**Window Dressing 2.0: Constituency-Level Web Campaigns in the 2010 UK
General Election**

Dr Benjamin Lee

2013

University of Leicester UK

bl100@le.ac.uk

Abstract

This paper explores the use of Web 2.0 tools in constituency level campaigns in the UK 2010 General Election. Specifically it examines whether Web 2.0 use was undertaken with a goal of promoting interaction with voters or was simply a ‘window dressing’ exercise. It does so using data from a nationwide survey of election agents and content analysis of a subset of campaign websites and data collected through interviews with candidates. The results show that while campaigns are keen to adopt Web 2.0 technology, they have largely eschewed the interactive potential of Web 2.0 in a replication of previous UK web campaigns that have demonstrated limited interactivity.

Key Words: Web 2.0; campaigns; Internet; interactivity; elections

Introduction

Political parties have faced a number of challenges as electorates have de-aligned and the social basis for their organisations has declined. Parties used to electorates with a clear social structure are now faced with a mass made up of complex and contradictory actors that necessitate new approaches to party politics with professional politicians at the centre (Katz & Mair, 1995; Katz, 2001). Whilst the functional role of parties as vehicles for power remains unchallenged, in terms of their role of representation and maintaining links between the rulers and the ruled, political parties are losing out to protest groups, single-issue groups, and apathy (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2000; Stoker, 2006). In part, at least, these developments can be seen as the result of the centralisation and professionalisation of parties, and in campaigns in particular (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2000). As parties leave less room for the local party members and supporters, the incentive to participate in, and engage with, campaigns is diminished (Green & Smith, 2003). Given this context, the arrival of a new suite of web campaign tools based on the idea of collaboration and interaction through an ‘architecture of participation’ (Web 2.0) offers a compelling arena for fresh research into web campaigning (O’Reilly, 2005). The question posed by this paper is: can Web 2.0 be used to make party campaigns more interactive and address the apparent gap between parties and voters?

This paper examines this question specifically at the level of constituency political campaigns, and measures two things: the extent of the adoption of Web 2.0 tools by campaigns, based on self-reported use of tools such as Facebook and Twitter in the 2010 Electoral Agent Survey and how far the adoption of specific interactive features within web campaign tools from content analysis data collected on 204 campaigns in

North West England in the final week of the 2010 campaign. The results of these analyses are triangulated through qualitative data collected through a series of semi-structured interviews with candidates and campaigners. The overarching aim is to provide an assessment of the role of Web 2.0 in the 2010 election, not only measuring the extent to which parties used Web 2.0 tools, but also how interactively they did so.

Campaign Modernisation

Election campaigning is supposedly the nexus of political communication, the one point in every electoral cycle when parties are forced to engage with voters in return for votes. However, trends in national political campaigning have pointed towards less and less engaging campaigns, with campaigns becoming professionalised and relying on marketing driven techniques rather than developing local support networks to get their point across and voters to the polls. Elements of locally focused strategies were still evident in UK campaigns well into the 1960s, with campaigns still very much about face-to-face and public interaction on the doorstep and the street corner (Holt & Turner, 1968). With the arrival of television news and the incorporation of techniques developed in the fields of advertising and marketing to political campaigns in the UK the situation changed dramatically, shifting the locus of campaigning from the constituency towards a unified national campaign. The labels applied to contemporary national level political campaigns vary: Packaged Politics (Franklin, 1994), Americanized (Scammell, 1995), Phase III (Farrell & Webb, 2000), Post-Modern (Norris, 2000), and Professionalization (Gibson & Rommele, 2009). Despite the differing terminology, the authors agree on the increasing importance of the central party in campaigns, and the role of the professional in supplanting that of the

amateur campaigner. As one writer put it, campaigns increasingly resembled 'marketing exercises' (Farrell, 2006, p123).

