

NORTHWESTERN MTS GUIDE TO NCA 2011



Student Presentations

Thursday, November 17th

8:00 AM – 9:15 AM Sheraton New Orleans / Gallier A

Ericka Menchen-Trevino

Session: The Role of New Technologies in the Circulation of Political Information

Title: *Flocking Together? Political Information in Multiply Mediated Social Networks*

Division: Political Communication

Abstract: *Could the information and communication technologies (ICTs) that connect us to our friends, colleagues and family also politically polarize society? Generally ICTs are implicated in an increase of political action rather than political tolerance.*

However, contact with others online often includes a wider group of voices, 'weak ties' who may not share one's political views. This study looks at individuals' networks of political conversation in-depth to further understand the role of ICTs in political conversation.

9:30 AM - 10:45 AM Sheraton New Orleans / Napoleon B1

Nicole Joseph

Session: What Journalism was and what Journalism is: Tracing the Evolution of Journalistic Practice over Time

Title: *Does Medium Matter? It Depends. Exploring the Role of Media Type and Organizational Mores on Journalistic Accountability*

Division: Mass Communication

Abstract: *This study examines the relationship between medium theory and journalistic accountability. It explores the roles that the Internet and other vehicles for disseminating news and information play in journalists' abilities to demonstrate accountability through the printing and broadcasting of error corrections. The results suggest that the online news medium does not, as speculated, inherently threaten journalistic ethics, and that organizational standards often "matter" more in the performance of accountability than the journalistic medium.*

Friday, November 18th

12:30 PM - 1:45 PM Sheraton New Orleans / Napoleon B3

William Barley (with Professor Paul Leonardi, and Jeffrey Treem)

Session: Examining Voices of Experts in Organizations: What Organizational Communication Can Contribute to the Study of Expertise

Title: *Information Triage: Evaluating Expertise to Support Distributed Collaboration*

Division: Organizational Communication

Abstract: *How do individuals evaluate the expertise of unfamiliar others? We introduce the concept of "evaluative expertise," - expertise at evaluating whether someone has expertise - and present an ethnographic study of a nursing team at a children's hospital who developed skills to accurately evaluate the contributory*

expertise of outside practitioners' who want to transfer patients into the hospital. We unearth the communicative practices comprising evaluative expertise and argue they are paramount for successful distributed collaboration.

12:30 PM - 1:45 PM Sheraton New Orleans / Napoleon B3

Jeffrey Treem (with Professor Paul Leonardi, and William Barley)

Session: Examining Voices of Experts in Organizations: What Organizational Communication Can Contribute to the Study of Expertise

Title: *The Discursive Construction of Expertise: Implications for Interorganizational Communication*

Division: Organizational Communication

Abstract: *This paper explores how Discourses of expertise shape interorganizational communication. Data from six geographically-distinct product development centers interacting with a common offshore center in India show that initial talk about engineer's expertise at the offshore center created broad Discourses regarding what work engineers shared, and consequently, the value the Indian engineers could contribute to product development. Emergent Discourses cut across geographic centers, indicating the power of local communication practices to shape macro-level organizational outcomes.*

2:00 PM - 3:15 PM Sheraton New Orleans / Evergreen

Xiao (Angela) Wu

Session: Online Political Deliberation Processes

Title: *Considering Online Public Debate in Authoritarian Contexts: The Internet and Cultivation of Civic Competence for Democracy*

Division: Political Communication

Abstract: *Existing Internet research in liberal-democracies tends to apply a deliberative model that values disagreements and debate, whereas studies of Internet communication in authoritarian regimes tend to appropriate academic resources in online activism research, which focus on freedom of expression and the community-building of subversive groups. Against this distinction, this paper proposes to focus on the underexplored online debate in authoritarian contexts, where the Internet may serve as an unprecedented setting in which public debate is learned and practiced. Citizenship studies are drawn to argue for the significance of the cultivation of civic competences beyond procedural democracy. This new research perspective is illustrated by studying the contingently developed Chinese normative debate culture and its political implications. The case study helps formulate three steps to guide further empirical investigation on public disagreements/debate in cyberspace under authoritarian rule.*

