reach hundreds of thousands of viewers and attract the attention of the mainstream media was an early indicator of the potential political power of YouTube.

Although some videos during the 2006 election caught the attention of users and the mainstream media, it was not until the presidential election season of 2008 that YouTube became a serious campaign battleground. YouTube radically altered the political ecosystem and played a critical role in helping candidates reach audiences and mobilize voters. During the 2008 election, roughly 39 percent of voters reported watching at least one political video online, official candidate videos received over 200 million views, and videos created by individuals or groups not associated with campaigns were viewed over 1 billion times.

YouTube has been instrumental in changing the political communication landscape in the United States. Prior to the 2008 election, the majority of the political videos on YouTube were "gotcha-type" videos or parodies, but this soon changed as the public and candidates began to embrace the Web site as a platform for serious political messaging. Campaigns began to utilize YouTube to reach audiences with videos of speeches, rallies, and political commercials. YouTube became a viable method for candidates to engage the public through videos, many that were viewed by millions, without the direct influence of the mainstream media or political parties.

YouTube has provided new ways for politicians to reach audiences, particularly younger demographics, and has allowed lesser-known candidates to have a platform. YouTube has also been credited with increasing the accountability of candidates, elevating the democratization of information, minimizing political artificiality, and increasing transparency. No longer can politicians ignore or deny previous statements, as recorded and often unscripted moments have a way of taking on a new life in the YouTube domain.

In just a short time, YouTube has become a necessary mechanism in political communication. Multiple candidates, in races both large and small, including President Barack Obama, have announced their candidacy via YouTube videos; mash-ups and user-generated political videos have been seen by millions; the public was invited to participate in political debates via the CNN-YouTube Debates; and political speeches that may have only been seen by the audience in attendance have become some of the most viewed political communication ever. In 2011, more than 500 candidates for political office and roughly 92 percent of House and Senate members had official YouTube channels. The Obama White House embraced YouTube as a mechanism for communication by creating the White House YouTube Channel, which posts an average of 17 videos per week, such as the president's weekly radio addresses and interviews with Obama generated from questions submitted by YouTube users.

YouTube and Participatory Culture

Through accessible digital technologies and user-generated content, YouTube has emerged as a site of participatory culture, one that has shifted the power relationship between politics, media industries, and consumers. YouTube functions as a site of cultural commons and political listening among users. This environment is not bound by the traditional confines of political communication; instead, it functions as a mediating mechanism for cultural and political citizenship that is created and disseminated by ordinary citizens. Via YouTube, individuals, regardless of location or time zone, can engage in political discussion and online videos passed virally between users. They are important rhetorical and persuasive artifacts.

The commerciality of YouTube has increased the possibilities for participation for a much broader range of contributors than ever before. Simply put, YouTube has become the world's largest town hall meeting. Through YouTube, a new meritocracy for political information, free from the gatekeepers and agenda setters of traditional media, have been able to connect with politicians, parties, candidates, and other voters in ways that were never before possible.

YouTube also functions as an important fact-checking platform for political information. If users come across information that is incorrect or misrepresented, they are highly likely to draw attention to it and discuss it virally, which essentially requires candidates or campaigns to respond. In the YouTube environment, candidates, campaigns, and the mainstream media no longer have total control over political messages, which has changed the ways that candidates must campaign.

Criticism of YouTube's Political Impact

Despite the widespread adoption of YouTube by politicians, the role it has begun to play in politics has ignited criticism. Critics argue that the culture of YouTube has resulted in the death of spontaneity in political discourse. It has created a mediated environment where candidates can no longer experiment with and refine campaign messages and are worried about having a "gotcha" moment captured and posted online. These factors have led to more scripted discourse and have removed some of the richness from political discourse. The long-term political relevance of YouTube has also been called into question. Critics suggest that large viewership numbers are not necessarily relevant because many users are young and not highly politically engaged, and campaigns often use strategies to overexaggerate the reach of political messages.

Conclusion

YouTube has substantially impacted politics in the United States. With metric services estimating that within the next decade, up to 90 percent of all Web traffic will be video-related, it is likely that YouTube's role in political communication will continue to gain significance.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Campaigns, Virtual; Social Networking Web Sites; Streaming Media; Topology of Social Networks; TwitVid.com; Web 2.0; West Wing Week; YouTube Politics Channel; YouTube War.

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YouTube Politics Channel

The YouTube Politics Channel, launched in October 2011, is a dedicated channel within the YouTube platform that serves as a hub for locating and accessing political videos, campaign messages, debates, news broadcasts, and parodies regarding the 2012 presidential campaign. The various features of the Politics Channel provided analytical data for assessing candidates' popularity, methods for tracking the latest political videos, opportunities to connect with candidates' personal YouTube channels, and platforms for users to communicate their opinion of the campaign. The primary focus of the Politics Channel was the 2012 presidential campaign. However, the channel also included videos beyond this scope by posting videos from other political races and content from various political activities, such as the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street movements.

The Politics Channel served as a mechanism in Google's attempt to solidify positions both as a dominant provider of digital political content and as a go-to source for political news and information. In response to the public's increasing appetite for gathering political information online, and campaigns' increased use of the Internet as a platform for framing and distributing messages, the Politics Channel was developed as a one-stop online destination for political information related to the 2012 presidential primary and election season.

Videos distributed through the YouTube Politics Channel were cultivated from a variety of sources, including candidates' official YouTube channels and Web sites, media outlets, and everyday citizens. A third-party outlet was also employed to search and monitor user-generated content on a variety of social media platforms; videos that were found to generate significant attention were then distributed via the Politics Channel. This allowed users to not only easily find videos produced by campaigns and media, but also provided access to unscripted political moments captured by ordinary people. The goal of the YouTube Politics Channel was to provide a holistic view of what politics look like in the YouTube environment.

Features

Through multifaceted functions, the YouTube Politics Channel attempted to connect users with all aspects of the presidential campaign, including news stories, campaign ads, debates, parodies, and speeches. The Politics Channel utilized the flexibility of the online environment to continually adapt content and maintain the channel's relevance throughout the election cycle.

During the primaries, the channel included multiple features that allowed users to follow and connect to the candidates. A prominently featured graph provided a running tally of the primary candidates' popularity in the digital video domain. The graph tracked the number of video views, YouTube search queries, subscribers, and video shares by candidate. A "meet the candidates" section allowed users to view popular videos, find statistics for each candidate, and directly navigate to candidates' individual YouTube channels. The candidate "dashboard" offered options for users to receive regular updates and videos from campaigns. Finally, a "hot political videos" tab linked to each day's top political videos from across the political spectrum; videos were a range of user-generated news footage and campaign videos.

During the conventions, the Politics Channel adapted its content to more specifically focus on the conventions, eliminating many of the features prominent during the primaries. The "conventions 2012" tab provided videos of all of the speeches broadcast during the conventions, as well as behind-the-scense candidate videos, news segments, and audience reaction videos. A feed tab, utilizing a really simple syndication (RSS) feed, a method of distributing links and syndicating content, was also added. This feature allowed users to quickly navigate to the most current videos uploaded to the channel and to videos linked through other YouTube channels and media outlets.

Following the conventions, the channel adapted its content to focus on the final stages of the campaign. Through the "elections 2012" tab, users could watch "What's On Now," spotlight videos highlighting timely and relevant campaign issues. Users were also presented with numerous highlights, which included a wide range of videos from stump speeches, news interviews, campaign advertisements, media parodies, and audience-reaction and user-generated videos.

By serving as a fully functioning social video tracker and providing analytical data, the YouTube Politics Channel made it easy for users to keep connected to the digital political pulse of the 2012 presidential election, with over 35,000 subscribers and over 4 million video views.

LaChrystal Ricke
Sam Houston State University

See Also: Campaigns, 2012; Innovation and Technology; Pioneers in Social Media and Politics; Streaming Media; Topology of Social Networks; YouTube.

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YouTube War

The idea of a "YouTube War" has been applied to a few conflicts since the 2005 creation of the Web site YouTube.com. The earliest uses seem to be regarding the Iraq War that started in 2003, and refer to postings of YouTube videos by soldiers showing what conditions in various Iraqi cities were actually like.

The term came to be used in the 2011 Libyan civil war, both in reference to the war's initial catalyst, the Benghazi protests of killed prisoners' relatives posted on YouTube and then broadcast by Al Jazeera television, and in reference to the ongoing use of YouTube during the conflict to document casualties and attacks.

Libyans celebrating in Al-Keish Square in Benghazi on October 23, 2011, after the fall of the dictatorship and death of Muammar Qadhafi at the hands of rebel forces. While Internet access had only reached 17 percent of the Libyan population when the uprising began, activists, especially from the Libyan diaspora, were able to spread YouTube videos and other online images of the oppression of Libyan protesters. This drew international outrage that likely hastened the end of the conflict.

Timeline

In March 2010, several relatives of prisoners killed at Abu Salim prison gathered to protest against the government of Muammar Qadhafi. The government response to these peaceful gatherings was to disperse them through violence, including the use of snipers to target people in the crowds. As word of the protests spread, a wholesale censorship campaign was undertaken to block Internet and telephone access throughout Libya in an effort to limit the potential of the protests to spread. The censorship began with blocking access to opposition political Web sites, and eventually included a blockade of all YouTube videos, not only because of the videos uploaded from the mobile phones of protest attendees, but also because of other videos showing various members of Qadhafi's family attending lavish parties. This provided a visceral reminder of the privileged lifestyle enjoyed by the regime and their estrangement from the difficult economic realities faced by most Libyans.

Beginning in February 2011, Libyans launched a series of protests against the Qadhafi regime that were sparked by the arrest of a prominent human rights activist, Fethi Tarbel. By the end of the month, rebel militias had taken control of Misrata and portions of Benghazi. The government responded by attacking protesters using aircraft and other methods widely considered disproportionate by the international community. Despite the Internet ban, these images and many others quickly made their way onto international Web sites and televisions through satellite news services like Al Jazeera, al-Arabiya, CNN, and others.

Organizations like Human Rights Watch demanded that the Libyan government re-establish access to opposition sites and YouTube and allow for transparency in order to afford some

level of protection via publicity to protesters and rebels. This was complemented by international sanctions, including a March 17 United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution authorizing a no-fly zone over Libya and the proactive military defense of civilian populations.

NATO forces were quickly invoked to enforce the UN resolution and engage in attacks on Libyan government forces deemed threatening to civilians. During March and April, the conflict quickly evolved from civilian protests to full-scale civil war, with rebel militias and government forces vying for control of key towns and power centers. Defections of various military units and government ministers quickly exposed the vulnerabilities of the regime.

A major development occurred in July when the National Transitional Council (NTC) was recognized as the legitimate representative of the Libyan people by the International Contact Group (ICG) on Libya. Throughout the summer, rebel groups continued to gain territory, until they finally entered Tripoli and Qadhafi's compound in August. Many major states followed the lead of the ICG and also recognized the NTC as the legitimate government during August and September. On October 20, Qadhafi was captured and killed by rebel forces.

Throughout the war, major developments, human rights abuses, protests, and declarations from various rebel groups were frequently uploaded to YouTube and then rebroadcast by various news outlets. These reports often noted that footage could not be verified, but it was nonetheless aired and treated as relatively reliable. In a sense, this made the Libyan civil war and Libyan revolution the first such conflict to be filmed primarily by amateurs using mobile phones at the scenes of various events.

YouTube Libyan Civil War Channel

In addition to television news, many of those who regularly uploaded videos of the Libya conflict created YouTube channels, which could then attract subscribers who would receive updates when new content was posted. It also allowed for users to leave comments in the footer of each clip, and to share videos on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. In May 2013, these channels contained roughly 500 unique videos. These fell into various categories. Primarily, they consisted of amateur recordings of attacks as they occurred, generally from a viewpoint supportive of the rebel groups and the NTC. Another significant number of videos featured public pronouncements by various officials in major governments and international bodies, including President Obama, former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and former U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta. Responses by officials in the Qadhafi regime, including his son Saif al-Islam Qadhafi and their supporters, also featured frequently noting abuses and humanitarian violations supposedly committed by the rebels and NATO. A few of these were uploaded news interviews with Muammar Qadhafi. A third, though significantly less numerous, group of clips involves the interpretation of various foreign policy experts and academics on the developments in Libya as they occurred, the justification or lack thereof for intervention, and the potential for democracy in a post-Qadhafi state. Finally, a small number of videos included individual commentary on the conflict in the form of video blogs, or even protest songs.

One of the most highly viewed of these videos was a post uploaded by Al Jazeera English during the most intense months of fighting, which is titled *Visual Diary Shows Libyan Soldier at War*. This three-and-a-half-minute short film includes footage of traveling in rebel convoys, posed photographs with weapons, interactions with NATO troops, and extremely graphic images of dead bodies, which appear to include both civilians and rebel fighters. The smiling face of the young soldier preparing for battle is made poignant with the subtitle noting that the soldier who filmed the footage was subsequently killed in battle.

Assessments

Some assessments of the Libya conflict argue that the significance of social media is easily overstated in terms of its impact on the local population and the spread of the conflict. Local Internet access had reached a penetration of only 17 percent of the population at the time the uprising began. Likewise, there were only 200,000 active Facebook and 64,000 active Twitter accounts in the country at the time. Research has shown that the vast majority of use of these sites were simply

used for personal relationships. However, a relatively large Libyan diaspora publicized abuses of the Qadhafi regime based on reports from friends and family, and launched a "day of anger" online, which also marked the true start of the revolution on February 17, 2011. They were instrumental in creating a viral video phenomenon by sharing videos uploaded by people in eastern Libya who were participating in or affected by the uprisings. Thus, YouTube and sites like Facebook were far more influential in galvanizing public opinion outside Libya than they were in coordinating or motivating the rebellion within.

Crucially, the easy access to YouTube clips meant that populations of powerful and influential states, including those on the UN Security Council, were confronted with frequent and shocking reminders of the brutality of the Qadhafi regime. This meant that the conflict quickly gained a human face, and the prospect of wholesale slaughter of civilians was taken seriously and treated with the utmost urgency.

As the timeline of the conflict reveals, the transition from the Western embrace of the Qadhafi regime, to its request for human rights to be respected, to the ultimate economic sanctions and virtual declaration of war happened in a matter of just a few months. It is difficult to imagine that absent this viral video component, abetted by social media, that the attention of the rest of the world would have been so fixated on this relatively isolated and poor country.

Of course, the CNN effect, or Al Jazeera effect, which note the role of television media in bringing war into the living rooms of viewers and changing the way that citizens and politicians react to conflict, could easily apply to this case. The difference, however, is that CNN, Al Jazeera, and other broadcasters were not able to take their cameras into the west of the country, or into all the many conflict zones, meaning that uploaded YouTube clips became the most important primary sources for reporting, especially in terms of visual impact.

Jeremy Kleidosty
University of St. Andrews

See Also: Activists and Activism, Digital; Africa, north; Al Jazeera Effect; Arab Spring; Citizen Journalism; CNN Effect; Egypt; International Intervention; International Unrest and Revolution; Libya; Tunisia; YouTube.

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Z

Zuckerberg, Mark

Cofounder, chairman, and CEO of Facebook, Mark Elliot Zuckerberg was born May 14, 1984, to Edward and Karen Zuckerberg in White Plains, New York. Both parents were well-educated. His father is a practicing dentist, and his mother is a licensed psychiatrist. The couple had four children—Mark, Randi, Donna, and Arielle. Although several sources report that Zuckerberg characterizes himself as an atheist, he was raised Jewish. Growing up in a Jewish family, Zuckerberg celebrated his *Star Wars*–themed bar mitzvah at Temple Beth Abraham under Rabbi David Holtz. The *Greenburgh Daily Voice* reported that Zuckerberg was a typical kid in the 1990s, enjoying extracurricular activities at Ardsley Middle School, including cross-country and fencing. Zuckerberg's Facebook timeline reports that he attended Ardsley High School for two years before transferring and graduating from Phillips Exeter Academy.

In his early adolescence, Zuckerberg enjoyed tinkering with computers and writing software. His father taught him some skills of programming early on, until he hired David Newman to tutor his son. Newman later told reporters that Zuckerberg was a prodigy. While his peers were playing computer games, Zuckerberg was creating computer software programs. Among his first software programs was ZuckNet, which allowed users to message each other. Many claim that his father was his first client, using the program in his dental practice. He also built Synapse Media Player, a program that would monitor user's listening habits and in turn recommend music based on what the user liked. He was approached by Microsoft to purchase the entity, but declined.

