

Comm 111S: Digital Media and the Political Process
Summer Quarter, 2009
Lectures: T/Th 11-12:30pm, 60-120

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Course Goals

Political campaigns used Facebook, YouTube, text messages, blogs, candidate Web-sites, and e-mail to an unprecedented extent during the 2007-2008 presidential primaries and general election. For many, these technologies are bringing about a radical change in the political process as ordinary citizens are increasingly participating and making their voices heard. Academics and pundits alike argue that in this bold new world networks of on-line citizens are carving out oppositional spaces for political communication, engaging in new forms of collective action, and challenging professional media and political organizations. All of which, they argue, is helping to bring about a leveled, participatory democracy, one where social networks on Facebook and video questions on YouTube are supplanting the gatekeepers of the past.

This course provides a broad overview of influential theoretical perspectives from communication, political science, legal studies, sociology, and organizational analysis with an eye towards exploring these claims. With an emphasis on electoral campaigns, the primary site of technological innovation in politics, this course poses questions like: are digital media altering the balance of political power in American democracy? Do digital networks fundamentally reshape the way that we elect presidents and contest public issues? Is the Internet undermining the ability of journalists and political elites to set the public agenda? To suggest answers to questions like these, we will turn to a number of core theoretical and empirical readings in a range of fields. To ground our discussion, we consider models of democracy. We will then turn to theories of on-line, peer-to-peer collaboration and arguments for why this may be bringing about a qualitatively different networked public sphere for citizens to debate issues. We will encounter theories of how formal political organizations and media outlets are responding to drastically falling information costs. We will explore the literature on networked media and social movements, investigating the potential for new forms of collective action on-line. Throughout, we will address a body of work that argues that new media are not democratizing at all, but extending the power of those already most influential in politics. At the end of this course, students will be familiar with major perspectives on digital media and the political process and equipped with the resources to ask critical questions about their own involvement in public affairs.

Readings

Required readings are available on reserve at Green Library, on-line, and you should buy:

Andrew Chadwick. 2006. *Internet Politics: States, citizens, and new communication technologies*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Assignments

Response Papers: You will write two ‘response’ papers of 3 double-spaced pages (1-inch margins) to an assigned statement. The purpose is to encourage you to think critically about the readings, draw connections between them, and develop your position in relation to a critical issue for digital media and politics. For example, you may be asked to respond to the statement: “Digital media changes who participates in setting the public agenda.” Your task is to critically evaluate the assumptions of the statement and develop your own point of view. Your writing needs to be well-supported and demonstrate knowledge of the readings as well as evaluate opposing points of view. The grade you receive will not be based on the position you adopt but the rigor with which you argue it.

First Response Paper Due: July 14th

Second Response Paper Due: August 4th

Final Paper: You will be asked to analyze one of several provided ‘sites’ for digital media and politics. Sites may include: a campaign Website, a Facebook cause, advocacy e-mails, CitizenTube, or non-governmental online efforts like the projects of the Sunlight Foundation. This assignment is intended to help you critically engage, as a work of original research, with a contemporary digital media object as a site for contemporary politics. Your essay will be approximately 8-10 pages. These essays will be graded based on your original analysis of the media object through engagement with the content of the course. The research questions you ask should be guided by your reading, and your essay should consider opposing theories or points of view. The best essays will offer a sustained focus on particular critical issues discussed during the quarter and students may ask a number of questions of their object, including what forms of participation does the site afford? What purpose does it serve and for whom? What types of organization is it premised upon? What is not visible about the site?

Due Date: TBA (Exam Week)

Expectations

Participation: While this is a lecture course, class meetings are highly participatory. All of us engage with digital media everyday, and on the heels of the longest and one of the closest watched electoral contests in history we all have first-hand experience with on-line politics. To that end, you need to come to class having done the readings and

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prepared to engage in class discussion. Contributions include questions, thoughts, or responses to your peers. Critical readings of the literature encountered in the course are especially valued, as are considered reflections on your own engagement with digital media and politics. In addition, I may call upon you to discuss your in-progress or completed response or final papers at any point in order to facilitate class discussion and improve writing on the assignments.

