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978-1-107-01595-1 - iPolitics: Citizens, Elections, and Governing in the New Media Era

Richard L. Fox and Jennifer M. Ramos

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iPolitics

Citizens, Elections, and Governing in the New Media Era

iPolitics provides a current analysis of new media's effects on politics, both at home and abroad. Politicians rely on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube to exercise political power. Citizens also use these tools to vent political frustrations, join political groups, and organize revolutions. Political activists blog to promote candidates, solicit and coordinate financial contributions, and provide opportunities for volunteers.

iPolitics describes the ways in which media innovations change how politicians and citizens engage the political arena. Most importantly, the volume emphasizes the implications of these changes for the promotion of democratic ideals. Among other things, contributors to this volume analyze whether the public's political knowledge has increased or decreased in the new media era, the role television still plays in the information universe, the effect bloggers have had on the debate and outcome of health care reform, and the manner in which political leaders navigate the new media environment. Although the majority of contributors examine new media and politics in the United States, the volume also provides a unique comparative perspective on this relationship using cases from abroad.

Richard L. Fox is Associate Professor of Political Science at Loyola Marymount University. He is coauthor of *It Still Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office* (Cambridge 2010) and *Tabloid Justice: The Criminal System in the Age of Media Frenzy*, 2nd edition (2007), as well as coeditor of *Gender and Election*, 2nd edition (Cambridge 2009).

Jennifer M. Ramos is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Loyola Marymount University. Her research focuses on understanding the causes and consequences of political change, with an emphasis on the role of ideas, norms, and identity. Her current interests include public opinion and foreign policy, sovereignty issues, and media and politics. She has published in *Journal of Politics*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *International Studies Perspectives*, and *Journal of Political Ideologies*.

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Citizens, Elections, and Governing in the New Media Era

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focuses on delineating the effects of domestic politics on international conflict and cooperation in general and American foreign policy in particular, as well as on the role of the mass media and public opinion in contemporary politics. His research has appeared in more than a dozen leading scholarly journals such as the *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, and *Journal of Politics*. His books include *Soft News Goes to War: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy in the New Media Age* (Princeton University Press 2003) and *War Stories: The Causes and Consequences of Public Views of War* (Princeton University Press 2010). He has also contributed op-ed articles to a variety of newspapers and magazines in the United States and abroad. Before coming to Harvard, Baum was associate professor of political science and communication studies at UCLA.

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(NYU Press 2009) and *The Essential HBO Reader* (University Press of Kentucky 2008). With Geoffrey Baym, he is coeditor of the forthcoming collection *Not Necessarily the News? News Parody and Political Satire Across the Globe* (Routledge).

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Preface and Acknowledgments

As we complete this manuscript, countries in the Middle East and North Africa are experiencing protests and riots against ruling regimes. Despite government efforts to block them, new media tools such as YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook are enabling citizens to organize and share their frustrations with one another and the world. Amid antigovernment demonstrations in Egypt, for instance, the regime shut down the Internet for days. Of course, it was too late; President Hosni Mubarak stepped down after almost 30 years in power. The situation in Egypt is only one example of how new media and communication tools are being used to transform politics. By the time this book reaches readers, it is likely that there will have been additional events in which new technologies played a pivotal role in determining political outcomes. In this volume, we have endeavored to put together a collection of works that provides a context for understanding how these changes in the media and information environment are affecting politics today and how they may continue to transform politics in the future.

In spring 2010, the Institute for Leadership Studies at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles (LMU), invited leading scholars to its eighth annual Dilemmas of Democracy conference focused on new media and politics. As conference organizers, we were particularly interested in compiling analyses of both U.S. and non-U.S. new media environments as they relate to politics. We are pleased to have the contributions of those who participated in the conference: Matthew Baum, Ann Crigler, Richard Davis, Urs Gasser, Jan Gerlach, Lauren Hume, Jeffery Jones, Marion Just, Parker Hevron, Matthew Kerbel, Jennifer Lawless, Jesse Mills, Lauren Mintz, and Deborah Wheeler. We were also able to add

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Preface and Acknowledgements

contributions from Tom Carlson and Kim Strandberg, and Zoe Oxley. We thank these scholars for their time and effort.

Behind the scenes, we had much support from our faculty, administrative, and student colleagues at Loyola Marymount University. Foremost, we thank Michael Genovese, the Director of the Institute for Leadership Studies, who offered us the opportunity to put on this conference. Michael was extraordinarily kind and generous with his support and was invaluable as a mentor and facilitator of funds for the conference. In addition, we are grateful to LMU's Bellarmine College of Liberal Arts Dean Paul T. Zeleza who has continued to support the Institute for Leadership Studies by providing the funds to make the conference, and volume, possible. Our department colleagues also were an excellent support – from marshalling students to attend the conference to reading drafts of our manuscript, they remind us how lucky we are to be in this department; thus, we thank Lance Blakesley, Jodi Finkel, Evan Gerstmann, Fernando Guerra, John Parrish, Janie Steckenrider, Seth Thompson, and Cassandra Veney. We would like to point out, though, that the conference proceedings would not have gone as smoothly as they did had it not been for Mercedes Adams, our undergraduate student assistant. She has moved on to law school, so we miss her tireless good cheer and efficiency.

As for the manuscript, we are grateful to have Robert Dreesen at Cambridge University Press, who has been very supportive of this project from the beginning. Finally, we would like to thank our student research assistants: Elysia Galindo-Ramirez, who provided great assistance in putting together the final version of the manuscript, and Samantha Hay, who did a fantastic job creating the index.

We dedicate this book to Jennifer's daughter, Isabelle, who waited just long enough for the conference to be done to come into this world, and Richard's children, Lila and Miles.

Richard L. Fox
Jennifer M. Ramos
February 13, 2011
Los Angeles