3:30 PM - 4:45 PM Sheraton New Orleans / Nottaway

Brooke Foucault Welles (with undergraduate Nick Merrill, and Professor Noshir Contractor)

Session: Groups, Teams, and Organizations

Title: *Virtual Group Commitment: An Examination of Factors Leading to Group Donations in Second Life*

Division: Organizational Communication

Abstract: *Virtual worlds with fully-functioning economies are increasingly becoming fertile grounds for profitable business ventures. As entrepreneurship moves into massively-multiplayer online worlds, groups of individuals are engaging in a style of commerce analogous to real world organizations. In this study, we examine how closely this analogy between organizations and virtual groups holds by examining predictors of group commitment. We tested real-world predictors for organizational commitment, including access to resources and various network measures, to see if these factors served as predictors for group commitment in Second Life. Results suggest that real-world models of organizational behavior may apply equally well in virtual worlds, despite differences in immediacy in virtual environments.*

Saturday, November 19th

12:30 PM - 1:45 PM Sheraton New Orleans / Napoleon A3

Emily Goodmann

Session: Cultural Identity Has Always Been Mediated: Continuities and Transformations of Culture from Newspapers to New Media

Title: *Designing and Surveying Wired Landscapes: The Chicago Telephone Directory, 1886-1916*

Division: Critical and Cultural Studies

Abstract: *Despite the impressive amount of scholarship completed regarding telephonic technology during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, missing from these accounts is the telephone's peripheral guide: the telephone directory. A historical focus on the telephone directory offers new insights into the history of mediated social and technological spaces afforded by the networked infrastructure of telephony. Between 1886 and 1916, the telephone directory exists as a dynamic example of a medium within the telephone system that afforded its users similar conceptual freedom of movement across space. Contrary to the telephone's impact on its users' perception of spatial annihilation, the telephone directory instead quelled those anxieties by mitigating, rather than annihilating, local spatial intricacies. This essay shows that the confluence of telephonic innovation, institutional printing strategies, and a burgeoning consumer culture in Chicago during the turn of the twentieth century find a nexus in the information design of the telephone directory. While distributed to incentivize telephone subscriptions and use, the telephone directory also became, in practice, a survey tool for its users. Modern Chicagoans used the directory in novel ways empowering themselves to survey and acclimate rapidly changing urban, social, technological, and economic landscapes.*

3:30 PM - 4:45 PM Sheraton New Orleans / Napoleon D3

Brooke Foucault Welles (with Professor Noshir Contractor)

Session: Top Papers in Human Communication and Technology: Self and Other Online

Title: *From Strangers to Friends Online: A Mixed-Methods Investigation of Friendship Formation on the Internet*

Division: Human Communication and Technology

Abstract: *Friendship is a major component of online worlds and constitutes a significant portion of social interaction within them. This study examines the emergence of friendship ties in the online world Second Life by combining Monge & Contractor's multi-theoretical multilevel network modeling with results of qualitative interviews conducted with users of Second Life. Results suggest that online friendship formation can be predicted by some of the network effects that predict friendship formation in the offline world, including a preference for proximity and a tendency towards balance. Other network effects, including no preference for age homophily and a tendency for low-status individuals to attract friends, are unique to the online world.*

Sunday, November 20th

9:30 AM - 10:45 AM Sheraton New Orleans / Evergreen

Ericka Menchen-Trevino

Session: Communication as a Means of Constructing Political Identity

Title: *Ideological 'deviants' and selective exposure to political communication*

Division: Political Communication

Abstract: *In today's media environment, technology users in the developed world can more easily satisfy their content preferences than they could before digital media became a near-ubiquitous presence in daily life. Scholars of political communication have long been concerned that citizens may retreat to enclaves made up of the politically like-minded, or, more recently that they may retreat from politics altogether. Studies of selective exposure to political communication have generally focused on a one-dimensional conception of the U.S. electorate where citizens range from liberal Democrats to moderates, to conservative Republicans. Those who deviate from this system are sometimes ignored as politically ignorant or arbitrarily lumped in with traditional partisans. A growing body of research on political ideology in the general public undermines the assumption that a one-dimensional left/right scale, let alone a binary variable adequately characterize the U.S. electorate. How can theories of mediated selective exposure take this more complex reality into account? This research provides a first step toward addressing this question by examining six carefully selected cases of such ideologically "deviant" citizens' political information gathering during the 2010 midterm election campaign using observed real-world web data as well as surveys and in-depth interviews. The way these citizens understand the political landscape, gather information across media, and make vote choices is examined and implications for research on selective exposure to political communication are discussed.*

