

GE3202: Citizen Journalism and Civil Society A Brief Introduction

Foreign Policy
November/December 2004, 33



What is citizen journalism?

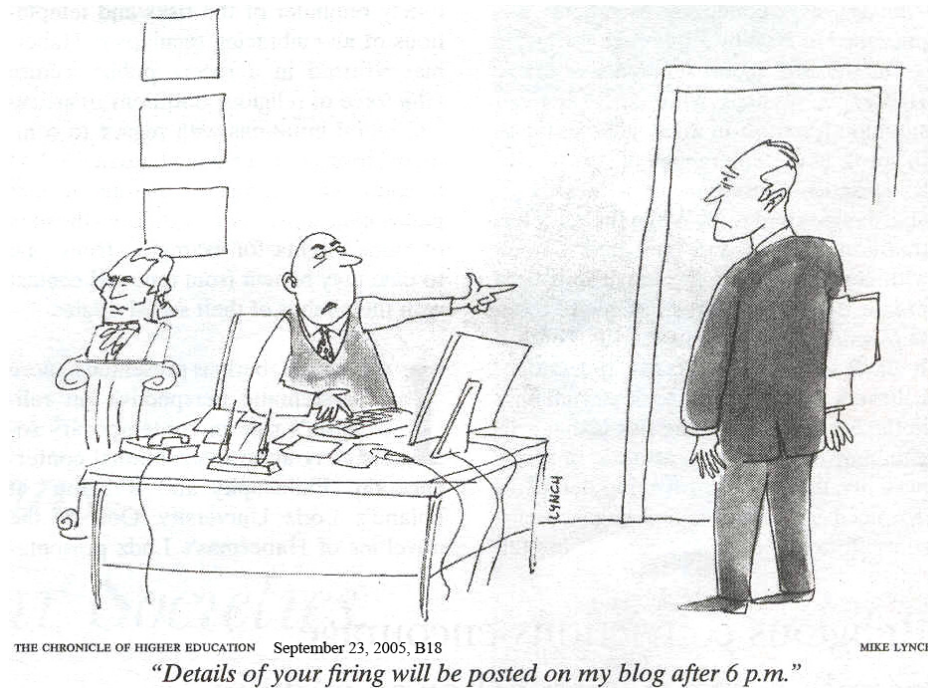


There is no one single definition of citizen journalism. Generally, the term refers to the practice and work of journalism-related activities by ordinary citizen. It takes many different forms, such as “public journalism,” “civic journalism,” “open source journalism,” “citizen media,” “we media,” “participatory media,” and “networked journalism.”

Adapted from Mary-Rose Papandrea. (2007). “Citizen Journalism and the Reporter’s Privilege,” p. 526.

The rise of the Internet, especially the social media, has contributed significantly to the proliferation of new form of journalism: citizen journalists.

Citizen journalists are bloggers, but not all bloggers are citizen journalists.



Web of Influence

*Every day, millions of online diarists, or “bloggers,” share their opinions with a global audience. Drawing upon the content of the international media and the World Wide Web, they weave together an elaborate network with agenda-setting power on issues ranging from human rights in China to the U.S. occupation of Iraq. What began as a hobby is evolving into a new medium that is changing the landscape for journalists and policymakers alike. | **By Daniel W. Drezner and Henry Farrell***

Internet and Citizen Journalism



- A powerful tool of autonomous political expression
- Contribution to political process, either through online donation or public debate and deliberation (e.g., blogging)
- Increase in exposure to political information and its effect on participation

Internet and Public Affairs

The interplay between the Internet and public affairs:

- As a platform of social activism
- As a form of deliberation
- As a means of political participation



Internet and Public Affairs: As a Platform of Social Activism



Internet Protest Over Bronx School's Metal Detectors

New York Times, September 21, 2005, A25

By FERNANDA SANTOS

The first rumors started swirling last spring, in hushed talks in the classroom, amid hallway banter, in lunchtime chats at pizza parlors along Jerome Avenue: metal detectors were coming to DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx.

