[Gov94CZ] From Voice to Influence: Understanding Citizenship in a Digital Age

Units: 4
Instructors: Danielle Allen, Department of Government Professor; Chaebong Nam, Postdoctoral Fellow
Class: 4-6 pm, Monday, CGIS Knafel K108 (FAS)
Office Hours:
- Chaebong Nam: 1-5 pm, Tuesday (https://calendly.com/chaebong_nam/gov94cz) or additional times via appointment (chaebong_nam@fas.harvard.edu)
- Danielle Allen: Wednesday (https://calendly.com/danielle_allen)

Course Description: Digital and social media platforms have brought about rapid and fundamental changes in the political landscape of our digital age. While those new technologies shape the ways we perceive and read the world, gather information, communicate with others, shape public opinions, and make political judgments, the institutional and electoral arenas have lost the monopoly of political decisionmaking. Instead, there now exist multiple levers to make political influence. Amidst this very change, young people rise as key political actors and re-write the meaning of *political*. This course will introduce students to an array of research and concepts that help clarify the political landscape in a digital age, as well as inviting them into close consideration of a set of design principles to guide effective, equitable, and self-protective civic agency in the contemporary communications environment. Student engagement and active inquiry in class is crucial. For a group project, students will conduct case studies to connect theory with practice and share their knowledge with their peers.

I. Readings (Available either online or at library reserves)

- o   Main Readings
    - ▪ Allen, D. S., & Light, J. S. (2015). *From voice to influence: Understanding citizenship in a digital age*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Process.
    - ▪ Jenkins, H. (2016). *By any media necessary: The new activism of American youth*. New York: New York University Press (Available online).
    - ▪ Allen, D. (2004). *Talking to strangers: Anxieties of citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- o   Supplementary Readings: See the weekly schedule
- o   The YPP Action Frame site: http://yppactionframe.fas.harvard.edu/

II. Weekly Schedule

WEEK 1 (8/31): Context Setting I: Youth, Media, and Participation *With or Without* Technology

- [Youth, New media, and the Rise of Participatory Politics](#) (Kahne, Middaugh, & Allen, 2014). YPP Research Network Working Paper #1, March 2013.
- [Beyond "The Crisis in Civics" – Notes from my 2013 DML talk](#) (Ethan Zuckerman)
- "[Using Digital Platforms to Promote Participatory Politics: A Discussion with Danielle Allen](#)."
- *[Toward Participatory Democracy](#)* (Danielle Allen, *Boston Review*)
- Bruce, B. C., & Hogan, M. (1998). [The disappearance of technology: Toward an ecological model of literacy](#). In D. Rethinking, M. C. McKenna, L. D. Labbo, & R. D. Kieffer (Eds.), *Handbook of literacy and technology: Transformations in a post-typographic world* (pp. 269–281). Florence, KY: Rutledge.

WEEK 2 (9/12): Context Setting II: Egalitarian Participatory Politics, What We Value, and *Beyond*
- **Reading:** Prologue & Chapters 1 to 4 (Part 1: Loss) & Chapter 9 ("Brotherhood, Love, and Political Friendship") in *Talking to Strangers.*
  - ❖ (Optional) *[Toward Participatory Democracy](#)* (Danielle Allen, Boston Review)
- **Reading:** Chapter 1 ("[Youth Voice, Media, and Political Engagement: Introducing the Core Concepts](#)") in *By Any Media Necessary.*
- **Blog posts:** [Why the YPP Action Frame?](#) (Also read the related posts— [What the Principles Get you](#) and [What We Value: Equity, Efficacy, and Self-Protection](#))

WEEK 3 (9/19): Principle 1—Why Does it Matter to Me?
- Theories/Perspectives
  - **Reading:** Introduction and Chapter 2 in *From Voice to Influence.*
  - **Reading:** Chapter 8 ("Receiving Public Sphere: The Flow Dynamics Model") in *From Voice to Influence.*
- Cases
  - **Reading**: Chapter 3 ("[Decreasing World Suck": Harnessing Popular Culture for Fan Activism](#)") in *By Any Media Necess*ary.
  - **Reading:** Chapter 5 ("[DREAMing Citizenship: Undocumented Youth, Coming Out, and Pathways to Participation](#)") in *By Any Media Necessary*.
  - **The YPP Action Frame site:** [The YPP Action Frame- "#1 Why Does It Matter to Me?](#)"
  - **Video clips**: Selected from [Informing Activists](#)
    - [How/When do movements affect culture?](#) – Jenn Earl
    - [How does movement participation affect people's lives?](#) – Marco Giugni
    - [Who Participates in Movements and Why?](#) – Bert Klandermans and Ziad Munson

WEEK 4 (9/26): Principle 2—How Much Should I Share?
- Theories/Perspectives
  - **Reading:** Chapter 5 ("The Danger of Transparent Friends") in *From Voice to Influence*.