With the shift in focus from the constituency to the national central campaign, both academic and public attention to local level electioneering also waned (Denver & Hands, 1997a). Campaigns were still fought and won at the constituency level, but this was now directed from the centre and focused only strategically relevant battleground seats (Norris, 2000). There have been a number of researchers who have maintained the study of constituency level campaigns in the UK, but usually with reference to the outcome of campaigns rather than as objects of study in themselves (Denver & Hands, 1992; Johnston & Pattie, 1995; Denver & Hands, 1997b; Johnston & Pattie, 1997; Fieldhouse & Cutts, 2008). Overall, the role of the constituency campaign in the UK General Election has been to some extent eclipsed by the growth in both scale and sophistication of the national level campaign.

The professionalisation of campaigns is closely linked with observations of party decline, coinciding as it does with the wider phenomena in the UK and elsewhere of declining party memberships and partisan identification (Katz & Mair, 1992; Mair & van Bizen, 2001; Seyd & Whitely, 2004). For voters, parties' concentration on specific, target seats may be negatively affecting turnout, with large numbers of voters virtually ignored by campaigns seeking to influence voters in a few key seats (Russell, 2005; Lilleker & Negrine, 2003). As a result, a key question, in particular at the local level, is how can citizens become better connected and more involved with the campaigns?

Web 2.0 as a Tool for More Interactive Campaigns

The earliest writers saw the expansion of digital communications as opening up new possibilities for political discourse (Rheingold, 1993; Negroponte, 1996). As thought expanded in some cases the web was seen more as a tool for the status quo rather than radical change, entrenching the power of established actors over new upstarts (Margolis & Resnick, 2000). Empirical study of online campaigning in the UK dates back to 1997, the first UK election at which national level parties (and a handful of constituency candidates) fielded web presences, with early efforts being described as 'truly dire' (Chadwick, 2006, p158). By 2001, online campaigning had expanded, with estimates of around a quarter of candidates maintaining a web presence, although the lack of any centralised database of campaign sites made the identification of relevant sites difficult (Coleman, 2001; Ward & Gibson, 2003). By 2005, an estimated 37% of candidates were online, demonstrating the continued evolution of the web as a campaign tool (Ward, Gibson & Lusoli, 2005, p16).

Many writers saw the ability to interact online as opening up new channels of communication between campaigns and the most interested and connected citizens (Norris, 2003; Rommele, 2003; Ward & Gibson, 2003). In particular the web created the potential for what Foot and Schneider (2006) termed a 'transactional relationship' (p199), creating a clear bond between campaigns and their supporters. Use of the web, and its promise of new levels of connectedness, would seem to have the potential to reverse the apparent decline in linkage provided by contemporary political campaigning and so contribute in part to the wider reinvigoration of party politics. Of course, not all were so optimistic about the potential for interaction in web campaigns.

In summing up the 2001 UK election Coleman dismissed online interactivity as a campaign tool, arguing that it was not surprising that campaigners avoided 'chatting with the enemy' (2001, p681). The most incisive explanation of this view comes from Stromer-Galley (2000), who argued that campaigns would avoid interactivity because it was burdensome, because they had limited control over what could be posted in such a space, and because allowing the public to question the campaign directly would challenge the deliberate ambiguity on which campaigns rely. In essence, by making campaigns too accountable, online interactivity would force them to reveal the often-unpopular details of plans rather than sell a grander (but vaguer) vision.

At the constituency level in the UK there has been little study of interactivity specifically. Ward and Gibson (2003) concluded that only a tiny minority of campaigns were using two-way interactive features on their websites suggesting that, despite the interactive potential of online campaigning, campaigners were using the web as a way of pushing out campaign messages rather than interacting with voters. This pre-dates the explosion of Web 2.0 tools and the interactivity they provide. There have been similarly limited findings looking at the national level party sites in the 2001 and 2005 elections (Coleman, 2001; Bartle 2005). Despite the evidence of a lack of enthusiasm from parties for interacting with voters online, there was a sense that the 2010 election might be different, as from 2005 onwards a new series of services - referred to collectively as Web 2.0 - emerged. The publishers O'Reilly coined the term Web 2.0, defining it as seven specific headings, only some of which are relevant in a political science context, and a number of academic writers have tried to refine the concept (O'Reilly, 2005; Anderson, 2007; Chadwick, 2012). The most interesting concept, however, to emerge from the definition of Web 2.0 has been the 'architecture

of participation': the idea that where Web 1.0 was constructed mainly of static web pages designed to impart information, Web 2.0 relies on developing frameworks that encourage users to populate them with their own content (Anderson, 2007, p19). In the context of this study, Web 2.0 sites can be operationalised as the platforms of Facebook, Twitter and various image and video sharing services such as YouTube and Flickr that allow users to upload their own content and interact with other users. These Web 2.0 sites are qualitatively different from conventional web pages (Web 1.0) that, in most cases, do not encourage users to upload their own content.

