Social Media and Public Administration

Article *in* Administrative Theory & Praxis · September 2011

DOI: 10.2753/ATP1084-1806330301

CITATIONS
163

READS
6,871

2 authors:

Thomas Bryer
University of Central Florida
49 PUBLICATIONS **1,592** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Staci Zavattaro
University of Central Florida
56 PUBLICATIONS **1,063** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Social Media and Public Administration

Theoretical Dimensions and Introduction to the Symposium

Thomas A. Bryer
University of Central Florida
Staci M. Zavattaro
University of Texas at Brownsville

In academia and in practice, there are observable anticipatory palpitations as managers, theorists, and other "connected" civic leaders consider the transformative potential of social media and networking tools for enhancing government transparency, public participation, and intergovernmental and cross-sector collaboration. Scholars and other thought leaders have written about ideas such as Democracy 2.0 (Mobilize.org, 2011) and Government 2.0 (Eggers, 2004). The potential for exercising the co-creation of content using social technologies is captured in the title of a book by Beth Noveck (2009): *Wiki Government: How Technology Can Make Government Better, Democracy Stronger, and Citizens More Powerful.*

The same kind of palpable excitement was seen in the early years when e-government and e-democracy became fashionable. The new technologies, scholars and thought leaders wrote, would transform how government agencies were managed internally, how citizens and businesses could conduct transactions, and how citizens could engage with their governments (Bryer, 2010). The high expectations were ultimately not matched by implementation (Kent & Taylor, 1998; Moon, 2002; West, 2004), although glimmers of potential were recorded in terms of enhancing citizen perception of government effectiveness and democratic responsiveness (Thomas & Streib, 2003; West, 2004).

Just as there were early adopters of e-government and e-democracy platforms, so too have public administration practitioners jumped into the social media movement headfirst, as the aforementioned titles indicate. As such, we thought it prudent for scholars within the discipline to explore more thoroughly how these technologies are used, to what ends, and to what success. With this symposium, we set out on the daunting task of tackling this growing issue, soliciting a variety of manuscripts exploring social media in different—yet related—ways. While reading the submissions, we saw several patterns emerge, each worthy of further exploration briefly within this space

Administrative Theory & Praxis / September 2011, Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 325–340.

1084-1806/2011 $9.50 + 0.00.
DOI 10.2753/ATP1084-1806330301

but in more detail for future research endeavors. We also saw some themes that were not explicitly present within the symposium but deserve some attention nonetheless.

The remainder of this introduction proceeds as follows. First, we suggest an explicit definition of social media and a related concept, Web 2.0. We do this based on how contributors to this symposium define the concepts, as well as how they have been defined by government agencies and within the still-growing literature. Second, we develop a theoretical platform for the study of social media in public administration, suggesting evolutionary paths from research on Web 1.0/e-government. Third, we introduce the contributions to this symposium, outlining contributions in each. In closing, we identify future theoretical and empirical research needs and opportunities. Ultimately, it is our hope that this introduction and collection of articles establishes a body of work and thought that can launch further timely and relevant research for both those primarily interested in theory-development as well as those interested in successful experimentation and implementation of social media tools within public administration.

DEFINING SOCIAL MEDIA

The Federal Web Managers Council, a group of federal government practitioners charged with developing best practices for agency Web sites and related service delivery, has developed a definition of social media that information technology units across federal agencies incorporated.

> Social media and Web 2.0 are umbrella terms that encompass the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation. Social media use many technologies and forms, such as blogs, wikis, photo and video sharing, podcasts, social networking, mashups, and virtual worlds. (U.S. General Services Administration, 2009, p. 1)

We suggest the need to separate and unpack the conceptions of *social media*, on the one hand, and *Web 2.0,* on the other. Seemingly, if both are indeed umbrella terms, then different conceptualizations also become necessary to better theorize about and study social media and Web 2.0 tools in public administration.

We realized the retooling was important, based first on reading submissions to the symposium, a review of existing practical and scholarly literature, and how the terms are employed when referenced colloquially. We focus our attention largely within the space of manuscripts submitted here, each of which makes use of varied definitions of social media. For example, Bryer utilizes the Federal Web Managers Council definition from the original call for papers; Rishel expands the Federal Web Managers Council definition to expressly include interactive and communal aspects rather than only friendly

gatherings; Hand and Ching, interestingly, employ definitions similar to the ones we have retooled; and Brainard and Derrick-Mills offer no explicit definition of the term.

