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The Online Citizen: Is Social Media Changing Citizens' Beliefs About Democratic Values?

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Abstract   Social media websites are rapidly changing the way that Americans live and communicate with one another. Social media sites encourage individuals to constantly share information about one's self (and constantly seek information about others) that would have been private in the past. This experience can alter how an individual views the world in ways that political scientists have not been able to fully capture. In a cross-sectional survey of the American public I find a strong correlation between the use of Facebook and personal blogs and support for civil liberties. Individuals who spend more time self-publicizing on the Internet seem to value freedom of expression more, but also value the right to privacy less than individuals who use social media less often. This pattern suggests that technology may be altering American attitudes on basic democratic values and highlights the need for dynamic research designs that account for the causal effect Internet use may have on individual political development.

Keywords   Political psychology · Democratic values · Online socialization

Social communication is in the midst of a fundamental paradigm shift. Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, the proliferation of personal websites, and mobile devices designed to access these sites anywhere, anytime have

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made it possible for people to share information about their lives with a wide audience, and millions of people are actively embracing this new form of communication. This technology then allows users to publicize themselves in ways that have never been possible before and is changing the nature of public and private spheres and individuals' relationships and interactions with one another.

This revolution has not gone unnoticed by social scientists. Indeed, one of the indications of the importance of social media use may be that it has drawn interest from scholars in psychology, sociology, education, communications and virtually every field that studies human behavior. The expansion of social media access means more and more individuals have access to increasing amounts of information and the opportunity for online socialization. Naturally, much of the research on social media use and political behavior has focused on how online socialization affects political knowledge (Delli Carpini and Keeter 2003) and political engagement (Boulianne 2009; Delli Carpini 2000; Jennings and Zeitner 2003; Lee 2006; Lupia and Philpot 2005; McLeod et al. 1999; Vitak et al. 2010; Zhang et al. 2010; Kittilson and Dalton 2011).

However, social media use may represent a much larger change in social norms that affects fundamental values and perceptions. Rather than being a media form like television, where users passively absorb information, sites like Facebook and Youtube allow and encourage users to generate content, share it with each other, and comment on what their fellow users produce. Social media sites are specifically designed to encourage users to publish photos, personal information, and comments about their lives—information which would have been shared with only family or a few close friends a decade ago. This shift in behavior means that more and more Americans, particularly among younger cohorts, are living their lives publicly.

This article presents preliminary evidence that suggests that online socialization is having an impact on the fundamental values that individuals hold, creating citizens who have different ideas about norms and democratic values. I find that individuals who get into the habit of sharing information about themselves may come to value the right of free expression more and the right of privacy less. However, this relationship is only significant with the youngest generation of American voters, suggesting that online socialization may play a key role in intellectual development and maturation. The limits of cross-sectional data analysis obviously make it difficult to make firm conclusions about the causal process that creates the link between online socialization and value formation. While not necessarily conclusive, these results suggest that online socialization plays a key role in shaping core democratic values by providing a conduit for self-publicizing. Online socialization may encourage very different behaviors and cultivate individuals with very different values than past forms of socialization.

Social Networking On- and Off-line

Recent political campaigns have brought attention to the role of social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, which are becoming common tools in these campaigns (Gueorguieva 2006). For the most part, research on social media use

focuses on political knowledge and political participation, though the effect of social media on either of these phenomena is still unclear (see Boulianne 2009 for a comprehensive review). Some researchers argue that virtual social networks act in the same manner that real-world contacts do. In the real world, social networks and interactions create a norm that the individual is expected to live up to (see, for example, Putnam 1995; Green and Gerber 2001; Fowler and Kam 2007; Sigel 2009). Therefore, if the individual's network prioritizes participation and communicates about it the individual will be more likely to participate in order to live up to the network norm. Kittilson and Dalton (2011) argued that online socialization can serve a similar role to real-world social capital. In their study they found a strong positive correlation between online social capital and increased political tolerance, which suggests that the acts of online communication and engagement can alter individual opinion. In fact, many scholars have suggested that these online relationships can encourage people who might otherwise have no real-world social connections to politics to become politically active solely through online network activation (Vitak et al. 2010; Zhang et al. 2010). Of course, others remain unconvinced. Some researchers argue that online political activity merely creates a norm of *online* activity that does not translate into real world action, creates minimal real world action (Valenzuela et al. 2009) and may even lower real world activity (Kenski and Stroud 2006).