What is known of political campaigns and Web 2.0 tools in the UK is limited to preliminary work conducted on national level sites. Jackson and Lilleker (2009) have argued that at the national level Web 2.0 is in practice Web 1.5, with campaigns still shunning interactivity. This approach was still evident to some extent at the national level during the 2010 campaign, but for some parties, at least, there were signs that this was part of a wider move towards a more interactive national campaign web presence (Lilleker & Jackson, 2010). Work comparing the UK and Australia has also begun to take stock of the role of Web 2.0 at the national level from the perspective of both the party and the electorate (Gibson & Cantijoch, 2011). Web 2.0 at the constituency level has yet to be evaluated in the UK at a general election. The rhetoric of Web 2.0 suggests that if campaigns adopt and use tools centred on the architecture of participation, then campaigns will become more interactive. If this is the case then the use of Web 2.0 by campaigns could go some way to joining the gap between campaigns and their electorates.

Data and Methods

To see if this was the case this paper looks at three sources of data: secondary survey data, content analysis of websites from the North West Region of England and semi-structured interviews carried out with campaigners. Data to measure the extent of Web 2.0 use comes from the 2010 Electoral Agent Survey (EAS) that is sent to election agents of the major parties in England, Scotland, and Wales (not Northern Ireland) following the election. Responses were accepted both by post and email. The EAS is a highly credible dataset, having been run following every general election since 1992, and forms the backbone of studies of campaigns at the constituency level in the UK (Denver & Hands, 1997a). For the 2010 campaign there were 1028 responses from the three major UK parties, a response rate of 54% (out of 1896 possible returns).

Content analysis is used to answer the question of whether campaigns actually made use of the interactive features of Web 2.0 tools. There is a rich history of seeking to understand website adoption through content analysis that has consisted of researchers developing schema and ‘coding’ websites based on the presence or absence of features (Gibson et al, 2008; Jackson & Lilleker, 2009; Ward & Gibson, 2003; Norris, 2003; Carlson & Djupsund, 2001). The aim of the schema in this instance was to concentrate on thickening the measurement of interactivity online, going to some extent beyond the categorisation of features. This framework embeds the distinction between media and human interactivity identified by Stromer-Galley (2000). In addition it also distinguishes between public dialogue and private dialogue.

Public dialogue - This can take the form of Facebook walls or Twitter @ replies. However, this feature is also possible on Web 1.0 sites though the use

of forums and comment sections. They were only included if there was evidence of their use in the form of someone from the campaign actively replying. ‘Empty rooms’, or what Jackson and Lilleker (2009, p244) term ‘graffiti’, were not included in this category.

Potential dialogue - The second category considered was potential dialogue features. These are features that allow dialogue in private between campaigns and voters and include tools such as email, feedback forms, Facebook messaging systems and private messages in Twitter. These features were opaque, unlike public dialogue features and evidence of use would be concealed from the researcher.

Site-based interactivity - The final category of features is site-based interactivity features that are akin to Stromer-Galley’s (2000) media interaction. These are features that allow engagement between users and systems such as email databases, following a user on a social network, or submitting personal information to polls and petitions. Also included in this category are joining the party and downloading campaign material.

The features belonging to each of these categories were identified and recorded across three platforms: conventional sites (Web 1.0), Facebook, and Twitter (see appendix A). Due to the timescales involved and the resources available the analysis was concentrated on the 75 constituencies in the North West region of the England as defined by the YouGov Polling company.¹ The focus of this analysis was on the three largest political parties in the UK: Labour, the Conservatives, and the Liberal

Democrats. Of the campaigns in the North West, a web presence could be identified for 204 of them. Data was collected in the final week of the short election campaign (30 April – 6 May 2010).² Where sites had a series of posts over time, only the last seven days of posts were reviewed for the analysis. Websites and profiles were identified using a series of publically available tools including Google and native search functions in both Twitter and Facebook. Additionally, Tweetminster³ had developed a list of Prospective Parliamentary Candidates' (PPC) Twitter accounts that was also used.