- o **Reading:** "Mind the Risks*," in Participatory Politics: Next-generation Tactics to Remake Public Spheres.* pp. 63-68 (Available online via the University library)
    - o **Reading:** Soep, E. (2012). The Digital Afterlife of Youth Media: Implications for Media Literacy Education. *Comunicar, 19*(38), 93-100.
- Cases
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 2 ("Watch 30 minute Video on Internet, Become Social Activist: Kony 2012, Invisible Children, and the Paradoxes of Participatory Politics") in *By Any Media Necessary.*
        - ❖ (Optional) "Jason Russell: Kony2012 and the Fight for Truth" (The Guardian)
        - ❖ (Optional) "Internet Activist, a Creator of RSS, Is Dead at 26, Apparently a Suicide" (NY Times)
    - o **The YPP Action Frame site:** The YPP Action Frame - #2 "How Much Should I Share?"
    - o **Video clips:** Selected from Informing Activists
        - ▪ What are the risks of activism and can I reduce those risks? – Heidi Reynolds-Stenson

WEEK 5 (10/3): Principle 3—How Do I Make it About More Than Myself?
- Theories/Perspectives
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 10 ("Reclaiming Disinterestedness in the Digital Era") in *From Voice to Influence.*
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 11 ("Achieving Rooted Cosmopolitanism in a Digital Age") in *From Voice to Influence.*
- Cases
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 4 ("Between Storytelling and Surveillance: The Precarious Public of American Muslim Youth") in *By Any media Necessary.*
    - o **The YPP Action Frame site:** The YPP Action Frame- #3 "How Do I Make it About More Than Myself?"
    - o **Video clips:** Selected from Informing Activists
        - ▪ Who participates in movements and why? – Bert Klandermans and Ziad Munson
        - ▪ When do movements shape public opinion? – Neal Caren
        - ▪ How do I build identity and solidarity in a movement? – Rachel Einwohner

    * Project (P-1) Due & Discussion about selected cases

WEEK 6 (10/17): Principle 4—Where Do We Start?
- Theories/Perspectives
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 7 ("Viral Engagement: Fast, Cheap, and Broad, but Good for Democracy?") in *From Voice to Influence.*
    - o **Reading:** *"Five Tactics of Participatory Politics" in Participatory Politics: Next-Generation Tactics to Remake Public Spheres* (Lissa Soep, 2014). (Available online via the University library)
    - o **Journal article:** "From Slactivism to Activism" (Evegeny Mozorov)

- o **Newspaper article:** Danielle Allen & Cathy Cohen, "The New Civil Rights Movement Doesn't Need an MLK" (The Washington Post)
- Cases
  - o **Reading:** Chapter 4 (""Undocumented, Unafraid, and Unapologetic": Dream Activists, Immigrant Politics, and the Queering of Democracy") in *From Voice to Influence.*
  - o **Video clips:** Selected from Informing Activists
    - What are the best tactics for my cause? – Catherine Corrigall-Brown
    - What are the best targets for my cause? – Tom Maher
    - How do I use online tools to my cause? – Lissa Soep

WEEK 7 (10/24): Principle 5—How Can We Make It Easy and Engaging for Others to Join In?
- Theories/Perspectives
  - o **Reading:** Chapter 6 ("Cute Cats to the Rescue? Participatory Media and Political Expression") in *From Voice to Influence.*
  - o **Reading:** Earl, J. (2013). Spreading the Word or Shaping the Conversation: "Prosumption" in Protest Websites, in Patrick G. Coy (ed.) *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change (Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change, Volume 36)* Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 3-38.
  - o **Website:** Effective Altruism
    - "Introduction to Effective Altruism"
    - Resources: https://www.effectivealtruism.org/resources/
- Cases
  - o **Reading:** "Introduction," " Points of Voice," & "Drop That Knowledge" in *Drop That Knowledge: Youth Radio Stories* (Lissa Soep, 2010) (Available online via the University library)
    - ❖ (Optional) *Youth Radio* Innovation Lab: An interactive map gentrification about Oaktown (https://youthradio.org/oaktown)
    - ❖ (Optional) *Community Mapping: Hull House Maps and Papers (1895) vs. Promise Tracker (2014–)*
  - o **The YPP Action Frame site:** The YPP Action Frame - #5 "How Can We Make It Easy and Engaging for Others to Join In?"
  - o **Video clips:** Selected from Informing Activists
    - When do I need an organization? – Jenn Earl
    - How do I work with existing organizations? – Grace Yukich
    - What are some considerations for youth in organizations? – Sarah Gaby