The content of the online experience seems to be a critical factor in how the online network affects individual behavior. Social discussion and interaction can provide information and increase political tolerance and political knowledge (Mutz 2002a, b; Godwin et al. 2004; Pattie and Johnston 2008; Harell 2010); however, discussion networks can often become one-sided which leads to less tolerance (Wojcieszak and Mutz 2009). Individuals may even have a tendency to organize their discussion networks to avoid this dissent (Kalish and Robins 2006), and individual personality differences can alter the impact of social networks (Hibbing et al. 2011).

This is problematic because the social networks that individuals form online are often politically homogenous (Gaines and Mondak 2009), which may limit the effect of the network on tolerance and engagement. Sunstein (2008a, b) has frequently argued that the Internet creates polarization because individuals select into information environments in which their views are never challenged and are frequently reinforced. This selection effect then leads to contentious and unproductive discussion on explicitly political websites (Wojcieszak and Mutz 2009). The learned social norm in the online political world may be highly negative, fractured and discouraging for the individual, leading to lower levels of engagement and increased political polarization (Jennings and Zeitner 2003; Lee 2006)

Social Media and Self-Publicity

The research on social networks and social media sites as a facilitator of those networks and discussions is critically important; however, of equal importance is the way that social media, simply by its very nature, is changing social norms and having a direct impact on individual beliefs about democratic values. Young adults

and adolescents live in a world in which the Internet has always existed, and social media sites have been a part of their intellectual and social development. Therefore, they have come of age at a time when social interaction requires sharing a great deal of their thoughts and life experiences online. Rather than being a factor that is exogenous to political development, social media may play an essential role in creating those predispositions as an environmental factor on par with socio-economic status or familial factors that shape political development, particularly when it comes to norms about the private and public sphere. Boyd and Marwick (2011) explain, "As social constructs, privacy and publicity are affected by what is structurally feasible and socially appropriate. In recent history, privacy was often taken for granted because structural conditions made it easier to not share than to share. Social media has changed this equation" (10). Though social media sites differ in features and capabilities, they all have one thing in common: they encourage people to publicize their lives. This crucial component is probably one of the single most important developments since the Internet itself was created. It has become commonplace to share details of one's life online in a way that would not have been possible a decade ago. To put it in political terms, we increasingly value our right to freedom of expression. At the same time, of course, the more you share of yourself with the world, the less important the private sphere becomes. If social media has an effect on beliefs about civil liberties then two hypotheses emerge:

H_1 As social media use increases, a social norm that encourages self-publicizing lowers the barrier between public and private sphere. Therefore, the more an individual publicizes online, the less he or she will value privacy.

H_2 Social media encourages individuals to share thoughts and state of mind, highlighting the value of personal expression. The more an individual publicizes online, the more he or she will value freedom of expression.

Ethnographic research has found preliminary evidence supporting these hypotheses among adolescents. In interviews with high school students, some researchers have found important distinctions between types of privacy and the importance that students attach to privacy (Raynes-Goldie 2010; Boyd and Marwick 2011). These researchers distinguish between "social privacy" and "institutional privacy." Social privacy refers to keeping things private within one's social sphere. Both Raynes-Goldie (2010), and Boyd and Marwick (2011) found that the adolescents they interviewed were concerned with social privacy. Adolescents were motivated (and engaged in a number of strategic behaviors) to keep their parents and teachers from spying on them online and watching their Facebook activity.

On the other hand, these students showed little awareness of, or concern about, institutional privacy. Institutional privacy refers to keeping one's information away from governments and corporations.[1] This crucial disconnect between types of privacy illustrates how a social norm can have a deleterious impact on respect for rights. Adolescents in the Boyd and Marwick study, for example, frequently expressed a wish for social privacy, but rarely asserted it as a fundamental right or

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[1] In other words, the institutions that political scientists are most frequently concerned with were the ones that adolescents were least likely to be concerned with.

altered their activity in a way that would guarantee privacy. Debatin et al. (2009) found that Facebook use had become so routine that users largely ignored the associated threats to privacy. Even when they were made aware of the risks, most felt that the social gain outweighed any chance of a privacy violation. Once the technology of social media enabled self-publicizing behavior that behavior became the norm, and individuals were reluctant to stop using it even if they were informed about threats to their privacy.

