

Social Media And Elections

Please read this page on “[Social Media and Elections](#)”. Once you have finished the reading, discuss the authors main points and type a reflection. Do you agree with the author's main points? Why or why not? Once you are finished, submit your completed assignment.

The Politico author, Nicholas Carr, contends that Social Media has dramatically altered the political landscape as a result of its changes to how we communicate and think as people. Much as in the past, when radio gave people the chance to hear the disembodied voices of their candidates, or when television gave image to that audio (allowing people to see their candidates, no matter where they may be), Social Media has transformed how people across the globe viewed political candidates. Instant communication and a 24-hour live feed of political candidates’ words and actions make reactions equally impulsive and instantaneous. This is a point Mr. Carr and I can both agree on; the Digital Age has demanded of political candidates perpetual motion, irrespective of what that motion or action entails; provocateurs are more successful than stable candidates in this modern landscape, as evidenced, as Carr says, by the rise of Donald Trump over the summer of 2015. With radio, words, diction, and how the candidate sounded and *appealed* to the people through words were what mattered; with television, public image was most important. With Social Media, of primacy is relevance; maintaining a constant relevance to the general public and always being on the public’s mind, holding their attention, are the most important aspects of campaigning. The ever distracted of the Digital Age need to have their attention constantly grabbed, and big, provocative personalities are the way that is accomplished. Many of Carr’s points are reasonable conclusions supported by historical evidence; having the opportunity to look back upon this article with nearly four years of hindsight, I can confidently say that Carr was ‘dead-on,’ so to speak, regarding the value of Social Media provocateurs in political landscapes. The shortened attention spans of the general public of ‘digital’ societies is apparent; objective studies have been conducted by various research organizations that make it conclusive that either attention spans have reduced broadly or have reduced with alterations in ‘task-demand’; either of these conclusions or both are reasonable. Taking this into account, it is only logical to find that provocateurs such as President Donald Trump, President Duterte, and President Bolsonaro are successful; the modern, instant-communication age demands perpetual ‘news-worthy’ words and action to grab attention. Attention is the most important object, not the type of attention that it is; in any case, any news is good news. The rise of such figures as these may be attributable to myriad other factors, but it is nigh inarguable that the alterations to how humans think and react as a result of Social Media and instant-communication is a factor. This instant communication has bred instant reaction and shortened attention; humans now wait for the ‘next big story’ and formulate a reaction, typically emotional, within minutes of reading/hearing/watching the story. From there, it is a matter of weaving narratives and organizing support while retaining attention. Carr was very much correct due to this, I feel.

Link:

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/09/2016-election-social-media-ruining-politics-213104>