In 2002, Zuckerberg enrolled at Harvard University to major in psychology and computer science. In his second year at Harvard, Zuckerberg created two different software programs. The first was called CourseMatch, and aimed to help students make class selections and form study groups. The second was called Facemash, a program that allowed students to self-select the best looking person from photos. Journalist Nicholas Carlson notes, "Mark got in trouble for creating it. The way the site worked was that it pulled photos of Harvard students off Harvard's Web sites. It rearranged these photos so that when people visited Facemash.com they would see pictures of two Harvard students and be asked to vote on which was more attractive." Although Zuckerberg was disciplined, he was not expelled from the school.

Although controversy exists over how the idea came about, Zuckerberg is most known for his creation of the Web site Facebook. Some argue

President Barack Obama and Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg discussing social media and politics at a "Facebook Live" town hall event held at Facebook's headquarters in Palo Alto, California, on April 20, 2011. The public was able to submit questions to the president via Facebook wall posts or the White House Web site, and the event was then livestreamed to online viewers on Facebook.

that Harvard seniors Cameron Winklevoss, Tyler Winklevoss, and Divya Narendra generated the idea for the social network HarvardConnections .com, and asked Zuckerberg to join their team and create the coding for the program. The three filed a lawsuit against Zuckerberg for stealing their idea. In April 2008, they were awarded $20 million cash and $45 million in stock in a settlement. In April 2011, the Winklevoss twin brothers appealed the case in the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, but were denied an overturn of the initial lower court's ruling.

Facebook

Started in Zuckerberg's Harvard dorm room in February 2004, thefacebook.com was originally only for use by Harvard students. Pulling in his Harvard friends Chris Hughes, Eduardo Saverin, and Dustin Moskovitz, the four expanded the site to include other Ivy League schools, and then expanded to other university, high school, and international campuses. The domain name, Facebook.com, was reportedly purchased for $200,000. In 2006 Facebook exploded, and was opened to anyone 13 years and older with an e-mail address. Headquartered in Menlo Park, California, Facebook's newsroom reports that 4,600 employees currently work for the company. It also boasts that as of October 2012, more than 1 billion people were active on Facebook, with 618 million daily active users.

Zuckerberg Ties the Knot

On May 19, 2012, Zuckerberg married Priscilla Chan in a small backyard ceremony at Zuckerberg's Palo Alto home. He told the rest of the world by simply updating his Facebook status to "married." According to *People* magazine, Chan and Zuckerberg met in college at a fraternity party, as both attended Harvard. According to her Facebook page, Chan is a native of Braintree, Massachusetts, and went to Quincy High School, graduating in 2003. A biology major, Chan graduated

in 2007 from Harvard University. After a brief stint teaching middle-school children, Chan continued her education, and in 2012, she graduated from the University of California, San Francisco medical school.

Political Activism

In September 2011, Zuckerberg's Facebook company created a political action committee (PAC) to focus on the election cycle and lobby for support regarding privacy and patents. Facebook had been trying to raise its profile in Washington, D.C., since the hiring of Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg in 2008. *CNN Money* reported in October 2012 that Facebook's PAC had raised a great deal of money. Although the company's employees heavily favor Democrats through their personal contributions, the social media company awarded Republicans $13,000 more than Democrats through the end of September 2012.

In April 2013, Zuckerberg, along with well-known leaders in the technology community, unveiled a new bipartisan political advocacy group Fwd.us. According to Evelyn Rusli in a *Wall Street Journal* article, Zuckerberg highlighted three priorities for the group:

> Comprehensive immigration reform that provides a clear path to citizenship; education reform to press for higher standards in schools and a "much greater focus" on math and sciences; and increased investment for scientific research.

Zuckerberg and his wife have also participated in political fundraising. In February 2013, the couple held a fundraising event at their home in Palo Alto for New Jersey Governor Chris Christie's re-election.

Philanthropy

In March 2013, Mark Zukerberg's net worth was reported by *Forbes* as $13.3 billion. *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* listed Zuckerberg and his wife as the second-largest charitable donors in the United States for 2012. Zuckerberg is one of the American billionaires who have committed at least half of their wealth to charity during their lifetimes through a philanthropic campaign called the Giving Pledge. Leaders and U.S. billionaires Warren Buffett and Bill Gates launched the campaign in 2010. During the holiday season of 2012, Zuckerberg gifted 18 million Facebook shares to the Silicon Valley Community Foundation for education initiatives that were worth nearly $500 million.

Alisa Agozzino
Ohio Northern University

See Also: Evolution of Social Media; Facebook; Pioneers in Social Media and Politics; Social Media, Adoption of; Social Networking Web Sites; World Wide Web, History of the.

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Glossary

Above the fold: On a Web page, content that can be seen without scrolling.

Absolute URL: Also called an absolute link, an Internet address that takes a user to the exact location of a file on the Internet.

Active time: Also known as engagement time, the amount of time a visitor to a Web site spends interacting with the page, for example, by clicking, scrolling, or hovering.

Ad banner: A type of Internet ad appearing on the top or bottom of a Web page.

Ad pages sold: The number of page views sold to an advertiser by an Internet advertising firm.

Adobe Acrobat: Software that allows users to create and read files in portable document format (PDF), a format that allows them to be shared, but prevents them from being changed.

AdWords: An advertising program created by Google that allows Web site owners to earn revenue by displaying ads next to their online content; the ads are selected to match audience interests, and the Web site owner earns money when a user clicks on an ad.

Aid Still Required (www.aidstillrequired.org): An organization founded by Andrea Herz Payne to bring continued awareness to issues (e.g., the conditions in a country months after a natural disaster) that may have fallen out of the news spotlight, but for which charitable support is still needed.

AIDA: Attention, interest, desire, and action—a traditional model for how advertising works, by moving a person from attention through interest and desire to action.

Alert: A media tool such as Google Alerts or Social Mention that sends notifications to a user when particular words or phrases (e.g., a company name or personal name) are mentioned on the Internet.

Amplification: One of the three components of a Klout score, amplification refers to how many people to act on messages posted by an individual.

App: A limited-use computer application that can be downloaded from the Internet.

Banner exchange: A type of Internet advertising in which different Web sites display each other's banner ads.

Blind link: A link on a Web page that does not indicate to the user where clicking on it will take them.

Blawg: A blog about the law.

Blog: A journal kept on the Internet for personal or other purposes; a contraction of "Web log."

Blogroll: A list of blogs recommended on a blog or other Web page, typically on topics related to the Web page and carried as a vertical list on one side of the Web page.

Born This Way Foundation: A foundation created in 2011 by pop singer Lady Gaga and her mother, Cynthia Germanotta, to help create a society tolerant of individual differences, particularly but not exclusively around gender and sexuality, and in which young people feel empowered to build a better world.

Bounce: A visit to a Web site in which the user views only one page.

Bounce rate: The number of bounces divided by the number of visits to a Web site.

Button ad: A small advertisement on a Web page, usually a small circular or rectangular ad at the bottom of the page.

Buzz: A rough measure of the number of people talking or tweeting about a product or candidate; campaigns may aim at "creating buzz," meaning a goal to increase the number of people aware of something and talking about it.

Call to action: The part of an advertisement that asks the reader to do something specific.

CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing Test to Tell Computers and Humans Apart): an anticomment spam feature that requires users to type in the characters appearing in a window (often in distorted form, to defeat optical character recognition) before posting.

Chiclet: A type of computer keyboard in which the keys are raised and separated by spaces, so the keys look like pieces of Chiclets gum. Alternatively, the small, square graphics appearing on Web and social media screens that display the logos of various RSS feeds and social media providers, such as the now-famous symbols for Twitter and Facebook. They are used on Web pages and social media apps to help providers track content as it moves around the digital universe, and to improve interconnectivity among different types of platforms.

Churn rate: The proportion of subscribers who leave a service (e.g., a mobile phone company). Also, the period of time it takes for a specific piece of hardware or software to become obsolete because of changes in regulatory policy, changes in technical standards and/or technology, or by corporate fiat on the part of the technology provider (e.g., discontinuing support for a particular platform or storage device).

Click path: The sequence of clicks that a visitor follows on a particular Web site.

Comment spam: Spam posted in the comments section of a blog, often posted by spambots; the CAPTCHA (Completely Automated Public Turing Test to Tell Computers and Humans Apart): system was developed to try to prevent comment spam.

Content provider: In the context of the Internet, an individual or company that provides content, such as text and graphics, to be posted on a Web site.

Contextual advertising: Advertising matched to the hosting Web page, usually by using keywords.

Conversion: When a reader takes a desired action, such as making a contribution, after viewing a web page or clicking on an ad.

Conversion rate: The number of conversions divided by the number of page views or clicks.

CPM: Cost per thousand, a method of paying for advertisements in terms of the number of impressions made on an ad, for example, $5 per 1,000 impressions.

CRM: Customer relationship management, a model that uses technology to manage the

interactions between a company and its customers, prospects, and so forth.

CTR: Click-through rate, the number of people who, after reading an ad, click on it.

CU-SeeMe: A free videoconferencing program that allows individuals to use a video camera and Internet connection to exchange live video.

DailyKos.com: A popular political Web site founded and published by Markos Moulitsas Zuniga in May 2002; as of 2012, the site had a quarter of a million registered users and 2.5 million unique visitors each month.

Deliverability: In the context of e-mail, the ability to deliver e-mail to the intended recipients.

Delivery rate: The percentage of e-mails in a marketing campaign that are received in the recipient's inbox, rather than their spam folder.

Digital divide: A term referring to differences in Internet access (or broadband access) among people of different races, genders, social classes, and so forth. Increasingly refers in a more generalized way to one's degree of access to the full range of mobile and online technology and resources.

Direct traffic: Users that come to a Web site by entering the URL.

Dooced: Being fired for something done on the Internet; the term was coined in 2002 by Heather Armstrong, who wrote about her job on her blog Dooce.com.

EMS: Electronic meeting system, a platform to facilitate group meetings over the Internet.

Event blog: A blog created to promote an event, or to otherwise present content about a specific event.

Exit percentage: The total number of exits (people leaving a Web page) divided by the number of pageviews.

Expert influencer: Someone who exerts influence on others because he or she is recognized as an authority, even if he or she is not personally known to the person who is influenced.

Facebook: A social networking site created in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, now the largest social networking site on the Internet.

FeedReader: A news aggregation program that allows readers to collect news feeds and access them from the Internet or a mobile device; more generally, a "feedreader" or "feed reader" is any program providing this type of capability.

Flame: posting a hostile comment in response to an online article or blog post; flames are often-based on personal attack, rather than engagement with the issues.

Follower: In the context of Twitter, a subscriber to the tweets of another person or organization.

Following: In the context of Twitter, choosing to "follow" someone means that one will receive their tweets (Twitter messages).

Forum: An online discussion site where people can post messages and reply to other messages; also known as a message board. Forums are usually organized into topics, and the messages are archived.

Friending function: On Facebook and similar social networks, sending an invitation to another Facebook user, inviting them to be a "friend," or giving them the choice to accept, decline, or defer. For example, it is possible to limit Facebook posts or other activities like sharing music to only friends.

Geolocation: The ability to identify the geographic location of an object.

Geolocational enabling: Turning on the function (e.g., on a mobile phone or computer) that allows software to deduce its location, for instance, so it can suggest restaurants in the vicinity.

Geotargeting: Choosing which content or advertising will be displayed to a user, based on his or her geographic location.

Google Groups: A social media service provided by Google to help readers find discussion groups related to their interests; it began as Deja News in 1995.

Haloscan: An early blog comment hosting service, founded in 2002, and renamed Echo in 2009.

Hashtag: A word or phrase (with no spaces) preceded by the # symbol, such as #ivoted; hashtags are used on Twitter to make it easy for users to find related content.

Hat tip: Acknowledgement of another's assistance; for instance, in providing the original idea for a blog post.

High consideration purchase: A purchase involving a relatively large amount of money, and hence relatively high risk; for instance, a new car.

Hit: A request to a Web server for a file to be uploaded.

Hotspot: A picture or icon that is hyperlinked. Also refers to particularly useful social media points at which to gather user or viewer metrics, as well as to places in the physical environment where wireless Internet service is available.

HTML: Hypertext markup language, a coding language used on the Internet to create Web pages.

HTTP: Hypertext transfer protocol, a set of rules allowing communication among computers connected to the Internet.

Hyperlink: On the Internet, a reference to another Web site or other data (e.g., a document) that can be accessed by clicking on the link.

ICQ: "I seek you," an instant messenger service that can be used online or with a smartphone.

Impression: In Internet advertising, a single display of an advertisement on a Web page.

Inbound links: Links from other sites on the Internet to your Web site; a high number of inbound links is one of the factors that may give a Web site a high ranking for search engines.

Infoglut: A mass of poorly organized information that is difficult to productively use.

Interstitial advertising: A type of Internet ad that appears during the transition from one Web page to another.

IPTV: Internet protocol television, a method of delivering television programs to viewers over the Internet.

Joined-up marketing: Creating a consistent brand strategy across all the different ways a customer may become aware of or interact with a company, including e-mail marketing, direct mail marketing, Internet advertising, or a Facebook app.

Keyword density: The ratio of a particular keyword to the total number of words on a Web page.

Keyword stuffing: A practice in which a keyword is inserted many times into a page in order to increase the page's keyword density.

Klout: A measure of social influence, ranging from 1 to 100, with higher scores indicating stronger influence and ability to cause others to take action. A Klout score is made up of three parts: true reach, amplification, and network impact.

Landing page: The Web page first shown to a visitor who arrives from another site; landing pages are usually specific to a given referring link.

Like function: On Facebook, the ability for a user to click a button on a Web site to indicate that they "like" a posting or a site, that is, are a fan of the item; however, "like" fraud is also possible, because the like button may be linked to a different Web site than the one where the button resides.

List cleaning: Also known as list scrubbing or list pruning, removing e-mails (or postal mail addresses) that are incorrect, undeliverable, or duplicated.

Liveblogging: Providing an ongoing series of blog posts during an event (e.g., an election or sporting event) to provide news coverage and commentary.

Low consideration purchase: A purchase involving relatively little money and relatively little risk; for instance, toothpaste.

Lurking: Reading content on an online forum or e-mail list without posting to the discussions.

Malware: Malicious software that may be installed on a user's computer without his or her knowledge, such as spyware.

Meetup: A social networking portal intended to help people meet others with like interests in their geographical area and organize group meetings.

Metadata: Literally data about data; 15 elements were defined as essential metadata for resource description at a workshop held in Dublin in 1995, and are known as the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set.

Microblog: A blog that limits file size, for instance, limiting a post to single images or short text messages. Twitter is a form of microblog.

Mobile application: An application designed for a mobile device, such as a smartphone.

MP3: A compression and playback standard for digital audio files.

Narrowcasting: Delivering a message to a specific group of people.

Netroots: Political activism organized through online social media, such as wikis and blogs; the term was coined in 2002 by Jerome Armstrong, an American political strategist.

Network impact: One of the three components of a Klout score, network impact refers to how often key influencers respond to content.

News reader: An Internet application on Usenet that allows readers to download, read, and post to Usenet groups.

NPTech: Information related to nonprofits and technology.

Open rate: In the context of an e-mail marketing campaign, the percentage of message or advertising e-mails actually opened by the people who receive them.

Opt-in: Features such as e-mails that are only provided to individuals who indicate that they want to receive them.

Organic search results: Site listings resulting from a user performing a search, as opposed to clicking on an ad.

Over-building: Building more computer capacity than is expected to be needed, so that necessary capacity will be available, even if there are failures of hardware or software.

Page depth: Also know as page views per session, the average number of page views by a visitor during a session.

Page tagging: Placing a piece of JavaScript code on a Web page to collect information about people who visit that page.

Pageview: A unit of measurement referring to one person looking at one Web page.

Peer influencer: *See* Positional influencer.

Permalink: A permanent URL linking to a Web page, document, and so forth, that will remain valid even if the original location of the Web page is moved.

Person finder: A Google Web application built in 2010 after the earthquake in Haiti to help people locate friends and relatives after that and similar disasters.

