

The Networked Citizen

Giovanni Navarria

The Networked Citizen

Power, Politics, and Resistance
in the Internet Age

palgrave
macmillan

Giovanni Navarra
University of Exeter
Exeter, United Kingdom

ISBN 978-981-13-3292-0 ISBN 978-981-13-3293-7 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-3293-7>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2019

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use. The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Singapore Pte Ltd.
The registered company address is: 152 Beach Road, #21-01/04 Gateway East, Singapore 189721, Singapore

*To Ringo, Biricchina, and Teta,
for their relentless support
and boundless love*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book would have never been possible without the support of several institutions and the help and guidance of many colleagues and friends.

The Department of Politics and the Centre for Political Thought at the University of Exeter provided the perfect home where to finalise this project. I am especially grateful to Robert Lamb and Dario Castiglione for their unwavering encouragement, assistance and friendship during these last months of writing.

At different stages, the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin and the Hong Kong Baptist University also provided much-appreciated welcome and research space for me to continue my work. In Berlin, a special thanks to Wolfgang Merkel for making my stay possible and Gudrun Mouna for the great Kaffee und Kuchen, and lovely afternoon chats; in Hong Kong, my gratitude to Colin Spark, Cherian George and the staff and students of the Department of Journalism at HKBU.

Paul Ginsborg and Dibyesh Anand's words of encouragement and critical comments on my Ph.D. thesis were very important for the continuation of my early research. Michael Schudson's work on *The Good Citizen* inspired the original framework of this book, while Michael's insightful comments during our conversations in San Diego years ago and more recently in Sydney helped me address some of the core weaknesses in my initial conceptualisation of the networked citizen.

The bulk of the research for this book, however, was conducted during my post-doc fellowship at the University of Sydney. During my stay in Australia, many people, at different stages of writing, provided source

material, commented or helped revise previous versions of articles or text part of which eventually made into the book—special thanks go out to Rachell Li at the Sydney Democracy Network and John Watson at TheConversation.com, for their sharp eye, editing skills, gracious help and unshakable kindness. Also, the section on China benefited from the indefatigable work of translation and research of Hao Jing, Xu Bingqing and Xu Jian. Colin Wight and Alana Mann earned my ever-lasting gratitude for, among other things, helping me extend my stay in Sydney beyond the end of my fellowship.

My thanks also to the editorial team at Palgrave, especially Vishal Daryanomet and Anushangi Weerakoon who were always kind and understanding, especially with my multiple and arbitrary deadline extensions.

Along the way, when I considered several times dropping the project or doubted I will ever finish it, the support of my closest friends and family was invaluable in helping me to stay the course. I am especially thankful to: Jinga, Marcella, Tanja, Adriano, Charlotte, Susanne, Max, Danica, Peter, Mitchell, Andrea, Evgeniya, Pier, Mark and Jean-Paul.

Lastly, a particular word of gratitude goes to John Keane, whose critical insights and wide-ranging knowledge on the subjects of power, media and politics, not to mention multiple revisions and editing of early drafts chapters were over the years invaluable in turning what was at the beginning a confused idea into this book.

CONTENTS

Part I A New Kind of Citizen

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|----|
| 1 | In Search of the Good Citizen | 9 |
| 2 | A Different Kind of Society | 19 |
| 3 | The Networked Citizen | 31 |

Part II USA: From Hope to Fake News

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|----|
| 4 | The MoveOn Model | 43 |
| 5 | A Model Imitated: From Dean to Obama | 67 |
| 6 | The First Twitter President | 91 |

Part III Italy: Rise and Fall of the Networked Citizen

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|-----|
| 7 | The Berlusconi Era | 145 |
| 8 | The Five Star Movement | 167 |