By the time the summer school term began, students were noticing the newly installed surveillance cameras along DeWitt Clinton's stairwells and the shell of a metal detector perched beyond a side door.

At 7 a.m., one person was protesting. By 11:30, 1,500 had walked out.

As Form of Deliberation

...the student wrote on an Internet message board, Sconex.com.

Soon, instead of their usual postings about classmates turned couples, prom king contenders and unbearably hot days of boredom at home, students were complaining about the changes that awaited them — and, eventually, organizing a protest.

Two days ago, all the planning became a reality. For the first time in recent memory, 1,500 New York City high school students skipped classes, marched for two miles and got what they wanted: a sit-down meeting

Janon Fisher contributed reporting for this article.

with school administrators, who have agreed to meet with students again and listen to their demands.

How they got to this point is a lesson in modern-day democracy that blends teenage angst and the Internet; a show of force borne out of disagreement and frustration among the students of one of the city's most traditional and toughest high schools.

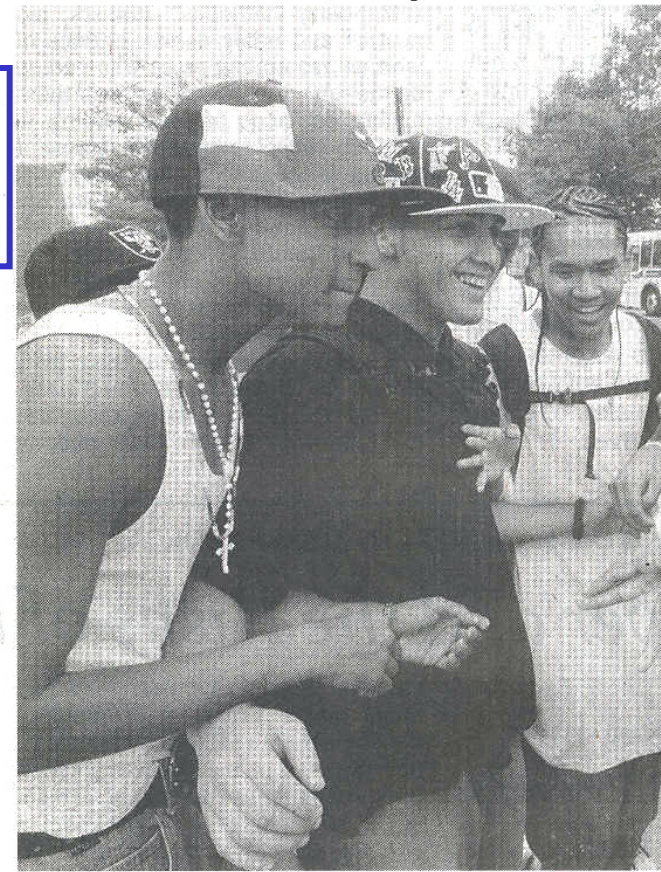
The Education Department installed the metal detectors because of DeWitt Clinton's high crime rate: 60 percent higher than the citywide average for schools of the same size.

But the protest was not violent, said Edward Jackson, 17, a senior and a tight end on the high school's football team.

"It was a good protest, the way protests should be," he said. "We got a chance to show that we care about what goes on in our school. We were able to express our point of view, even though we know what we believe in is very different than what the school believes in."

The DeWitt Clinton of today, which had 13 major crimes during the 2003-04 school year, counts many celebrities among its graduates. It is the alma mater of the actor Burt Lancaster, the fashion designer Ralph Lauren and the cartoonist Stan Lee. It opened its doors in 1935 as an all-boys' school and stayed that way until the mid-1980's, when it began to enroll girls, a period that also coincided with the decline of the Bronx.