Writing: Class assignments need to be on time and polished. Late papers and those with spelling, factual, and grammatical errors will be penalized. The Honor Code applies to all work.

Grades

Participation = 15%

First Response Paper = 25%

Second Response Paper = 25%

Final Paper = 35%

Course Schedule

Tuesday, June 23: Introduction: Analyzing Digital Media and Politics

No Readings

Thursday, June 25: Models of Democracy

Andrew Chadwick, *Internet Politics*, pp. 83-113

Recommended Readings:

Benjamin Barber. 1984. *Strong democracy: Participatory politics for a new age*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

David Held. 2006. *Models of Democracy* (3rd Edition). New York: Wiley Publishing.

Michael Schudson. 1998. *The good citizen*. New York: The Free Press.

Theda Skocpol. 2003. *Diminished democracy: From membership to management in American civic life*. Norman, O.K.: University of Oklahoma Press.

Tuesday June 30: Technology and Society

Andrew Chadwick, *Internet Politics*, pp. 1-37

Langdon Winner, "Do artifacts have politics?" Available online at:

<http://zaphod.mindlab.umd.edu/docSeminar/pdfs/Winner.pdf>

Lucas D. Introna and Helen Nissenbaum. 2000. Shaping the Web: Why the politics of search engines matters. *The Information Society*, 16: 169-185.

Recommended Readings:

Andrew Barry. 2001. *Political machines: Governing a technological society*. New York: The Athlone Press.

Jack L. Goldsmith and Tim Wu. 2006. *Who controls the Internet?* New York: Oxford University Press.

Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel. (Eds). 2005. *Making things public: Atmospheres of democracy*. Cambridge, M.A.: The MIT Press.

Thursday, July 2: Technology and Society (continued)

Michael Schudson. 2003. Click here for democracy: A history and critique of an information-based model of citizenship. In *Democracy and new media*. Henry Jenkins, David Thorburn and Brad Seawell (Eds.) Cambridge: MIT Press. **On reserve at Green Library**

Philip Agre. 2002. Real-time politics: The Internet and the political process. *The Information Society*, 18: 311-331.

Recommended Readings:

Fred Turner. 2006. *From counterculture to cyberculture*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Jennifer S. Light. 2003. *From warfare to welfare: Defense intellectuals and urban problems in cold war America*. Baltimore, M.D.: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Michael Schudson. 2001. Politics as cultural practice. *Political Communication*, 18: 421-431.

Paul Edwards. 1997. *The closed world*. Cambridge, M.A.: The MIT Press.

Tuesday, July 7: Collective Action, Peer Production, and Networked Publics

Andrew Chadwick, *Internet Politics*, pp. 114-143

Beth S. Noveck. 2005. Democracy of groups. *First Monday* 10(11). Available online at: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=838385

Yochai Benkler. 2006. Introduction. *The wealth of networks: How production networks transform markets and freedom*. New Haven, C.T.: Yale University Press. Available online at: http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/wealth_of_networks/Main_Page#Read_the_book

Recommended Reading:

Yochai Benkler. 2002. Coase's penguin, or, Linux and *the nature of the firm*. *The Yale Law Journal*, 112: 369-446.

Andrew Chadwick. 2009. Web 2.0: New challenges for the study of democracy in an era of informational exuberance. *I/S: A Journal of Law and Policy for the Information Society*, 5(1): 9-41.

Mizuko Ito. Introduction to *Networked Publics*. Available online at: <http://www.networkedpublics.org/book/introduction>

Bruce Bimber. 2003. *Information and American Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Steven Weber. 2004. *The success of open source*. Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press.

James Boyle. 2003. The Second Enclosure Movement and the Construction of the Public Domain. *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 66: 33-74.

Henry Jenkins. 2006. *Convergence culture*. New York: New York University Press.

Thursday, July 9: The Internet and the Public Sphere

Daniel W. Drezner and Henry Farrell. The power and politics of blogs. Paper prepared for presentation at the 2004 *American Political Science Association annual conference*.