In an environment where sharing one's life and personal information is routinized and expected, a cultural norm may develop that systematically changes what rights we believe are important. Even if an individual might be inclined to protect his or her privacy or even reluctant to share information online the social cost of doing so is high enough to override those individual instincts (Debatin et al. 2009). If experience is a teacher, then the current American technological experience teaches us that privacy has little value, but our right to express ourselves is critical to individual fulfillment.

Design and Method

In order to investigate the connection between online behavior and political attitudes, I conducted a cross-sectional survey on support for civil liberties, general political attitudes, and social media use in August 2010. Using the Qualtrics, Inc. respondent panel,[2] I surveyed 913 US adults and asked a series of questions that pitted concerns for individual rights against concerns about security.[3] One of the concerns with ethnographic studies like the one conducted by Boyd and Marwick is that it did not delve much into institutional privacy, nor put the discussion to subjects explicitly in terms of rights and tradeoffs. Earlier research in American politics has often found a gap between broad support for individual rights in vague terms, and actual support for these principles when specific trade-offs are involved, especially those involving personal safety (see, among others, Davis and Silver 2004). Broadly speaking, Americans always support ideas like individual liberty or privacy (Marcus et. al. 1995), but this support has little meaning unless it is brought into a specific context where rights are put into competition with one another.

In order to see measure support for civil liberties I used items designed to test individuals' support for values like privacy and freedom of expression against concerns about safety and security. Respondents were shown two statements that reflected these concerns and asked which statement they agreed with more. For example, respondents were asked if they agreed more with the statement, "Government should be allowed to record telephone calls and monitor email in

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[2] Respondents are a pre-selected group of adults chosen by Qualtrics, Inc. and invited to participate in survey research in exchange for gift certificates and coupons. The sample is fairly diverse ideologically, with a slight liberal lean. The sample did have a substantially larger number of female (57 %) and Asian-American (9.2 %) respondents than the general population and a lower percentage of Latino respondents (4.7 %), though it is not clear how these differences would have affected the results.

[3] Scale items were drawn from Davis and Silver (2004). The full questionnaire is available in Appendix as Supplementary Material.

order to prevent people from planning terrorist or criminal acts," or, "People's conversations and email are private and should be protected by the Constitution." Nine statement pairs were presented in random order, with three items dealing with privacy, two dealing with freedom of expression, and four items focused on due process rights.

After the survey I separated out these three categories and combined items to make separate scales for support for privacy, free expression, and due process.[4] It was necessary to separate these items because self-publicizing over the Internet should have different effects for each of these categories. Obviously, combining support for privacy, support for free speech, and support for due process into one measure would be problematic because of the different ways that self-publicizing affects each of these areas. Self-publicizing should decrease support for privacy, because it encourages individuals to share more of themselves and reduces the importance of privacy. It should increase support for free expression, and it should have little effect on support for due process. This last category is particularly important. Due process measures were included in the survey to demonstrate that the effect of self-publicizing is not merely a spurious artifact, nor does it necessarily increase (or decrease) support for civil liberties in general. Instead, the effects of self-publicizing should only be seen on those democratic values that are directly related to the act of self-publicizing.

The respondents themselves are a pre-selected group of adults chosen by Qualtrics, Inc. and invited to participate in survey research in exchange for gift certificates and coupons. They access the survey through the Qualtrics website and can complete surveys at their convenience. Though the panel is designed to reflect the demographics of the country as a whole, it is obviously not a randomly selected sample, which limits the generalizability of these findings. In this case, individuals who participate in online survey panels must, by definition, have regular access to and familiarity with the Internet—and have them at a higher rate than the general population. For example, 29 % of the respondents in this survey claimed to have a personal blog and 88 % said they had a Facebook account. This discrepancy, while notable, does not necessarily diminish the findings in this study. In fact, in some ways the bias in the sample is somewhat helpful. An analysis of the general population would have to account for socio-economic or other individual differences that might limit access to online outlets. At a bare minimum, all of the users in the sample have enough sophistication and familiarity with Internet use to sign up to be regular survey panelists with an Internet survey company. By looking only at individuals with regular Internet access, I can eliminate that selection factor as a potential determinant of political attitudes. Given the increasingly large number of Americans who go online, it makes sense to focus on Internet users, especially as Internet use among younger Americans increases.