WEEK 8 (10/31): Principles 6—How Do We Get Wisdom from Crowds? & Principle 7––How Do We Handle the Downside of Crowds?
- Theories/ Perspectives
  - o **Reading:** Chapter 9 ("Pursuing Cognitive Democracy") in *From Voice to Influence.*
  - o **Reading:** Cynthia Farina, Hoi Kong, Cheryl Blake, Mary Newhart, Nik Luka. "Democratic Deliberation in the Wild: The McGili Online Design Studio and

The RegulationRoom Project." Fordham Urban Law Journal 41 (2014): 1527-759.
- o **Reading:** Chapter 1 ("Hearing the Other Side, in Theory and in Practice") & Chapter 2 ("Encountering Mixed Political Company") in *Hearing the Other Side: Deliberative versus Participatory Democracy* (Diana Mutz, 2007).
- Cases/Strategies
    - o **Website:** *RegulationRoom* platform (for federal rulemaking)— http://www.regulationroom.org
    - o **Newspaper article:** *Shooting Spurs Hashtag Effort on Stereotypes* (The NY Times)
    - o **The YPP Action Frame site**: #6 "How Do We Get Wisdom from Crowds?" & #7 "How Do We Handle the Downside of Crowds?"
    - o **Video clips:** Selected from *Informing Activists*
        - ▪ How can I build coalitions and increase diversity? – Rich Wood
        - ▪ What do I need to know about the media environment? – Deana Rohlinger

WEEK 9 (11/7): Principle 8—Does Raising Our Voices Count As Civic and Political Action?
- Perspectives/Theories
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 3 ("Impure Dissent: Hip Hop and the Political Ethics of Marginalized Black Urban Youth" in *From Voice to Influence.*
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 10 ("Rhetoric, a Good Thing" & "Epilogue") in *Talking to Strangers.*
- Case/Strategies
    - o **Reading:** Youth & Participatory Politics Research Network Working Papers No. 3 ("And then the Zimmerman Verdict Happens...": Black Marginalization, New Media and Contemporary Black Activism).
    - o **Video clips**
        - ▪ The Black Youth Project Video: #BYP100 Responds to George Zimmerman Verdict
            - ❖ (Optional) The Black Youth Project (BYP) site: http://blackyouthproject.com/
        - ▪ *#BlackTwitter after #Ferguson* (Times Video)
    - o **Magazine article**: "*How Trayvon Martin's Death Launched a New Generation of Black Activism*"
    - o **The YPP Action Frame site:** The YPP Action Frame - #8 "Does Raising Our Voices Count as Civic and Political Action?"

WEEK 10 (11/14): Principle 9—How Do We Get From Voice to Change? & Principle 10—How Can I Find Allies?
- Perspectives/Theories
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 7 (*"It's Called Giving a Shit!": What Counts as "Politics"?*) in by *Any Media Necessary.*
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 6 ("Bypassing the Ballot Box: How Libertarian Youth Are Reimagining the Political") in *By Any Media Necessary.*
    - o **Reading:** Chapter 5 ("The Social Citizen") in *Hearing the Other Side*

❖ **Reading (Optional):** Bautista, M., Bertrand, M., Morrell, E., Scorza, D., & Matthews, C. (2013). Participatory Action Research and City Youth: Methodological Insights from the Council of Youth Research. *Teachers College Record, 115*(10), 1. (Available online via the University library)

- Cases
  - ○ **The YPP Action Frame site:** #9 "How Do We Get From Voice to Change?" & # 10 "How Can I Find Allies?"
  - ○ **Video clips**: Selected from Informing Activists
    - ▪ How/When do movements make a political difference? – Katrin Uba
    - ▪ What can be done about activist burnout? – Sharon Nepstad
    - ▪ How do I adapt my tactics to the political environment? – Holly McCommon
  - ❖ **Website (Optional):** Youth Participatory Action Research
    - ▪ Explore the content, specially "Get Started → Community Support" (Barriers to working together, Seeking allies, Speaking to powerful people, engaging your school principal)