Phishing: Using fraudulent means to obtain confidential information such as usernames and passwords, for example, by sending an e-mail purportedly from an individual's bank and asking for their account information in order to "restore service."

Ping: A message sent by a blog to a server when a new entry is posted or updated.

Poke: On Facebook, to send a message to attract the attention of someone, analogous to physically poking them.

Pop-under ads: Also known as pop-behind ads, ads that automatically appear in a new window behind the current window when a user visits a Web site or clicks on an ad.

Pop-up ads: Ads that automatically appear in a new Web window on top of the current window when a user visits a Web site or clicks on an ad.

Positional influencer: Someone who exerts influence through their relationship with the individual being influenced; for example, by being a member of the same family or a close friend. Also known as peer influencers.

Posting: To send a message to an Internet forum, blog, or in a section devoted to comments on news or other Web pages.

Power user: Someone who is unusually good at using a computer program and can use advanced features of the program.

PPC advertising: Pay-per-click advertising, a type of advertising in which the advertiser only pays when a visitor actually clicks on an ad.

Product placement: Arranging for a product to be seen or mentioned on a Web site or in a film or television show, appearing to be a normal part of the story, but in fact as a means of advertising the product.

PSA: Public service announcement, an announcement usually run at no cost because it is considered to be in the public interest.

Real World: A reality television program running on MTV beginning in 1992; one of the first of many reality shows, it followed a group of strangers who live together in a house and depicts many issues relevant to young adults, such as sexuality and drug use.

Reblog: Reposting content written by someone else, with the notice that it originated elsewhere; reblogging has become an indicator of the popularity of posts on social media sites.

Recency: The number of days passed since a given user has visited a given Web site.

Red-lining: Also known as "weblining," a method of grading customers and allocating resources toward them. Alternatively, the act of omitting entire populations from the list of those slated to receive infrastructural improvements related to new technologies (such as high-speed fiber optical cable replacing in-ground copper wiring) by simply crossing them out on the relevant lists in policymaker and/or provider development activities. Often determined by geographical location, economic status, "need for service," and/or "perceived ability to pay" criteria.

Redundancy: In Internet terms, having a secondary system to back up service in case of a failure in the primary service.

Referent influencer: Someone who exerts influence on people who he or she knows, whether in person or through the use of social media.

Referring site: A Web site that sends a user to another site.

Repeat visitor: A user who makes at least two visits to a given Web site.

Retweet: Forwarding or posting someone else's tweet (Twitter message).

ROI: Return on investment, a measure of evaluating the effectiveness of an advertising campaign or other business decision; ROI is calculated by dividing the return (e.g., contributions received) by the cost of whatever is evaluated.

Search engine: A tool to find information on the Internet by entering search terms; major search engines include Google, Yahoo!, and Bing.

Secure mobile phone messaging: Using software to encrypt SMS text messages sent via mobile phone.

SEO: Search engine optimization, a method of manipulating content on a Web site in order to have that site rank more highly in searches and thus become more visible.

Session: A theoretically uninterrupted visit by a user to a Web site, during which time the user does not go to any other Web site, and there is not a gap of 30 minutes or longer between pageviews.

Signal blocking: Blocking a wireless signal by electronic (i.e., jamming) or physical (i.e., wallpaper with metallic ink) means.

SIM: Social influence marketing, that is, using social media in a marketing campaign.

Single: A visit to a Web site during which a user views only one Web page.

Skyscraper ad: A vertical display ad, usually appearing on one side of a Web page.

Sleeper effect: An observed psychological effect in which a message paired with a discrediting cue (e.g., the information comes from a disreputable source) becomes more, rather than less, persuasive in a person's memory over time.

SMS: Short messaging service, a method to send short text messages using a mobile phone, the Internet, and so forth.

Snoball.com: A Web site to encourage people to donate to charities; users choose from a number of charities (1.7 million as of November 2012) and make specific pledges based on their behavior (e.g., contributing a set amount to a charity each time they patronize a particular coffee shop) or external event (e.g., making a specific donation each time a particular sports team wins).

Social blogs: Blogs created to share personal information about the blogger.

Social conversation: A type of social marketing in which a brand engages in a direct conversation with customers or potential customers through social media such as Twitter or Facebook.

Social influencers: People who have an unusually strong influence on their peers, in matters ranging from consumer choices (e.g., what brand of clothing they favor or what television programs they watch) to casting a vote in an election.

Social network: A Web site that facilitates users connecting with each other and sharing information; Facebook is currently the largest social network in the world.

Social news service: Also called a social bookmarking service, a service that facilitates sharing of Web pages with friends.

Spam: E-mail that is neither requested nor desired by a user; much spam carries unsolicited advertising, hence the alternate name unwanted commercial e-mail (UCE).

Splog: A spam blog, that is, a blog created solely to make money from advertisers by garnering pageviews from users coming from search engines; the articles in splogs are often made up primarily of search terms in order to attract more clicks.

Spyware: Malware (malicious software) that captures information from a computer without the user's knowledge.

Super-user: A system administrator granted privileges to make changes in the systems beyond what ordinary users are allowed to do.

Tablet: A small mobile personal computer with a touch screen and a virtual keyboard.

Tag cloud: A graphical display of tags or important words in a document, with terms used more often presented in larger type.

Tags: Keywords assigned to documents or images on the Internet, so that the Web pages can be more easily found by search engines.

Technology steward: A person who understands the technology needs of a community and has sufficient expertise to address them. Often plays a gatekeeper role for technologically unsophisticated populations

Thread: On a message board, the sequence of messages in response to an initial post.

Tiananmen Square tank video: Video of the Tiananmen Square protests in Beijing, China, in 1989, including a man facing down Chinese tanks; the video was widely viewed internationally.

Trackback: A method of notifying an Internet author when someone links to a document created by him or her.

Troll: On the Internet, someone who disrupts an online community by posting off-topic or inflammatory messages.

True reach: One of the three components of a Klout score, true reach represents the number of people influenced by one person.

Tweeps: In the context of Twitter, people who follow someone else's tweets.

Tweet: Text messages sent on Twitter; they must be 140 characters or fewer.

TweetReach: A company specializing in analyzing the impact of Twitter campaigns.

Tweetup: An in-person meeting by people who usually communicate over Twitter.

Twitter: A social messaging tool that allows users to post brief text messages (140 characters or fewer) called tweets.

Unconnected: People who do not have ready access to high-speed Internet and/or mobile and social media resources, or who elect not to use those resources even if they are available.

Unique visitor: In Web analytics, a person who visits a Web site at least once in a given period of time; a unique visitor is counted only once, even if they visit the Web site multiple times during the given time period.

Unsubscribe/opt-out: Choosing to not be part of an e-mail list.

URL: Uniform resource locator, a character string identifying a Web site.

Viral: In the Internet context, to become extremely popular in a short period of time; a video or Web page that is viewed by many people (sometimes millions) in a short period of time is said to have "gone viral." Typically, content must migrate from its original distribution platform to other communication modalities in order to achieve viral status.

Virtual world: An online community formed around a computer-simulated environment, such as that typical of multiplayer fantasy games.

VOIP: Voice over internet protocol, a method of transmitting voice communications, faxes, etc., over the Internet rather than over phone lines.

VPN: Virtual private network, a private network transmitted over the Internet.

Warm traffic: In terms of marketing, people who know in general what they want, but do not know that your product will solve their problem.

Web analytics: The analysis of data collected from the Internet, often done to optimize a Web site.

Web spider: Also called a Web crawler, a search engine that locates information on the Internet in a systematic fashion by browsing the Web at regular intervals and indexing all the words in documents located.

Webcast: The broadcast of a live event over the Internet.

Widgets: Software applications designed to be portable so they can run on multiple software platforms.

Wiki: A Web site that allows multiple users to add, edit, and delete content, thus promoting cooperation in the creation of documents and other content.

Wonkette: An online satirical political magazine founded in 2004 by Gawker Media.

XML: Extensible markup language, a document description language for the Internet that was standardized in 1998.

YouTube: A video-sharing site created in 2005, and currently owned by Google.

Sarah Boslaugh
Kennesaw State University

Resource Guide

Books

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Convergence: The International Journal of Research Into New Media Technologies

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Government Information Quarterly
Interface
International Journal of Inclusive Democracy
International Journal of Internet Science
International Journal of the Humanities
International Journal of the Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
International Journal of Virtual Communities and Social Networking
Interdisciplinary Political Studies
Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media
Journal of Communication
Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication
Journal of Media Research
Journal of New Communications Research
Journal of Politics
Mass Communication and Society
MIS Quarterly
National Civic Review
New Media & Society
Perspectives on Politics
Policy Studies Journal
PS: Political Science and Politics
Social Networks: An International Journal of Structural Analysis
TIS: The Information Society
Wired

Web Sites

Al Jazeera (English)
http://www.aljazeera.com
Annenberg Public Policy Center: Political Communication
http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/political-communication
Berkman Center for Internet and Society
http://cyber.law.harvard.edu
Born This Way Foundation
http://bornthiswayfoundation.org
Brave New Films
http://www.bravenewfilms.org
Center for Innovative Media
http://smpa.gwu.edu/center-innovative-media-0
Center for International Media Assistance
http://cima.ned.org
Center for Responsive Politics
http://www.opensecrets.org
Change.org
http://www.change.org
Chartered Institute of Public Relations: Social Media Guidelines
http://www.cipr.co.uk/content/social-media-guidance
Clay Shirky
http://www.shirky.com
Color of Change
http://www.colorofchange.org
Contacting the Congress
http://www.contactingthecongress.org
Contract From America
http://contractfromamerica.org
Daily Kos
http://www.dailykos.com
Delicious
http://delicious.com
Democracy for America
http://democracyforamerica.com
Democracy Now!
http://www.democracynow.org
Digg
http://www.digg.com
Electronic Frontier Foundation
https://www.eff.org
Electronic Privacy Information Center
http://epic.org
E-Voter Institute
http://www.evoterinstitute.com
Facebook
https://www.facebook.com
FactCheck.org
http://www.factcheck.org
Foursquare
https://foursquare.com
Google Plus+
https://plus.google.com
HeadCount
http://www.headcount.org
Hootsuite
http://hootsuite.com
i-Docs
http://i-docs.org
Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication
http://www.gwu.edu/~ipdgc

Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy: Research and Publications
http://shorensteincenter.org/research-publications
LinkedIn
https://LinkedIn.com
LiveJournal
http://www.livejournal.com
Mashable
http://mashable.com
Meetup
http://www.meetup.com
MIT Center for Civic Media
http://civic.mit.edu
MIT Media Lab
http://www.media.mit.edu
MoveOn.org
http://front.moveon.org
Myspace
http://www.myspace.com
Ning
http://www.ning.com
OhMyGov Inc.
http://ohmygov.com
OpenCongress
http://www.opencongress.org
OpenGovernment
http://opengovernment.org
Partnership for Public Service
http://ourpublicservice.org
Pew Internet and American Life Project
http://www.pewinternet.org
Politico
http://www.politico.com
PolitiFact.com (*Tampa Bay Times*)
http://www.politifact.com
Powerline
http://www.powerlineblog.com
ProBlogger
http://www.problogger.net
Raw Story
http://rawstory.com
Robin Hood Foundation
http://www.robinhood.org
Social Media Collective (Microsoft)
http://research.microsoft.com/en-us/projects/socialmedia
Social Media Research Foundation
http://www.smrfoundation.org
SurveyMonkey
http://www.surveymonkey.com
Truthy (Information Diffusion)
http://truthy.indiana.edu
Twitter
https://twitter.com
YouTube
http://www.youtube.com

Political Office Web Sites

U.S. House of Representatives
http://www.house.gov
(Contact Information for Individual Representatives)
http://www.house.gov/representatives
U.S. President
http://www.whitehouse.gov
U.S. Senate
http://www.senate.gov
(Contact Information for Individual Senators)
http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

Sarah Boslaugh
Kennesaw State University

Appendix

Congressional Social Media Use

Compiled by J. Thomas Walzer

There is no doubt that social media has generated a new era in political communication, especially among representative lawmakers and their constituents. But how far the social media phenomenon has developed can only be seen on a case-by-case basis as presented in the following statistics. Seeing the kind of editorial research done at SAGE's sister publication, *CQ Researcher* (www.cqresearcher.com), this encyclopedia's editors undertook the challenge of determining exactly what U.S. Congresspersons were up to on the social media front. Using *CQ Researcher* as a starting point to contact office managers, administrative heads, or communication managers for each Congressperson, we created the following appendix detailing individual representatives' number of Facebook "likes," average Facebook post frequency, number of tweets, number of Twitter followers, YouTube usage, and number of videos posted, among other social media uses. The appendix was researched in October 2013, at the latest possible date prior to the encyclopedia's to-press deadline in early November.

The results of the research clearly indicate Senator John McCain (R-Arizona) is among the leaders of the pack with 862,382 Facebook "likes," 1,817,626 Twitter followers, and 603 videos posted on YouTube. Yet McCain does not have an RSS feed. Closer to the lower end of the spectrum in the U.S. House of Representative, there is Representative C. W. Bill Young (R-Florida) with 33 Facebook "likes" and no Twitter account. We included the birth date and age of the Congressperson to see if there was any correlation between social media activity and age. We leave that to the reader to deduce.

—The Editors

Sources: CQ Researcher; U.S. Senate at http://www.senate.gov; U.S. House of Representatives at http://www.house.gov; Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Richard Shelby	Alabama	Senate	R	1986/27	05/06/34 79	Yes
Jeff Sessions	Alabama	Senate	R	1997/16	12/24/46 67	Yes
Vacant: District 1	Alabama	House				
Martha Roby	Alabama	House	R	2011/2	07/26/76 37	Yes
Mike D. Rogers	Alabama	House	R	2003/10	07/16/58 55	No
Robert Aderholt	Alabama	House	R	1997/16	07/22/65 48	Yes
Mo Brooks	Alabama	House	R	2011/2	04/29/54 59	Yes
Spencer Bachus	Alabama	House	R	1993/20	12/28/47 66	Yes
Terri Sewell	Alabama	House	D	2011/2	01/01/65 48	Yes
Lisa Murkowski	Alaska	Senate	R	2002/11	05/22/57 56	Yes
Mark Begich	Alaska	Senate	D	2009/4	03/30/62 51	Yes
Don Young	Alaska	House	R	1973/40	06/09/33 80	Yes
John McCain	Arizona	Senate	R	1987/26	08/29/36 77	Yes
Jeff Flake	Arizona	Senate	R	2013/1	12/31/62 51	Yes
Ann Kirkpatrick	Arizona	House	D	2013/1	03/24/50 63	Yes
Ron Barber	Arizona	House	D	2013/1	08/25/45 68	Yes
Raúl M. Grijalva	Arizona	House	D	2003/10	02/19/48 65	Yes
Paul Gosar	Arizona	House	R	2011/2	11/27/58 55	Yes
Matt Salmon	Arizona	House	R	2013/1	01/21/58 55	Yes
David Schweikert	Arizona	House	R	2011/1	03/03/62 51	Yes
Ed Pastor	Arizona	House	D	1991/22	06/28/43 70	Yes
Trent Franks	Arizona	House	R	2003/10	06/19/57 56	Yes
Kyrsten Sinema	Arizona	House	D	2013/1	07/12/76 37	Yes
Mark Pryor	Arkansas	Senate	D	2003/9	01/10/63 50	Yes
John Boozman	Arkansas	Senate	R	2011/2	12/10/50 63	Yes
Rick Crawford	Arkansas	House	R	2011/2	01/22/66 47	Yes
Tim Griffin	Arkansas	House	R	2011/2	08/21/68 45	Yes
Steve Womack	Arkansas	House	R	2011/2	02/18/57 56	Yes
Tom Cotton	Arkansas	House	R	2013/1	5/13/77 36	Yes
Dianne Feinstein	California	Senate	D	1992/21	06/22/33 80	Yes
Barbara Boxer	California	Senate	D	1993/20	11/11/40 72	Yes
Doug LaMalfa	California	House	R	2013/1	07/02/60 53	Yes
Jarod Huffman	California	House	D	2013/1	02/18/64 49	Yes
John Garamendi	California	House	D	2009/4	01/25/45 68	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
8,049	days/weekly	Yes	146	11,275	Yes	Yes	125
14,272	days/weekly	Yes	1,426	23,237	Yes	Yes	365
6,000	almost daily	Yes	2,953	8,211	Yes	Yes	127
n/a	n/a	Yes	1,487	8,677	No	Yes	39
4,119	weekly/biweekly	Yes	768	6,060	Yes	Yes	112
23,635	days/weekly	Yes	189	1,440	Yes	Yes	66
2,463	days/weekly	Yes	405	6,814	Yes	Yes	207
2,165	weekly	Yes	721	4,658	No	Yes	63
10,319	days/weekly	Yes	1,850	19,605	Yes	Yes	525
8,338	days/weekly	Yes	2,491	13,884	Yes	Yes	315
2,641	weekly	Yes	643	6,349	Yes	Yes	168
862,382	weekly/biweekly	Yes	5,454	1,817,626	No	Yes	603
3,794	weekly/biweekly	Yes	570	20,234	Yes	Yes	89
1,746	almost daily	Yes	403	1,825	Yes	Yes	31
5,275	almost daily	Yes	704	1,864	No	Yes	41
7,981	almost daily	Yes	1,251	10,100	Yes	Yes	213
2,009	days/weekly	Yes	3,349	8,258	Yes	Yes	194
4,456	days/weekly	Yes	492	2,053	Yes	Yes	28
2,726	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,027	7,890	Yes	Yes	127
1,835	biweekly/monthly	Yes	108	701	Yes	Yes	15
4,277	weekly	Yes	861	10,756	Yes	Yes	103
5,992	almost daily	Yes	1,238	3,745	No	Yes	36
5,250	days/weekly	Yes	1,106	7,812	Yes	Yes	81
5,946	days/weekly	Yes	1,052	15,561	Yes	Yes	165
1,856	days/weekly	Yes	893	5,468	Yes	Yes	101
7,931	almost daily	Yes	5,427	9,207	Yes	Yes	495
3,073	days/weekly	Yes	1,621	5,863	Yes	Yes	113
4,048	days/weekly	Yes	570	2,801	Yes	Yes	55
6,747	weekly/biweekly	Yes	759	22,496	Yes	Yes	95
5,000	biweekly/monthly	Yes	1,083	32,810	No	Yes	105
26,805	weekly	Yes	150	756	Yes	Yes	17
1,044	biweekly/monthly	Yes	338	1,478	Yes	Yes	13
2,304	weekly	Yes	6,175	8,017	Yes	Yes	239