Building on the definitions advanced by symposium contributors, we suggest the following: *Social media* are technologies that facilitate social interaction, make possible collaboration, and enable deliberation across stakeholders. These technologies include blogs, wikis, media (audio, photo, video, text) sharing tools, networking platforms (including Facebook), and virtual worlds. We suggest a departure from the Federal Web Managers Council in referring to social media as activities; as authors in the symposium suggest, both theoretically (Bryer, this issue) and through empirical evidence (Brainard & Derrick-Mills, this issue; Hand & Ching, this issue), actual implementation of social media may not achieve possible levels of interaction, collaboration, and deliberation. As such, it is better to define social media as technologies that can be and are manipulated to lead to certain activities, but which may not, after implementation, have any social component whatsoever.

Social media need not be Web based or even digital, as demonstrated in Rishel's contribution regarding both remote and face-to-face use of interactive audience response systems to enable active deliberation. Therefore, we adopt technology in its broadest, perhaps elementary (Pfaffenberger, 1992), sense. Technology is inherently time specific. In other words, the pen was, at one point, advanced technology, as were early mainframe computers. We can even go back to the printing press, which could quite possibly be the earliest form of social media for its ability to print pamphlets that mobilized generations. For example, Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* was a pamphlet that spurred social interaction and collaboration toward overthrowing a tyrant. Closer to today, we see the same tactics playing out across the border in Mexico. There, members of rival cartels constantly drop propaganda pamphlets that either encourage citizens to join the cartels or to send messages to detractors, warning them against tangling with powerful cartels. There, the social interaction is a warning not to act. In either example, the technologies are simple pen and paper. Therefore, we believe that social media can fall into traditional media categories, as well as newer digital technologies, thus splitting further from the Federal Web Manager's Council definition as previously stated. Each definition—both for social media above and Web 2.0 below—encapsulates the sociotechnical elements of technology that factor the human elements within them (Pfaffenberger, 1992).

Social media that are Web based fall into the class of technologies classified as Web 2.0 (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, wiki). These Web-based tools represent the newest generation of Web tools given the potential for them to be utilized for social and interactive purposes; they are a departure from purely asynchronous tools that ushered in the first wave of e-government scholarship and advocacy (e.g., static Web sites for information sharing, or

basic transaction-based tools embedded in Web sites). All Web 2.0 tools have social/interactive capacity, but as some scholars here suggest, the capacity may not be tapped in actual implementation.

In sum, we see the tools through a means-versus-ends lens. In other words, Web 2.0 technologies are the latest means through which people can achieve social ends. Again, we appreciate and do not neglect the capacity of traditional media tools to lead to socially interactive ends as well, but here we turn our attention to the digital technologies, as those are capturing most attention now in practice. In and of themselves, Web 2.0 tools are not necessarily collaborative or interactive, although they have such built-in capacity. Take, say, YouTube, the popular video-sharing Web site. People post videos all the time, but unless there are comments or the videos have "gone viral," not much collaboration or interaction takes place. The platform remains static while certainly having the ability to generate many-to-many interaction, albeit in a digital space.

For the Web 2.0 platforms to be considered social, they should be enacted to take advantage of collaborative and deliberative capacities. Content sharing, for example, is important, but unless social means are attached, the platform is not being utilized to its fullest social capacity. Getting to the end result—the collaborative decision, the smart mob, the policy change, the administrative change, whatever the collaboration dictates—is what transforms Web 2.0 into social media. In a physical, real-life collaborative network, people are the core. As such, their results are products of the networking. The network was the facilitative means to achieve the social end. The same is said of digital spaces that produce similar outcomes.

For public administration, it seems that embracing Web 2.0 technologies in a still-static manner (as Brainard & Derrick-Mills, Hand & Ching, and Bryer show us within this symposium) will not get to the deliberative, communal practices that those embracing digital tools to foster direct democracy envision (Rishel, this issue). Government entities, too, might appear social with use of Web 2.0 tools but often are loath to truly interact lest they give up power (Bryer, this issue; Brainard & Derrick-Mills, this issue).

With our revamped definitions offered, we now turn toward developing a workable model of challenges and concerns facing those who study and adopt social media platforms.

THEORETICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE STUDY OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Except for Rishel's contribution to this symposium, all others focus on Web 2.0 social media tools. Theoretical and practical insights can thus be gleaned from research and theory on e-government/Web 1.0. Figure 1 depicts core attributes of e-government, social media, and Web 2.0 use in government. The

Figure 1. Theoretical Implications of Social Media

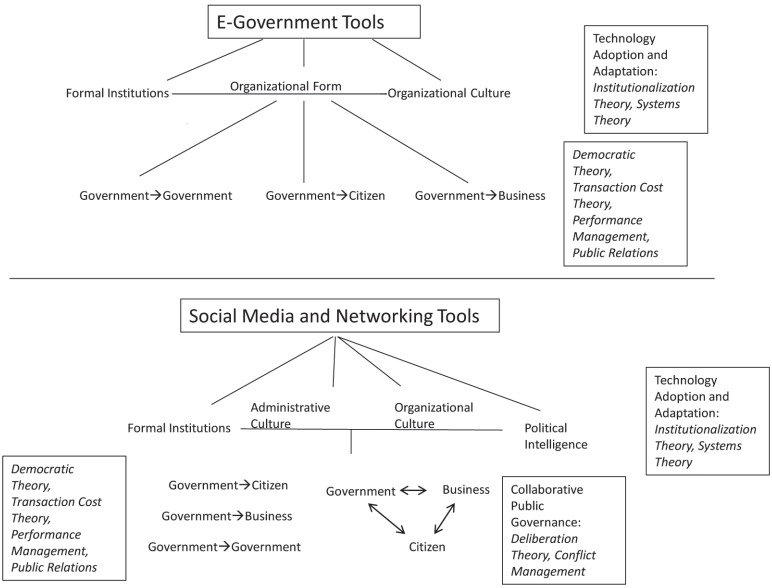

figure captures in both realms the adoption/adaptation filters that are likely to shape implementation of e-government and social media technologies, as well as the outputs of these technologies reflected in the nature of possible government–stakeholder relations. Key theoretical considerations are identified alongside each dimension. We present such a figure to showcase how many similar theoretical and practical issues, indeed, exist between the two technological platforms, as well as the additional considerations that emerge when utilizing social media and Web 2.0 tools. We mean this figure as a way to guide future research within not only social media but Web 1.0 as well. One sees, for example, the added communication layers potentially utilized within the Web 2.0/social media space that are not present in Web 1.0. In addition, we add a theoretical lens for collaborative governance, as such thoughts often are the genesis for utilizing interactive tools in the first place.

Web 1.0 might colloquially be defined as anything on the Web that is intended to be read or otherwise unidirectionally shared. E-government initiatives with these tools are thus limited to information provision, potentially asynchronously bidirectionally communicated (e.g., through e-mail), and certain business transactions (e.g., scheduling appointments, paying bills or fines). These functions—information provision, interaction, and transaction—are three of four related to government–stakeholder interaction identified in the *Economist*'s ("The Electronic Bureaucrat," 2008) review of data from the

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The fourth is transformation, which becomes possible with Web 2.0 and social media tools.

Research and theory on Web 1.0 e-government can broadly be divided across two categories: (a) adoption and adaptation and (b) government–stakeholder relations. Much adoption/adaptation scholarship is guided by seminal work performed by Fountain (2001), with correctives by Norris (2003) and Yang (2003). In summary, Fountain developed a theoretical framework and empirical basis to show how "objective" technologies are transformed in their implementation to potentially not achieve desired or technologically possible results. Objective technologies are filtered through organizational form, organizational culture, and formal institutions, leading to enacted technologies that may be different in form and purpose than initially intended.

In the second category, Holmes (2001) identified three categories of government–stakeholder relations, which have been institutionalized in government (Executive Office of the President, 2002): government-to-citizen, government-to-business, and government-to-government. Research has examined components of each type of relation, bringing to bear theories and practices of democracy, performance management, and transaction costs. Numerous studies have examined, for instance, characteristics of government Web sites in terms of their potential to inform, interact with, or transact with citizens and other stakeholders (e.g., Greitens & Strachan, 2011; Hale, Musso, &Weare, 1999; Musso, Weare, & Hale, 2000; Scott, 2006; Weare, Musso, & Hale, 1999).

From a democratic perspective, prior studies have sought to understand how the adoption of various components of e-government leads to changes in citizen trust in government. For example, Morgeson, VanAmburg, and Mithas (2010) found that generalized trust between citizen and government is not apparent, although citizens may become more confident in the performance potential of government agencies. Limitations to generalized trust might be traced to the limited democratic contents of government Web sites as identified by Scott (2006) and Greitens and Strachan (2011). One catch, however, is that the technologies and deliberative spaces must be set up correctly to foster such deliberative interaction, lest citizens get wary and refuse to participate (Gordon & Manosevitch, 2011).