Part IV China: The CCP vs. Wǎngmín

9 Control of Media 221

10 The Party's Greatest Ally 237

Part V The Power and Weakness of Networked Citizens

11 Power as Shared Weakness 265

12 What Kind of Citizens Do We Want to Be? 281

Index 303

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 4.1	MoveOn original petition web page (<i>Source</i> Archive.org)	49
Fig. 4.2	MoveOn fund-raising (<i>Data source</i> The Center for Responsive Politics Opensecrets.org)	56
Fig. 5.1	Broadband vs. dial-up adoption over time in USA (<i>Source</i> Pew Research Centre)	76
Fig. 5.2	Obama 2008: funds raised and spent (<i>Source</i> Center for Responsive Politics, Opensecrets.org. Data updated to 17 November 2008)	82
Fig. 6.1	Clinton vs. Trump (<i>Source</i> Silver 2016)	94
Fig. 6.2	Number of ads aired (September–October 2016) (Ads by the Candidate or Supporting group. <i>Source</i> The Wesleyan Media Project 2016)	100
Fig. 6.3	Advertisements spending (in USD Millions) (Up to a week before Election Day. <i>Source</i> Advertising Analytics and Murray 2016)	101
Fig. 6.4	Free media coverage vs. money raised (2016–2012) (The total ‘money raised’ does not include donations from the candidate’ parties and SuperPACs. <i>Source</i> Harris 2016; The Washington Post Staff 2016)	101
Fig. 6.5	Trump’s lies in 2016 (<i>Source</i> Politifact.com. Trump’s 371 statements (on the left) throughout the 2016 campaign. See: Holan and Sharockman 2016)	108
Fig. 6.6	Clinton’s and Trump’s lies in 2016 (<i>Source</i> Politifact.com. Trump’s 371 statements (on the left) throughout the 2016 campaign. See: Holan and Sharockman 2016)	108
Fig. 6.7	Clinton is unfit to be president (<i>Source</i> Trump 2016)	110

Fig. 6.8	Trump and Twitter (<i>Source</i> Trump 2017a)	110
Fig. 6.9	% of US adults who use at least one social media site (<i>Source</i> Pew Research Centre. Social media included in the survey: Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn)	112
Fig. 6.10	Trump's Twitter followers (2015–2018) (<i>Source</i> Twitter. com. Data collected on key dates: before and after campaign announcement (14/19 June 2015); end of the year (31 December 2015); after first caucus in Iowa (3 February 2016); after Super Tuesday (3 March 2016); after Republican Nomination (20 June 2016); after first televised debate with Hillary Clinton (27 September 2016); after Election Day (9 November 2016); at Inauguration Day (20 January 2017); after first State of the Union Address (20 January 2018); at Midterms Election Day (6 November 2018))	114
Fig. 6.11	Video board at Trump's rally (<i>Source</i> Jacobs 2018)	115
Fig. 6.12	Trump's tweets: selected topics (January 2017–November 2018) (<i>Source</i> Trumptwitterarchive.com)	115
Fig. 6.13	Trump vs. Megyn Kelly	117
Fig. 6.14	Trump campaign ads (<i>Source</i> Brad Parscale/CBS News)	120
Fig. 8.1	Comments per section (May 2005–April 2006) (In August 2007, when I conducted the final survey, the blog's post were archived according to ten topic categories: Citizen Primaries, Ecology, Economics, Energy, Health/ Medicine, Information, Politics; Technology/Internet; Transport/Getting About; Wailing Wall)	173
Fig. 8.2	Comments month by month (May 2005–April 2006)	174
Fig. 8.3	Average number of monthly comments per post (12 months)	174
Fig. 8.4	La Settimana No. 1 (<i>Source</i> Beppegrillo.it)	178
Fig. 8.5	Grillo's Clean Up Parliament (Grillo 2005h)	182
Fig. 8.6	V-Day, 8 September 2007—map (<i>Source</i> Google Maps: https://bit.ly/2HnEYdI)	185
Fig. 8.7	M5S: % share of votes and type of election (Data compiled by the author and retrieved from the Interior Ministry Elections Archive: https://elezionistorico.interno.gov.it/ ; 2012 and 2017 Regional data only Sicily; 2011 Regional only Molise; 2019 Regional only Sardinia)	197
Fig. 8.8	M5S online primaries—voting record (Data retrieved from Beppegrillo.it and ilblogdellestelle.it)	202

Fig. 8.9	M5S: number of votes and type of election (Data retrieved from Italian Interior Ministry's Elections Online Archive)	202
Fig. 9.1	Chinese Internet users and % rate of population (<i>Data source</i> China Internet Network Information Center [CNNIC]— https://cnnic.com.cn/)	224
Fig. 11.1	Types of networks (Author's rendering, based on Baran's original configuration)	268
Fig. 12.1	Social media worldwide users 2019 (<i>Source</i> Statista.com)	284
Fig. 12.2	MeToo movement original tweet (Milano 2017)	286