The key question in this study is not whether individuals have access to self-publicizing sites, but how often they take advantage of these sites. In order to capture online activity, respondents were asked if they had a Facebook or Twitter

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[4] Earlier analyses also looked at each item on an individual basis rather than combining items into scales. Examining each item separately does not alter the substantive results of the analyses.

account or a personal blog, and they were also asked how often they engaged in activity on these sites. Respondents reported how often they tweeted, blogged, posted status updates, posted photos, commented on others' posts, how much time overall they spent self-publicizing online, and how important this activity was in their daily life. Not surprisingly, responses to these seven items were highly correlated with one another. A principal components analysis revealed a single-factor solution with strong loads for all seven items (Eigenvalue = 3.74). After scaling all 7 variables on a common metric, I combined them into one overall measure of online publicizing (Cronbach's alpha = 0.87). This scale of self-publicizing runs from 0 (representing no activity in any social media platform) to 1 (representing regular, high levels of self-publicizing activities across multiple platforms).

I estimated a series of ordered logit models using support for each value (privacy, free expression, and due process) as the dependent variables. The main independent variable of interest is the self-publicizing measure, but the model also controls for individual level factors that could affect attitudes on civil liberties. Previous research indicates that individual personality traits, measured through either the Big 5 (Gerber et al. 2010), or through the lens of authoritarian personality (Feldman 2003), often alter individual willingness tolerate dissenting opinion or allow disliked groups to have full citizenship rights, and individual political ideology may also limit support for civil liberties (Lindner and Nosek 2009). Therefore, the survey measured political ideology (measured on a 5 point scale from 1-Extremely liberal to 5-Extremely conservative), partisanship (a 7 point scale from 1-Strong Democrat to 7-Strong Republican), and contained a Five Factor personality battery designed to measure agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, extroversion, and openness to experience.[5] The sample did tilt toward the Left politically. While almost 40 % of respondents identified as Democrats, only 22 % identified as Republican, and there was a similar liberal slant on the ideological scale. Finally, respondents were asked how worried or threatened they felt about the possibility of future terrorist attacks. A wide body of literature has demonstrated that Americans' attitudes toward civil liberties can change dramatically in response to physical threats (Sniderman et al. 1996; Marcus et al. 1995; Peffley et al. 2001; Davis and Silver 2004; Huddy et al. 2005), so it was necessary to determine how threatened respondents felt at the time of the survey.

Results

Table 1 shows strong support for H_1. Analysis of the data reveals that involvement with social media had a significant effect on respondents' support for civil liberties, though this effect is especially pronounced among younger respondents. The first column of Table 1 shows the result of an ordered logit model using the whole

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[5] Respondents also filled out questions to capture their beliefs about conformity, autonomy and social cohesion as in Feldman's (2003) work on authoritarian personalities. The results of the logit models are substantively no different when authoritarian personality measures are used in place of the Big Five personality traits.

Table 1 Effect of self-publicizing on support for privacy rights

	All respondents	Under 25	Over 25
Self-publicity	−0.65**	−2.18**	−0.50
	(0.32)	(0.99)	(0.34)
Agreeableness	0.93*	2.51*	0.76
	(0.50)	(1.56)	(0.54)
Conscientiousness	0.43	−0.03	0.47
	(0.45)	(1.43)	(0.49)
Neuroticism	−1.21**	−1.21	−1.13**
	(0.39)	(1.25)	(0.41)
Extraversion	−0.14	0.72	−0.24
	(0.38)	(1.23)	(0.40)
Openness to experience	1.62**	0.91	1.64**
	(0.49)	(1.44)	(0.53)
Fear of terrorism	−0.39**	−0.45*	−0.38**
	(0.08)	(0.23)	(0.09)
Partisanship	−0.08**	0.07	−0.11**
	(0.04)	(0.10)	(0.04)
Ideology	0.01	0.04	0.03
	(0.07)	(0.20)	(0.07)
Female	0.09	0.22	0.07
	(0.12)	(0.37)	(0.14)
African-American	0.22	1.02**	0.04
	(0.21)	(0.50)	(0.24)
Latino	−0.13	0.31	−0.22
	(0.28)	(0.65)	(0.31)
Asian	0.06	−0.41	0.14
	(0.21)	(0.51)	(0.24)
Log likelihood	−1204.83	−143.10	−1053.27
N	907	118	789
Pseudo R^2	0.03	0.07	0.03

Each column represents a separate ordered logit analysis. In each case the dependent variable was the individual's support for privacy rights. The first column represents the full sample, with the second column breaking out respondents based on whether or not they are over 25 years of age. Cells represent logit coefficients with standard errors in *parentheses*. * $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$

sample. Among all respondents, online socialization has a negative effect on support for the right to privacy; however, that result seems to be driven by respondents aged 25 and under. When support for privacy is modeled separately for younger respondents and the rest of the sample, the effect of online socialization is still significant only for the younger population. Though the effect of socialization for the rest of the adults is still negative it is no longer statistically significant.[6] These results would seem to indicate that online socialization has an effect when it plays a role in the maturation and development process of the individual.

