

**Authorship, Intention, and Orientations:  
How Bloggers and Their Readers Create Participatory Opportunity**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The widespread availability of digital media production tools has led to a dramatic increase in the production of media content by amateurs. Most such content fails to become part of the mainstream media discourse; however, political blogs have lately been legitimized and co-opted by the mainstream press. While much has been written about the blogger as a content producer and blog content as a part of political discourse, little has been written about the nature of the relationship between bloggers and their readers in this amateur-driven, decentralized context. Using survey data from bloggers and their readers, this study examines the relationship between the collective and expressive political participation of political blog readers and their motivations for blog use and perceptions of the blog community, and bloggers' perceptions of the community and their own participation.

Weblogs are becoming the bridge between the individual and the community in cyberspace: a place where one can self-publicise and self-describe, but also learn, debate and engage in community. In other words, weblogs are not only a representative sample of mass amateurisation, they're becoming enmeshed in the very structures of information-retrieval, community interaction and media distribution themselves. (Coates, 2003)

Since the introduction of affordable personal computers and desktop publishing software in the 1980s, there has been a consistent trend in media toward amateurization of production. Prior to the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, examples of this tended to be seen as novelties – the handheld visuals of *The Blair Witch Project* became the gimmick that sold the film, rather than an artifact of its extremely low budget. The rise of blogging, particularly of blogs that deal primarily with politics, marks the first distinct production sector reliant on amateur tools that is subsequently taken seriously by its professional media counterparts.

The attention given to political blogs by both traditional journalists and academics often centers on issues of party politics and electoral campaigns (see Lawson-Borders & Kirk, 2005; Packer, 2004; Trammell, Williams, Postelnicu, & Landreville, 2006). Blogs also are frequently discussed as extensions of the blogger – what Coates (2003) describes as the differentiation of the “homepage (as a place)” and the “weblog (as a person)” (see Hara & Estrada, 2005 for more on the individualistic approach to blogs) – without much regard for the character of the community that may develop through the blog. These approaches overlook two rich and vibrant aspects of the political blogosphere.

First, though many of the highest-trafficked political blogs are explicitly partisan – such as Daily Kos<sup>1</sup>, whose founder envisions it as a key part of a nascent “Democratic noise machine” (Wallace-Wells, 2006) – or focus primarily on discussing the news of the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.dailykos.com>

day, others are driven more by particular issues or causes. The authors of blogs such as Bitch Ph.D.<sup>2</sup> and Black Feminism<sup>3</sup> tend to write about gender issues; TalkLeft<sup>4</sup> provides “liberal coverage of crime-related political and injustice news”; two different sites called Stop the ACLU<sup>5</sup> seek to provide a specific counter-force to the ACLU. While these sites all have significant links to and from the more party-focused segments of the political blogosphere, their own content is driven by the pursuit of a particular type of social change.

Lacking some of the physical and resource restrictions of traditional social movement groups – most notably the need for physical proximity of members and the overhead costs associated with office space, print publications, etc. – blog communities may find themselves better situated both to act quickly and to organize nationally. For instance, the community at a site called Firedoglake – less than two years old, but something like middle-aged in blog terms – spent some time during the 2006 Connecticut Senate race doing battle with NARAL, Planned Parenthood and the Human Rights Campaign over their support for Joe Lieberman.<sup>6</sup> The community, which had been pursuing progressive social policy change since its inception, was active in organizing postcard mailings and decentralized phone banks, all conducted using the blog to distribute information and members’ own initiative as a primary resource.

In this paper I will look at the potential of blogs to be venues for collective political and social action, through the ways in which readers engage with the bloggers

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<sup>2</sup> <http://bitchphd.blogspot.com>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.blackfeminism.org>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.talkleft.com>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.stoptheaclu.com>, <http://www.stoptheaclu.org>

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.firedoglake.com/2006/07/11/an-open-letter-to-democrats-from-planned-parenthood/>

and each other in the communities that form via political blogs. It is not just media production that has become markedly easier thanks to the tools of the digital age, but distribution as well, and that means it is much easier to spread a political message far and wide than it was a decade ago. For example, one of the Stop the ACLU sites has, in about two years, gathered a network of over 4000 members, including people “from all 50 states and 12-14 foreign countries,” with its site as its primary means of promotion.