Finally, as well as statistical measures, it is also possible to explore the use of Web 2.0 by campaigns through qualitative data. A series of semi-structured interviews were conducted between September 2011 and March 2012 with representatives from campaigns in the 2010 election. Eight interviews were conducted in total, with six candidates and two campaign managers interviewed, representing six campaigns in total: two Liberal Democrat, two Labour and two Conservative. Interviews were limited to candidates who had made some use of Web 2.0 sites in their campaign and those who were willing to cooperate with the research. Subjects were guaranteed anonymity in the hope of improving their willingness to participate in the study and the openness of their responses.

Web 2.0 Adoption

The first, and simplest measure considered here is the adoption of Web 2.0 campaign tools: the creation of accounts on specific Web 2.0 services. Graph one reports the adoption of both Web 1.0 (i.e. conventional html websites) and Web 2.0 tools including social networks - typically Facebook – video and image sharing services

such as Flickr and YouTube, and finally the use of Twitter by campaigns. A separate question was not asked about the use of blogs. Although blogs are often held up as being an example of Web 2.0, the nature of blogs and blogging has shifted. The development of blog software that allows users to change the appearance of sites, add static pages, and hide comment sections has made it difficult to distinguish effectively between a blog and a conventional website, and the inclusion of blogs within conventional campaign sites has further complicated the issue.

GRAPH 1: Campaigns using web campaign tools as reported by agents (%)

Over four fifths of campaigns reported having a campaign site during the 2010 election (82.6%). Conceivably this was a broad category covering personal campaign sites, repurposed local party websites, and local enclaves in national party domains. The use of Web 2.0 by campaigns was also very common. Web 2.0 services such as Twitter and Facebook were not available to campaigners in 2005 and it is a testament to the rapid rise of social media sites that over half (55.6%) of the sample of 2010 campaigns reported using Web 2.0 in some form. The overwhelming majority of this

was down to the use of social networking sites (50.7%); again, based on the researcher's later experience, this was most likely to mean the use of Facebook rather than then rivals such as Bebo and MySpace. Twitter was also common amongst campaigns, perhaps more than might be expected given its smaller user base (22.7%), whilst image and video sharing services were less used (21%). Given the complexity of the terminology involved, some caution must be exercised over these results. For example, both Facebook and Twitter have the capacity for sharing video and images, whilst Twitter, although identified as a separate site, could also be considered to be a social network, leading some subjects to double count their Web 2.0 platforms. Despite this, Web 2.0 does seem to have taken off amongst campaigners in the UK.

Interactive Features

Despite the high level of adoption, there is little corroborating evidence from closer examination of candidate's use of Web 2.0 tools. The first three bars of graph two report the frequency of public dialogue features, examples of campaigns engaging directly with other users in public, in the sample of campaigns. Public dialogue features were extremely rare on Web 1.0 and on Facebook. Campaigns were simply not attempting to engage voters using these tools, at least in public. The exception was Twitter, where around 12% of online campaigns used public @ replies. As a proportion of campaigns actually on Twitter, rather than online in general, this figure is even higher (40%). Immediately the idea that the apparent adoption of Web 2.0 tools has led to some new kind of interactive, discursive campaign needs to be questioned.

Where campaigns did interact online it was through Twitter. The choice of Twitter over interactive spaces on conventional websites or Facebook was interesting. Campaigns might have been expected to prefer media where they can exercise control over content, but the Twitter eco-system is far more open in as much as any user can reply to any other user's message. This may be connected to the short form of Twitter messages (140 characters), which require less time to formulate than other types of message. Twitter might also help campaigns to reach a more influential audience than other tools. The schema could not take into consideration who @ replies were addressed to, so rather than local constituents campaigns may instead be trying to interact with party elites, journalists or other national figures rather than rank and file voters and supporters.