The protest started to gather steam on Sept. 14, six days after the school year began. That morning, at each of the 10 periods of gym class, school safety officers explained to the students how the process would work: line up, remove metal from



José David, second from the left, and fellow students at the protest against the lunchtime confinement and the

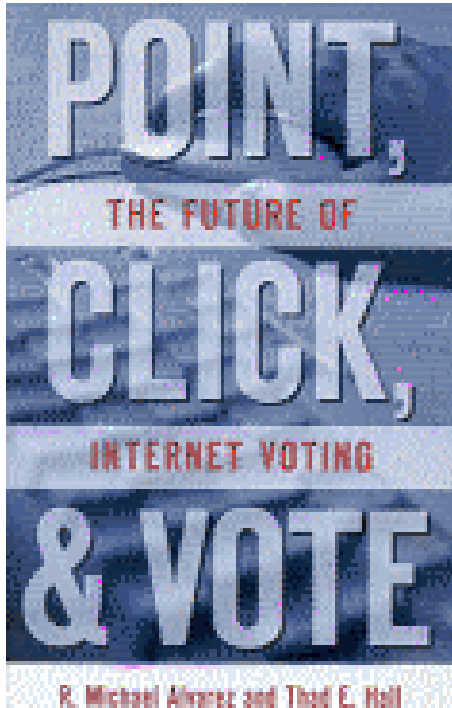
your pockets, take off your belt and walk through the metal detector. Book bags would be searched, too, scanned by X-ray machines like those at airports, and, starting Monday, no one would be allowed to leave the building at lunchtime. The safety officers said it would be too difficult to screen all the returning students.

It did not sit well with José David, 17, a senior. Last Thursday, he circu-

lated a petition against the confinement and the "In 46 minutes, I got there," he said.

On Friday, Mr. David sent a message on the school's website inviting students to test on Monday. He gathered south of the school there, silently, under the first period of class.

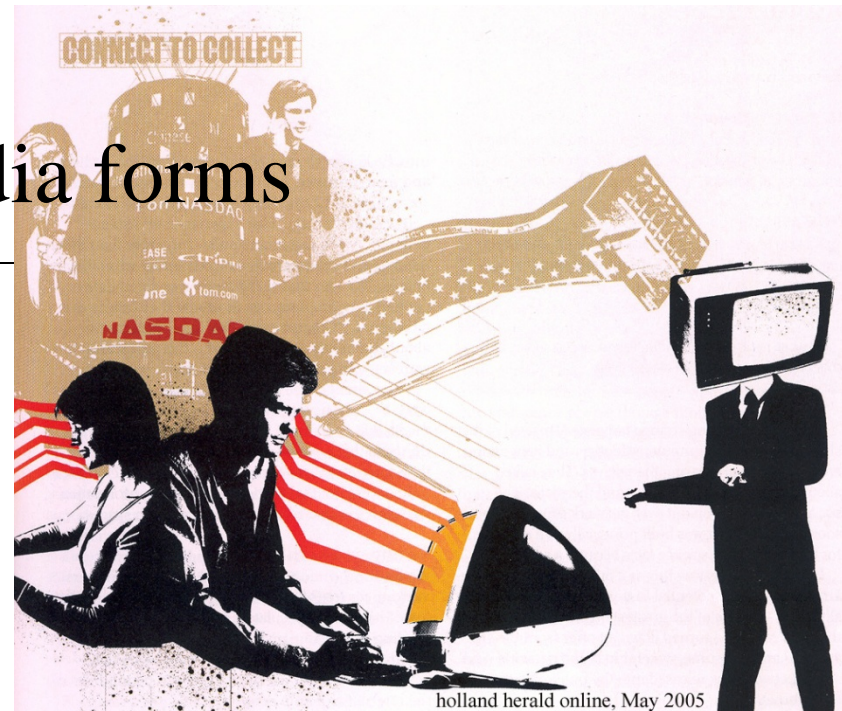
As a Means of Political Participation



- Local networking and citizen participation
- Access to government and democracy

Consequences of the Interplay

- Politicization
 - The rise of civil society challenging the status quo
 - Institutional innovation
 - Convergence of all media forms
-



I blog, therefore I am?