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Tom McClintock	California	House	R	2009/4	07/10/56 57	Yes
Mike Thompson	California	House	D	1999/14	01/24/51 62	Yes
Doris Matsui	California	House	D	2005/8	09/25/44 69	Yes
Ami Bera	California	House	D	2013/1	03/02/65 48	Yes
Paul Cook	California	House	R	2013/1	03/03/43 70	Yes
Jerry McNerney	California	House	D	2007/6	06/18/51 62	Yes
Jeff Denham	California	House	R	2011/2	07/29/67 46	Yes
George Miller	California	House	D	1975/38	05/17/45 68	Yes
Nancy Pelosi	California	House	D	1987/26	03/26/40 73	Yes
Barbara Lee	California	House	D	1998/15	07/14/46 67	Yes
Jackie Speier	California	House	D	2008/5	05/14/50 63	Yes
Eric Swalwell	California	House	D	2013/1	11/16/80 33	Yes
Jim Costa	California	House	D	2005/8	04/13/52 61	Yes
Mike Honda	California	House	D	2001/12	06/27/41 72	Yes
Anna G. Eshoo	California	House	D	1993/20	12/13/42 71	Yes
Zoe Lofgren	California	House	D	1995/18	12/21/47 66	Yes
Sam Farr	California	House	D	1993/20	07/04/41 72	Yes
David Valadao	California	House	R	2013/1	05/14/77 36	Yes
Devin Nunes	California	House	R	2003/10	10/01/73 40	Yes
Kevin McCarthy	California	House	R	2007/6	01/26/65 48	Yes
Lois Capps	California	House	D	1998/15	01/10/38 75	Yes
Buck McKeon	California	House	R	1993/20	09/09/39 74	Yes
Julia Brownley	California	House	D	2013/1	08/28/52 61	Yes
Judy Chu	California	House	D	2009/4	07/07/53 60	Yes
Adam Schiff	California	House	D	2001/12	06/22/60 53	Yes
Tony Cárdenas	California	House	D	2013/1	03/31/63 50	Yes
Brad Sherman	California	House	D	1997/16	10/24/54 59	Yes
Gary Miller	California	House	R	1999/14	10/16/48 65	Yes
Grace F. Napolitano	California	House	D	1999/14	12/04/36 77	Yes
Henry A. Waxman	California	House	D	1975/38	09/12/39 74	Yes
Xavier Becerra	California	House	D	1993/20	01/26/58 55	Yes
Gloria Negrete McLeod	California	House	D	2013/1	09/06/41 72	Yes
Raul Ruiz	California	House	D	2013/1	08/25/72 41	Yes
Karen Bass	California	House	D	2011/3	10/03/53 60	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
6,298	biweekly/monthly	Yes	165	6,736	Yes	Yes	192
3,394	days/weekly	Yes	293	1,785	Yes	Yes	49
5,631	days/weekly	Yes	753	6,485	Yes	Yes	89
1,349	days/weekly	Yes	429	2,101	Yes	Yes	35
1,812	days/weekly	Yes	150	782	Yes	Yes	3
553	weekly/biweekly	Yes	398	2,365	No	Yes	42
1,919	days/weekly	Yes	1,189	4,900	Yes	Yes	186
6,506	days/weekly	Yes	1,877	10,017	Yes	Yes	70
89,968	weekly	Yes	1,550	374,236	Yes	Yes	839
13,172	days/weekly	Yes	1,378	11,831	Yes	Yes	483
10,856	days/weekly	Yes	1,327	10,098	No	Yes	345
3,157	days/weekly	Yes	1,035	2,641	No	Yes	57
433	weekly/biweekly	Yes	436	1,291	No	Yes	93
7,247	weekly	Yes	852	11,183	Yes	Yes	81
5,037	weekly	Yes	606	5,652	Yes	Yes	61
2,484	weekly	Yes	533	3,601	Yes	Yes	63
3,801	weekly/biweekly	Yes	485	5,280	No	Yes	96
1,038	weekly	Yes	162	819	Yes	Yes	11
2,609	biweekly/monthly	Yes	2	187	Yes	Yes	150
32,155	weekly	Yes	4,264	40,088	Yes	Yes	303
3,952	days/weekly	Yes	1,161	4,860	Yes	Yes	160
4,586	weekly	Yes	1,318	11,223	Yes	Yes	161
260	days/weekly	Yes	116	326	No	Yes	12
6,037	weekly	Yes	994	6,822	Yes	Yes	94
11,514	weekly	Yes	944	6,648	Yes	Yes	252
3,288	almost daily	Yes	782	1,151	Yes	Yes	14
3,298	biweekly/monthly	Yes	370	5,104	Yes	Yes	147
984	biweekly/monthly	Yes	249	3,613	Yes	Yes	22
2,285	biweekly/monthly	Yes	707	5,244	Yes	Yes	27
1,963	days/weekly	Yes	457	2,583	Yes	Yes	30
6,217	days/weekly	Yes	1,046	12,584	Yes	Yes	117
1,563	days/weekly	Yes	155	1,256	Yes	Yes	14
3,694	days/weekly	Yes	112	1,196	Yes	Yes	2
8,236	days/weekly	Yes	1,334	18,304	Yes	Yes	215

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Linda Sánchez	California	House	D	2003/10	01/28/69 44	Yes
Ed Royce	California	House	R	1993/20	10/12/51 62	Yes
Lucille Roybal/Allard	California	House	D	1993/20	06/12/41 72	Yes
Mark Takano	California	House	D	2013/1	12/10/60 52	Yes
Ken Calvert	California	House	R	1993/20	6/8/1953 60	Yes
Maxine Waters	California	House	D	1991/22	08/15/38 75	Yes
Janice Hahn	California	House	D	2011/2	05/30/52 61	Yes
John Campbell	California	House	R	2005/8	07/19/55 58	Yes
Loretta Sanchez	California	House	D	1997/16	01/07/60 53	Yes
Alan Lowenthal	California	House	D	2013/1	03/08/41 72	Yes
Dana Rohrabacher	California	House	R	1989/24	06/21/47 66	Yes
Darrell Issa	California	House	R	2001/12	11/01/53 60	Yes
Duncan Hunter	California	House	R	2013/1	12/07/76 37	Yes
Juan Vargus	California	House	D	2013/1	03/07/61 52	Yes
Scott Peters	California	House	D	2013/1	06/17/58 55	Yes
Susan Davis	California	House	D	2001/12	04/13/44 69	Yes
Mark Udall	Colorado	Senate	D	2009/4	07/18/50 63	Yes
Michael F. Bennet	Colorado	Senate	D	2009/4	11/28/64 49	Yes
Diana DeGette	Colorado	House	D	1997/16	07/29/57 56	Yes
Jared Polis	Colorado	House	D	2009/4	05/12/75 38	Yes
Scott Tipton	Colorado	House	R	2011/2	11/17/50 63	Yes
Cory Gardner	Colorado	House	R	2011/2	08/22/64 49	Yes
Doug Lamborn	Colorado	House	R	2007/6	05/24/54 59	Yes
Mike Coffman	Colorado	House	R	2009/4	02/27/55 58	Yes
Ed Perlmutter	Colorado	House	D	2007/6	05/01/53 60	Yes
Christopher Murphy	Connecticut	Senate	D	2012/2	08/03/73 40	Yes
Richard Blumenthal	Connecticut	Senate	D	2011/2	02/13/46 67	Yes
John Larson	Connecticut	House	D	1999/14	07/22/48 65	Yes
Joe Courtney	Connecticut	House	D	2007/6	04/06/53 60	Yes
Rosa DeLauro	Connecticut	House	D	1991/22	03/02/43 70	Yes
Jim Himes	Connecticut	House	D	2009/4	07/05/66 47	Yes
Elizabeth Esty	Connecticut	House	D	2013/1	08/25/59 54	Yes
Tom Carper	Delaware	Senate	D	2001/12	01/23/47 66	Yes
Christopher Coons	Delaware	Senate	D	2010/3	09/09/63 50	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
1,788	days/weekly	Yes	1,100	4,329	Yes	Yes	97
3,599	weekly/biweekly	Yes	885	5,185	Yes	Yes	272
1,981	days/weekly	Yes	350	1,793	Yes	Yes	32
11,896	days/weekly	Yes	325	4,237	Yes	Yes	36
1,741	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,580	3,517	No	Yes	47
16,818	weekly/biweekly	Yes	928	19,384	Yes	Yes	176
2,504	days/weekly	Yes	934	3,889	Yes	Yes	85
3,064	days/weekly	Yes	464	4,722	Yes	Yes	223
7,396	days/weekly	Yes	1,499	12,928	Yes	Yes	64
1,400	almost daily	Yes	442	1,914	Yes	Yes	14
7,216	monthly or less	Yes	6,158	13,296	No	Yes	30
54,313	almost daily	Yes	15,681	120,250	Yes	Yes	409
5,749	biweekly/monthly	Yes	117	957	Yes	Yes	48
394	biweekly/monthly	Yes	119	853	Yes	Yes	5
866	almost daily	Yes	1,009	1,542	Yes	Yes	69
3,028	almost daily	Yes	271	937	No	No YT channel	n/a
12,949	days/weekly	Yes	2,866	25,255	Yes	Yes	271
7,550	weekly	Yes	722	13,868	Yes	Yes	193
6,146	weekly/biweekly	Yes	848	8,975	Yes	Yes	152
30,723	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,750	25,042	Yes	Yes	301
1,803	days/weekly	Yes	631	4,920	Yes	Yes	167
4,174	almost daily	Yes	1,037	4,317	No	Yes	29
2,550	days/weekly	Yes	555	1,921	Yes	Yes	148
6,877	days/weekly	Yes	1,410	10,976	Yes	Yes	164
4,240	days/weekly	Yes	690	7,947	Yes	Yes	131
14,105	almost daily	Yes	3,010	15,329	No	Yes	153
2,873	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,549	13,571	Yes	Yes	112
3,108	weekly/biweekly	Yes	998	7,113	Yes	Yes	67
2,983	almost daily	Yes	2,692	6,992	Yes	Yes	412
1,082	days/weekly	Yes	2,045	9,520	Yes	Yes	97
3,490	days/weekly	Yes	3,511	10,922	Yes	Yes	222
1,039	days/weekly	Yes	338	2,266	Yes	Yes	30
3,437	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,116	9,220	Yes	Yes	139
1,915	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,518	2,151	Yes	Yes	272

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
John Carney	Delaware	House	D	2011/2	05/20/56 57	Yes
Bill Nelson	Florida	Senate	D	2001/12	09/29/42 71	Yes
Marco Rubio	Florida	Senate	R	2011/2	05/28/71 42	Yes
Jeff Miller	Florida	House	R	2001/12	06/27/59 54	Yes
Steve Southerland	Florida	House	R	2011/2	10/10/65 48	Yes
Ted Yoho	Florida	House	R	2013/1	04/13/55 58	Yes
Ander Crenshaw	Florida	House	R	2001/12	09/01/44 69	Yes
Corrine Brown	Florida	House	D	1993/20	11/11/46 67	Yes
Ron DeSantis	Florida	House	R	2013/1	09/14/78 35	Yes
John Mica	Florida	House	R	1993/20	01/27/43 70	Yes
Bill Posey	Florida	House	R	2009/4	12/18/47 66	Yes
Alan Grayson	Florida	House	D	2013/1	03/13/58 55	Yes
Daniel Webster	Florida	House	R	2011/2	04/27/49 64	Yes
Richard Nugent	Florida	House	R	2011/2	05/26/51 62	Yes
Gus Bilirakis	Florida	House	R	2007/6	02/08/63 50	Yes
C. W. Bill Young	Florida	House	R	1971/42	12/16/30 83	Yes
Kathy Castor	Florida	House	D	2007/6	08/20/66 47	Yes
Dennis Ross	Florida	House	R	2011/2	10/18/59 54	Yes
Vern Buchanan	Florida	House	R	2007/6	05/08/51 62	Yes
Thomas J. Rooney	Florida	House	R	2009/4	11/21/70 43	Yes
Patrick Murphy	Florida	House	D	2013/1	03/30/83 30	Yes
Trey Radel	Florida	House	R	2013/1	04/20/76 37	Yes
Alcee L. Hastings	Florida	House	D	1993/20	09/05/36 77	Yes
Ted Deutch	Florida	House	D	2010/3	05/07/66 47	Yes
Lois Frankel	Florida	House	D	2013/1	05/17/48 65	Yes
Debbie Wasserman Schultz	Florida	House	D	2005/8	09/27/66 47	Yes
Frederica Wilson	Florida	House	D	2011/2	11/05/42 71	Yes
Mario Diaz/Balart	Florida	House	R	2003/10	09/25/61 52	Yes
Joe Garcia	Florida	House	D	2013/1	10/12/63 50	Yes
Ileana Ros/Lehtinen	Florida	House	R	1989/24	07/15/52 61	Yes
Saxby Chambliss	Georgia	Senate	R	2003/10	11/10/43 70	Yes
Johnny Isakson	Georgia	Senate	R	2005/8	12/27/44 69	Yes
Jack Kingston	Georgia	House	R	1993/20	04/24/55 58	Yes
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.	Georgia	House	D	1993/20	02/04/47 66	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
4,598	almost daily	Yes	1,096	5,093	Yes	Yes	40
17,823	biweekly/monthly	Yes	418	32,658	No	Yes	137
64,088	days/weekly	Yes	1,251	13,904	Yes	Yes	574
7,032	days/weekly	Yes	46	275	Yes	Yes	141
3,437	almost daily	Yes	516	6,164	No	Yes	59
2,340	days/weekly	Yes	177	1,810	Yes	Yes	17
4,876	weekly	Yes	533	6,770	No	Yes	65
2,179	weekly/biweekly	Yes	735	4,535	Yes	Yes	63
6,598	almost daily	Yes	798	3,229	Yes	Yes	55
1,231	weekly/biweekly	Yes	121	488	Yes	Yes	118
1,787	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,043	7,004	Yes	Yes	111
66,316	days/weekly	Yes	851	48,573	No	Yes	240
2,070	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,212	3,685	Yes	Yes	56
1,576	weekly/biweekly	Yes	64	2,434	Yes	Yes	49
6,799	weekly	Yes	2,342	9,125	Yes	Yes	213
33	no posts	No	n/a	n/a	Yes	Yes	16
2,473	weekly/biweekly	Yes	13	72	Yes	Yes	96
6,361	almost daily	Yes	10,441	6,832	Yes	Yes	109
20,774	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,494	13,776	Yes	Yes	264
7,078	days/weekly	Yes	2,133	11,674	Yes	Yes	133
3,591	days/weekly	Yes	407	1,435	No	Yes	17
7,376	days/weekly	Yes	3,126	7,633	Yes	Yes	47
2,102	days/weekly	No	n/a	n/a	Yes	Yes	149
6,901	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,110	7,153	Yes	Yes	109
3,848	weekly	Yes	359	1,746	Yes	Yes	32
35,625	weekly/biweekly	Yes	299	3,016	Yes	Yes	234
6,138	days/weekly	Yes	1,238	5,711	Yes	Yes	44
8,648	days/weekly	Yes	1,387	6,260	No	Yes	284
212	days/weekly	Yes	55	64	Yes	Yes	22
4,929	days/weekly	Yes	10,193	21,801	Yes	Yes	922
3,595	weekly	Yes	585	8,753	No	Yes	319
22,468	weekly/biweekly	Yes	187	13,064	No	Yes	219
10,372	days/weekly	Yes	1,158	9,466	Yes	Yes	222
2,102	weekly	Yes	619	5,143	Yes	Yes	31