Private dialogue features are reported in the final four bars of graph two. Private features are those that are interactive, but are opaque, so knowing whether or not they were used is difficult for the external observer. As would be expected, in-built messaging systems such as Facebook messaging were as common as the use of the sites themselves. Feedback forms on conventional websites were common (32.8%), but the provision of an email address was more so (75%). Email was the single biggest (potential) connection between campaigns and users. However, given the lack of access to the content of these emails no objective assessment of interactivity was possible.

The least interactive features were those where the user interacts with a system rather than another human: site-based interactivity. These are reported in graph three. Examples of these features include downloading materials, participating in polls,

following options on social networks and signing up to email newsletters. As with potential dialogue features, some of these behaviours were also built into Web 2.0 sites in the form of ‘following’ or ‘friending’ mechanisms. There is a good deal more variation in the distribution of these features over conventional websites, with donating and joining the party being the most popular features to include in a Web 1.0 campaign site. Web 2.0 sites were not generally used to host these features (with the exception of in built following mechanisms) and largely seem to be focused on information provision rather than encouraging site-based interactivity.

GRAPH 2: Public and private dialogue features (% of online campaigns)

GRAPH 3: Site-based interactivity features (% of online campaigns)

In Their Own Words...

The low levels of public dialogue suggested by the quantitative data are confirmed by interview data. Many subjects were sanguine about their online campaigns, in particular the extent to which Web 2.0 tools were useful for communicating with voters. Subjects seemed to view the web as more of a requirement than an opportunity, and even the candidates with higher aspirations for their web campaigns found it difficult to develop an audience.

'It was very much a shop window as far as I was concerned. I didn't update all the time. I would put photographs up there; if anybody looked at it they would think [candidate name] looks like a normal [person], which I am.

Conservative Candidate 1

'[When asked how much interactivity they saw?] Not much. I think there are a couple of things to be aware of. One is that there is a sense in which you've got to be either a celebrity or a notoriety to get a lot of people to decide to follow you.'

Labour Candidate 1

Despite this, Twitter in particular did seem to emerge as the candidates' favourite. In some instances campaigns saw Twitter as a way to engage in wider debate. One candidate thought they got good results from following up on public meetings through Twitter, developing an on going conversation with voters. Others found Twitter useful, but not necessarily for contacting voters. Instead candidates seemed keener on the idea of Twitter allowing them to engage with key elites such as local journalists.

'[I] would talk at a public meeting and we would get involved in a conversation over Twitter afterwards.'

Lib-Dem Candidate 1

'Whilst lots of your constituents might not be on Twitter, a lot of – to use a local government speak – key stakeholders... I mean a horrible phrase I know but I have no better one. Terrible. But certainly you look no you will find pretty much every [local newspaper title] journalist is now on Twitter. All the ones who are involved in my area are following me and I'm following them.'

Conservative Candidate 2

The surprise that emerged from the interview data was the importance of email to candidates, not only as a tool of internal organisation and co-ordination between national and local campaigns, but as a tool for responding to and engaging with voters. Many found the workload be onerous; however, others maintained that they replied to every email they received.

'But email was the key one, so I found a lot of it... Yeah, email and dialogue with people. And it was a much bigger amount of traffic and conversation via email than the previous general election.'

Lib-Dem Candidate 1

'They are the people who want to know what my views as a candidate are so I took a bit of time responding to individuals...'

Lib-Dem Candidate 2

Although this is anecdotal evidence, it suggests that the potential dialogue features described above account for a significant amount of interaction between campaigns and voters and may well be worth further study. The wider picture, however, is one of scepticism from campaigns at the value of interactive campaigning. This does not seem to be an outright rejection on the grounds of cost or loss of control as Stromer-Galley (2000) suggests, but more practically with a lack of critical mass of voters paying attention to campaign web presences. If they could have attracted a significant following then at least some campaigners interviewed suggested they might have sought to do more.

