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Tweeting to Power

Jason Gainous and Kevin M. Wagner

Using theory and data from leading online social media, Gainous and Wagner illustrate how platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are bypassing traditional media and creating a new forum for the exchange of political information and campaigning. Beginning with a strong theoretical foundation grounded in political, communications, and psychology literature, this book examines the effect of online social media on how people come to learn, understand, and engage in politics. By lowering the cost of both supplying the information and obtaining it, social networking applications have recreated how, when, and where people are informed. The authors illustrate how political actors utilized these Internet networks to control the flow of information and win elections. These new and growing online communities are a new forum for the exchange of information that is governed by relationships formed and maintained outside traditional media. With an approach grounded in both social science theory and empirical data, Gainous and Wagner show how the online social media revolution is creating a new paradigm for political communication and shifting the very foundation of the political process.

Sport 2.0

Andy Miah

Digital technology is changing everything about modern sports. Athletes and coaches rely on digital data to monitor and enhance performance. Officials use tracking systems to augment their judgment in what is an increasingly superhuman field of play. Spectators tune in to live

sports through social media, or even through virtual reality. Audiences now act as citizen journalists whose collective shared data expands the places in which we consume sports news. Sport 2.0 examines the convergence of sports and digital cultures, examining not only how it affects our participation in sport but also how it changes our experience of life online. This convergence redefines how we think of about our bodies, the social function of sports, and it transforms the populations of people who are playing. Sport 2.0 describes a world in which the rise of competitive computer game playing—e-sports—challenges and invigorates the social mandate of both sports and digital culture. It also examines media change at the Olympic Games, as an exemplar of digital innovation in sports. Furthermore, the book offers a detailed look at the social media footprint of the 2012 London Games, discussing how organizers, sponsors, media, and activists responded to the world's largest media event.

Plugged In

Patti M. Valkenburg and Jessica T Piotrowski

This book is an illuminating study of the complex relationship between children and media in the digital age. Now, as never before, young people are surrounded by media, thanks to the sophistication and portability of the technology that puts it literally in the palms of their hands. Drawing on data and empirical research that cross many fields and continents, this book examines the role of media in the lives of children from birth through adolescence, addressing the complex issues of how media affect the young and what adults can do to encourage responsible use in an age of selfies, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. The book looks at both the sunny and the dark side of media use by today's youth, including why and how their preferences change throughout childhood, whether digital gaming is harmful or helpful, the effects of placing tablets and smartphones in the hands of toddlers, the susceptibility of young people to online advertising, the legitimacy of parental concerns about media multitasking, and more.

Following Searle on Twitter

Adam Hodgkin

Twitter is used as an example of a distinctively digital institution. Twitter's constitution and development is a test case for Searle's theory of Status Function Declarations. The analysis distinguishes between acts of the individual members of Twitter, joining, following and tweeting; and the acts, or Status Function Declarations of the Twitter system as a whole, manifested in the way that the software system can change, and the way in which Twitter can interact with other institutions through its Application Programming Interface. It is argued that Twitter is an exemplar or paradigm and not an exception. All our very new digital institutions use language in ways quite different from traditional institutions and in understanding digital institutions we need to probe the basic actions, the Status Function Declarations through which we build and shape their performance and evolution. It is further suggested that the normative structures we find in digital institutions arise directly from the Status Function Declarations of their members and this insight helps us understand how they attract and may magnify problematic behaviour — in the case of Twitter, trolling and bullying. The theory of digital institutions developed is naturalistic and evolutionary and the work of Michael Tomasello on primate behavior and child development has suggestive parallels for understanding the development of social media.

The Culture of Connectivity

Jose van Dijck

This book studies the rise of social media in the first decade of the twenty-first century, up until 2012. It provides both a historical and a critical analysis of the emergence of networking services in the context of a changing ecosystem of connective media. Such history is needed to understand how the intricate constellation of platforms profoundly affects our experience of online sociality. In a short period of time, services like Facebook, YouTube and many others have come to deeply penetrate our daily habits of communication and creative production. While most sites started out as amateur-driven community platforms, half a decade later they have turned into large corporations that do not just facilitate user connectedness, but have become global information and data mining companies extracting and exploiting user connectivity. Offering a dual analytical prism to examine techno-cultural as well as socio-economic aspects of social media, the author dissects five major

platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, and Wikipedia. Each of these microsystems occupies a distinct position in the larger ecosystem of connective media, and yet, their underlying mechanisms for coding interfaces, steering users, filtering content, governance and business models rely on shared ideological principles. Reconstructing the premises on which these platforms are built, this study highlights how norms for online interaction and communication gradually changed. "Sharing," "friending," "liking," "following," "trending," and "favoriting" have come to denote online practices imbued with specific technological and economic meanings. This process of normalization is part of a larger political and ideological battle over information control in an online world where everything is bound to become "social."