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[6] These results are robust across a number of different models. The age of 25 seems to be the "cut-off" point for a significant effect from social media use. Breaking down age by various categories or using an interaction term between age and social media reveals that it really is only the 18–25 group that shows a significant relationship between social media use and support for civil liberties.

It seems as though younger Americans were more likely to internalize the social norms associated with social media because they grew up at a time when social media use was rampant and integrated into their daily lives. Respondents who were 25 at the time of the survey would have been just reaching adulthood at the same time that social media sites like MySpace and Facebook were becoming popular. Therefore, they may be the first generation of American voters to have a significant relationship between social media and support for basic democratic values. Older Americans seem to have been less likely to have their attitudes affected by self-publicizing. It may be that older Americans are more likely to see self-publicizing as an extraneous activity, rather than a societal norm and would then be less likely to incorporate the values associated with online self-publicizing with their political values.

Of course, there are alternate explanations for the results in Table 1. Because of the cross-sectional nature of the data the relationship between self-publicizing and support for privacy may simply be a correlation rather than a causal relationship. One could argue that people who self-publicize online, for whatever reason, are less inclined to support privacy and that their behavior may be driven by an unobserved third variable. This cannot be ruled out; however, there is reason to think that self-publicizing is having a causal effect. If online self-publicizing is just an endogenous variable then its effects should be consistent across the entire sample. If there is some unobserved third variable that drives online behavior and opinions then the observed relationship between self-publicizing and privacy seen in Table 1 should be the same for 18-25 year olds as it is for older adults. Within the sample online behavior for 18-25 year olds is not significantly different from that of older adults. Online self-publicizing and socialization only falls off significantly among adults over 50 within the sample.[7] The difference in results between younger adults and the rest of the sample cannot be explained by differences in online self-publicizing.

The relationship between self-publicizing and civil liberties judgments can also be seen in Table 2, which measures the relationship between self-publicizing and support for freedom of expression. As in Table 1, the youngest cohort seems to be the one most affected by Internet habits. H_2 receives strong support among the youngest cohort. There is a significant, positive relationship between self-publicizing and support for freedom of expression. Personality factors also seem to play a key role in support for freedom of expression, but it is only among respondents under 25 that we see a statistically significant effect from Internet usage.

The results from Tables 1 and 2 strongly indicate that self-publicizing plays an important role in individual political development, but has little effect on those who came of age without social media. The finding that self-publicizing is significantly correlated with support for speech and privacy among young people is robust across a number of model specifications, but this effect disappears among older adults. Again, the absence of results among older adults suggests that significant effects among younger adults are not merely endogenous artifacts. If it were merely an

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[7] Even if respondents over 50 are excluded, there is still no statistically significant relationship between online self-publicizing and support for democratic values among adults over 25.

Table 2 Effect of self-publicizing on support for free speech

	All respondents	Under 25	Over 25
Self-publicity	0.89**	5.12**	0.40
	(0.34)	(1.29)	(0.36)
Agreeableness	0.60	−0.15	0.68
	(0.53)	(1.83)	(0.56)
Conscientiousness	0.23	1.86	0.24
	(0.48)	(1.69)	(0.51)
Neuroticism	−1.42**	−0.75	−1.50**
	(0.40)	(1.41)	(0.43)
Extraversion	−0.10	2.27*	−0.27
	(0.41)	(1.05)	(0.43)
Openness to experience	1.53**	0.71	1.61**
	(0.50)	(1.65)	(0.54)
Fear of terrorism	−0.10	−0.21	−0.08
	(0.08)	(0.28)	(0.09)
Partisanship	−0.04	0.07	−0.05
	(0.04)	(0.11)	(0.04)
Ideology	−0.05	−0.05	−0.04
	(0.07)	(0.22)	(0.08)
Female	0.24*	0.30	0.23
	(0.14)	(0.44)	(0.15)
African-American	0.16	0.94	−0.06
	(0.22)	(0.59)	(0.25)
Latino	−0.30	−0.25	−0.37
	(0.31)	(0.78)	(0.35)
Asian	−0.22	0.27	−0.29
	(0.22)	(0.57)	(0.25)
Log likelihood	−954.49	−88.07	−848.14
N	907	118	789
Pseudo R^2	0.03	0.14	0.03