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Lynn Westmoreland	Georgia	House	R	2005/8	04/02/50 63	Yes
Hank (Henry) Johnson	Georgia	House	D	2007/6	10/02/54 59	Yes
John Lewis	Georgia	House	D	1987/26	02/21/40 73	Yes
Tom Price	Georgia	House	R	2005/8	10/08/54 59	Yes
Rob Woodall	Georgia	House	R	2011/2	02/11/70 43	Yes
Austin Scott	Georgia	House	R	2011/2	12/10/69 44	Yes
Doug Collins	Georgia	House	R	2013/1	08/16/66 47	Yes
Paul C. Broun	Georgia	House	R	2007/6	05/14/46 67	Yes
Phil Gingrey	Georgia	House	R	2003/10	07/10/42 71	Yes
John Barrow	Georgia	House	D	2005/8	10/31/55 58	Yes
David Scott	Georgia	House	D	2003/10	06/27/46 67	Yes
Tom Graves	Georgia	House	R	2010/3	02/03/70 43	Yes
Mazie K. Hirono	Hawaii	Senate	D	2013/1	11/03/47 66	Yes
Brian Schatz	Hawaii	Senate	D	2013/1	10/20/72 41	Yes
Colleen Hanabusa	Hawaii	House	D	2011/2	05/04/51 62	Yes
Tulsi Gabbard	Hawaii	House	D	2013/1	04/12/81 32	Yes
Mike Crapo	Idaho	Senate	R	1999/14	05/20/51 62	Yes
James E. Risch	Idaho	Senate	R	2009/4	05/03/43 70	Yes
Rául Labrador	Idaho	House	R	2011/2	12/08/67 46	Yes
Mike Simpson	Idaho	House	R	1999/14	09/08/50 63	Yes
Richard J. Durbin	Illinois	Senate	D	1997/16	11/21/44 69	Yes
Mark Kirk	Illinois	Senate	R	2010/3	09/15/59 54	Yes
Bobby L. Rush	Illinois	House	D	1993/20	11/23/46 67	Yes
Robin Kelly	Illinois	House	D	2013/1	04/30/56 57	Yes
Daniel Lipinski	Illinois	House	D	2005/8	07/15/66 47	Yes
Luis V. Gutierrez	Illinois	House	D	1993/20	12/10/53 60	Yes
Mike Quigley	Illinois	House	D	2009/4	10/17/58 55	Yes
Peter Roskam	Illinois	House	R	2007/6	09/13/61 52	Yes
Danny K. Davis	Illinois	House	D	1997/16	09/06/41 72	Yes
Tammy Duckworth	Illinois	House	D	2013/1	03/12/68 45	Yes
Jan Schakowsky	Illinois	House	D	1999/14	05/26/44 69	Yes
Brad Schneider	Illinois	House	D	2013/1	08/20/61 52	Yes
Bill Foster	Illinois	House	D	2013/1	10/07/55 58	Yes
William Enyart	Illinois	House	D	2013/1	09/22/49 64	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
3,950	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,534	5,654	Yes	Yes	82
2,945	weekly	Yes	778	4,750	Yes	Yes	87
11,175	biweekly/monthly	Yes	880	29,906	Yes	Yes	45
8,805	weekly/biweekly	Yes	3,689	21,316	Yes	Yes	315
2,162	weekly	Yes	1	523	Yes	Yes	80
20,049	days/weekly	Yes	946	5,667	No	Yes	96
7,828	almost daily	Yes	733	1,630	Yes	Yes	58
8,213	weekly	Yes	1,018	11,956	Yes	Yes	131
6,340	weekly	Yes	1,617	12,407	Yes	Yes	307
6,428	weekly	Yes	621	6,516	Yes	Yes	92
884	weekly/biweekly	Yes	719	4,953	Yes	Yes	26
8,758	days/weekly	Yes	1,930	8,211	Yes	Yes	117
16,841	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,906	9,421	Yes	Yes	129
6,403	weekly/biweekly	Yes	129	1,691	No	Yes	15
1,431	weekly/biweekly	Yes	810	4,682	Yes	Yes	281
2,675	days/weekly	Yes	335	2,413	Yes	Yes	197
4,659	days/weekly	Yes	2,626	6,352	No	Yes	289
0	no posts	Yes	104	4,122	No	Yes	16
3,146	days/weekly	Yes	670	6,282	Yes	Yes	76
1,291	biweekly/monthly	Yes	140	2,426	Yes	Yes	51
8,552	biweekly/monthly	Yes	1,996	34,396	Yes	Yes	515
10,023	days/weekly	Yes	2,388	22,554	No	Yes	187
9,081	weekly/biweekly	Yes	431	3,216	Yes	Yes	82
886	days/weekly	Yes	201	406	Yes	Yes	14
1,596	weekly	Yes	275	951	Yes	Yes	33
40,066	days/weekly	Yes	2,058	26,680	Yes	Yes	251
4,523	days/weekly	Yes	3,210	8,392	Yes	Yes	180
5,653	days/weekly	Yes	2,831	12,504	No	Yes	403
1,132	weekly/biweekly	Yes	78	215	Yes	Yes	160
5,874	days/weekly	Yes	519	4,712	Yes	Yes	30
4,828	biweekly/monthly	Yes	1,343	12,193	Yes	Yes	169
899	weekly/biweekly	Yes	405	1,668	Yes	Yes	15
1,617	weekly/biweekly	Yes	458	1,669	Yes	Yes	16
642	weekly	Yes	53	1,010	Yes	Yes	12

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Rodney Davis	Illinois	House	R	2013/1	01/05/70 43	Yes
Randy Hultgren	Illinois	House	R	2011/2	03/01/66 47	Yes
John Shimkus	Illinois	House	R	1997/16	02/21/58 55	Yes
Adam Kinzinger	Illinois	House	R	2011/2	02/27/78 35	Yes
Cheri Bustos	Illinois	House	D	2013/1	10/17/61 52	Yes
Aaron Schock	Illinois	House	R	2009/4	05/28/81 32	Yes
Joe Donnelly	Indiana	Senate	D	2013/1	09/29/55 58	Yes
Dan Coats	Indiana	Senate	R	2011/2	05/16/43 70	Yes
Pete Visclosky	Indiana	House	D	1985/28	08/13/49 64	Yes
Jackie Walorski	Indiana	House	R	2005/8	08/13/63 50	Yes
Marlin Stutzman	Indiana	House	R	2010/3	08/31/76 37	Yes
Todd Rokita	Indiana	House	R	2011/2	02/09/70 43	Yes
Susan W. Brooks	Indiana	House	R	2013/1	08/25/60 53	Yes
Luke Messer	Indiana	House	R	2013/1	02/27/69 44	Yes
André Carson	Indiana	House	D	2008/5	10/16/74 39	Yes
Larry Bucshon	Indiana	House	R	2011/2	05/31/62 51	Yes
Todd Young	Indiana	House	R	2011/2	08/24/72 41	Yes
Chuck Grassley	Iowa	Senate	R	1981/32	09/17/33 80	Yes
Tom Harkin	Iowa	Senate	D	1985/28	11/19/39 74	Yes
Bruce Braley	Iowa	House	D	2007/6	10/30/57 56	Yes
Dave Loebsack	Iowa	House	D	2007/6	12/23/52 61	Yes
Tom Latham	Iowa	House	R	1995/18	07/14/48 65	Yes
Steve King	Iowa	House	R	2003/10	05/28/49 64	Yes
Pat Roberts	Kansas	Senate	R	1997/16	04/20/36 77	Yes
Jerry Moran	Kansas	Senate	R	2011/2	05/29/54 59	Yes
Tim Huelskamp	Kansas	House	R	2011/2	11/11/68 45	Yes
Lynn Jenkins	Kansas	House	R	2009/4	06/10/63 50	Yes
Kevin Yoder	Kansas	House	R	2011/2	01/08/76 37	Yes
Mike Pompeo	Kansas	House	R	2011/2	12/30/63 50	Yes
Mitch McConnell	Kentucky	Senate	R	1985/28	02/20/42 71	Yes
Rand Paul	Kentucky	Senate	R	2011/2	01/07/63 50	Yes
Ed Whitfield	Kentucky	House	R	1995/18	05/25/43 70	Yes
Brett Guthrie	Kentucky	House	R	2009/4	02/18/64 49	Yes
John Yarmuth	Kentucky	House	D	2007/6	11/04/47 66	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
2,964	days/weekly	Yes	881	2,287	Yes	Yes	28
3,520	days/weekly	Yes	1,282	5,668	Yes	Yes	120
6,977	weekly/biweekly	Yes	5,963	10,487	Yes	Yes	197
4,524	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,106	8,593	Yes	Yes	132
2,724	days/weekly	Yes	310	3,352	Yes	Yes	23
27,627	weekly/biweekly	Yes	67	3,714	Yes	Yes	190
8,870	weekly/biweekly	Yes	961	9,135	Yes	Yes	13
5,400	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,462	13,522	Yes	Yes	228
1,885	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,077	3,268	Yes	Yes	42
3,410	days/weekly	Yes	868	1,881	Yes	Yes	36
3,427	weekly/biweekly	Yes	807	4,025	Yes	Yes	79
5,873	days/weekly	Yes	3,214	8,258	Yes	Yes	178
7,316	weekly/biweekly	Yes	332	1,926	Yes	Yes	16
8,280	days/weekly	Yes	453	2,117	Yes	Yes	43
3,502	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,347	7,281	Yes	Yes	30
7,542	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,164	5,672	Yes	Yes	82
14,723	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,568	5,747	Yes	Yes	87
14,787	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,809	72,652	Yes	Yes	484
6,721	biweekly/monthly	Yes	1,906	16,645	No	Yes	164
3,951	weekly/biweekly	Yes	4,510	15,426	Yes	Yes	156
3,138	biweekly/monthly	Yes	154	1,368	Yes	Yes	56
5,596	weekly/biweekly	Yes	957	9,329	Yes	Yes	64
13,733	weekly/biweekly	Yes	732	18,960	No	Yes	582
5,456	weekly/biweekly	Yes	691	10,786	Yes	Yes	176
8,543	days/weekly	Yes	1,816	13,455	Yes	Yes	245
4,656	days/weekly	Yes	3,048	8,340	Yes	Yes	251
7,126	almost daily	Yes	3,292	11,343	Yes	Yes	216
6,043	days/weekly	Yes	2,863	5,953	Yes	Yes	78
2,929	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,433	5,305	Yes	Yes	183
17,642	biweekly/monthly	Yes	3,197	25,215	Yes	Yes	535
267,000	days/weekly	Yes	1,415	297,642	Yes	Yes	119
2,059	biweekly/monthly	Yes	169	2,846	Yes	Yes	81
1,153	days/weekly	Yes	575	3,740	Yes	Yes	56
6,766	weekly/biweekly	Yes	891	5,824	No	Yes	196

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Thomas Massie	Kentucky	House	R	2013/1	01/13/71 42	Yes
Hal Rogers	Kentucky	House	R	1981/32	12/31/37 76	Yes
Andy Barr	Kentucky	House	R	2013/1	07/24/73 40	Yes
Mary Landrieu	Louisiana	Senate	D	1997/16	11/23/55 58	Yes
David Vitter	Louisiana	Senate	R	2005/8	05/03/61 52	Yes
Steve Scalise	Louisiana	House	R	2008/5	10/06/65 48	Yes
Cedric Richmond	Louisiana	House	D	2011/2	09/13/73 40	Yes
Charles W. Boustany Jr.	Louisiana	House	R	2013/1	02/21/56 57	Yes
John Fleming	Louisiana	House	R	2009/4	07/05/51 62	Yes
Rodney Alexander	Louisiana	House	R	2003/10	12/05/46 67	Yes
Bill Cassidy	Louisiana	House	R	2009/4	09/28/57 56	Yes
Angus King	Maine	Senate	I	2013/1	03/31/44 69	Yes
Susan Collins	Maine	Senate	R	1997/16	12/27/52 61	Yes
Chellie Pingree	Maine	House	D	2009/4	04/02/55 58	Yes
Mike Michaud	Maine	House	D	2003/10	01/18/55 58	Yes
Barbara Mikulski	Maryland	Senate	D	1987/26	07/20/36 77	Yes
Benjamin L. Cardin	Maryland	Senate	D	2007/6	10/05/43 70	Yes
Andy Harris	Maryland	House	R	2011/2	01/25/57 56	Yes
C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger	Maryland	House	D	2003/10	01/31/46 67	Yes
John Sarbanes	Maryland	House	D	2007/6	05/20/62 51	Yes
Donna F. Edwards	Maryland	House	D	2008/5	06/28/58 55	Yes
Steny Hoyer	Maryland	House	D	1981/32	06/14/39 74	Yes
John Delaney	Maryland	House	D	2013/1	04/16/63 50	Yes
Elijah E. Cummings	Maryland	House	D	1996/17	01/18/51 62	Yes
Chris Van Hollen	Maryland	House	D	2003/10	01/10/59 54	Yes
Edward J. Markey	Massachusetts	Senate	D	2013/1	07/11/46 67	Yes
Elizabeth Warren	Massachusetts	Senate	D	2013/1	06/22/49 64	Yes
Richard E. Neal	Massachusetts	House	D	1989/24	02/14/49 64	Yes
Jim McGovern	Massachusetts	House	D	1997/16	11/20/59 54	Yes
Niki Tsongas	Massachusetts	House	D	2007/6	04/26/46 67	Yes
Joseph Kennedy III	Massachusetts	House	D	2013/1	10/04/80 33	Yes
Vacant: 5th District	Massachusetts	House				
John F. Tierney	Massachusetts	House	D	1997/16	09/18/51 62	Yes
Michael E. Capuano	Massachusetts	House	D	1999/14	01/09/52 61	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
17,483	days/weekly	Yes	1,073	8,055	Yes	Yes	41
3,409	weekly/biweekly	Yes	761	2,517	Yes	Yes	103
7,443	days/weekly	Yes	743	2,821	Yes	Yes	37
7,651	weekly	Yes	1,303	11,676	Yes	Yes	368
55,219	days/weekly	Yes	3,457	23,998	No	Yes	444
5,923	days/weekly	Yes	343	1,697	Yes	Yes	190
2,720	days/weekly	Yes	999	5,210	Yes	Yes	47
5,366	weekly	Yes	187	3,788	Yes	Yes	34
31,690	almost daily	Yes	886	7,828	Yes	Yes	376
1,957	weekly/biweekly	Yes	110	1,286	Yes	Yes	22
15,041	days/weekly	Yes	1,518	5,916	Yes	Yes	182
4,639	days/weekly	Yes	516	4,612	Yes	Yes	90
8,640	biweekly/monthly	Yes	745	26,741	Yes	Yes	237
4,735	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,001	9,199	Yes	Yes	370
6,542	weekly/biweekly	Yes	414	7,117	Yes	Yes	45
8,133	biweekly/monthly	Yes	2,425	23,393	Yes	Yes	191
3,146	weekly	Yes	2,361	19,453	Yes	Yes	274
2,500	weekly/biweekly	Yes	570	2,093	Yes	Yes	85
2,738	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,157	3,443	Yes	Yes	119
4,720	weekly/biweekly	Yes	281	2,911	Yes	Yes	33
3,717	biweekly/monthly	Yes	2,229	12,909	Yes	Yes	89
14,677	almost daily	Yes	4,864	36,799	Yes	Yes	473
772	days/weekly	Yes	719	1,831	Yes	Yes	15
10,573	days/weekly	Yes	2,782	10,924	Yes	Yes	136
4,477	weekly/biweekly	Yes	682	14,952	Yes	Yes	307
3,901	days/weekly	Yes	2,653	17,723	No	Yes	468
100,977	biweekly/monthly	Yes	156	40,862	Yes	Yes	52
1,034	biweekly/monthly	Yes	348	2,170	Yes	Yes	35
4,299	weekly	Yes	1,750	8,866	Yes	Yes	133
3,493	days/weekly	Yes	1,866	5,630	Yes	Yes	132
7,055	days/weekly	Yes	562	6,731	Yes	Yes	8
2,662	days/weekly	Yes	639	3,774	Yes	Yes	137
2,783	weekly/biweekly	Yes	625	3,856	No	Yes	27