Conclusions

The central focus of this paper has been to explore the potential of Web 2.0 as a tool to enable greater interaction between campaigns and voters during the 2010 constituency election campaigns. This was thought an important avenue to explore given the apparent decline in the representative functions evidenced by declining party memberships and partisanship, and in the context of the emergence of Web 2.0 tools since 2005. Based on the greater interactivity afforded by the design of Web 2.0 tools and the excitement over the Obama campaign's apparent success at exploiting them, it was thought that there might be some development beyond previous patterns of web campaigning in the UK. The evidence suggests, however, that whilst the tools

may be new and different, the Web 2.0 area does not seem to have been accompanied by any obvious explosion in online interactivity at the subnational level.

Looking only at the adoption of Web 2.0 tools as reported by campaigns themselves, it is clear that the use of Web 2.0 tools by campaigns has proliferated fast, with over half of the sample engaging with Web 2.0 on some level. Based on content analysis of campaigns in the North West, however, campaigns largely seem to avoid the use of public dialogue features. What public dialogue did occur was concentrated on Twitter. This may represent a genuine attempt to reach out to voters but given the smaller user base of Twitter, it more likely represents attempts by local campaigns to reach out to a vanguard of opinion formers such as journalists. What is less clear is the extent to which interaction is being carried on in private. The provision of an email address was almost a reflex behaviour for campaigns, but anecdotal evidence suggests that email supports a lot of interaction between voters and campaigns, although more systematic study is difficult without some kind of privileged access.

In terms of the wider debate about interactivity in sub national campaigns online in the UK, this paper offers a number of further conclusions. The adoption of tools with little evidence of interactivity supports Jackson and Lilleker's (2009) thesis that political parties were willing to put a toe in Web 2.0, but were reluctant to commit fully, engaging instead in what they called Web 1.5. As a way to explain this, Stromer-Galley's (2000) argument that interactivity is simply a poor fit for political campaigns that are unwilling to relinquish control could also apply. Equally, however, as interview data has indicated, the success of online campaigns also requires an audience, something that even those well disposed towards the idea of a web

campaign struggled with. Finally, the importance of email underlines Nielson's (2011) arguments about the centrality of 'mundane' tools in online campaign mobilisation practices.

As for future study, there is room to improve the data available about subnational web campaigns both through secondary surveys and content analysis. The increasing complexity of campaign web presences has been accompanied by an increase in the resources required to analyse them. A further complication may be the increased use of Web 2.0 tools as platforms for gathering data. Web 2.0 has been criticised previously as a platform for surveillance (Ghel, 2011). Initial reports from the 2012 Obama campaign also indicate that 'Big Data' is an area of interest (Bimber, 2012). It is not clear that the UK will follow the same model given the different electoral and regulatory factors involved, but certainly moves to centralise web campaigns at the subnational level could in future lead to less autonomy for local candidates and a correspondingly diminished level of variation to analyse.

Currently, in the UK context, the availability of Web 2.0 does not seem to have dramatically altered the behaviour of UK candidates online from earlier elections. They use the tools on a superficial level, but in the sample analysed there was little evidence that adoption had led to more interactivity. This analysis was limited by the availability of data and in particular data of private communications between candidates and voters but, publically at least, Web 2.0 is not serving to encourage interaction between candidates and voters.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his profound thanks to Rachel Gibson, Andrew Russell and David Cutts for their sound advice and encouragement. He would also like to thank the reviewers for their constructive comments.

About the author

Benjamin Lee has recently completed a PhD in the Institute for Social Change at the University of Manchester. His thesis focused on the role of the web in constituency level campaigns at the 2010 UK general election. He is currently a Research Associate in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Leicester and is currently working on a project that deals with the use of the web by populist parties and movements in the UK. He can be contacted at: Dr Benjamin Lee, Department of Politics and International Relations, The University of Leicester, University Rd, Leicester, LE1 7RH. Email bl100@leicester.ac.uk.

Notes

¹ See: <http://ukpollingreport.co.uk/>.

² In order to draw a meaningful comparison between web presences it is necessary to collect content analysis data as contemporaneously as possible. This is so that all campaign web presences are collected at the same stage of the election.

³ www.tweetminster.co.uk is a clearing-house for political Twitter accounts in the UK.

