Political Science

G. R. Boynton's New Media and Politics

University of Iowa 9-13-2010

A comparison of the popularity of political figures and pop icons on micro blogging websites

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This paper is posted at Iowa Research Online.
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I. Intro

The purpose of this report is to introduce the reader to how micro blogging websites can help answer important questions in global communications. In this report we will start by asking a specific question that relates to global communication and introduce the tools necessary to answer such a question.

II. The question being asked in this report can be broken down to two questions, an abstract or conceptual one, and a concrete one, which describes what questions we need to ask to answer the first one. For example for the purposes of this report a comparison of key political icons and pop icons will be made to see, which is more popular? This is the abstract question in this report, however to answer it another question must be answered. How many tweets did each figure generate on twitter during an equal amount of time?

III. The main search engine that was relied on to answer the above questions was twitter. Twitter is a widely known micro blogging website that allows users to post blogs of 140 characters or less, but can be infinitely useful as a method of learning what is relevant and important to people at any given period of time. The search started on Wednesday the 25th and lasted for two days, with the data being collected on Friday the 27th. The selected political figures were Barack Obama, and Osama Bin Laden, while the pop icons were Setembro, and Aaliah.

IV. Results

The results collected were exported to excel spread sheets and were surprising to myself. Most people are under the misconception that Americans care very little for politics and idolize pop icons such as musicians and actors. The first spread sheet belonged to Setembro, a Latin celebrity that only succeeded in generating twenty tweets over the course of two days. Aaliah, an American singer, model, and actress whose recent death in a plane crash generated much controversy had generated 102 tweets which were significantly higher than Setembro but still negligible to the results of the political icons. Barack Obama's search came back with 2635 tweets. Needles to say Obama is the United States' 44th and current president. Most of the tweets concerning Obama were regarding the Islamic center being erected near ground zero and his controversial support of it. Last but not least the infamous Saudi Arabian terrorist known as Osama Bin Laden generated 2267 tweets, placing his popularity second only to Obama.

To make this data relative to the question being asked, a comparison will reveal that Obama and Bin Laden's popularity amongst twitter users have the combined sum of 4902 tweets while the pop icons had a combined sum of 122 tweets. Through such data a conclusion can be made, that contrary to popular belief, politics (at least regarding these two figures) holds more sway on twitter's populace than pop icons do.

V. The 4 excel spread sheets that contain the results of our search are all stored in Drop Box and can be supplied upon demand. They are each named after the figure they represent.