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Stephen Lynch	Massachusetts	House	D	2001/12	03/31/55 58	Yes
Bill Keating	Massachusetts	House	D	2011/2	09/06/52 61	Yes
Carl Levin	Michigan	Senate	D	1979/34	06/28/34 79	Yes
Debbie Stabenow	Michigan	Senate	D	2001/12	04/29/50 63	Yes
Dan Benishek	Michigan	House	R	2011/2	04/20/52 61	Yes
Bill Huizenga	Michigan	House	R	2011/2	01/31/69 44	Yes
Justin Amash	Michigan	House	R	2011/2	04/18/80 33	Yes
Dave Camp	Michigan	House	R	1991/22	07/09/53 60	Yes
Dan Kildee	Michigan	House	D	2013/1	08/11/58 55	Yes
Fred Upton	Michigan	House	R	1987/26	04/23/53 60	Yes
Tim Walberg	Michigan	House	R	2011/2	04/12/51 62	Yes
Mike J. Rogers	Michigan	House	R	2001/12	06/02/63 50	Yes
Sandy Levin	Michigan	House	D	1983/30	09/06/31 82	Yes
Candice Miller	Michigan	House	R	2003/10	05/07/54 59	Yes
Kerry Bentivolio	Michigan	House	R	2013/1	10/06/51 62	Yes
John Dingell	Michigan	House	D	1955/58	07/08/26 87	Yes
John Conyers Jr.	Michigan	House	D	1965/48	05/16/29 84	Yes
Gary Peters	Michigan	House	D	2009/4	12/01/58 55	Yes
Amy Klobuchar	Minnesota	Senate	D	2007/6	05/25/60 53	Yes
Al Franken	Minnesota	Senate	D	2009/4	05/21/52 61	Yes
Tim Walz	Minnesota	House	D	2007/6	04/06/64 49	Yes
John Kline	Minnesota	House	R	2003/10	09/06/47 66	Yes
Erik Paulsen	Minnesota	House	R	2009/4	05/14/65 48	Yes
Betty McCollum	Minnesota	House	D	2001/12	07/12/54 59	Yes
Keith Ellison	Minnesota	House	D	2007/6	08/04/63 50	Yes
Michele Bachmann	Minnesota	House	R	2007/6	04/06/56 57	Yes
Collin C. Peterson	Minnesota	House	D	1991/22	06/29/44 69	Yes
Rick Nolan	Minnesota	House	D	2013/1	12/17/43 70	Yes
Thad Cochran	Mississippi	Senate	R	1978/35	12/07/37 76	Yes
Roger Wicker	Mississippi	Senate	R	2007/6	07/05/51 62	Yes
Alan Nunnelee	Mississippi	House	R	2011/2	10/09/58 55	Yes
Bennie Thompson	Mississippi	House	D	1993/20	01/28/48 65	Yes
Gregg Harper	Mississippi	House	R	2009/4	06/01/56 57	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
1,802	weekly/biweekly	Yes	367	2,882	Yes	Yes	17
1,197	weekly/biweekly	Yes	473	3,571	Yes	Yes	26
13,443	biweekly/monthly	Yes	445	14,448	Yes	Yes	65
40,807	weekly/biweekly	Yes	773	14,162	Yes	Yes	49
3,485	days/weekly	Yes	153	8,507	Yes	Yes	56
3,381	days/weekly	Yes	3,126	6,677	Yes	Yes	138
71,704	days/weekly	Yes	5,937	45,156	Yes	Yes	16
3,562	weekly	Yes	1,526	14,224	Yes	Yes	134
2,939	days/weekly	Yes	505	3,983	Yes	Yes	35
4,865	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,222	8,644	Yes	Yes	66
5,754	days/weekly	Yes	1,108	6,124	Yes	Yes	127
11,673	weekly/biweekly	Yes	779	5,824	Yes	Yes	193
7,544	days/weekly	Yes	799	8,728	Yes	Yes	94
3,899	days/weekly	Yes	403	78,760	Yes	Yes	173
2,972	days/weekly	Yes	493	2,281	Yes	Yes	25
4,337	days/weekly	Yes	1,934	8,924	Yes	Yes	119
4,360	weekly	Yes	647	10,333	Yes	Yes	37
2,455	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,135	4,739	Yes	Yes	121
90,711	days/weekly	Yes	1,297	23,852	Yes	Yes	41
273,242	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,316	153,765	Yes	Yes	185
5,180	biweekly/monthly	Yes	295	918	Yes	Yes	45
2,570	biweekly/monthly	Yes	1,878	5,861	Yes	Yes	62
5,295	days/weekly	Yes	2,349	10,411	Yes	Yes	324
2,630	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,994	3,639	Yes	Yes	52
27,032	weekly	Yes	5,912	47,569	Yes	Yes	122
355,193	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,427	198,667	Yes	Yes	415
578	no posts	No	n/a	n/a	No	No YT channel	n/a
5,187	days/weekly	Yes	498	2,104	Yes	Yes	20
719	no posts	Yes	468	7,505	Yes	No YT channel	n/a
4,071	weekly/biweekly	Yes	928	10,014	No	Yes	171
7,464	days/weekly	Yes	1,183	5,080	Yes	Yes	111
2,517	weekly/biweekly	Yes	201	3,196	No	Yes	22
9,231	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,651	9,809	Yes	Yes	85

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Steve Palazzo	Mississippi	House	R	2011/2	02/21/70 43	Yes
Claire McCaskill	Missouri	Senate	D	2007/6	07/24/53 60	Yes
Roy Blunt	Missouri	Senate	R	2011/2	01/10/50 63	Yes
William "Lacy" Clay	Missouri	House	D	2001/12	07/27/56 57	Yes
Ann Wagner	Missouri	House	R	2013/1	09/13/62 51	Yes
Blaine Luetkemeyer	Missouri	House	R	2009/4	05/07/52 61	Yes
Vicky Hartzler	Missouri	House	R	2011/2	10/13/60 53	Yes
Emanuel Cleaver II	Missouri	House	D	2005/8	10/26/44 69	Yes
Sam Graves	Missouri	House	R	2001/12	11/07/63 50	Yes
Billy Long	Missouri	House	R	2011/2	08/11/55 58	Yes
Jason Smith	Missouri	House	R	2013/1	06/16/80 33	Yes
Max Baucus	Montana	Senate	D	1978/35	12/11/41 72	Yes
Jon Tester	Montana	Senate	D	2007/6	08/21/56 57	Yes
Steve Daines	Montana	House	R	2013/1	08/20/62 51	Yes
Deb Fischer	Nebraska	Senate	R	2013/1	03/01/51 62	Yes
Mike Johanns	Nebraska	Senate	R	2009/4	06/18/50 63	Yes
Jeff Fortenberry	Nebraska	House	R	2005/8	12/27/60 53	Yes
Lee Terry	Nebraska	House	R	1999/14	01/29/62 51	Yes
Adrian Smith	Nebraska	House	R	2007/6	12/19/70 43	Yes
Harry Reid	Nevada	Senate	D	1987/26	12/02/39 74	Yes
Dean Heller	Nevada	Senate	R	2011/2	05/10/60 53	Yes
Dina Titus	Nevada	House	D	2013/1	05/23/50 63	Yes
Mark Amodei	Nevada	House	R	2011/2	06/12/58 55	Yes
Joe Heck	Nevada	House	R	2011/2	10/30/61 52	Yes
Steven Horsford	Nevada	House	D	2013/1	04/29/73 40	Yes
Jeanne Shaheen	New Hampshire	Senate	D	2009/4	01/28/47 66	Yes
Kelly Ayotte	New Hampshire	Senate	R	2011/2	06/27/68 45	Yes
Carol Shea/Porter	New Hampshire	House	D	2013/1	12/02/52 61	Yes
Ann McClane Kuster	New Hampshire	House	D	2013/1	09/05/56 57	Yes
Jeff Chiesa	New Jersey	Senate	R	2013/1	06/22/65 48	No
Robert Menendez	New Jersey	Senate	D	2006/7	01/01/54 59	Yes
Robert Andrews	New Jersey	House	D	1990/23	08/04/57 66	Yes
Frank A. LoBiondo	New Jersey	House	R	1995/18	05/12/46 66	Yes
Jon Runyan	New Jersey	House	R	2011/2	11/27/73 40	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
3,909	days/weekly	Yes	873	4,490	No	Yes	73
18,756	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,930	4,790	Yes	Yes	261
10,975	weekly/biweekly	Yes	3,250	28,452	No	Yes	506
626	weekly	Yes	716	1,842	Yes	Yes	8
17,103	days/weekly	Yes	594	4,020	Yes	Yes	39
1,340	almost daily	Yes	28	234	Yes	Yes	241
4,417	days/weekly	Yes	2,000	5,881	Yes	Yes	68
10,230	days/weekly	Yes	1,031	8,881	Yes	Yes	44
4,364	weekly	Yes	4,856	9,075	Yes	Yes	1050
8,295	days/weekly	Yes	57	596	Yes	Yes	23
5,383	almost daily	Yes	298	764	No	Yes	16
11,241	weekly/biweekly	Yes	234	2,812	Yes	Yes	194
7,993	weekly	Yes	134	551	Yes	Yes	186
2,292	weekly	Yes	508	1,866	Yes	Yes	44
1,964	weekly/biweekly	Yes	382	5,569	No	Yes	29
4,808	weekly	Yes	579	9,755	Yes	Yes	337
3,421	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,137	8,671	Yes	Yes	207
3,763	days/weekly	Yes	2,548	7,543	Yes	Yes	203
5,444	weekly/biweekly	Yes	661	2,312	Yes	Yes	95
12,720	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,111	147,797	No	Yes	470
4,557	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,806	8,877	No	Yes	89
497	weekly/biweekly	Yes	650	3,266	Yes	Yes	108
3,475	weekly/biweekly	Yes	540	3,086	Yes	Yes	15
2,584	days/weekly	Yes	1,918	5,605	Yes	Yes	124
1,384	weekly/biweekly	Yes	645	3,078	Yes	Yes	58
5,751	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,322	13,738	Yes	Yes	206
8,753	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,614	25,617	Yes	Yes	220
730	weekly	Yes	262	1,734	Yes	Yes	58
1,221	weekly	Yes	572	2,997	Yes	Yes	19
n/a	n/a	Yes	31	769	No	Yes	6
11,995	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,790	31,071	Yes	Yes	617
1,184	no posts	Yes	903	23,704	No	Yes	196
2,891	weekly	Yes	1,442	4,488	Yes	Yes	57
1,633	weekly	Yes	508	4,261	No	Yes	30

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Chris Smith	New Jersey	House	R	1981/32	03/04/53 60	Yes
Scott Garrett	New Jersey	House	R	2003/10	07/09/59 54	Yes
Frank Pallone, Jr.	New Jersey	House	D	1988/25	10/30/51 62	Yes
Leonard Lance	New Jersey	House	R	2009/4	06/25/52 61	Yes
Albio Sires	New Jersey	House	D	2006/7	01/26/51 62	Yes
Bill Pascrell	New Jersey	House	D	1997/16	01/29/37 76	Yes
Donald Payne, Jr.	New Jersey	House	D	2012/1	12/16/58 55	Yes
Rodney Frelinghuysen	New Jersey	House	R	1995/18	04/29/46 67	Yes
Rush Holt	New Jersey	House	D	1999/14	10/15/48 65	Yes
Martin Heinrich	New Mexico	Senate	D	2013/1	10/17/71 42	Yes
Tom Udall	New Mexico	Senate	D	2009/4	05/18/48 65	Yes
Michelle Lujan Grisham	New Mexico	House	D	2013/1	10/24/59 54	Yes
Steve Pearce	New Mexico	House	R	2011/2	08/24/71 42	Yes
Ben Ray Luján	New Mexico	House	D	2009/4	06/07/72 41	Yes
Charles Schumer	New York	Senate	D	1999/14	11/23/50 63	Yes
Kirsten Gillibrand	New York	Senate	D	2009/4	12/09/66 47	Yes
Tim Bishop	New York	House	D	2003/10	06/01/50 63	Yes
Peter King	New York	House	R	1993/10	04/05/44 69	Yes
Steve Israel	New York	House	D	2001/12	05/30/58 55	Yes
Carolyn McCarthy	New York	House	D	1997/16	01/05/44 69	Yes
Gregory Meeks	New York	House	D	1998/15	09/25/53 60	Yes
Grace Meng	New York	House	D	2013/1	10/01/75 38	Yes
Nydia M. Velázquez	New York	House	D	1993/20	03/23/53 60	Yes
Hakeem Jeffries	New York	House	D	2013/1	08/04/70 43	Yes
Yvette Clarke	New York	House	D	2007/6	11/21/64 49	Yes
Jerrold Nadler	New York	House	D	1992/21	06/13/47 66	Yes
Michael Grimm	New York	House	R	2011/2	02/07/70 43	Yes
Carolyn Maloney	New York	House	D	1993/10	02/19/48 65	Yes
Charles Rangel	New York	House	D	1971/42	06/11/30 83	Yes
Joseph Crowley	New York	House	D	1999/14	03/16/62 51	Yes
José E. Serrano	New York	House	D	1990/23	10/24/43 70	Yes
Eliot Engel	New York	House	D	1989/24	02/18/47 66	Yes
Nita Lowey	New York	House	D	1989/24	07/05/37 76	Yes
Sean Patrick Maloney	New York	House	D	2013/1	07/30/66 47	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
155	biweekly/monthly	Yes	87	1,107	No	Yes	36
3,687	weekly/biweekly	Yes	372	1,984	Yes	Yes	291
4,483	weekly/biweekly	Yes	4,485	10,419	Yes	Yes	35
2,803	weekly	Yes	403	1,534	Yes	Yes	76
1,443	weekly/biweekly	Yes	906	6,208	Yes	Yes	94
5,392	weekly	Yes	517	2,831	Yes	Yes	113
5,127	days/weekly	Yes	522	974	Yes	Yes	2
95	monthly	Yes	90	444	Yes	Yes	48
12,402	weekly/biweekly	Yes	690	6,456	Yes	Yes	168
3,837	weekly	Yes	380	2,729	Yes	Yes	27
9,412	weekly	Yes	1,329	12,786	Yes	Yes	249
2,986	weekly/biweekly	Yes	388	2,025	Yes	Yes	17
4,909	days/weekly	Yes	2,108	5,160	Yes	Yes	171
3,869	weekly/biweekly	Yes	752	6,431	Yes	Yes	77
26,410	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,400	68,066	No	Yes	79
90,550	weekly/biweekly	Yes	5,480	86,402	Yes	Yes	127
3,567	weekly/biweekly	Yes	824	4,428	Yes	Yes	96
16,197	days/weekly	Yes	1,595	16,242	Yes	Yes	239
1,625	weekly	Yes	1,459	11,926	Yes	Yes	112
4,188	biweekly/monthly	Yes	231	973	Yes	Yes	6
6,514	weekly/biweekly	Yes	990	7,087	Yes	Yes	14
1,211	days/weekly	Yes	768	2,434	Yes	Yes	5
5,164	biweekly/monthly	Yes	128	4,384	No	Yes	13
674	weekly	Yes	276	2,431	No	Yes	108
1,214	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,408	6,244	Yes	Yes	70
2,972	days/weekly	Yes	667	5,749	Yes	Yes	219
3,995	weekly/biweekly	Yes	231	5,136	Yes	Yes	149
147	weekly	Yes	583	6,159	Yes	Yes	188
7,137	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,432	16,355	Yes	Yes	192
775	biweekly/monthly	Yes	706	5,245	No	Yes	108
10,087	weekly	Yes	1,272	8,752	Yes	Yes	49
9,461	weekly/biweekly	Yes	486	4,359	Yes	Yes	237
3,483	weekly/biweekly	Yes	712	6,484	Yes	Yes	72
2,025	days/weekly	Yes	475	1,791	No	Yes	40