Matthew Hindman. Political accountability and the Web's "missing middle." Paper prepared for presentation at the *Princeton Conference on Changing Media and Political Accountability*, November 30-December 1, 2007.

Recommended Readings:

Matt Carlson. 2007. Blogs and journalistic authority. *Journalism Studies*, 8(2): 264-279.

Lincoln Dahlberg. 2007. Rethinking the fragmentation of the cyberpublic: from consensus to contestation. *New Media and Society*, 9(5): 827-847.

Jodi Dean. 2001. Cybersalons and civil society: Rethinking the public sphere in transnational technoculture. *Public Culture*, 13(2): 243–265.

Matthew Hindman. 2008. *The myth of digital democracy*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Matthew Hindman, Kostas Tsioutsoulouklis, and Judy A. Johnson. 2003. Googlearchy: How a few heavily-linked sites dominate politics on the Web. Paper presentation at the *Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association*, April 3-6, 2003.

Clay Shirky. 2005. Power laws, weblogs, and inequality. In *Extreme Democracy*. M. Ratcliffe and J. Lebkowsky (Eds.). Available online at: <http://www.lulu.com/content/125298>.

Tuesday, July 14: Networked Civil Society

FIRST RESPONSE PAPER DUE AT START OF CLASS

Bruce Bimber, Andrew J. Flanagin, and Cynthia Stohl. 2005. Reconceptualizing collective action in the contemporary media environment. *Communication Theory*, 15(4): 365-388.

W. Lance Bennett. 2003. Communicating global activism: Strengths and vulnerabilities of networked politics. *Information, Communication and Society*, 6: 143–168.

Richard Kahn and Douglas Kellner. 2004. New media and Internet activism: from the 'Battle of Seattle' to blogging. *New Media and Society*, 6(1): 87-95. Available online at: <http://richardkahn.org/writings/tep/newmediaactivism.pdf>

Recommended Reading:

W. Lance Bennett. 2003. New media power: The Internet and global activism. In *Contesting media power: Alternative media in a networked world*, N. Couldry and J. Curran (Eds.). Lanham, M.D.: Rowman & Littlefield.

Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists beyond borders: Advocacy networks in international politics*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Eric Klinenberg and Andrew Perrin. 2000. Symbolic politics in the information age. *Information, Communication and Society*, 3(1): 17-38.

Thursday, July 16: Mediated Electoral Politics

Andrew Chadwick, *Internet Politics*, pp. 144-176

Read chapter overviews, vignettes, practices, techniques, and tensions and look at the Webscapes of Kirsten Foot and Steven Schneider, *Web Campaigning Digital Supplement*. Available online at:

[http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/0262062585/WebCampaigningDigitalSupplement.html#\[\[Welcome%20to%20the%20Web%20Campaigning%20Digital%20Supplement](http://mitpress.mit.edu/books/0262062585/WebCampaigningDigitalSupplement.html#[[Welcome%20to%20the%20Web%20Campaigning%20Digital%20Supplement)

Recommended Reading:

Kirsten A. Foot and Steven M. Schneider. 2006. *Web campaigning*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Michael Margolis and David Resnick. 2000. *Politics as usual*. Thousand Oaks, C.A.: Sage.

Tuesday, July 21: Theoretical Perspectives on the 2003-2004 Campaign

Andrew Chadwick. 2007. Digital network repertoires and organizational hybridity. *Political Communication*, 24: 283-301.

Matthew Hindman. 2005. The real lessons of Howard Dean: Reflections on the first digital campaign. *Perspectives on Politics*, 3(1), 121-128.

Daniel Kreiss. 2009. Developing the 'good citizen': Digital artifacts, peer networks, and formal organization during the 2003-2004 Howard Dean campaign. *The Journal of Information Technology and Politics*, in press.

Clay Shirky. 2004, February 3. Exiting Deanspace. Available online at: http://many.corante.com/archives/2004/02/03/exiting_deanspace.php

Recommended Reading:

Quintus R. Jett and Liisa Välikangas. 2004. The gamble of open organizing. Available online at: <http://mba.tuck.dartmouth.edu/digital/Research/AcademicPublications/OpenOrganizing.pdf>

Gretchen A. Haas. 2006. *Subject to the system: The rhetorical constitution of good Internet citizenship in the 2004 U.S. presidential campaign*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.

