

Journals review

TELOS. Cuadernos de Comunicación, Tecnología y Sociedad. La investigación en comunicación política: tendencias actuales, retos y problemas

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Under the coordination of Professor María José Canel, the central Dossier of this edition of *TELOS*

analyses the current trends, challenges and problems in political communication research. Among other articles, of note is the one by Javier del Rey on the challenges of the internet in political communication, questioning the social and intellectual environment that should be promoted by the internet in today's society. In his article, Víctor Sampedro tackles the ambivalent effects of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) on political communication, highlighting the fracturing of the common public sphere, the internationalisation of content and audiences and the techno-political empowerment of citizens. Maarek describes the international evolution of research into political communication and Pere-Oriol Costa describes the route taken by Spanish academics, noting some ideas that go beyond the "voluntarism" that has developed to date, driving research in political communication. The article by Bouza provides a methodological approach to research into political communication. And, to finish, John B. Thompson provides an interesting introduction to the perils of "mediated visibility" that has transformed relations between visibility and power. Outside the *Dossier*, we can also find an article by Manuel Castells on relations between communication and power in online society and an article by Richeri on the new challenges of communication research.

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<<http://info.telefonica.es/index/revistatelos.html>>

**Réseaux. Communication - Technologie - Société
Parler politique en ligne**

Vol. 26, no. 150, 2008

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In this edition of the French journal *Réseaux* we find a monograph dedicated to the new forms of politics related to new information and communication technologies (ICTs), especially the internet, and the challenges arising with a new kind of participatory or deliberative democracy. The monograph starts with a bibliographical review of studies on political discussion online, noting the need to research further into the reasons that lead citizens to take part in online discussions. Based on a specific case, Benvegna and Brugidou analyse the resources that facilitate the transformation of a series of individual discourses into public political proposals that can be considered collectively acceptable. The article by Mathieu Chaput proposes an alternative theory to the Habermas model of participation that serves to analyse the characteristics of online discussions, the model of critical discussion produced by the pragmatic-dialectic theory. The articles by Desquinabo and Kies analyse, from different perspectives, the discussion forums of political parties, such as the French *Jeunes populaires* and *Désirs d'avenir*, the latter by socialist Ségolène Royal, or the forum of a small Italian political party, Radicali Italiani. Finally, Patrice Flichy invites us to reflect on the relationship between democracy and internet and the need for media literacy in traditional political parties.

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<<http://reseaux.revuesonline.com/>>

**European Journal of ePractice
E-Participation**
No. 7, March 2009
ISSN: 1988-625X



The seventh edition of the *European Journal of ePractice*, a journal financed by the European Commission, takes advantage of the elections for the European Parliament in June 2009 to tackle the new forms of political participation encouraged by new technologies and outlines, throughout eight articles, the state of democracy and participation in the European continent. Among the different articles that go to make up this monograph, we can highlight the one by Smith and Dalakouridov, where the authors provide a historical and theoretical review of the challenges and benefits of e-participation. Continuing along these descriptive lines, Panopoulou, Tambouris and Tarabanis analyse the progress and current trends of e-participation in Europe, concluding that most activities have focused on areas such as providing information, deliberation and consultation. We can also find an evaluation of projects on e-participation in the article by Aichholzer and Hilmar, and an analysis of specific cases, such as e-consultation, in an article by Tomkova that questions whether e-consultation, rather than being an e-participation practice used to improve civic commitment in drawing up public policy, is not more useful as a façade for political correction in a new space. Other articles analyse e-participatory budgets ("Beyond Theory: e-Participatory Budgeting and its Promises for eParticipation") and e-voting, describing the objectives, measures, procedures and technology used and the results obtained by an e-voting experience in the Swiss canton of Neuchâtel.

Version available online:
<<http://www.epractice.eu/journal/volume/7>>

Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication (JCMC)
Vol. 14, no. 2, January 2009
ISSN: 1083-6101



Of the journals that have communication via the internet as one of their main areas of interest, the JCMC is one of the oldest. Since 1995, promoted by the International Communication Association, we can find some reviews of research on the role of the internet in political and electoral campaigns. In the last edition of January 2009 two articles actually stand out concerning this theme. On the one hand, Sonja Utz presents us with a study of the role of the main social network on the internet in Holland (Hyves) in the last election campaign. By means of observation and a basic statistical treatment of interactivity between users and political candidates within the "virtual world", the author arrives at an interesting preliminary conclusion: based on online interaction, voters with *a priori* different points of view can end up rating certain candidates highly. On the other hand, in the same journal we can find a collective article by Marko M. Skoric, Deborah Ying and Ying Ng that questions the relationship between citizens' levels of political participation and their online social capital. By carrying out telephone surveys, they suppose that the more people use the internet, the more they will tend to participate in politics. Although the findings are not definitive, they conclude that the trend does not refute the hypothesis and that, in any case, it can be said that political participation via the internet is a growing form of sociability.

Version available online:
<<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/117979306/home?CRETRY=1&SRETRY=0>>

Social Science Computer Review

Vol. 26, no. 3, autumn 2008

ISSN: 0894-4393



Since 1983 SAGE, as part of its range of journals on the media and new technology, has offered this journal with a clear interdisciplinary approach. Although initially it focused on the world of computation, since the appearance of the internet this has been one of its most relevant themes. In the last edition of autumn 2008,

we can find two articles directly related to aspects of electoral political communication on the internet. Firstly, we have an enterprising article by Kevin A. Pirch that places us in the setting of the primary elections for the Democrat candidature to the US Senate for the state of Connecticut. In this work, the aim is to show the potential for success of a network of blogs, where opinions were given concerning an unknown hopeful, who at first started off with few possibilities compared with another candidate with a recognised track record. In the same edition of the journal, of particular note is the article by Vassia Gueorguieva on the impact of online social networks such as MySpace and YouTube in the full electoral year that was 2006 in the US. According to the author, in this period there was an accelerated increase in internet use by all candidates but especially those representing the Democrat party, which meant that, shortly afterwards, Republican candidates also gave in to these new practices. The author attempts to argue that there is a gradual displacement of the strategic centrality of electoral campaigns to the world of online social networks.

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**Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties
Internet Surveys and National Election Studies:
A Symposium**

Vol. 18, no. 4, 2008. ISSN: 1745-7289



This edition of the *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* is particularly interesting because it is a monograph focusing on the dimension known as *Internet polling*, i.e. surveys of election behaviour online. This edition is a summary compendium of the results arising from a prior symposium held in Essex (England) on this area. It contains general considerations on the potential of online surveys which, well optimised, would overtake traditional face to face and telephone surveys in terms of quantity, costs, speed and even possibilities for experimentation. Within this corollary of experiences, of note are the methodological contributions such as that by Vavreck and Rivers, who explain the improvements that online surveys are meant to bring compared with some characteristics of more conventional polling; as well as the article by Atkeson and Tafoya, which shows how a combination of polls via ordinary post and online can have certain advantages in guaranteeing representative results in general, although online respondents had features of higher social status. Also of interest is the article by Gibson and McAllister, who discuss the epistemological deficiencies of online surveys carried out during the Australian general elections. In general, this edition allows us to examine a highly specific area of research and its most recent lines of investigation.

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