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Christopher Gibson	New York	House	R	2011/2	05/13/64 49	Yes
Paul Tonko	New York	House	D	2009/4	06/28/49 64	Yes
Bill Owens	New York	House	D	2009/4	01/20/49 64	Yes
Richard Hanna	New York	House	R	2011/2	01/25/51 62	Yes
Tom Reed	New York	House	R	2010/3	11/18/71 42	Yes
Dan Maffei	New York	House	D	2013/1	07/04/68 45	Yes
Louise Slaughter	New York	House	D	1987/26	08/14/29 84	Yes
Brian Higgins	New York	House	D	2005/8	10/06/59 54	Yes
Chris Collins	New York	House	R	2013/1	05/20/50 63	Yes
Richard Burr	North Carolina	Senate	R	2005/7	11/30/55 56	Yes
Kay Hagan	North Carolina	Senate	D	2009/4	05/26/53 60	Yes
G. K. Butterfield	North Carolina	House	D	2004/9	04/27/47 66	Yes
Renee Ellmers	North Carolina	House	R	2011/2	02/09/64 49	Yes
Walter Jones	North Carolina	House	R	1995/18	02/10/43 70	Yes
David Price	North Carolina	House	D	1997/16	08/17/40 73	Yes
Virginia Foxx	North Carolina	House	R	2005/8	06/29/43 70	Yes
Howard Coble	North Carolina	House	R	1985/28	03/18/31 82	Yes
Mike McIntyre	North Carolina	House	D	1997/16	08/06/56 57	Yes
Richard Hudson	North Carolina	House	R	2013/1	11/04/71 42	Yes
Robert Pittenger	North Carolina	House	R	2013/1	08/15/48 65	Yes
Patrick McHenry	North Carolina	House	R	2005/8	10/22/75 37	Yes
Mark Meadows	North Carolina	House	R	2013/1	07/28/59 54	Yes
Mel Watt	North Carolina	House	D	1993/20	08/26/45 68	Yes
George Holding	North Carolina	House	R	2013/1	04/17/68 45	Yes
Heidi Heitkamp	North Dakota	Senate	D	2013/1	10/30/55 58	Yes
John Hoeven	North Dakota	Senate	R	2011/2	03/13/57 56	Yes
Kevin Cramer	North Dakota	House	R	2013/1	01/21/61 52	Yes
Sherrod Brown	Ohio	Senate	D	2007/6	11/09/52 61	Yes
Rob Portman	Ohio	Senate	R	2011/2	12/19/55 58	Yes
Steve Chabot	Ohio	House	R	2011/2	01/22/53 60	Yes
Brad Wenstrup	Ohio	House	R	2013/1	06/17/58 55	Yes
Joyce Beatty	Ohio	House	D	2013/1	03/12/50 63	Yes
Jim Jordan	Ohio	House	R	2007/6	02/17/64 49	Yes
Bob Latta	Ohio	House	R	2007/6	04/18/56 57	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
3,541	weekly	Yes	408	4,707	Yes	Yes	22
9,019	weekly	Yes	1,589	6,634	Yes	Yes	217
3,070	days/weekly	Yes	1,696	3,591	Yes	Yes	21
4,165	almost daily	Yes	1,763	5,736	Yes	Yes	31
2,035	weekly	Yes	488	4,341	Yes	Yes	20
1,874	weekly	Yes	351	1,482	Yes	Yes	4
5,601	weekly	Yes	938	7,993	Yes	Yes	181
3,886	weekly/biweekly	Yes	4,568	10,057	Yes	Yes	219
4,235	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,007	1,701	Yes	Yes	27
3,161	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,142	23,865	Yes	Yes	92
16,214	weekly	Yes	2,295	20,402	Yes	Yes	225
578	weekly/biweekly	Yes	557	2,259	Yes	Yes	53
6,600	almost daily	Yes	3,253	9,810	Yes	Yes	116
6,551	weekly	Yes	839	9,741	Yes	Yes	66
2,212	no posts	Yes	1,198	5,453	Yes	Yes	33
3,898	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,924	11,053	Yes	Yes	162
1,218	weekly/biweekly	Yes	569	3,098	Yes	Yes	5
2,884	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,335	4,513	Yes	Yes	106
2,113	weekly/biweekly	Yes	891	2,536	Yes	Yes	36
952	almost daily	Yes	921	1,823	Yes	Yes	104
7,968	weekly	Yes	1,857	12,729	No	Yes	150
2,211	weekly	Yes	415	2,877	Yes	Yes	33
944	monthly	Yes	25	2,137	Yes	Yes	10
613	weekly/biweekly	Yes	242	1,850	Yes	Yes	26
2,266	weekly/biweekly	Yes	767	5,041	No	Yes	21
3,129	weekly/biweekly	Yes	252	5,433	Yes	Yes	113
1,097	weekly/biweekly	Yes	384	1,859	Yes	Yes	681
85,942	weekly/biweekly	Yes	955	34,237	Yes	Yes	91
36,688	weekly/biweekly	Yes	775	1,589	Yes	Yes	219
6,212	weekly	Yes	716	6,203	Yes	Yes	16
4,555	days/weekly	Yes	962	1,539	No	Yes	32
34,759	days/weekly	Yes	328	500	Yes	Yes	4
9,159	biweekly/monthly	Yes	787	16,104	No	Yes	108
5,016	biweekly/monthly	Yes	3,766	12,880	Yes	Yes	176

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Bill Johnson	Ohio	House	R	2011/2	11/10/54 59	Yes
Bob Gibbs	Ohio	House	R	2011/2	06/14/54 59	Yes
John Boehner	Ohio	House	R	1991/22	11/17/49 64	Yes
Marcy Kaptur	Ohio	House	D	1983/30	06/17/46 67	Yes
Michael Turner	Ohio	House	R	2003/10	01/11/60 53	Yes
Marcia L. Fudge	Ohio	House	D	2008/5	10/29/52 61	Yes
Pat Tiberi	Ohio	House	R	2001/12	10/21/62 51	Yes
Tim Ryan	Ohio	House	D	2003/10	07/16/73 40	Yes
David Joyce	Ohio	House	R	2013/1	03/17/57 56	Yes
Steve Stivers	Ohio	House	R	2011/2	03/24/65 48	Yes
Jim Renacci	Ohio	House	R	2011/2	12/03/58 55	Yes
James M. Inhofe	Oklahoma	Senate	R	1994/19	11/17/34 79	Yes
Tom Coburn	Oklahoma	Senate	R	2005/8	03/14/48 65	Yes
Jim Bridenstine	Oklahoma	House	R	2013/1	06/15/75 38	Yes
Markwayne Mullin	Oklahoma	House	R	2013/1	07/26/77 36	Yes
Frank Lucas	Oklahoma	House	R	1994/19	01/06/60 53	Yes
Tom Cole	Oklahoma	House	R	2003/10	04/28/49 64	Yes
James Lankford	Oklahoma	House	R	2011/2	03/04/68 45	Yes
Ron Wyden	Oregon	Senate	D	1996/17	05/03/49 64	Yes
Jeff Merkley	Oregon	Senate	D	2009/4	10/24/56 57	Yes
Suzanne Bonamici	Oregon	House	D	2012/1	10/14/54 59	Yes
Greg Walden	Oregon	House	R	1999/14	01/10/57 56	Yes
Earl Blumenauer	Oregon	House	D	1996/17	08/16/48 65	Yes
Peter DeFazio	Oregon	House	D	1987/26	05/27/47 66	Yes
Kurt Schrader	Oregon	House	D	2009/4	10/19/51 62	Yes
Robert Casey, Jr.	Pennsylvania	Senate	D	2007/6	04/13/60 53	Yes
Pat Toomey	Pennsylvania	Senate	R	2011/2	11/17/61 52	Yes
Robert Brady	Pennsylvania	House	D	1998/15	04/07/45 68	Yes
Chaka Fattah	Pennsylvania	House	D	1995/18	11/21/56 57	Yes
Mike Kelly	Pennsylvania	House	R	2011/2	05/10/48 65	Yes
Scott Perry	Pennsylvania	House	R	2013/1	05/27/62 51	Yes
Glenn "GT" Thompson	Pennsylvania	House	R	2009/4	07/27/59 64	Yes
Jim Gerlach	Pennsylvania	House	R	2003/10	02/25/55 58	Yes
Patrick Meehan	Pennsylvania	House	R	2011/2	10/20/55 58	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
1,675	weekly	Yes	1,913	6,064	No	Yes	185
2,368	weekly	Yes	1,270	5,998	Yes	Yes	66
379,152	weekly	Yes	11,848	556,469	Yes	Yes	837
no posts	n/a	Yes	182	1,876	Yes	Yes	28
4,404	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,292	4,631	Yes	Yes	242
14,511	days/weekly	Yes	1,395	9,257	Yes	Yes	176
2,260	weekly/biweekly	Yes	444	793	Yes	Yes	17
11,990	days/weekly	Yes	1,367	16,010	Yes	Yes	165
3,554	weekly/biweekly	Yes	966	2,060	Yes	Yes	13
2,909	weekly/biweekly	Yes	973	6,203	Yes	Yes	69
2,393	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,491	6,026	Yes	Yes	52
12,542	weekly/biweekly	Yes	3,966	9,526	No	Yes	678
25,870	weekly/biweekly	Yes	970	72,149	No	Yes	449
20,604	weekly/biweekly	Yes	690	10,727	Yes	Yes	39
4,803	weekly	Yes	516	2,656	Yes	Yes	681
3,594	weekly/biweekly	Yes	186	957	Yes	Yes	47
5,558	weekly/biweekly	Yes	250	4,820	Yes	Yes	249
7,177	days/weekly	Yes	1,893	9,029	Yes	Yes	232
26,887	biweekly/monthly	Yes	833	23,840	No	Yes	234
12,891	biweekly/monthly	Yes	1,214	24,098	Yes	Yes	161
2,969	weekly/biweekly	Yes	345	2,549	Yes	Yes	44
6,425	weekly/biweekly	Yes	750	9,172	Yes	Yes	168
19,402	weekly/biweekly	Yes	312	2,427	Yes	Yes	132
4,750	monthly	Yes	228	6,273	Yes	Yes	244
4,283	weekly/biweekly	Yes	923	7,343	Yes	Yes	71
6,673	weekly/biweekly	Yes	680	15,446	No	Yes	127
8,153	days/weekly	Yes	1,801	27,179	Yes	Yes	278
2,228	weekly/biweekly	Yes	422	5,492	Yes	Yes	32
6,675	weekly/biweekly	Yes	5,819	8,250	Yes	Yes	98
4,464	weekly/biweekly	Yes	332	4,175	Yes	Yes	194
2,237	days/weekly	Yes	616	2,953	Yes	Yes	59
1,616	biweekly/monthly	Yes	2,699	7,900	Yes	Yes	251
1,628	weekly/biweekly	Yes	620	7,191	Yes	Yes	20
4,416	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,112	5,275	Yes	Yes	120

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Mike Fitzpatrick	Pennsylvania	House	R	2011/2	06/28/63 53	Yes
Bill Shuster	Pennsylvania	House	R	2001/12	01/10/61 52	Yes
Tom Marino	Pennsylvania	House	R	2011/2	08/13/52 61	Yes
Lou Barletta	Pennsylvania	House	R	2011/2	01/28/56 57	Yes
Keith Rothfus	Pennsylvania	House	R	2013/1	04/25/62 51	Yes
Allyson Y. Schwartz	Pennsylvania	House	D	2005/8	10/03/48 65	Yes
Mike Doyle	Pennsylvania	House	D	1995/18	08/05/53 60	Yes
Charlie Dent	Pennsylvania	House	R	2005/8	05/24/60 53	Yes
Joe Pitts	Pennsylvania	House	R	1997/16	10/10/39 74	Yes
Matt Cartwright	Pennsylvania	House	D	2013/1	05/01/61 52	Yes
Tim Murphy	Pennsylvania	House	R	2003/10	09/12/52 61	Yes
Jack Reed	Rhode Island	Senate	D	1997/16	11/12/49 64	Yes
Sheldon Whitehouse	Rhode Island	Senate	D	2007/6	10/22/55 58	Yes
David Cicilline	Rhode Island	House	D	2011/2	07/15/61 52	Yes
Jim Langevin	Rhode Island	House	D	2001/12	04/22/65 48	Yes
Lindsey Graham	South Carolina	Senate	R	2003/10	07/09/55 58	Yes
Tim Scott	South Carolina	House	R	2013/1	09/19/65 48	Yes
Mark Sanford	South Carolina	House	R	2013/1	05/28/60 53	Yes
Joe Wilson	South Carolina	House	R	2001/12	07/31/47 66	Yes
Jeff Duncan	South Carolina	House	R	2011/2	01/07/66 47	Yes
Trey Gowdy	South Carolina	House	R	2011/2	08/22/64 49	Yes
Mick Mulvaney	South Carolina	House	R	2011/2	07/21/67 46	Yes
James E. Clyburn	South Carolina	House	D	1993/20	07/21/40 73	Yes
Tom Rice	South Carolina	House	R	2013/1	08/04/57 56	Yes
Tim Johnson	South Dakota	Senate	D	1997/16	12/28/46 67	Yes
John Thune	South Dakota	Senate	R	2005/8	01/07/61 52	Yes
Kristi Noem	South Dakota	House	R	2011/2	11/30/71 42	Yes
Lamar Alexander	Tennessee	Senate	R	2003/10	07/03/40 73	Yes
Bob Corker	Tennessee	Senate	R	2007/6	08/24/52 61	Yes
Phil Roe	Tennessee	House	R	2009/4	07/21/45 68	Yes
John J. Duncan, Jr.	Tennessee	House	R	1988/25	07/21/47 66	Yes
Chuck Fleischmann	Tennessee	House	R	2011/2	10/11/62 51	Yes
Scott DesJarlais	Tennessee	House	R	2011/2	02/21/64 49	Yes
Jim Cooper	Tennessee	House	D	2003/10	06/19/54 59	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
6,753	days/weekly	Yes	2,505	5,543	Yes	Yes	82
2,487	weekly	Yes	1,914	8,962	Yes	Yes	86
2,394	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,250	5,321	Yes	Yes	93
3,479	weekly/biweekly	Yes	953	6,068	Yes	Yes	76
3,883	almost daily	Yes	904	1,276	Yes	Yes	53
9,115	days/weekly	Yes	187	1,767	Yes	Yes	63
1,584	biweekly/monthly	Yes	391	6,190	Yes	Yes	55
3,202	weekly	Yes	778	2,589	No	Yes	37
2,107	biweekly/monthly	Yes	615	4,541	Yes	Yes	327
2,143	weekly	Yes	1,436	1,944	Yes	Yes	47
2,141	weekly	Yes	974	5,295	Yes	Yes	113
1,951	biweekly/monthly	Yes	1,320	7,197	Yes	Yes	183
5,298	weekly	Yes	1,185	13,876	Yes	Yes	293
2,732	weekly	Yes	75	1,393	Yes	Yes	200
2,293	weekly	Yes	1,106	7,248	Yes	Yes	313
18,167	weekly	Yes	2,822	53,357	Yes	Yes	535
27,764	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,653	42,770	No	Yes	56
1,997	weekly/biweekly	Yes	45	819	Yes	Yes	682
24,293	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,844	21,777	Yes	Yes	211
15,883	days/weekly	Yes	2,013	12,539	Yes	Yes	177
61,611	weekly/biweekly	Yes	975	35,818	Yes	Yes	258
9,880	weekly/biweekly	Yes	647	6,604	Yes	Yes	135
3,566	one post this year	Yes	568	20,215	No	Yes	182
3,284	weekly/biweekly	Yes	233	1,930	Yes	Yes	682
2,878	biweekly/monthly	Yes	1,125	9,050	Yes	Yes	73
80,916	weekly/biweekly	Yes	978	22,198	Yes	Yes	572
22,103	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,369	11,871	Yes	Yes	109
6,554	weekly	Yes	768	17,821	Yes	Yes	258
7,391	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,327	23,198	Yes	Yes	238
4,278	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,189	7,042	No	Yes	98
2,430	biweekly/monthly	Yes	23	269	Yes	Yes	147
4,088	weekly/biweekly	Yes	976	4,858	Yes	Yes	60
8,938	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,605	5,516	Yes	Yes	94
7,241	biweekly/monthly	Yes	464	4,822	Yes	Yes	41