Jennifer Stromer-Galley and Andrea B. Baker. 2006. Joy and sorrow of interactivity on the campaign trail: Blogs in the primary campaign of Howard Dean. In *The Internet Election: Perspectives on the Web in Campaign 2004*, J. C. Tedesco (Ed.). New York: Rowan and Littlefield, Inc.

Jerome Armstrong. 2006, June 29. The Journey with Trippi, Dean and DFA. *MyDD*. Available online at: <http://www.mydd.com/story/2006/6/29/12475/7402>

Thomas Streeter and Zephyr Teachout (Eds.), *Mousepads, shoe leather, and hope: Lessons from the Howard Dean campaign for the future of Internet politics*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Thursday, July 23: New Media, Privacy, and Associational Politics

Andrew Chadwick, *Internet Politics*, pp. 257-288.

Philip N. Howard. 2005. Deep democracy, thin citizenship: The impact of digital media in political campaign strategy. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 597.

Christopher Hunter. 2002. Political privacy and online politics: How e-campaigning threatens voter privacy. *First Monday* 7(2). Available online at: http://outreach.lib.uic.edu/www/issues/issue7_2/hunter/index.html

Anne Applebaum. 2009, April 20. The Twitter revolution that wasn't. *Slate*. Available online at: <http://www.slate.com/id/2216529/>

Recommended Reading:

Marc Andrejevic. 2005. The work of watching one another: Lateral surveillance, risk, and governance. *Surveillance & Society*, 2(4): 479-497.

Greg Elmer. 2003. A diagram of panoptic surveillance. *New Media & Society* 5(2): 231-247.

John Palfrey, Bruce Etling, and Robert Faris. Reading Twitter in Tehran? *The Washington Post*. Available online at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/19/AR2009061901598.html?sid=ST2009061902364>

Philip Howard. 2006. *New media campaigns and the managed citizen*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Jonathan Zittrain. 2008. Meeting the risks of generativity: Privacy 2.0. *The future of the Internet and how to stop it*. Available online at: <http://futureoftheinternet.org/>

Tuesday, July 28: Perspectives on 2007-2008

Guest Lecture: Will Bunnett, Senior Email Writer and Producer, Obama for America, Organizing for America

Colin Delaney. Lessons from the Obama campaign. *e.politics*. Available online at: <http://www.epolitics.com/2009/02/23/beginning-an-article-series-on-lessons-from-the-obama-campaign/>

Marc Ambinder. 2008, November 11. How to tell your VoteBuilders from your MyBOs, your Catalists from your VANs. *The Atlantic*. Available online at: http://marcambinder.theatlantic.com/archives/2008/11/technology_catalist_votebuilde.php

Tim Dickinson. 2008, March 20. The machinery of hope: Inside the grass-roots field operation of Barack Obama, who is transforming the way political campaigns are run. *Rolling Stone*. Available online at: <http://www.rollingstone.com/news/coverstory/19106326>

Zack Exley. 2008. The new organizers, what's really behind Obama's ground game. *The Huffington Post*. Available online at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/zack-exley/the-new-organizers-part-1_b_132782.html

Adam Nagourney. 2008, November 4. The '08 campaign: Sea change for politics as we know it. *The New York Times*. Available online at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/04/us/politics/04memo.html>

Thursday, July 30: New Media and New Political Elites?

Matthew Hindman. 2007. "Open-source politics" reconsidered: Emerging patterns in online political participation. In *governance and information technology: From electronic government to information government*, Viktor Mayer-Schonberger and David Lazer (Eds.). **On reserve at Green Library**

Alex Koppelman. 2006. Bloggers' double-super-secret-smoky-room. *Salon*. Available online at: http://www.salon.com/politics/war_room/2006/06/22/townhouse/index.html

K. Daniel Glover and Mike Essl. 2006, December 3. New on the Web: Politics as usual. Available online at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/03/opinion/03glover.html>

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Daniel Schulman. 2007, June 20. Meet the new bosses. *MotherJones*. Available online at: <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2007/06/meet-new-bosses?page=1>

Recommended Reading:

Matt Bai. 2007. *The argument: Billionaires, bloggers, and the battle to remake Democratic politics*. New York: The Penguin Press.