References

Anderson, P. (2007) *What is Web 2.0: Ideas, Technologies and Implications for Education* [online]. Available from: <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/reports/2007/twweb2.aspx> [Accessed 5 April 2012].

Bartle, J. (2005) 'The Press, Television and the Internet', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 58(4), pp. 699-711.

Bimber, B., (2012) 'Technology in the 2012 US election: the normalization of digital media'. Paper presented at Chasing the Digital Wave: International Lessons for the UK 2015 Election Campaign, London, 22 November.

Carlson T. and Djupsund, G. (2001) 'Old Wine in New Bottles: The 1999 Finnish Election Campaign on the Internet', *International Journal of Press Politics* 6(1), pp. 68-87.

Chadwick, A. (2006) *Internet Politics: States, Citizens and New Communication Technologies*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Chadwick, A. (2012) 'Web 2.0: New Challenges for the Study of E-Democracy in an Era of Informational Exuberance' in Coleman, S. and Shane, P. (eds.) *Connecting Democracy: Online Consultation and the Flow of Political Communication*. MIT Press, pp. 45-75.

Coleman, S. (2001) 'Online Campaigning', *Parliamentary Affairs* 54(4), pp. 679-688.

Dalton, R. and Wattenberg, M. (2000) 'Unthinkable democracy' in Dalton, R. and Wattenberg, M. (eds.), *Parties Without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Denver, D. and Hands, G. (1992) 'Constituency Campaigning', *Parliamentary Affairs* 45(4), pp. 528-544.

Denver, D. and Hands, G. (1997a) *Modern Constituency Electioneering*, London: Routledge.

Denver, D. and Hands, G. (1997b) 'Challengers, Incumbents and the Impact of Constituency Campaigning in Britain', *Electoral Studies* 16(2), pp.175-193.

Farrell, D. (2006) 'Political Parties in a Changing Campaign Environment', in Katz, R. and Crotty, W. (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Party Politics*, London: Sage.

Farrell, D. and Webb, P. (2000) 'Political Parties as Campaign Organizations' in Dalton, R. and Wattenberg, M. (eds.), *Parties Without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fieldhouse, E. and Cutts, D. (2008) 'The Effectiveness of Local Party Campaigns in 2005: Combining Evidence from Campaign Spending and Agent Survey Data', *British Journal of Political Science* 39(2), pp. 367-388.

Foot, K. and Schneider, S. (2006) *Web Campaigning*, London: MIT Press.

Franklin, B. (1994) *Packaging Politics: Political Communications in Britain's Media Democracy*, London: Arnold.

Gehl, R. (2011) 'The Archive and the Processor: The Internal Logic of Web 2.0', *New Media and Society* 13(8), pp.1228-1244.

Gibson, R, and Cantijoch, M. (2011) 'Comparing Online Elections in Australia and the UK: Did 2010 Finally Produce 'The' Internet Election?', *Communication, Politics and Culture* 44(2), pp.4-17.

Gibson, R, Lusoli, W, and Ward, S. (2008) 'Nationalizing and Normalizing the Local? A Comparative Analysis of Online Candidate Campaigning in Australia and Britain', *Journal of Information, Technology and Politics* 4(4), pp. 15-31.

Gibson, R, and Rommele, A. (2009) 'Measuring the Professionalization of Campaigning', *Party Politics* 15(3), pp.265-294.

Green, D, and Smith, J. (2003) 'Professionalization of Campaigns and the Secret History of the Collective Action Problem', *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 15, pp. 321-339.

Holt, R. and Turner, J. (1968) *Political Parties in Action: The Battle for Baron's Court*, London: The Free Press.

Jackson, N, and Lilleker, D. (2009) 'Building an Architecture of Participation? Political Parties and Web 2.0 in Britain', *Journal of Information Technology and Politics* 6(3/4), pp.332-250.

Johnston, R, and Pattie, C. (1995) 'The Impact of Spending on Party Constituency Campaigns at Recent British General Elections', *Party Politics* 1(2), pp.133-164.

Johnston, R, and Pattie, C. (1997) 'Where's the Difference? Decomposing the Impact of Local Election Campaigns in Great Britain', *Electoral Studies* 16(2), pp.165-174.