WEEK 11 (11/21): Pedagogy of Participatory Politics
- **Reading:** Kahne, Joseph, Erica Hodgin, and Elyse Eidman-Aadahl. "Redesigning Civic Education for the Digital Age: Participatory Politics and the Pursuit of Democratic Engagement." *Theory & Research in Social Education* 44.1 (2016): 1-35.
- **Reading:** Chapters 1 ("The Two Concepts of Education") & Chapter 2 ("Participatory Readiness") in *Education and Equality* (Danielle Allen, 2016).
- **Reading:** "Afterwards: Necessary Learning" in *By Any Media Necessary.*
  - ❖ **Reading (Optional):** Bruce, Bertram C. "From Hull House to *Paseo Boricua*: The theory and practice of community inquiry." *Philosophy of Pragmatism (Ii): Salient Inquiries*. Eds. Dicher, Bogdan and Adrian Luduşan. Cluj-Napoca, Romania: Editura Fundaţiei pentru Studii Europene (European Studies Foundation Publishing House), 2008. 181-98.

WEEK 12 (11/28): Presentation (4- 8 pm). Dinner served.
- Readings from the presenters (need to be sent to the instructors one week prior to the class)

WEEK 13 (12/5): Reading week

WEEK 14 (12/17): Due

III. Class Assignments

1. Group Project: Case Study

Own your knowledge. I want students to create their own meanings from their experiences both in and beyond class. Lecture and readings are important, of course. But they are not the best way to own knowledge. Connecting theories, knowledge, and practices you hear from the class to your lived experiences begins with an authentic question that matters to you. Simply, what do you care about? And why does it matter to you? It *does* echo the first principle of the ten. Then, how do you proceed to the next steps? You engage in the inquiry cycle—seen in Figure 1—originally drawn from John Dewey. Once you come up with an essential question that connects with your life, you can investigate through multiple methods, sources, and media. Any tangible products can derive from investigation—the tangible product in our class will be your case study. Note that your creation is inseparable from other steps, especially discussion and reflections. You need to discuss meanings 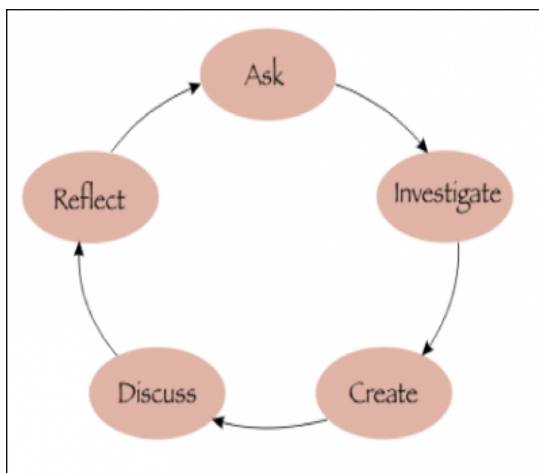and lessons of your creation with others and then go back to previous steps, namely investigation and creation, and tinker with your creation. In the end, you and your audience—now your instructors and peers but beyond that down the road—are all invited to a broad vista to "look back" at the whole inquiry process and generate further meanings together. These five steps, of course, are neither linear nor discrete. Rather, they are embedded in one another. The point here is that this inquiry cycle can break down your inquiry processes––typically complicated and less articulate—into small pieces and monitor your own meaning making experiences. In completing this process you claim the ownership of knowledge. Though the knowledge is provisional and tentative, you can own it for a moment. Please see the related posts: "The YPP Action Frame with Inquiry-Based Learning II: "Small Inquiry" and "Big Inquiry"" and "The YPP Action Frame with Inquiry-Based Learning I: An Inquiry Cycle" from the YPP Action Frame site.

Figure 1 The Inquiry Cycle

Case Study. Team up with your peers (2 or 3 students in one group) to conduct a case study. What kind of case study? You could start by writing a captivating story around the case. We will discuss several real world cases during class, and you can imagine emulating one of them. The case study can be like a journalistic report in which the story can be situated in particular theories and perspectives we discuss in class. The cases we address there are quite lengthy, but you are not necessarily required to write such a long paper. What matters most is the content and message you want to deliver through the case; this project is an exercise both to express your creativity and practice research skills. It is broken into small pieces (P1, P2, P3-1, P3-2, and P3-3) to help you complete the end project (P4) effectively.