Moving from Web 1.0, limited interaction potential Web sites, to Web 2.0 and other social media with greater capacity for transformational relationship development ("The Electronic Bureaucrat," 2008) introduces continuity from these kinds of research studies as well as avenues for new theory development. Brainard and McNutt (2011), for instance, studied the characteristics of police–citizen relations using social media Web 2.0 tools, asking whether relationship characteristics were primarily informational, transactional, or collaborative. They found that, despite the social potential of Web 2.0 technologies, government–citizen relations remained largely unidirectional. This

finding is consistent with findings in this symposium (Brainard & Derrick-Mills, this issue; Hand & Ching, this issue).

Nonetheless, the potential for more extensive social interaction creates opportunities to bring different theories to bear beyond what has been advanced within the e-government Web 1.0 literature. Specifically, theories of deliberative democracy, consensus building, and collaborative advantage can elucidate the ways in which diverse stakeholders engage in multistakeholder dialogue. These theories are not a new research area (see, e.g., Herranz, 2007; Huxham, 1996; Kent & Taylor, 1998; Weeks, 2000). What will be interesting for future research is examination of these deliberative components given the peculiarities of Web-based social media specifically, including the potential for full anonymity (at least on the surface, not counting the digital trail usually left behind); technological interaction across text, video, audio, and photographs; and the variations in rules for membership and civility of discourse in an online, digital-only space. Aspects of these dimensions have been explored to some degree in civil society social media spaces online (e.g., Brainard & Brinkerhoff, 2004; Brainard & Siplon, 2002). They have not been examined in multistakeholder settings for the purpose of governance rather than civil society development. By introducing the potential for multistakeholder deliberation rather than unidirectional or asynchronous communications, additional filters can be considered as affecting enactment of technologies for democratic, transactional, or other ends. In this symposium, Bryer addresses this issue directly and suggests that in addition to those filters identified by Fountain (2001), two others be added: administrative culture and political intelligence.

Despite the potentials we have mentioned, there is still resistance (or perhaps misunderstanding) within government agencies to using social media and Web 2.0 technologies in what might be considered genuinely collaborative and dialogic manners. Online spaces for collaboration might not foster consensus, nor might they allow dissensus to emerge (Cammaerts, 2008; Mouffe, 1999). Indeed, if the seemingly dialogic tools still are used in one-way manners, naïve social networking phenomena found in live, in-person social networks (Golub & Jackson, 2010) could move into digital spaces, bringing citizens and governments no closer to an idealized organization-public relationships based on two-way dialogue (Grunig & Grunig, 1991; Kent & Taylor, 1998). Although not included specifically within the figure, this adoption issue always is underlying and thus deserving of further study.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SYMPOSIUM

Our symposium generated several interesting and unique contributions to the field. Within the broader picture depicted in the previous section, the contributors focus in three areas. First, Bryer considers the nonfinancial democratic

costs and benefits incurred through technology adoption/adaptation for public participation purposes. Second, Hand and Ching consider the potential for multi-stakeholder dialogue using Facebook specifically as a tool, but they find a tendency in their study population for continuation of unidirectional information sharing using the social tool. Third, Brainard and Derrick-Mills consider this multi-stakeholder deliberation potential as well, within the context of an electronic commons. They, too, find a tendency toward using Web 2.0 tools in Web 1.0 ways. Last, Rishel considers a social media tool that is not necessarily Web based; focusing on audience response systems, Rishel finds theoretical potential for achieving desired deliberative outcomes and, implicitly, presents lessons and standards that government agencies might apply to achieve these ends using Web-based social media.

Besides these linkages, we notice several patterns among the articles: no clear definition of social media, tendencies toward one-way communication, and power relations. Also important are issues and topics we did not see covered. To that end, gaps exist concerning records management, privacy issues, administration-specific requirements, and ethics.

No Clear Definition of Social Media

We covered this point earlier so we will not belabor it further within this space. The lack of a clear definition led us to unpack and reexamine the definitions of Web 2.0 and social media. With the diversity of definitions, even when utilizing the one we placed in the symposium's original call for papers, we decided to explore the constructs further and assign them both as umbrella terms, rather than one being an umbrella that holds the other. We believe our definitions will further guide research within this developing area by clarifying (even if slightly) the uses and intentions of the tools.