Conclusion

Patricia A. Matthew

in Written/Unwritten: Diversity and the Hidden Truths of Tenure

The anthology concludes by looking forward and considering how social media, especially Twitter, is shaping how faculty of color manage their careers. It discusses the possibilities and risks of engaging with complicated ideas and taking on the work of activism outside of academia while in full view of those who evaluate our work. With a mix of cautionary tales and strategies for success the chapter focuses on the challenges black women academics face on social media as they are targeted by right-wing student groups It also discuses how social media has shaped and influenced the career opportunities of then doctoral candidate Tressie McMillan Cottom.

Twitter and the Paradox of Following and Trending

José van Dijck

in The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media

The fourth chapter traces the transformation of Twitter, the microblogging platform that started in 2006. The platform aimed to be an autonomous utility service promoting user connectedness, but

gradually transmuted into an information network exploiting user connectivity. Twitter's history revolves around a double paradox: first, the functions of following and trending presume a neutral technological infrastructure where all users are equal and all content is carried indiscriminately. In practice, Twitter's filtering mechanisms inscribe more weight to some twitterers and tweets, thus promoting the creation of big followings and popular trends. Second, Twitter presents its network as an online "town hall" for networked communication, but the platform has manifested itself as a potent instrument for manipulating opinions. In light of this paradox, we need to interpret how Twitter changed its initial ambitions from wanting to be a "utility" to becoming an "information networking company." Using instruments like predictive analytics, the site increasingly aims at capitalizing the flow of tweets rushing though its veins

What Do Girls Dig?

Bethany Nowviskie

in Debates in the Digital Humanities

This chapter begins by presenting an exchange of tweets spawned by the news that two out of thirty-three speakers at the "Digging into Data Challenge" conference are women. The author then expresses her belief that the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and other "Digging into Data" supporters do a consistently brilliant job of identifying sensitive and qualified peer reviewers and funding worthy projects. She says that the NEH's digital humanities programs, in particular, are broadly representative of the actual makeup of the field. Any gender imbalance has little to do with the Digging into Data grant-making process and more with broader issues, going all the way back to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education for girls in the public schools.

Introducing Digital Humanities Now

Daniel J. Cohen

in Debates in the Digital Humanities

This chapter focuses on Digital Humanities Now, a new web publication resulting from the author's attempt to combine the activities of several hundred digital humanities scholars with TwitterTim.es (a service that creates a real-time publication consisting of articles highlighted by people you follow on Twitter). DHN aggregates thousands of tweets and the hundreds of articles and projects those tweets point to and boils them down to the most-discussed items, with commentary from Twitter. Based on the early returns, the algorithms have done fairly well, putting on the front page articles on grading in a digital age and bringing high-speed networking to liberal arts colleges, Google's law archive search, and a talk on how to deal with streams of content given limited attention.

al-Thawra al-daHika: The Challenges of Translating Revolutionary Humor

Lewis Sanders IV and ark Visonà

in Translating Egypt's Revolution: The Language of Tahrir (A Tahrir Studies Edition)

The authors translate a representative selection from the avalanche of political jokes that the Egyptian revolution generated and that have qualified it as "the laughing revolution" analyzing the structure and dissemination of these jokes that were predominantly inspired by both traditional and social media discourses, forms, and languages. One of the most revolutionary aspects about some of these jokes is that they are being constantly updated and made to bear on the latest events on mobile phones, Facebook and Twitter. Despite the challenges of translating jokes and other emerging forms of humor and satire on social media networks (videos, cartoons, photoshop imaging, etc) these new forms of comic relief have come to represent some of the most important weapons that have sustained Egypt's revolution in its most difficult and tragic moments. The black humor of the jokes that circulated after the October 9 "Maspero Massacre" is a case in point. Egyptians immediately turned this tragic incident and the junta's transparent denial of responsibility for the massacre of peaceful demonstrators into a joke that ridiculed the SCAF's incredulous claims by parodying the language and discourse of the SCAF's Facebook communiqués.