Civic Media

EMAC 4372

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Spring 2010   Office Number: 1.502

M,W 2:00-3:15 CB3 1.306   Office Hours: M 1:00-2:00, W 3:30-4:30

dparry@utdallas.edu   & by appointment

Course Description:

Unlike prior forms of broadcast media, the digital network distributes the means of production and dissemination within the populace as a whole, replacing one to many communication with the many-to-many. While by no means egalitarian, the shift away from broadcast media to a more distributed form opens up a range of possibilities for communities to leverage the digital network and computational technologies to not only to communicate with each other but to work to solve their own problems.

In this class we are going to work to understand how the digital network can foster civic engagement, and be purposed to solve a wide range of citizen concerns.

To accomplish this goal, the class is divided into three sections: theory, research, and practice. In the first part of class we will read some of the key works on community building and the media's role in empowering/disempowering citizens, with particular focus on the effect the digital network is having. Second, we will look at particular examples of Citizen Media and research what groups are doing, what has worked, and what has not. Finally the class will work in groups to make their own "Civic Media" projects.

Required Texts:

(available at Off-Campus Books)

> *Here Comes Everybody* Clay Shirky

(also required)

> The Internet. Seriously. Most of what we do in this class requires that you have a strong internet connection that you can access frequently. Consider this a "textbook cost" for the class.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Participation (35%): This is a crucial part of class. Students are expected to come to class on time, prepared, having completed the assigned reading and writing, and ready to contribute their thoughts to class discussions, to listen seriously and respectfully to the thoughts of others, and to participate in all in-class activities. I strongly urge you to attend every class, as most of the work done in class is necessary for successful completion of the course. Only three absences are permitted, and these should be used for illness or emergencies (i.e., this does not mean three absences plus absences for illness etc.). Missing more than three classes will affect your grade. More than five absences can result in failing the course. If you need to miss class for religious reasons, please speak to me ahead of time. Absences for religious purposes do not count against the permitted number (as long as prior notification is given). Lateness is also unacceptable; if you arrive late to class you will be

marked as absent. Leaving early also counts as an absence. Your primary responsibility is to be in class and fully present.

Research Projects (30%): A significant part of this course will involve researching about and learning from existing projects. At different times throughout the semester groups will be responsible for researching examples of civic media and presenting them to the class. This will involve looking at what tools these endeavors use, understanding how they use them; looking into failed projects, understanding what caused them to fail; and investigating successful projects which can serve as a model for your group projects. Consider this collaborative research done by the entire class to help prepare for doing the final project.

Social Media (10%): Throughout the course of the semester we will be using social media to further our investigations and conversations about the matter. Part of your grade will involve joining in these conversations.

Final Project (25%): Students will work in groups to produce their own civic media project. Details of this will be handed out in class.

Course Website:

The course website for this class can we found at <http://emaccivicmedia.pbworks.com/>. You should get in the habit of checking this regularly as I will post suggestions and thoughts about the readings here, as well as links to other things that might interest the class. The syllabus can be found here as well, and any changes to the syllabus will be posted here. If you forget the web address you can always find it from <http://www.outsidethetext.com>, an easier url to remember.

How to Reach Me:

The best way to reach me is by email <dparry@utdallas.edu> or you can find me online at <http://www.outsidethetext.com>. I check email frequently throughout the day. If you email me and do not receive a response within 48 hours (usually I will get back to you within a day), please feel free to email me again (I might not have received your first one) and give me a reminder. I promise not to consider this harassing.

My office hours are Monday 1:00-2:00 and Wednesday 3:30-4:30 (or by appointment—I am frequently on campus outside these hours). My office is ATEC 1.502.

Please refer to coursebook.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies for further policies.

<u>Class Schedule</u>

Week One

January 18th

Week Two

January 23rd

- "What is Civic Media" MIT Talk on Civic Media

January 25th

- Howard Rheingold, "How to Recognize the Future When it Lands on You."
- Howard Rheingold, "The New Power of Collaboration"
- Ethan Zuckerman, "Four Questions about Civic Media"

Week Three

January 30th

- Jurgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere an Encyclopedia Article"
- Benedicit Anderson, "Imagined Communities"

February 1st

- Robert Putnam "Tuning In, Turning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America."
- Robert Putnam "Bowling Alone"
- Marshall McLuhan, "The Medium is the Message" (aka "The Medium is the *Social* Message")

Week Four

February 6th

- Paul Starr, "The Opening of the Public Sphere 1600-1860"
- Center for Social Media, "Public Media 2.0: Dynamic, Engaged Publics"

February 8th

- Yochai Benkler, "Emergence of the Networked Public Sphere" Chp 7. in *The Wealth of Networks*

Week Five

February 13th

- Clay Shirky *Here Comes Everybody*

February 15th

- Clay Shirky *Here Comes Everybody*

Week Six

February 20th

- Group Work in Class

February 22nd

- Group Work in Class

Week Seven

February 27th

- Beth Simone Noveck "Wiki-Government"
- Sunlight Foundation

February 29th

- Global Voices/Ushahidi/Witness HUB

Week Eight

March 5th

- Group Examples

March 7th

- Group Examples

Spring Break

Week Nine

March 19th

- Interview with Andrew Slack "How Dumbledore's Army is Changing the World" Part 1, and 2
- Jane McGonigal, "This is not a Game"

March 21st

- Pew Research Trend Data
- Eszter Hargittai, "The Digital Reproduction of Inequality"
- Jessie Daniels, "Race, Digital Divides & Mobile Technology: What the Research Tells Us."
- Jessie Daniels, "Race, Racism & the Internet. 10 Things Sociologists Should be Researching."

Week Ten

March 26th

- Group Tools

March 28th

- Group Tools

Week Eleven

April 9th

- Learning from Failures

April 11th

- Mimicking Successes

Week Twelve

April 16th

- "Streetbook" -John Pollock
- "New Media and the People Powered Uprisings." - Zeynep Tufekci
- "The Middle Ground Between Technology and Revolutions." -Aaron Bady

April 18th

- Nathan Jurgenson, "Welcome to the Augmented Revolution"
- Alexis Madgrigal, "A Guide to the Occupt Wall Street API"

Week Thirteen

April 23rd

- Quinn Norton "Anonymous 101: Introduction to the Lulz"
- Brookings Institute. "Hacktivism, Vigilantism, and Collective Action in a Digital Age."

April 25th

- Jay Rosen "Occupy PressThink: Tim Pool"

Week Fourteen

<u>**Class Schedule**</u>

April 30th
- Group Final

May 2nd
- Group Final

Week Fifteen