Each column represents a separate ordered logit analysis. In each case the dependent variable was the individual's support for free speech. The *first column* represents the full sample, with the *second column* breaking out respondents based on whether or not they are over 25 years of age. Cells represent logit coefficients with standard errors in *parentheses*. * $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$

artifact, then the significant effect of online self-publicizing should be consistent across groups. That it is not suggests that online self-publicizing plays a significant role in intellectual development. The results in Tables 1 and 2 are consistent with the idea that early socialization plays a major role in determining individual political values and attitudes. Now, however, much of that socialization is happening online rather than in the real world. As young people publish their activities and information about themselves online, it seems they come to learn that freedom of expression is a critical democratic value. They express themselves frequently, so they feel that the freedom to express one's views is critically important. On the other hand, because they keep nothing private, the right to withhold information or establish a private sphere seems to be less important. It is possible that, over time, this learning process would also affect older adults. They may be somewhat

immune, though, because they developed their views in a world without sites like Facebook, and for them these outlets are mild diversions rather than a critical part of their socialization. For younger Americans, self-publicizing is a critical part of maintaining their relationships both online and off-line (Pempek et al. 2008), so they may integrate these experiences more thoroughly into their understanding of the political world.

The lack of significant results from Table 3 lends further credence to the idea that self-publicizing encourages development of certain values but not others. There is no obvious reason to expect a relationship between online self-publicizing and respect for due process of law. Unlike the right to privacy or free expression, the act of self-publicizing would seem to teach little about due process. As Table 3 shows, there is in fact little evidence of any relationship between the two, as the coefficient for self-publicizing never approaches statistical significance for any age group. Instead, fears of terrorism seem the most prominent cause of attitudes on due process vs. security, which coincides with findings from previous research on civil liberties (Sniderman et al. 1996; Marcus et al. 1995; Peffley et al. 2001; Davis and Silver 2004; Huddy et al. 2005). This is the only category of democratic values where the youngest cohort seems unaffected by their level of self-publicizing, which suggests that Internet self-publicizing is not having an effect on general support for democratic values. The narrow effects seen in these tables suggests that rather than undermining support for democratic values, self-publicizing is a teaching process whose effects are targeted directly at issues related to the activity of self-publicizing.

Conclusions and Directions for Further Research

The results presented in this paper suggest an important link between online activity and attitudes toward basic democratic values. Among the youngest cohort of adults, online self-publicizing activity seems to teach Americans to support values like freedom of expression, while lowering support for the right to privacy. Just as real-world social networks can impart norms and values (Mutz 2002a, b; Godwin et al. 2004; Harell 2010), social networking online through social media sites can lead an individual to internalize the norms of the online social network. Because the norm on a site like Facebook is to publicize one's private life, users on such sites become accustomed to a world where privacy is an afterthought, but expressing one's self is all important. Self-publicizing activity seems to create citizens with different value priorities than those who matured before the Internet became such a widespread tool.

The results presented here may not be surprising given previous research on social media use and political behavior or attitudes, though that research has often focused on the content of online discussion. Positive online engagement can lead to increased political participation (Kittilson and Dalton 2011), while negative experiences can lead to increased polarization and intolerance (Sunstein 2008a, b). The results here suggest that the nature of social media and the way that it encourages self-publicizing online creates changes in norms and values similar to the way that social networks or