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Diane Black	Tennessee	House	R	2011/2	01/16/51 62	Yes
Marsha Blackburn	Tennessee	House	R	2003/10	06/06/52 61	Yes
Stephen Fincher	Tennessee	House	R	2011/2	02/07/73 40	Yes
Steve Cohen	Tennessee	House	D	2007/6	05/24/49 64	Yes
Ted Cruz	Texas	Senate	R	2013/1	12/22/70 43	Yes
John Cornyn	Texas	Senate	R	2002/11	02/02/52 61	Yes
Louie Gohmert	Texas	House	R	2005/8	08/18/53 60	Yes
Ted Poe	Texas	House	R	2005/8	09/10/48 65	Yes
Sam Johnson	Texas	House	R	1991/22	10/11/30 83	Yes
Ralph Hall	Texas	House	R	1981/32	05/03/23 90	Yes
Jeb Hensarling	Texas	House	R	2003/10	05/29/57 56	Yes
Joe Barton	Texas	House	R	1983/30	09/15/49 64	Yes
John Culberson	Texas	House	R	2001/12	08/24/56 57	Yes
Kevin Brady	Texas	House	R	1997/16	11/04/55 58	Yes
Al Green	Texas	House	D	2005/8	09/01/47 66	Yes
Michael McCaul	Texas	House	R	2005/8	01/14/62 51	Yes
Mike Conaway	Texas	House	R	2005/8	06/11/48 65	Yes
Kay Granger	Texas	House	R	1997/16	01/18/43 70	Yes
Mac Thornberry	Texas	House	R	1995/18	07/15/58 55	Yes
Randy Weber	Texas	House	R	2013/1	07/02/53 60	Yes
Rubén Hinojosa	Texas	House	D	1997/16	08/20/40 73	Yes
Beto O'Rourke	Texas	House	D	2013/1	09/26/72 41	Yes
Bill Flores	Texas	House	R	2011/2	02/25/54 59	Yes
Sheila Jackson Lee	Texas	House	D	1995/18	01/12/50 63	Yes
Randy Neugebauer	Texas	House	R	2003/10	12/24/49 64	Yes
Joaquín Castro	Texas	House	D	2013/1	09/16/74 39	Yes
Lamar Smith	Texas	House	R	1987/26	11/19/47 66	Yes
Pete Olson	Texas	House	R	2009/4	12/09/62 51	Yes
Pete Gallego	Texas	House	D	2013/1	12/02/61 52	Yes
Kenny Marchant	Texas	House	R	2005/8	02/23/51 62	Yes
Roger Williams	Texas	House	R	2013/1	09/13/49 64	Yes
Michael Burgess	Texas	House	R	2003/10	12/23/50 63	Yes
Blake Farenthold	Texas	House	R	2011/2	12/12/62 51	Yes
Henry Cuellar	Texas	House	D	2005/8	09/19/55 58	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
9,423	days/weekly	Yes	1,849	7,869	Yes	Yes	165
17,714	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,658	11,633	No	Yes	450
5,481	days/weekly	Yes	1,711	5,183	No	Yes	24
5,202	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,577	8,611	Yes	Yes	519
338,994	days/weekly	Yes	1,515	189,384	No	Yes	200
35,108	days/weekly	Yes	11,394	52,357	No	Yes	544
17,744	days/weekly	Yes	2,096	17,568	Yes	Yes	409
14,142	weekly	Yes	1,915	9,960	Yes	Yes	620
2,602	weekly/biweekly	Yes	284	2,495	Yes	Yes	91
2,168	weekly/biweekly	Yes	218	858	Yes	Yes	23
5,386	weekly/biweekly	Yes	471	9,819	No	Yes	285
4,521	days/weekly	Yes	894	12,631	Yes	Yes	221
3,101	weekly/biweekly	Yes	3,094	16,890	Yes	Yes	79
5,201	almost daily	Yes	4,075	10,896	Yes	Yes	544
2,613	biweekly/monthly	Yes	190	5,223	Yes	Yes	82
2,817	weekly/biweekly	Yes	555	5,768	Yes	Yes	495
6,554	biweekly/monthly	Yes	443	3,298	No	Yes	150
5,167	weekly	Yes	984	6,397	Yes	Yes	36
3,802	weekly/biweekly	Yes	260	2,016	No	Yes	173
1,350	weekly/biweekly	Yes	586	1,212	Yes	Yes	38
2,324	biweekly/monthly	Yes	918	4,650	Yes	Yes	35
12,162	days/weekly	Yes	393	2,753	Yes	Yes	61
4,864	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,332	7,036	Yes	Yes	121
7,133	biweekly/monthly	Yes	1,204	9,775	Yes	Yes	7
8,456	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,880	8,866	Yes	Yes	215
8,599	weekly	Yes	1,945	15,665	Yes	Yes	27
9,717	biweekly/monthly	Yes	729	11,452	Yes	Yes	192
3,355	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,479	3,882	Yes	Yes	157
4,925	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,180	2,389	Yes	Yes	49
7,251	weekly/biweekly	Yes	4,411	10,851	Yes	Yes	92
1,782	weekly/biweekly	Yes	469	1,093	Yes	Yes	27
3,850	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,889	12,319	Yes	Yes	613
3,220	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,925	5,850	No	Yes	212
5,007	days/weekly	Yes	1,168	6,038	Yes	Yes	89

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Gene Green	Texas	House	D	1993/20	10/17/47 66	Yes
Eddie Bernice Johnson	Texas	House	D	1993/20	12/03/35 78	Yes
John Carter	Texas	House	R	2003/10	11/06/41 72	Yes
Pete Sessions	Texas	House	R	1997/16	03/22/55 58	Yes
Marc Veasey	Texas	House	D	2013/1	01/03/71 42	Yes
Filemon Vela	Texas	House	D	2013/1	02/13/63 50	Yes
Lloyd Doggett	Texas	House	D	2005/8	10/06/46 67	Yes
Steve Stockman	Texas	House	R	2013/1	11/14/56 57	Yes
Orrin Hatch	Utah	Senate	R	1977/36	03/22/34 79	Yes
Mike Lee	Utah	Senate	R	2011/2	06/04/71 42	Yes
Rob Bishop	Utah	House	R	2003/10	07/13/51 62	Yes
Chris Stewart	Utah	House	R	2013/1	07/15/60 53	Yes
Jason Chaffetz	Utah	House	R	2009/4	03/26/67 46	Yes
Jim Matheson	Utah	House	D	2001/12	03/21/60 53	Yes
Patrick Leahy	Vermont	Senate	D	1975/38	03/31/40 73	Yes
Bernie Sanders	Vermont	Senate	I	2007/6	09/08/41 72	Yes
Peter Welch	Vermont	House	D	2007/6	05/02/47 66	Yes
Tim Kaine	Virginia	Senate	D	2013/1	02/26/58 55	Yes
Mark Warner	Virginia	Senate	D	2009/4	12/15/54 59	Yes
Rob Wittman	Virginia	House	R	2007/6	02/03/59 54	Yes
Scott Rigell	Virginia	House	R	2011/2	05/28/60 53	Yes
Bobby Scott	Virginia	House	D	1993/20	04/30/47 66	Yes
J. Randy Forbes	Virginia	House	R	2001/12	02/17/52 61	Yes
Robert Hurt	Virginia	House	R	2011/2	6/16/69 44	Yes
Bob Goodlatte	Virginia	House	R	1993/20	09/22/52 61	Yes
Eric Cantor	Virginia	House	R	2001/12	06/06/63 50	Yes
Jim Moran	Virginia	House	D	1991/22	05/16/45 68	Yes
Morgan Griffith	Virginia	House	R	2011/2	03/15/58 55	Yes
Frank Wolf	Virginia	House	R	1981/32	01/30/39 74	Yes
Gerry Connolly	Virginia	House	D	2009/4	03/30/50 63	Yes
Maria Cantwell	Washington	Senate	D	2001/12	10/13/58 55	Yes
Patty Murray	Washington	Senate	D	1993/20	10/11/50 63	Yes
Suzan DelBene	Washington	House	D	2013/1	02/17/62 51	Yes
Rick Larsen	Washington	House	D	2001/12	06/15/65 48	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
2,364	weekly/biweekly	Yes	234	4,547	No	Yes	13
3,561	weekly	Yes	4,305	7,878	Yes	Yes	91
6,889	weekly	Yes	2,823	9,758	Yes	Yes	141
6,239	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,499	12,099	Yes	Yes	94
2,741	weekly	Yes	452	1,966	Yes	Yes	31
1,475	weekly/biweekly	Yes	140	1,205	No	Yes	201
9,572	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,049	8,087	Yes	Yes	375
7,424	days/weekly	Yes	6,032	13,171	Yes	Yes	43
26,584	no posts for 1 year	Yes	978	8,572	Yes	Yes	425
86,669	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,305	72,209	Yes	Yes	481
3,815	biweekly/monthly	Yes	0	859	Yes	Yes	123
4,374	weekly/biweekly	Yes	330	1,580	Yes	Yes	32
1,027	weekly/biweekly	Yes	4,236	55,168	No	Yes	351
12,130	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,108	7,661	Yes	Yes	65
8,026	biweekly/monthly	Yes	2,324	17,764	Yes	Yes	291
290,002	almost daily	Yes	7,812	181,443	Yes	Yes	599
10,899	weekly/biweekly	Yes	258	1,221	Yes	Yes	369
4,568	weekly/biweekly	Yes	269	1,515	Yes	Yes	61
23,829	weekly	Yes	2,839	42,941	Yes	Yes	379
8,850	biweekly/monthly	Yes	3,833	12,173	Yes	Yes	129
17,687	days/weekly	Yes	2,359	7,062	Yes	Yes	220
4,801	weekly/biweekly	Yes	570	6,219	No	Yes	105
17,305	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,631	11,333	Yes	Yes	178
9,221	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,381	5,661	Yes	Yes	121
6,661	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,888	9,911	Yes	Yes	170
220,406	weekly/biweekly	Yes	5,955	177,368	Yes	Yes	1050
11,466	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,117	9,640	No	Yes	76
2,913	weekly/biweekly	Yes	624	5,591	Yes	Yes	105
18,575	weekly/biweekly	Yes	221	4,489	Yes	Yes	104
3,524	biweekly/monthly	Yes	2,336	5,602	Yes	Yes	117
17,282	monthly or less	Yes	497	7,423	Yes	Yes	238
35,067	biweekly/monthly	Yes	3,109	19,285	Yes	Yes	114
982	weekly	Yes	434	2,050	Yes	Yes	17
2,196	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,707	2,718	Yes	Yes	45

Name	State	Senate or House	Party	Year Elected/ Number of Years in Service	Date of Birth and Age	Facebook Page
Jaime Herrera Beutler	Washington	House	R	2011/2	11/03/78 35	Yes
Doc (Richard) Hastings	Washington	House	R	1995/18	02/07/41 72	Yes
Cathy McMorris Rodgers	Washington	House	R	2005/8	05/22/69 44	Yes
Derek Kilmer	Washington	House	D	2013/1	01/01/74 39	Yes
Jim McDermott	Washington	House	D	1989/24	12/28/36 77	Yes
Dave Reichert	Washington	House	R	2005/8	08/29/50 63	Yes
Adam Smith	Washington	House	D	1997/16	06/15/65 48	Yes
Denny Heck	Washington	House	D	2013/1	07/29/52 61	Yes
Jay Rockefeller	West Virginia	Senate	D	1985/28	06/18/37 76	Yes
Joe Manchin	West Virginia	Senate	D	2010/3	08/24/47 66	Yes
David B. McKinley	West Virginia	House	R	2011/2	03/28/47 66	Yes
Shelly Moore Capito	West Virginia	House	R	2001/12	11/26/53 60	Yes
Nick Rahall	West Virginia	House	D	1977/36	05/20/49 64	Yes
Tammy Baldwin	Wisconsin	Senate	D	2013/1	02/11/62 51	Yes
Ron Johnson	Wisconsin	Senate	R	2011/2	04/08/55 58	Yes
Paul Ryan	Wisconsin	House	R	1999/14	01/29/70 43	Yes
Mark Pocan	Wisconsin	House	D	2013/1	08/14/64 49	Yes
Ron Kind	Wisconsin	House	D	1997/16	03/16/63 50	Yes
Gwen Moore	Wisconsin	House	D	2005/8	04/18/51 62	Yes
Jim Sensenbrenner	Wisconsin	House	R	1979/34	06/14/43 70	Yes
Tom Petri	Wisconsin	House	R	1979/34	05/28/40 73	Yes
Sean Duffy	Wisconsin	House	R	2011/2	10/03/71 42	Yes
Reid Ribble	Wisconsin	House	R	2011/2	04/05/56 57	Yes
Mike Enzi	Wyoming	Senate	R	1997/16	02/01/44 69	Yes
John Barrasso	Wyoming	Senate	R	2007/6	07/21/52 61	Yes
Cynthia Lummis	Wyoming	House	R	2009/4	09/10/54 59	Yes

Number of Facebook Likes	Avgerage Facebook Post Frequency	Twitter	Number of Tweets	Number of Twitter Followers	RSS Feed	YouTube	Number of Videos
5,057	biweekly/monthly	Yes	106	4,712	Yes	Yes	17
2,333	weekly/biweekly	Yes	635	2,844	Yes	Yes	73
13,049	weekly	Yes	3,137	16,153	Yes	Yes	348
5,678	weekly/biweekly	Yes	195	1,757	Yes	Yes	202
9,056	weekly	Yes	1,325	9,106	Yes	Yes	201
5,687	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,326	8,349	Yes	Yes	91
2,666	weekly/biweekly	Yes	982	6,904	Yes	Yes	66
1,134	weekly/biweekly	Yes	472	1,254	Yes	Yes	12
6,062	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,685	12,683	No	Yes	141
14,951	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,489	17,192	Yes	Yes	120
1,059	almost daily	Yes	1,247	5,166	Yes	Yes	74
6,710	weekly/biweekly	Yes	820	7,195	Yes	Yes	168
1,697	weekly	Yes	467	7,088	No	Yes	9
14,117	weekly/biweekly	Yes	721	6,160	Yes	Yes	31
6,704	weekly/biweekly	Yes	739	19,863	Yes	Yes	308
386,062	days/weekly	Yes	1,198	361,693	Yes	Yes	239
7,494	weekly/biweekly	Yes	788	2,252	Yes	Yes	28
3,521	weekly	Yes	568	5,330	Yes	Yes	117
3,702	weekly/biweekly	Yes	2,401	9,495	Yes	Yes	237
4,079	biweekly/monthly	Yes	137	946	No	Yes	65
1,812	weekly/biweekly	Yes	230	86	No	Yes	38
11,241	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,205	10,496	No	Yes	170
2,774	weekly/biweekly	Yes	531	5,640	Yes	Yes	68
5,039	weekly/biweekly	Yes	675	6,143	Yes	Yes	177
6,932	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,261	12,923	No	Yes	601
2,154	weekly/biweekly	Yes	1,064	8,567	Yes	Yes	187

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