Tendencies Toward One-Way Communication

If we come from the point of view that social media are meant to lead to interactivity, then we should see more of that emanating from citizen–government relations on the platforms. What this symposium revealed, however, was that the tools are still largely used in one-way, asymmetric manners, despite the availability of more collaborative spaces. Hand and Ching, Brainard and Derrick-Mills, and Bryer all point out, either empirically or theoretically, the ways in which one-way communications manifest themselves on the platforms. Hand and Ching realize that a speaking-from-power stance is in place within municipal governments, while Brainard and Derrick-Mills find similar results when analyzing interactions between a local police department and its citizens. In each case, the government entities were reluctant to give up control or power of the message, using the platforms as public relations

and marketing tools to craft and shape an image of the cities under study (Zavattaro, 2010). Bryer goes on to theoretically explore this one-way issue as well, noting that quality of participation on the citizens' parts might diminish, leaving the government with nothing helpful.

Realizations such as those presented within this symposium might further drive government agencies toward one-way models if administrators realize the return on investment is low. In other words, if administrators see no need to gain useful feedback, they might simply launch a Facebook page, a blog, or a community forum simply for the sake of appearing open and transparent, succumbing to normative isomorphic pressure (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Therefore, the pages could become simulations (Baudrillard, 2000) of deliberative, open communication spaces and a perversion of the deliberative democratic space that Rishel envisions in her article.

Power Relations Manifested

Along similar lines, the one-way communicative tendencies allow government power systems to come into play digitally. There is a notion that governments want to control information to shape an opinion (Zavattaro, 2010). Adding social media or Web 2.0 platforms simply gives the agencies another vehicle through which to control the messaging. As Brainard and Derrick-Mills note, the police precincts studied online rarely posted back to citizens. Hand and Ching reveal similar results within Arizona cities. Again, genuine dialogue is rendered ineffective at best and useless at worst. To be genuinely collaborative, government agencies must relinquish some power and control to the citizenry, moving closer to a kind of authentic public participation that Arnstein (1969) and King, Feltey, and Susel (1998) envisioned.

Even if power is relinquished or shared by government, citizens still run into the danger that Walter Lippmann elucidated in the 1920s. He decried the notion of the omnicompetent citizen, which suggests that citizens are supposed to spend massive amounts of time researching each issue to engage in public participation efforts. When citizens do not achieve this rationally driven end, they are meant to feel inferior. Web 2.0 and social spaces promote the expectation for citizen omnicompetence, especially when the focus of Web 2.0 and social technologies is on transparency rather than collaboration (Noveck, 2011). Opening more government information to more eyes does not lead definitively to more collaborative decision making if citizens and other stakeholders do not have the guidance or contextual knowledge to interpret the information presented in a meaningful manner. As several authors here note, including Brainard and Derrick-Mills, Bryer, and Hand and Ching, citizens might be able to post thoughts or opinions about every issue and with access to an abundance of relevant information, but that does not mean any of those comments are particularly useful or demonstrative of the capacity for citizen

competence. In essence, we are left at square one with no spaces to collaborate but simply to interact—information rich but otherwise uninformed. As Rishel notes, it is important to be deliberative when addressing the "other" within collaborative, decision-making spaces.

Records Management

Adding social media and Web 2.0 platforms to an organization's communications tool kit adds yet another layer of paperwork—maintaining records according to proper procedures. No contributors to this symposium addressed this practical issue—something public organizations struggle with when implementing social media and Web-mediated technologies. It remains relatively clear what constitutes a paper record, but what exactly constitutes a record when generated on Web 2.0 technologies remains a challenging issue for government agencies (Wilshusen, 2010). According to the National Archives and Records Administration, federal records are created "without respect to format. This definition applies to all Federal records, including any information created and maintained using Web 2.0 technologies which fit the criteria identified in the definition" (2010, p. 4).

The next set of issues regarding these platforms come when determining: the value of the record, its intended purpose, its permanence, if it is a duplication of material released elsewhere, and the appropriate maintenance and disposal schedule (National Archives and Records Administration, 2010). To tackle the diverse issues, Franks (2010) sets out policy recommendations of government agencies, specifically the U.S federal government. The recommendations, however, certainly can cross level domains and deserve attention in the future. To wit, Franks (2010) suggests creating a chief records officer within the federal government, training employees on proper records management procedures, and updating information technology platforms to accommodate and capture these new records. These suggestions are open for critical examination. What is the effect on the budget and scope of government if a chief records officer is brought in? What employees should receive the training? How will citizens even know if records are being properly kept? Do citizens know that information they submit to Web 2.0 and social platforms even becomes a public record?