The important question of how bloggers and readers interact to produce a community with the potential for collective action is one that has not previously been addressed in detail. Indeed, even the most recent “census” by BlogAds, the company which provides much of the syndicated advertising run by major and not-quite-major blogs, only addresses readers’ motivations in terms of blog content consumption (BlogAds, 2006). This study provides a basis for understanding how the interaction of bloggers and their readers, as well as interaction within a reader community, may impact the American political scene at a time when volatile issues such as global warming, immigration and same-sex marriage are rallying activists both online and offline. To begin, I will review some of the literature dealing with political activists’ use of the Internet to communicate and take action.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### *Activists and Activism Online*

The ability of the Internet to boost civic engagement and social mobilization has been examined from a variety of perspectives, ranging from traditional protests to new forms of activism based on digital communication to pop culture fandom (see Scardaville, 2005). Salter (2003), positing the Internet as a version of Habermas’s public

sphere, laid out a broad theoretical approach. He identifies the Internet's potential as "a foundational medium for civil society" as growing out of a traditional media system in which structural constraints – particularly those related to money and power – keep mass communication from being used to create a true public sphere. There are also important concerns dealing with the nature of the Internet as a communication medium. Unlike television, newspapers and the other media of traditional mass communication, the Internet operates as a meta-medium, allowing different forms of communication – including one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many – to move within its structures (Rosenzweig, 1998). Because of this, the Internet is best thought of not as a metaphorical village or highway, but as a multi-layered metaphor for the world itself.

Given the ability of the Internet to move information and connect people in previously difficult or impossible ways, theories about the ways in which people interact need to be rethought. Bimber and his colleagues (2005) note that existing collective action theory relies heavily on the notion of formal organization and the availability of resources. They see new media – and the Internet in particular – as inherently expanding the field of how collective action happens. As they note:

For several years researchers have been reporting instances of collective action employing new technologies of communication and information that appear to depart from some of [the] expectations of traditional theory, especially where discrete free-riding decisions and the role of organization are concerned. (Bimber et al., 2005, 369)

The examples they cite include Iraqis using text messages to anonymously report criminal activity to local authorities; the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which used e-mail in order to reduce overhead and increase accessibility while operating in third world countries; and the "Battle in Seattle" protests against the World Trade

Organization, in which disparate groups used the Internet to form a temporary coalition of activists with many different concerns but one big target in common.

For those WTO protesters, the Internet provided an outlet not just to connect with other like-minded activists, but also to obtain information that the traditional media could not or would not provide. It was an example of the Internet being “deployed in a democratic and emancipatory manner by a growing planetary citizenry,” which continued into the early 2003 protests against the then-looming Iraq War (Kahn & Kellner, 2004). The Internet – particularly via blogs and listservs – was an important tool in motivating discussion of the proposed war and what could be done about it, as well as in actually mobilizing people the world over to protest against it (Nah, Veenstra, & Shah, 2006). However, its most important function in the phenomenon may have been to counteract the suppressive effect of traditional media, especially television, on the likelihood of protesting (Hwang, Schmierbach, Paek, Gil de Zuniga, & Shah, 2006). Those war opponents who got most of their news about Iraq from television sources were less likely to protest or to see the cause of the protest as winnable – the consumption of news from Internet sources and discussion of the issue via the Internet negated this effect and allowed those who felt alienated by the coverage in the traditional media to see themselves as legitimate participants in the process.

#### *Blogs and Civic, Social and Political Participation*

The mass amateurization of online publishing prompted by the development of easy-to-use blog software has preceded the rise of a much wider and more visible activist class on the Internet. This has been accomplished in large part by lowering the barrier to entry in creating a “socially-interactive” web presence (Kahn & Kellner, 2004). Even the kinds of groups that had long used the web to get information out – notably parties, campaigns and formal social movement organizations – were able to benefit from these changes by virtue of relying on newly available software tools. Howard Dean’s presidential

campaign was the first major campaign to successfully take advantage of these tools, launching its blog about a year and a half before the 2004 general election (Kerbel & Bloom, 2005). Between its launch and the 2004 New Hampshire primary election, the Dean blog contained many of things that are seen as typical of political blogs – news excerpts, commentary, updates on the “horse race” – but also contained a significant amount of information about participation in the campaign and activism on the issues that drove it, Iraq in particular. The blog also facilitated the development of an active community of Dean supporters online, who were able to use the site to discuss issues and action without necessarily having any specific guidance from the campaign. Many of the most active participants in the Dean blog have since set up their own community-driven blogs.