MTS Faculty Presentations

Thursday, November 17th

3:30 PM - 4:45 PM Sheraton New Orleans / Borgne

Pablo Boczkowski (with Eugenia Mitchelstein)

Session: From Mapping, Clicking, Emailing and Blogging to the Politics of Play on GameTrailers.com

Title: *Clicking, Emailing, and Commenting: How Users Take Advantage of Different Forms of Interactivity on Online News Sites*

Division: Mass Communication

Abstract: *This study examines the uptake of multiple interactive features on news sites. It looks at the thematic composition of the most clicked, most emailed, and most commented stories during periods of heightened and routine political activity. Results show that (a) during the former period, the most commented stories were more likely to be focused on political, economic and international topics (or "public affairs" news) than the most clicked and most emailed articles. (b) The three types of interactivity exhibited a greater presence of public affairs content during the period of heightened political activity than during its routine counterpart. (c) As the period of heightened political activity unfolded, consumers' propensity to click on, email, and comment about public affairs stories increased.*

Sunday, November 20th

8:00 AM – 9:15 AM Sheraton New Orleans / Bayside C

Ellen Wartella (with Post-Doc Alexis Lauricella)

Session: Parenting, Caregiving, and Media: Young Children and their Media Environment

Title: *Technology in Preschools: How Different Preschool Programs Use and View Technology in the Classroom*

Division: Mass Communication

Abstract: *Teachers of preschool-aged children (N=674) completed an online survey about media use in their classrooms. Teachers taught in one of 4 preschool programs (Head Start, Universal Pre-K, Preschool, or Center-based Childcare). Teachers' attitudes towards media, access, and use of media differed as a function of preschool program type. This study provides insight into how childcare settings differ in their media environments and notes the almost universal use of audio technologies over digital technologies and televisions.*

Alumni Presentations

Friday, November 18th

2:00 PM - 3:15 PM Sheraton New Orleans / Napoleon B1

Tom Ksiazek (Assistant Professor, Villanova University)

Session: Top Papers in Mass Communication Research

Title: *Partisan Audience Polarization: Beyond Selective Exposure*

Division: Mass Communication

Abstract: *This study extends the body of research on partisan audience polarization beyond selective exposure. The author uses network analysis to explore patterns of avoidance, along with similarities in broad patterns of media use among "Red" and "Blue" audiences using cross-platform, metered exposure data from Nielsen's TV/Internet Convergence Panel. The results suggest that audiences of partisan news outlets do not display polarized consumption patterns and actually share a great deal in common beyond their news exposure.*

Saturday, November 19th

12:30 PM – 1:45 PM Sheraton New Orleans / Grand Ballroom D/E

Su Jung Kim (Post-Doc, Integrated Marketing Communication, Northwestern University)

Session: Roundtable on Research in Progress 10: Technology and Social Change II

Title: *Cross-platform media use and its political implications*

Division: Roundtables on Research in Progress

Abstract: *The relationship between media use and its political implications has been an important topic in political communication. However, much previous research has examined the political effect of media use within a medium-specific context, not fully considering the fact that people use multiple media outlets as their sources of news and information. This study investigated the patterns of exposure to multiple media outlets (i.e., media repertoires) and the differences in user background characteristics, the levels of total news consumption, political interest, political knowledge, and voter turnout of each media repertoire group. The preliminary results showed that there are five distinctive media repertoires: TV-oriented Entertainment Fans, Internet Maniacs, Traditional News Seekers, Tabloid Newspaper Readers, and Cable Junkies. This study also found significant differences in age, gender, education, and political variables among representative users of different media repertoire groups.*