Privacy Concerns

The next gap within this symposium comes when addressing privacy concerns. Privacy protections are guaranteed within the Privacy Act of 1974, which limits the amount of personally identifying information the federal government can collect about people and how it can distribute that sensitive information. The challenges are twofold. First, if the government agency itself launches and

controls the platform, then administrators must control the information collected and stored. Second, and more likely, is the agency using a third-party provider (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) to host its material? In that case, the agency "could have limited control over what is done with its information once posted on the electronic venue" (Wilshusen, 2010, pp. 6–7). Relatedly, it becomes unclear once more what organization owns that information—the government or the third-party provider. It is no secret that third-party providers keep and store our personal information. Whenever we log into our e-mail, or Facebook, or online shopping site, recommendations always pop up based on our browsing history, our message content, or profile listings. If we become "friends" or "followers" of a government agency, whatever information we choose to share about ourselves also becomes available to the government.

Perhaps a quick example will showcase what we mean. We are both digital friends with each other on Facebook. That means that we can see what each other posts to our personal profiles (for better or worse!). In a recent example, one of our former students (Tom) contacted the other (Staci) via Facebook, indicating that it was such a small world because the two of us (Tom and Staci) know each other. She figured out the link because our personal details, including our complete Friends lists, are available to view. Now replace Tom or Staci with, say, Department of State, or City of Orlando, and the same result could occur. Once someone agrees to be friends with another entity, be that a person, a business, or a government, they automatically cede control of whatever personal information they choose to share. "Uncertainty about who has access to personal information provided through agency social networking sites could diminish individuals' willingness to express their views and otherwise interact with government" (Wilshusen, 2010, p. 7).

Scholars and practitioners must work together to address this gap. Several questions arise. What are the effects of privacy statements on social networking sites? In other words, does an express notification of privacy concerns and records management deter participation in any way? What are government agencies doing to protect privacy? What theoretical directions can help explain this concern? (Perhaps the notion of the panopticon needs to go digital?)

Administration-Specific Requirements

Some of the contributions to this symposium touch on administrative costs, but none do so explicitly. For example, all of the authors tangentially address the administrative costs associated with implementing social media or Web 2.0 technologies. In Brainard and Derrick-Mills and Hand and Ching's cases, the authors explore types of interactions taking place within the digital spaces. Neither, however, addresses the issue from the administrative side in terms of initial startup, people dedicated to updating the media, how often they are updated, decisions on what to post, how and when, and so on. Bryer notes

that the actual server and digital spaces are relatively inexpensive or free, but he turns the view once again toward the citizens' costs in interacting with government, as well as the democratic costs the government agencies might incur if no meaningful interaction and collaboration takes place. Rishel, too, tackles ways the technology might make people more deliberative, but she does not explore the costs associated with the audience response systems (ARS). Are people meant to purchase the devices themselves? Is the government? Some smart phones serve as ARS devices, but who exactly can afford those devices? Who creates the spaces through which people interact using the ARS? In other words, does an administrator still need to craft a digital presentation that allows for the digital interaction?

Certainly, citizen costs and processes are important to address with the growth of social media and Web 2.0 platforms in government, and all the authors noted here do excellent jobs at such a task. What we suggest, however, is that the lens turn around to explore the costs—direct and indirect—that administrators endure. Some of the questions previously noted are worth addressing in future research projects. We also suggest that scholars examine issues such as motivation to participate in social media, time spent on social media at work (for official purposes and recreational), policies (or lack thereof) that direct use of social media for employees (what can and cannot be posted), stresses associated with the platforms, and attention spent on social media and Web 2.0 versus traditional media.

Ethical Concerns

One final area in which we see a need for more research involves the intersection of ethics and the technologies. No papers specifically mention ethical issues, but they certainly do arise. For example, the Hatch Act governs what federal government employees can and cannot do while in an official capacity related to political involvement. The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (2010) issued guidance regarding the act and social media. According to that guidance, government employees can, say, write a blog regarding a partisan candidate or issue but cannot do so while at work, nor can they solicit funding for that candidate or issue. Furthermore, federal employees can post partisan affiliations to a personal Facebook page or Twitter feed but not while at work. Violating the provisions could be an ethical violation that might cause disciplinary action toward the employee.