Blogs such as Dean’s as well as unaffiliated political sites have shown an ability to draw disaffected citizens into political participation through discussion, campaign activity and voting, among other things (Lawson-Borders & Kirk, 2005). The nature of blogs encourages the creation of grassroots networks by privileging the linking of like-minded bloggers and communities via the currency of reputation. In this way blogs are able to create social networks of activists who are geographically dispersed and who comprise a kind of “virtual public” (Wise, 2003).

The awareness of membership in this group – the development of a group identity – may be an important part of the process of turning a group of blog readers into a group of people willing to work together for social change (Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Though Putnam himself might not consider blogs to be “voluntary associations,” his claim that the feeling of connectedness to such groups is important to the formation of a democratic populace seems to suggest that a strong blog membership identity should precede participation in collective action with the blog community (2000). It is not clear, however, whether this approach, which might be seen as a version of the “hearts and

minds” theory (Leites & Wolf Jr., 1970) or if blogs, owing to their decentralized and barrierless nature, are better understood through the lens of resource mobilization (McCarthy & Zald, 1973). The traditional consideration of resource mobilization as dealing with organizers and available resources within a community seems at a glance to map well – at a smaller scale – to blog readerships. Many bloggers bring to the resource table experience as an activist, and in some cases connections to the world of formal politics and social movements. Their readers all must be on the “have” side of the digital divide to start with,<sup>7</sup> and each have resources on the micro level that they may be willing to contribute to the collective cause – be they communications expertise, social network connections, money, time, etc. The extent to which a blogger chooses to act as a community leader in this context may be the deciding factor that allows a group’s disparate resources to be brought together.

#### *Blogger-Reader Interaction*

Most research on the blog phenomenon has focused on bloggers and their acts of expression, but some work has looked at how readers use blogs, how they view bloggers and how the two groups interact. Herring and her colleagues (2004) found that blogs offer limited interactivity between the blogger and the reader – more than so a traditional web page, but less than that offered by e-mail. The asynchronous nature of control over this interaction – the blogger makes any post at any time  $t$ , the reader may only make comments in response to the post and only at time  $t + x$  – provides bloggers with a way to both initiate and dominate the discussion that occurs on their blogs. Gumbrecht (2004)

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<sup>7</sup> Though it is worth pointing out that blogs have the capacity to close one digital divide – that of the ability to express oneself online, which no longer requires more technical expertise than it takes to operate a web browser, nor requires subscription-based hosting.

takes this a step further and examines blogs as a “protected space” for the blogger, where he or she can create a discourse in which he or she controls all elements – participants, topic, tone, rhetoric, etc. However, she notes that “bloggers still exercise self-control over how they present their material in order to shield themselves from potentially harmful future interactions.” That is, social constraints are still operative in this environment, because a tyrannical blogger will soon find that he or she has no more readers or incoming links.

Not all blogs are alike in their behavior as a “protected space,” however. Blogs with higher traffic and more incoming links – “A-list” blogs – have exponentially more readers than their smaller counterparts. While they retain structural control over how content is created,<sup>8</sup> bloggers at these sites are unable to control how discussion grows out of that content simply because the discussion is too big (Herring et al., 2005). At most, they become a kind of privileged participant within the community by directly responding to comments in discussions, rather than indirectly by creating new posts to address what readers are saying.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The micro availability of resources within a relatively unbound community of readers and the status of the blogger as a discussion leader lead to two sets of propositions: that both offline and online political participation by blog readers should be related to their explicit motivation to participate, their connectedness to the group and by the blogger’s status as a participant. However, it is unclear how the two pathways to

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<sup>8</sup> Even this is partially untrue for a handful of sites, such as Daily Kos and MyDD, which allow users to post “diaries” – essentially secondary blogs within the site which get some front page exposure.

participation might differentially impact either participation in group political activities or participation in expressive activities. Thus, this research examines the relationship to four kinds of political participation by readers – online group, offline group, online expressive and offline expressive – of five constructs:

- a: their seeking of participation opportunities through blogs
- b: their feelings of community at the blogs they read
- c: bloggers' claim to have started their blog to help a cause
- d: bloggers' view of their blog as a place for collective action to be organized
- e: bloggers' own participation

Additionally, this analysis examines the extent to which online and offline forms of participation predict each other. But although offline participation opportunities often arise in blog communities, the availability of online participation opportunities – many of which fit the niche of the micro resource group well – is where the more interesting potential of blog communities lies. These are the activities that open doors for decentralized, informal groups to quickly coalesce and take action, a task which is much more difficult without the capabilities of the Internet.