Table 3 Effect of self-publicizing on support for due process

	All respondents	Under 25	Over 25
Self-publicity	−0.39	−0.26	−0.35
	(0.31)	(0.92)	(0.34)
Agreeableness	0.61	2.61*	0.38
	(0.49)	(1.52)	(0.52)
Conscientiousness	−0.24	−0.86	−0.21
	(0.45)	(1.39)	(0.48)
Neuroticism	−1.70**	−2.16*	−1.65**
	(0.38)	(1.14)	(0.41)
Extraversion	−0.47	−1.31	−0.48
	(0.37)	(1.18)	(0.39)
Openness to experience	2.36**	4.11**	2.21**
	(0.48)	(1.41)	(0.51)
Fear of terrorism	−0.44**	−0.61**	−0.44**
	(0.08)	(0.23)	(0.08)
Partisanship	−0.16**	0.18**	−0.21**
	(0.03)	(0.09)	(0.04)
Ideology	−0.15**	0.01	−0.17**
	(0.07)	(0.18)	(0.07)
Female	0.10	0.28	0.09
	(0.13)	(0.36)	(0.14)
African-American	0.01	0.03	0.04
	(0.19)	(0.41)	(0.22)
Latino	−0.20	−1.06	−0.12
	(0.28)	(0.69)	(0.31)
Asian	−0.04	−0.61	0.07
	(0.21)	(0.51)	(0.24)
Log likelihood	−1591.81	−185.99	−1385.09
N	907	118	789
Pseudo R^2	0.05	0.08	0.06

Each column represents a separate ordered logit analysis. In each case the dependent variable was the individual's support for due process rights. The *first column* represents the full sample, with the *second column* breaking out respondents based on whether or not they are over 25 years of age. Cells represent logit coefficients with standard errors in *parentheses*. * $P < 0.1$, ** $P < 0.05$

early socialization experiences can shape individual attitudes. Researchers focusing on adolescent development have started to document value shifts and changes in intellectual development related to social media use (Raynes-Goldie 2010; Boyd and Marwick 2011), and the results in this paper indicate that those norms do alter political attitudes on democratic priorities. These findings are especially relevant because the technological trend for the last 10 years has been to make social media more accessible for more people, especially adolescents.

However, while the results of this study are intriguing and suggest an important role for online socialization, the data here are hardly conclusive. The correlation between social media use and political attitudes could be caused by an omitted factor that shapes both self-publicizing activity and attitudes on civil liberties. One could easily argue that people who support free expression (and are less concerned

with privacy) are also just more likely to use social media, and the social media use itself does not play a causal role. The limits of cross-sectional data make it difficult to rule out this possibility, though the fact that significant effects are found only in the youngest cohort would seem to support the idea that a developmental process is at work. If the relationship is due to a third, unmeasured factor, it is unclear why that factor would affect young Americans, but not middle-aged and older voters. The level of variation in key variables is similar across age groups, for the most part. Within this sample, the amount of variance on online self-publicizing, support for privacy, and support for due process were the same within 18-25 year-olds and older adults, though there was substantially more variance in support for free speech among the younger cohort.

Clearly, further study is needed. If social media use is really creating new social norms and encouraging a shift in support for fundamental values then we could see the beginning of major changes in the American political system. The survey results here suggest that respect for civil liberties is changing due to technological changes that thin the wall between the public and private spheres. A society that does not see privacy as a fundamental right is a society where sexual behavior, health information, and other aspects of one's life may have to be shared with the world. Increasingly, Americans who use social media may no longer see the ability to keep their lives private as a fundamental right. As Debatin et al. (2009) found, many social media users see the loss of privacy as the price of engaging with their social circle. Citizens may not like governments or corporations tracking their activities and gathering information on their private lives, but unless they actually view privacy as an important right there seems little chance of mobilizing citizens to stop such activities. If privacy is no longer considered a right (or at least one that does not deserve a high priority), then any number of policy changes may be possible. One need look no further than the 2012 debate on access to contraception to see the policy implications of a weakened right to privacy.

Moreover, if social media use leads to changes in basic American values, then it may also have an impact on other foundational beliefs such as community and social identity. Social media relationships can be used to maintain pre-existing real world relationships (Pempek et al. 2008), but as time moves on those relationships may alter the way an individual responds to community and social life. For researchers interested in social capital, political participation and even spatial and identity politics, changes in technology may be especially important if social media use introduces changes in how individuals relate to one another and identify their communities. For example, if an individual thinks of herself as part of an online community will she still be willing to engage in her real-world community? Will she be active locally as well as online and develop in-person social ties, or will she be content to maintain her personal relationships online? Is there a meaningful distinction between online and off-line social capital?

Ultimately, we still don't know what the impact of this new form of online behavior will be on the political world. There is a dearth of dynamic survey data, particularly data that describe the youngest generation. There is an urgent need for research designs that will track the course of individual development and determine how social media use in the Information Age is affecting our fundamental attitudes.

If social media engagement is going to play a central role in individual's socialization and intellectual development then it is absolutely critical that political scientists understand the role online socialization will play in shaping the fundamental ideals of the next generation of American voters.

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