- P0 [Not Graded]. Please consult with Chaebong (chaebong_nam@fas.harvard.edu) regarding the case selection by September 29, 2016.
- P1. "Why it matters to me/us"

- o *Choose your case*—any case you can think of that matters to you and is *safe* enough to share with others. Yes, these first two elements already echo YPP Action Frame's principle 1 ("Why does it matter to me?") and principle 2 ("How much should I share?").
  - o The case can be anything (any group, any organization, or any single person) that matters to you in connection with a large theme of the course: Youth, media, and participatory politics. Be creative and flexible in choosing your case.
  - o *Introduce the case*, explaining why the case matters to you, what you want to talk about in the case, spelling out main issues you would want to explore.
  - o *Try to situate the case* in one or some of theoretical perspectives discussed in class.
    - ▪ You are welcome to challenge the existing viewpoints and values, as well as defending them. For instance, we see the three values—equity, efficacy, and self-protection—as "timeless but not dogmatic" (quoted from Tom Hayden's reflection about the Port Huron Statement at 50). If you find other ideas and values pertain to your own case, please bring them to our class through your own inquiry-cycle.
  - o *Describe briefly a general plan* about how to investigate your issues:
    - ▪ What sorts of data would you need to understand the case?
      - • Who would you want to talk with you?
      - • What would you observe?
      - • What existing data would you want to explore?
      - • How do we analyze them?
    - ▪ What is your position in the case?
  - o Due: Week 5 (A 6 to 8 page statement, or longer if desired)
  - o *Please talk with Chaebong beforehand*

- P2. "What we discovered so far"
  - o Share your interviews, observation pieces, artifacts, or any relevant data, and how they support your case and arguments. Or share anything new or unexpected you found.
  - o Due: Week 10

- P3-1. Presentation (Week 12)

- P3-2. Add *Discussions* and *Conclusion* based on feedback from the presentation

- P3-3. Individual reflection note. This portion is spared for individual reflection about the collaborative research-learning activities. As members on the same team, you share a common ground for the case, but that does not necessarily mean that you share exact thoughts with others. Thus, this individual reflection paper gives you an opportunity to flesh out your own thought or ideas around your case or your collaborative thinking activities.

- P4.
  - o Compile P1 to P3-3
  - o Submit by due date: By 5 pm on December 17, 2016

2. **Individual Weekly Reading Notes (IN)**

- Share your thoughts on the readings and cases of the week. Required **for 8 weeks**.
- You are strongly encouraged to respond to other students' comments.
- Share any cases/examples you think are relevant to the topic of the week. Send the links or information to the instructor, or post them directly onto the class web.
- The reading notes to needs to be uploaded **by 5 pm on Sunday before class**.

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* The Potential Use of Case Studies and Important Research Ethics
Please note that we strongly encourage student openness to share knowledge with others, not only peers in class, but also with the general public outside of class.

- Public knowledge sharing
    - o The case studies can be shared with peers in class to deepen discussion and understanding throughout the course.
    - o The final products can also be shared on an external website, such as the YPP Action Frame site (http://yppactionframe.fas.harvard.edu). The core ideas of *Government 94* are drawn from 5 year-long research studies done by the MacArthur Foundation's Youth Participatory Politics (YPP) Research Network, including the YPP Action Frame. In this class, you are invited to add your own thoughts and insights to current key findings. As you yourselves stand among rising civic actors, you can bring out your own creative and thoughtful interpretations, both theoretically and practically.
    - o Your case studies will contribute to a body of democratic knowledge building and further sharpen understanding of a political landscape in the digital age. The studies also can be shared in conference talks for the books that the YPP research team may eventually write. Note that your names or names of the participants for your cases can be replaced with pseudonyms or made anonymous, if you wish. Choosing to use your real name or pseudonyms or remaining anonymous will not affect your grade or our evaluation on your performance. If you want to opt out of the sharing part, please contact Chaebong Nam via email (chaebong_nam@fas.harvard.edu) and inform her of your decision. Your opt-out will not affect your grade or evaluation on your performance as well.

- Research Ethics
    - o Although knowledge sharing is important for democratic knowledge production, individual right to privacy should not be compromised against people's wishes. Research ethics becomes more difficult in a digital environment. The primary purpose of conducting case study in *Government 94* is to serve your authentic and critical learning experience, but our emphasis on research ethics cannot be overrated. We urge you to protect your participants' rights to their privacy, as well as to respect them as your partners for democratic knowledge building. Simply, listen to the participants, respect them, and

see them as your project partners. It is imperative to clarify to your potential participants the purpose of your case study, your main issues, the methods of investigation, the potential uses of your case studies, and the boundaries of sharing personal information. We will discuss more details in class. The instructors are readily available to address your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact Chaebong Nam anytime if you are seeking consultation.

IV. Grading Criteria[*]

Elements	Percentage	Sub-elements	Points
Attendance	20%		
Individual Weekly Reading Notes	30%		
Group Project	50%	P1	100
		P2	100
		P3-1	100
		P3-2	100
		P3-3	100
		P4 (Compiled with Conclusion-Reflection)	100

* Although is a general guideline, there can be flexibility at the instructor's discretion.