Back in 1997 (says Bloggercon.com) there were five blogs. Now, analysts reckon 30,000 such weblogs, or digital diaries, are created every day; the Blog Herald estimates there are 34.5 million worldwide! Who are all those bloggers? Well, most are just ordinary folk writing about daily life for family and friends. But many are reporting news from their field – say health or technology – in a way that is transforming ‘mass’ media into an arena of niche news and endless discussion. To see what bloggers are talking about, go to Technorati, which monitors over 7,000,000 blogs. Want your own? It’s easy to put a blog together with Blogger or Typepad.

www.technorati.com

www.blogger.com

www.typepad.com

holland herald Online, May 2005, 11

Before the Internet, you will have to rely on the traditional media to be known in the world of public affairs. Today, the blog levels the playing field for citizens and politicians alike.

Check out MentoringBrothers.org to learn more



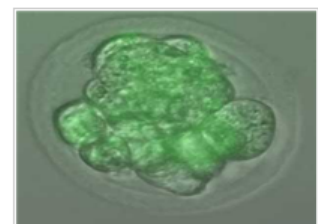
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Today on Technorati



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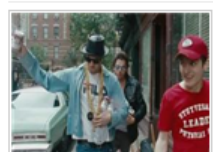
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The Son of a 9/11 Victim Speaks Out

With the death of the man behind the 9/11 attacks, a son of a victim speaks out about the emotions surrounding both events.

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Beastie Boys - "Fight For Your Right (Revisited)"

The new Beastie Boys mini movie in support of their new album is a star studded wet dream.

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Top 5 risers

Top 5 fallers



133 million blog records indexed by Technorati since 2002

7.4 million blogs posted in last 120 days

1.5 million blogs posted in last 7 days

900,000 blog posts in 24 hours

76,000 blogs with **Technorati Authority** of 50+

Top 100 blogs by **Technorati Authority**

Technorati Authority is the number of blogs linking to a website in the last six months. The higher the number, the more Authority the blog has.

Antiglobalization protesters took to Hong Kong's streets in December to voice their discontent



Time,
February 2006, A10

Social activism is one of the basic elements of democracy. **What are the examples?**

Examples of social activism include civil rights, gay rights, trade unionism, anti-globalization, environmentalism, and feminism.

Anatomy of Deliberative Democracy

- Decentralization
 - Diffusion of power
 - Blogging: From professional journalist to citizen journalist in mass communication
- Participation
 - Online forums
 - Civic engagement
 - E-democracy

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About E-Democracy.org



E-Democracy.org

E-Democracy.org builds online public space in the heart of real democracy and community. Our mission is to harness the power of online tools to support participation in public life, strengthen communities, and build democracy.

Starting with the world's first election information website in 1994 in Minnesota, today we host over 30 local Issues Forums in 15 communities across three countries - New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition to these "online town halls," we promote civic engagement online around the world.

E-Democracy.org is a U.S. registered 501c.3 non-profit non-partisan organization that accepts grants and donations. We estimate that 90% of our labor is donated by volunteers.

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Anatomy of Deliberative Democracy

- Rationalization

“A set of ideas which inspired the emergence of rules-based organizations based upon rational calculation, planning, and control.”

Andrew Chadwick, *Internet Politics*, p. 30

Examples: E-government, e-commerce, narrowcasting, personalized communication, data-mining

The control over the Internet
has serious implications for
civil society.



Civil Society

Civil society is:

“an arena where free, self-determining individuality sets forth its claims for satisfaction of its wants and personal autonomy.”

Source: Adam Seligman, *The Idea of Civil Society*, 1992, p. 5

Citizen Journalism and Civil Society



Citizen Information and Political Participation