With the privacy concerns previously noted, agencies could use social media and Web 2.0 technologies to undertake—either intentionally or unintentionally—a form of digital surveillance (Albrechtslund, 2008). More work needs to be done in this area, as there seems to be a vacuum of literature specifically addressing ethics related to social media and Web 2.0. Research needs to emerge within this area to give clearer direction for practitioners engaging in this area, as well

as scholars seeking a research platform. To achieve both ends, we suggest the following questions as good starting points: How, if at all, do ethics differ in online spaces versus in-person interactions? What theoretical lenses can we use to study digital ethics? How do digital deliberative and collaborative spaces affect administrative ethics, if at all? What ethical challenges do practitioners face when dealing with agency or personal social media tools?

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The pieces presented within this symposium indicate a good first step toward actively engaging the academy within this growing field of study. More work, however, needs to be done to understand, grasp, and adapt these technologies to the field. Within this introduction, we attempt to outline workable definitions of social media and Web 2.0, pulling the two apart to hopefully gain a better understanding of each as umbrella terms for myriad technologies, digital or otherwise. We then offer a theoretical model indicating how emerging digital and social technologies/platforms present different challenges from Web 1.0 counterparts that offered mostly one-way communicative opportunities. Finally, we present some additional questions for future research to fill gaps within the literature.

The symposium only scratches the surface, perhaps necessarily, of research needed within this area. We provide some guidance throughout our introduction but also encourage scholars, especially those interested in theory, to examine this growing field.

REFERENCES

Albrechtslund, A. (2008). Online social networking as participatory surveillance. *First Monday, 13*(3). http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/viewArticle/2142/1949/, accessed May 24, 2011.

Arnstein, S.R. (1969). A ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Planning Association, 35,* 216–224.

Baudrillard, J. (2000). *Simulacra and simulation.* (C. Tucker, Trans.). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Brainard, L.A., & Brinkerhoff, J.M. (2004). Lost in cyberspace: Shedding light on the dark matter of grassroots organizations. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 33,* 32S–53S.

Brainard, L.A., & McNutt, J.G. (2011). Virtual government-citizen relations: Informational, transactional, or collaborative? *Administration & Society, 42,* 836–858.

Brainard, L.A., & Siplon, P.D. (2002). Cyberspace challenges to maintain nonprofit health organizations. *Administration & Society, 34,* 141–175.

Bryer, T.A. (2010). Across the great divide: Social media and networking for citizen engagement. In J. Svara & J. Denhardt (Eds.), *Connected communities: Local governments as a partner in citizen engagement and community*

building (pp. 73–79). www.tlgconference.org/communityconnectionswhite-paper.pdf, accessed May 24, 2011.
Cammaerts, B. (2008). Critiques on the participatory potentials of Web 2.0. *Communication, Culture & Critique, 1,* 358–377.
DiMaggio, P.J., & Powell, W.W. (1983). The iron cage revisited. *American Sociological Review, 48,* 147–160.
Eggers, W.D. (2004).*Government 2.0: Using technology to improve education, cut red tape, reduce gridlock, and enhance democracy.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
The electronic bureaucrat. (2008, February 14). *Economist*. www.economist.com/node/10638002?story_id=10638002/, accessed May 24, 2011.
Executive Office of the President. (2002).*The president's management agenda.* Washington, DC.
Fountain, J.E. (2001). *Building the virtual state: Information technology and institutional change.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
Franks, P.C. (2010). *How federal agencies can effectively manage records created using new social media tools.* Washington, DC: IBM Center for the Business of Government.
Golub, B., & Jackson, M.O. (2010). Naïve learning in social networks and the wisdom of crowds. *American Economic Journal: Microeconomics, 2,* 112–149.
Gordon, E., & Manosevitch, E. (2011). Augmented deliberation: Merging physical and virtual interaction to engage communities in urban planning. *New Media & Society, 13,* 75–95.
Greitens, T.J., & Strachan, J.C. (2011). E-government and citizen engagement: An overview of US states' government Websites. *International Journal of Public Administration, 34,* 54–58.
Grunig, J.E., & Grunig, L.A. (1991). Conceptual differences in public relations and marketing: The case of health-care organizations. *Public Relations Review, 17,* 257–278.
Hale, M., Musso, J., & Weare, C. (1999). Developing digital democracy: Evidence from California municipal Web pages. In B. Hague & B. Loader (Eds.), *Digital democracy: Discourse and decision making in the information age* (pp. 96–115). New York: Routledge.
Herranz, J.J. (2007). The multisectoraltrilemma of network management. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 18,* 1–31.
Holmes, D. (2001). *E-gov: E-business strategies for government.* London: Brealey.
Huxham, C. (1996). *Creating collaborative advantage.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
Kent, M.L., & Taylor, M. (1998). Building relationships through the World Wide Web. *Public Relations Review, 24,* 321–334.
King, C.S., Feltey, K.M., & Susel, B.O. (1998). The question of participation: Toward authentic public participation in public administration. *Public Administration Review, 58,* 317–326.
Mobilize.org. (2011). *Democracy 2.0 summits.* http://mobilize.org/get-involved/democracy-2–0/summits/, accessed May 24, 2011.
Moon, M.J. (2002).The evolution of e-government among municipalities: Rhetoric or reality? *Public Administration Review, 62,* 424–433.