## **METHODS**

The data for this project were gathered in association with a researcher who has been in contact with operators of the 300 most-linked-to<sup>9</sup> political blogs. Those 300 bloggers were asked to participate in a project in which both they and their readers would complete a survey. 154 of them expressed an interest in doing so, and were sent links to two online surveys – one for them (and any other people blogging at that site) to complete, and one for them to post for their readers. Data were collected between

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<sup>9</sup> Via [blogpulse.com](http://blogpulse.com)

November 26 and December 10, 2006, yielding completed surveys for 40 bloggers and 3909 blog readers.

Results of the blogger survey were treated as contextual variables within the reader data. Relationships among variables were analyzed using linear regression, with seven variables included as controls: years reading political blogs, hours spent reading blogs per day, traditional media exposure, education, income, age and strength of partisanship. Several indices were created prior to analysis. Readers' offline group participation was measured with an index comprised of four items, such as working for a political party or candidate (see Appendix for full question wording), with a Cronbach's alpha of .83; online group participation was measured with an index comprised of six items, such as downloading campaign material from a political web site, with an alpha of .83; offline expressive participation was measured with an index of three items, such as contacting a politician, with an alpha of .72; and online expressive participation was measured with an index of six items, such as forwarding a political e-mail to friends, with an alpha of .83. Readers' use of blogs to find ways to participate was measured with a three-item index with an alpha of .74. Bloggers' own participation was measured with an index of seven items with an alpha of .86. Lastly, readers' print news exposure was measured with a four-item index, the alpha of which was .73, while TV news exposure was measured with a three-item index having an alpha of .79. All of the non-control variables, as well as traditional media exposure, were measured on a ten-point scale.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Years spent reading political blogs, hours spent reading blogs per day and age were measured with open-ended questions. Education was measured on a seven-point range from "Some high school" to "Doctoral degree." Income was measured on a six-point range from "Less than \$20,000" to "More than \$100,000." Strength of partisanship was measured on a three-point scale including "Weak," "Moderate" and "Strong."

Relationships were analyzed using four weighted least squares regression models. Weighted regression was employed because the blogger-level contextual variables occur at different frequencies – some blogs had as few as a single reader submit responses to the reader survey, while the most responsive blog community had 1182 members submit responses. Hierarchical linear modeling is often to handle such data in which cases are grouped into contextual clusters, such as a survey data which includes information about a respondents' home towns (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992), but these data do not lend themselves to such analysis because each case is not the groups at the contextual level are not necessarily discrete. Most, if not all, respondents read blogs other than the one which they are connected to through the survey, and may even read other blogs which are included in this data collection. Weighted regression allows for different error variances across the blog groups to be accounted for (Draper & Smith, 1981).

## RESULTS

For all four dependent variables, strong relationships were found between online and offline counterparts. In the final weighted regression models, offline group participation predicted its online counterpart with a  $\beta$  of .58, and the reverse relationship was found with at  $\beta = .67$ . Offline expressive participation predicted online expression with  $\beta = .60$ , and the reverse was found at  $\beta = .66$ . All relationships were significant at the .001 level.

All four of the dependent variables also were found to have significant relationships to participation-seeking and feeling of. The betas for participation-seeking as a predictor were all positive – .25 for online group, .07 for offline group, .17 for online expressive and .10 for offline expressive. Feeling of community, however, was

positively related to both forms of group participation, but negatively related to expressive participation. It predicted online group participation with  $\beta = .05$  and offline group participation with  $\beta = .07$ , but displayed negative relationships with online and offline expression, with  $\beta = -.05$  and  $\beta = -.06$ , respectively. All relationships was significant at the .001 level, except for the prediction of offline group participation by feeling of community, which was at the .01 level.

Bloggers' participation was a significant predictor of both types of online participation by readers –  $\beta = .06$  for online group,  $\beta = .05$  for online expressive, both at the .001 level – but did not predict either form of offline participation. Additionally, neither of the measures dealing with bloggers' intentionality significantly predicted any form of reader participation. Complete regression results, including control variables, can be seen in Table 1.