Katz, R. (2001) 'The Problem of Candidate Selection and Models of Party Democracy', *Party Politics* 7(3), pp. 277-296.

Katz, R, and Mair, P. (1992) 'The Membership of Political Parties in European Democracies 1960-1990', *European Journal of Political Research* 22(1/2), p329-345.

Katz, R. and Mair, P. (1995) 'Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy: The Emergence of the Cartel Party', *Party Politics* 1(5), pp. 5-28.

Lilleker, D, and Jackson, N. (2010) 'Towards a More Participatory Style of Election Campaigning: The Impact of Web 2.0 on the UK 2010 General Election', *Policy & Internet* 2(3), pp.69-98.

-
- Lilleker, D, and Negrine, R. (2003) 'Not Big Brand Names but Corner Shops: Marketing Politics to a Disengaged Electorate', *Journal of Political Marketing* 2(1), pp. 55-74.
- Mair, P, and van Bizen, I. (2001) 'Party Membership in 20 European Democracies 1980-2000', *Party Politics* 7(1), pp.5-21.
- Margolis, M. and Resnick, D. (2000) *Politics as Usual: The Cyberspace 'Revolution'*, London: Sage.
- Negroponte, N. (1996) *Being Digital*, Reading: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Nielson, R. (2011) 'Mundane Internet Tools, Mobilizing Practices and the Coproduction of Citizenship in Political Campaigns', *New Media & Society* 13(5), pp. 755-771.
- Norris, P. (2000) *A Virtuous Circle: Political Communications in Post-Industrial Democracies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Norris, P. (2003) 'Preaching to the Converted: Pluralism, Participation and Party Websites', *Party Politics* 9(1), pp.21-45.
- O'Reilly, T. (2005) *What is Web 2.0?* [online]. Available from: <http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html> [accessed 5 March 2012].
- Rheingold, H. (1993) *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier*, London: MIT Press.
- Römmele, A. (2003) 'Political Parties, Party Communication and New Information Communication Technologies', *Party Politics* 9(1), pp. 7-20.
- Russell, A. (2005) 'Political Parties as Vehicles of Political Engagement', *Parliamentary Affairs* 58(3), pp.555-569.
- Scammell, M. (1995) *Designer Politics: How Elections Are Won*, London: St Martin's Press.
- Seyd, P, and Whiteley, P. (2004) 'British Party Members: An Overview', *Party Politics* 10(4), pp.355-366.
- Stoker, G. (2006) *Why Politics Matters: Making Democracy Work*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Stromer-Galley, J. (2000) 'Online Interaction and Why Candidates Avoid it', *Journal of Communication* 50(4), pp.111-132.

Ward, S, and Gibson, R. (2003) ‘Online and On Message? Candidate Websites in the 2001 General Election’, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 5(2), pp.188-205.

Ward, S, Gibson, R, and Lusoli, W.(2005) ‘The UK Parties and the 2005 Virtual Election Campaign – Not Quite Normal?’ in Davis, R, Owen , D, Taras, D, and Ward, S. (eds.), *Making a Difference? Internet Campaigning in Comparative Perspective*. Lanham MD: Lexington Books.

APPENDIX A

This schema lists the features recorded for each of the three categories of interactivity: public, private, and site-based, across the three platforms considered: conventional sites (Web 1.0), Facebook and Twitter.

Public dialogue is defined as public interaction between the campaign and user in which the campaign is seen to reply to the user. This included campaign responses on forums, comment sections, Facebook and ‘mentions’ on Twitter. Examples of users posting but campaigns not responding were not recorded as demonstrating public dialogue.

TABLE 1: Content analysis schema for measuring interactive features in local campaign web presences

	Web 1.0	Facebook	Twitter
Public dialogue	Public dialogue	Public dialogue	Public dialogue
Private dialogue	Email Contact form	Private message	Private message
Site-based	Poster Leaflet Poll Petition Org. request Donate Join Email subscription	Poster Leaflet Poll Petition Org. request Donate Join ‘Friend’	Poster Leaflet Poll Petition Org. request Donate Join ‘Follow’