Morgeson, F.V., VanAmburg, D., & Mithas, S. (2010). Misplaced trust? Exploring the structure of the e-government-citizen trust relationship. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 21,* 257–283.

Mouffe, C. (1999). Deliberative democracy or agonistic pluralism? *Social Research, 66,* 745–758.

Musso, J., Weare, C., & Hale, M. (2000). Designing Web technology for local governance reform: Good management or good democracy? *Political Communication, 17,* 1–19.

National Archives and Records Administration. (2010). *A report on federal Web 2.0 use and record value*. www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/resources/Web2.0-use.pdf, accessed May 7, 2011.

Norris, D.F. (2003). Building the virtual state . . . or not? A critical appraisal. *Social Science Computer Review, 21,* 417–424.

Noveck, B.S. (2009). *Wiki government: How technology can make government better, democracy stronger, and citizens more powerful.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Noveck, B.S. (2011). Defining open government. Cairns blog. http://cairns.typepad.com/blog/2011/04/whats-in-a-name-open-gov-we-gov-gov-20-collaborative-government.html, accessed May 7, 2011.

Pfaffenberger, B. (1992). Social anthropology of technology. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 21,* 491–516.

Scott, J.K. (2006). "E" the people: Do U.S. municipal government Web sites support public involvement? *Public Administration Review, 66,* 341–353.

Thomas, J.C., & Streib, G. (2003). The new face of government: Citizen-initiated contacts in the era of e-government. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory, 13,* 83–102.

U.S. General Services Administration. (2009, July). *GSA social media policy*. (GSA publication no. CIO 2106.1). Washington, DC. www.gsa.gov/graphics/staffoffices/socialmediapolicy.pdf, April 13, 2011.

U.S. Office of Special Counsel. (2010). Frequently asked questions regarding social media and the Hatch Act. Washington, DC. www.osc.gov/documents/hatchact/federal/2010-07-27%20Updated%20AO%20Re%20Social%20Media%20Questions%20defines%20FR%20ee.pdf, accessed May 7, 2011.

Weare, C., Musso, J., & Hale, M. (1999). Electronic democracy and the diffusion of municipal Web pages in California. *Administration & Society, 31,* 3–27.

Weeks, E. (2000). The practice of deliberative democracy: Results from four large-scale trials. *Public Administration Review, 60,* 360–372.

West, D.M. (2004). E-government and the transformation of service delivery and citizen attitudes. *Public Administration Review, 64,* 15–27.

Wilshusen, G.C. (2010). *Challenges in federal agencies' use of Web 2.0 technologies.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office. www.gao.gov/new.items/d10872t.pdf, accessed May 7, 2011.

Yang, K. (2003). Neoinstitutionalism and e-government: Beyond Jane Fountain. *Social Science Computer Review, 21,* 432–442.

Zavattaro, S.M. (2010). Municipalities as PR and marketing firms. *Administrative Theory & Praxis, 32,* 191–211.

Thomas A. Bryer is an assistant professor in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Central Florida. His teaching and research focus on public participation with government, citizen engagement, cross-sector collaboration, and ethics. His work appears in *Public Administration Review*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, *Public Performance and Management Review*, *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, *American Review of Public Administration*, *International Journal of Public Participation*, *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, *Public Administration and Management*, and *International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior.* He has published book chapters and award-winning teaching simulations.

Staci M. Zavattaro is an assistant professor in the Department of Government at the University of Texas at Brownsville. Her research focuses on the intersection of public administration, public relations, and marketing. Her work appears in *Administrative Theory & Praxis* and *Employee Responsibilities & Rights Journal.*