## **DISCUSSION**

These findings describe two separate but intertwined processes in the development of participatory opportunities in a blog community. The results for both kinds of offline participation most likely tell us something about the kind of people who tend to come together at a particular blog. Most respondents' offline participation probably did not come as a result of their membership in the blog community, but rather from pre-existing or outside connections, attitudes or habits. The fact that the pursuit of participation opportunities via blogs is positively related to offline participation, while connectedness to the blog community is negatively related to it, supports this conclusion, since only community-related participation should be prompted by community connectedness. Similarly, the relationship of variables pertaining to the bloggers

themselves fits this framework. Blogs that are run with support for a cause in mind, or whose bloggers are themselves highly participatory have readerships that are no different than other blogs when it comes to offline participation; additionally, even those blogs that are viewed by their bloggers as places where activists convene do not have higher rates of offline participation.

Looking at the results for online participation, we find the other part of the process: the relationship to group membership. Participation-seeking and feeling of community are both positive predictors of the two online forms of participation. This outcome makes sense because we would expect a reader's online participation opportunities to come, at least in part, from the community of blog readers to which he or she belongs. Feeling connected to that community thus becomes an important part of committing to take part in those opportunities. The blogger's presence as a community leader or organizer of those opportunities implies that he or she would be taking part in some of the same activities as the readers, which accounts for the significance of blogger participation as a predictor of readers' online participation, but not as a predictor of offline participation.

Some of the differences in the antecedents of offline and online participation can also be seen in the results from the control variables. Offline participation is predicted by education, income, age and strength of partisanship, which fits existing theory on which people are most likely to engage in social action (Putnam, 2000). Print news use is also a significant predictor, but exposure to blogs – either in the long term or daily consumption – is not. When it comes to predicting online participation, however, only income and age remain significant predictors, suggesting that although micro-level resource availability

may be important online, one need not be highly educated or particularly partisan to be motivated to engage in online participation. What does seem to be important is experience with and above average consumption of blog content. This suggests that opportunities to participate online are easier to commit to and are more accessible for less educated than offline opportunities, but require some experience with the medium to be skilled enough to find and be comfortable enough to join an online political community.

The results of this study provide good news for participatory democracy. They demonstrate that blogger-led and community-driven social movements can rise in the blogosphere, and that people who might not find ways to participate offline can do so online. For individuals with a drive to pursue social and political change, blogging may provide a helpful path to bringing together a group of like-minded people who are willing to act collectively for a cause. This is not to say that one launches a blog and becomes a prominent political figure overnight – resources such as existing connections to other sites within the blogosphere are key to building a readership (Herring et al., 2005) – but that this method of community-building can both a) circumvent many of the costs associated with bringing people into an offline political or social movement, and b) work to encourage participation.

There are some limitations to what can be said about these results, most notably in terms of the sample of readers. Unlike polling the membership of a formal organization, there is no way to define a sampling frame of blog readers – even sites that allow users to register with the site also have readers who choose not to register. Because of this, any attempt to define a site's population is going to necessarily leave out people who read the site but don't post comments or otherwise interact with the blogger, other readers or the

content. Additionally, some sites have no direct participatory mechanism, meaning there would be no way to even start compiling the site's readership. This study employed a convenient sample of readers from the sites whose bloggers chose to participate, which, while not ideal, is the only to include everyone in the sampling process. At this time, political blog readers are simply too small a part of the general population to attempt to study them directly through any other means.

This study also is unable to reach any conclusions regarding causality, owing to its cross-sectional nature. Although it seems reasonable to suggest that the relationships found between the independent variables and offline participation are mostly due to blog selection effects, while the relationships found for online participation are mostly due to blog community membership effects, the data are unable to show this and can only note in what circumstances these types of participants tend to be found.

Future research in this area would be well advised to address the causality problem to more fully understand how and when blog communities can be successful as social movement groups. Simultaneous longitudinal case studies of several blog communities would provide data that show whether individuals become more active and invested in the community over time, and under what circumstances. Such a study could also shed some light on the sustainability of a decentralized social movement group in a blog community. Most political blogs are less than five years old and large-scale readerships are even younger than that – whether individuals' commitment to a cause can be maintained past the initial activities of any particular group remains to be seen. Bloggers who seek to effect political or social change through their writing and community leadership will surely keep trying to attract readers who are motivated to

participate, and their innovations may continue to change how movements should be measured.

