

Political Communication: Research Methods

POLS 418

MWF 10:00-10:50

Drew Seib

February 7, 2011

Goals

- ▶ Importance of political talk on the internet
- ▶ Talk about Mutz and Wojcieszak's results
- ▶ Start thinking about political communication project

Before we get started...

- ▶ For Wednesday read Johnson et al., 2008 (Skip Delli Carpini et al., 2004)
- ▶ Also going to skip Kaid Chapter 4
- ▶ Read Marcus (2003) for Friday.

Reinvigorating Democracy

- ▶ The authors begin by stating that scholars have hoped that the Internet would reinvigorate democracy.
 - ▶ What is the authors' concern?

Reinvigorating Democracy

- ▶ The authors begin by stating that scholars have hoped that the Internet would reinvigorate democracy.
 - ▶ What is the authors' concern?
 - ▶ Why might the Internet be a solution to their concern?

Reinvigorating Democracy

- ▶ The authors begin by stating that scholars have hoped that the Internet would reinvigorate democracy.
 - ▶ What is the authors' concern?
 - ▶ Why might the Internet be a solution to their concern?
 - ▶ Given what you read in this article do you think the Internet is helping to reinvigorate democracy?

Reinvigorating Democracy

- ▶ The authors begin by stating that scholars have hoped that the Internet would reinvigorate democracy.
 - ▶ What is the authors' concern?
 - ▶ Why might the Internet be a solution to their concern?
 - ▶ Given what you read in this article do you think the Internet is helping to reinvigorate democracy?
- ▶ How do the authors go about examining the Internet's potential to reinvigorate democracy?

Talk or Discussion

- ▶ What do the authors mean when they refer to talk and discussion? Are they the same thing?

Talk or Discussion

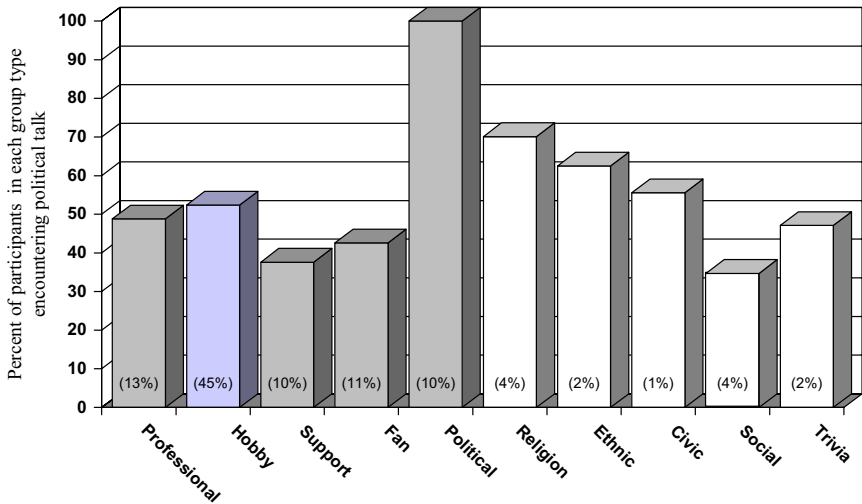
- ▶ What do the authors mean when they refer to talk and discussion? Are they the same thing?
- ▶ Which do the authors examine?

Talk or Discussion

- ▶ What do the authors mean when they refer to talk and discussion? Are they the same thing?
- ▶ Which do the authors examine?
- ▶ How do they examine political talk?

Talk or Discussion

- ▶ What do the authors mean when they refer to talk and discussion? Are they the same thing?
- ▶ Which do the authors examine?
- ▶ How do they examine political talk?
- ▶ What is the weakness in the way they examine political talk?



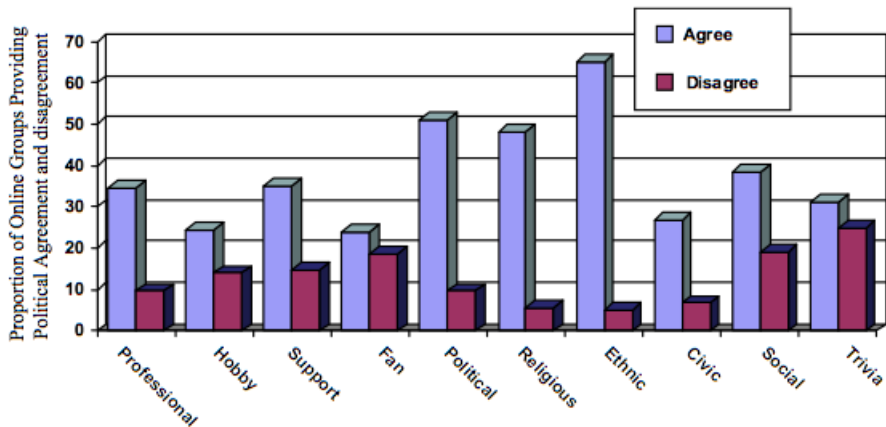
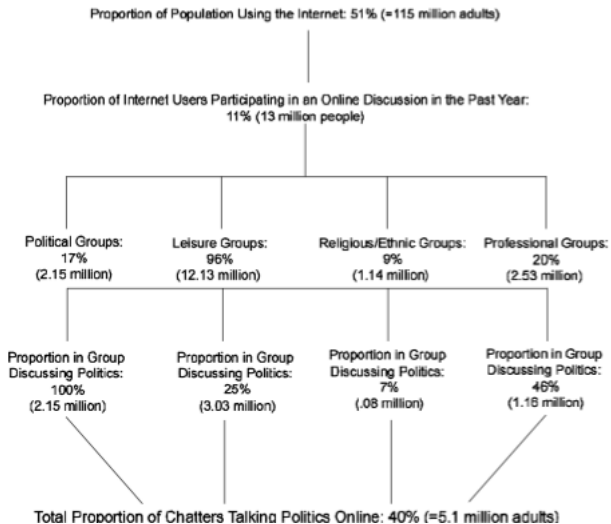


Table 1 Hierarchical Linear Model of Exposure to Disagreement in Online Group Political Talk Occurs

	Coefficient (SE)
(Intercept)	2.74*** (.032)
<i>Individual-Level Fixed Effects</i>	
Age	-.01** (.00)
Education	-.03 (.02)
Gender (male)	-.01 (.07)
Married	-.25** (.07)
Income	-.00 (.00)
Race (White)	.09 (.08)
Republican	.04(.01)
Democrat	-.14 (.09)
Strength of Party Identification	-.11 (.08)
<i>Online Group-Level Fixed Effects</i>	
Professional Online Groups	.22 (.13)
Leisure Online Groups	.33** (.09)
Religious/Ethnic Online Groups	-.25 (.17)
<i>Random Effect</i>	
Variance	.53
Chi-square	1337.19***
Level-1 error	.73

Note: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. P-values are two-tailed tests. Estimate is the result of a Hierarchical Linear Model with Political Group as the reference category.



Trust the findings?

- ▶ Do you think the authors' findings depict what is occurring on the Internet?

Thinking about the communication project...

- ▶ The authors find that some political talk does occur on the internet. However, they rely on a survey of what respondents reported being exposed to, which means that we don't really know what going on on the internet.
 - ▶ If we wanted to go out on the internet and explore whether there is political talk, what would we look for?
 - ▶ In other words, how do we know it when we see it?

Thinking about the communication project...Continued

- ▶ Need to form groups of 2 (One group will have 3).
- ▶ Picking Topics