Tuesday, August 4: New Media Politics and Political Economy SECOND RESPONSE PAPER DUE

Andrew Chadwick, *Internet Politics*, pp. 289-316.

Trebor Scholz. 2008. Market ideology and the myths of 'Web 2.0'. *First Monday*.

Available online at:

<http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2138/1945>

Tiziana Terranova. 2000. Free labor: producing culture for the digital economy. *Social Text*. 18(2): 33-58.

Marshall Kirkpatrick. 2009. How to sell your soul on Twitter and who's buying.

ReadWriteWeb. Available online at:

http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/how_to_sell_your_soul_on_twitter_and_whos_buying.php

Recommended Reading:

Tiziana Terranova. 2004. *Network culture: Politics for the information age*. Ann Arbor, M.I.: Pluto Press.

Henry Jenkins. 2009, April 8. Critical information studies for a participatory culture (Part One). *Confessions of an Aca/Fan*. Available online at:

<http://www.diigo.com/annotated/0f44ea2a03ae1f3ad411aa21f7a3f74e>

Andrew Ross. 2006. Technology and below-the-line labor in the copyfight over intellectual property. *American Quarterly*, 58(3): 743-766.

Mirko Tobias Schäfer. *Bastard culture! User participation and the extension of cultural industries*. Dissertation: University of Utrecht Department for Media and Culture Studies. Available online at: <http://www.mtschaefer.net/entry/defending-my-bastard-culture/>

Thursday, August 6: Digital Representation and Governance

Andrew Chadwick, *Internet Politics*, pp. 177-203

Stephen Coleman, 2005. The lonely citizen: Indirect representation in an age of networks. *Political Communication*, 22(2): 197-214.

Review Peer to Patent: <http://www.peertopatent.org/>

Recommended Reading:

Antonio Cordella. 2007. E-government: towards the e-bureaucratic form. *Journal of Information Technology*, 22: 265-274.

Andrew Chadwick and Christopher May. 2003. Interaction between states and citizens in the age of the Internet: 'E-government' in the United States, Britain and the European Union, *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration and Institutions* 16(2): 271-300.

Joseph S. Nye and Elaine Ciulla Kamarck (Eds.) 2002. *Governance.com. Democracy in the information age*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute.

Tuesday, August 11th: Political Communication and the Search Engine

Guest Lecture: Laura Granka, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Communication, Stanford University; User Experience Researcher, Google, Inc.

Pan, B., Hembrooke, H., Joachims, T., Lorigo, L., Gay, G., and Granka, L. 2007. In Google we trust: Users' decisions on rank, position, and relevance. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12(3), article 3. Available online at: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol12/issue3/pan.html>

Chris Anderson. 2004, October. The Long Tail. *Wired*. Issue 12.10. Available online at: <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/12.10/tail.html>

Recommended Reading:

Van Couvering, E. 2009. The History of the Internet Search Engine: Navigational Media and the Traffic Commodity. In eds Spink, A. & Zimmer, M. *Web Search*.

Thursday, August 13th: The Limits of Networked Production?

Shay David and Trevor .J. Pinch. 2006. Six degrees of reputation: The use and abuse of online review and recommendation systems. *First Monday*, 11(3). Available online: http://131.193.153.231/www/issues/issue11_3/david/index.html

Paul du Gay. The values of bureaucracy: An introduction. Available online through GoogleBooks.

Paul Duguid. 2006. Limits of self-organization: Peer production and “laws of quality.” *First Monday* 11(10). Available online at: <http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/1405/1323>

Recommended Reading:

Paul du Gay. 2000. *In praise of bureaucracy*. London: Sage.

Paul du Gay. 2005. *The Values of Bureaucracy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Michael Schudson. 1994. The “public sphere” and its problems: Bringing the state (back) in. *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics & Public Policy*, 8: 529–546.