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Table 1

	On Grp	Off Grp	On Exp	Off Exp
On/Offline counterpart	<b>.578***</b>	<b>.667***</b>	<b>.601***</b>	<b>.664***</b>
A Participation seeking via blogs	<b>.254***</b>	<b>.065***</b>	<b>.173***</b>	<b>.101***</b>
B Feeling of community	<b>.049***</b>	<b>-.046**</b>	<b>.074***</b>	<b>-.056***</b>
C Blogger motivated by politics	.003	.026	-.004	.015
D Blogger view of own blog as organizer	.023	-.008	.012	.019
E Blogger participation	<b>.055***</b>	.007	<b>.049***</b>	.022
Years visiting political blogs	<b>.037**</b>	-.021	.018	.003
Time spent reading blogs/day	<b>.052***</b>	-.021	<b>.034**</b>	.000
Print news use	<b>.053***</b>	<b>.056***</b>	<b>.063***</b>	<b>.040**</b>
TV news use	.008	.025	<b>.034**</b>	.005
Education	.003	<b>.037**</b>	-.006	.023
Income	.000	<b>.039**</b>	<b>.027*</b>	-.004
Age	<b>-.050***</b>	<b>.067***</b>	<b>.032*</b>	<b>.052***</b>
Strength of partisanship	-.009	<b>.073***</b>	.009	<b>.050***</b>
Adjusted R Square	61.0%	55.0%	60.5%	56.3%

\*\*\* p < .001, \*\* p < .01, \* p < .05

Weighted Least Squares Regression - Weighted by blogN from WLS, MOD\_1 weight\*\* .000

APPENDIX – Survey question wording

READER QUESTIONS

Readers' offline group participation:

How often during the past 12 months have you, yourself, engaged in this activity?  
(0 = Never, 10 = Very frequently)

- \* Attended a political meeting, rally, or speech.
- \* Worked for a political party or candidate.
- \* Circulated a petition for a candidate or issue.
- \* Contributed money to a political campaign.

Readers' offline expressive participation:

How often during the past 12 months have you, yourself, engaged in this activity?  
(0 = Never, 10 = Very frequently)

- \* Wrote a letter to an editor of a newspaper/magazine.
- \* Displayed a campaign button, sticker, or sign.
- \* Contacted a politician.

Readers' online group participation:

How often during the past 12 months have you, yourself, engaged in this activity?  
(0 = Never, 10 = Very frequently)

- \* Organized political activity via the Internet.
- \* Subscribed to a political e-mail list.
- \* Downloaded campaign material from a political website.
- \* Met in person with a political group I joined online.
- \* Engaged in collective action that was organized through the blog where I found the link to this survey.
- \* Engaged in collective action that was organized through another blog.

Readers' online expressive participation:

How often during the past 12 months have you, yourself, engaged in this activity?  
(0 = Never, 10 = Very frequently)

- \* Sent an e-mail to an editor of a newspaper or magazine.
- \* Used e-mail to contact a politician.
- \* Forwarded a political e-mail to friends.
- \* Signed an online petition.
- \* Forwarded a news story to friends via e-mail.
- \* Recruited friends via e-mail to support a cause or campaign.

Feeling of community:

(0 = Strongly disagree, 10 = Strongly agree)

- \* I feel like I'm part of a community at the blogs I read.

Seeking participation via blogs:

(0 = Strongly disagree, 10 = Strongly agree)

- \* I use blogs to find others who think like me.
- \* I use blogs to find ways to participate in the political process.
- \* I use blogs to organize or engage in collective action for a political or social movement.

### BLOGGER QUESTIONS

Blogger motivated by politics:

To what extent are the following motivations CURRENTLY reasons for why you blog? (0 = Not at all, 10 = Very much)

- \* To influence public opinion
- \* To help society
- \* To help your political party or cause
- \* To critique your political opponents
- \* To serve as a political watchdog

Blog as site of political organizing:

To what extent do you view... (0 = Not at all, 10 = Very much)

- \* ...your blog as a place for people to organize political action?

Blogger participation

How often, if at all, have you participated in the following types of political action? (0 = Not at all, 10 = Frequently)

- \* Signed a paper petition
- \* Contributed money to a political campaign or cause
- \* Worked on a political campaign
- \* Contacted elected officials
- \* Wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine
- \* Volunteered for a social group or cause
- \* Attended a protest or rally