Twitter and Microblogging:
political, professional and personal practice

Lancaster University 10-12 April 2013

N.B. The best way to experience the conference programme is via http://lanyrd.com/2013/lutwit13/

Wednesday 10 April

Registration   10.00-11.00   George Fox foyer
If you arrive later, just join a session and register in a break

Introduction   11.00-11.25   George Fox 1
Julia Gillen @juliagillen, Greg Myers @GregMyers and Johnny Unger @johnnyunger
– Lancaster University

Plenary 1   11.30 – 12.30   Chair: Julia Gillen   George Fox 1
Lee Salter, University of the West of England @leesalteeee
Online freedom and repressive law: the paradox of digital journalism

Twitter and similar services represent one of the key paradoxes of liberal capitalism. The apparent freedom it affords communicators in an unregulated space resembles for some a free-market of ideas, or at least a significant form of rapid news circulation that circumvents broadcast-age regulation. However, drawing on Gramsci's distinction between coercion and consent, it can be seen how, as with the "free-market", the potential for freedom has been cut short. Whilst the attention of journalists and scholars has pointed to injunctions, court restrictions and libel cases, there have been much more pernicious cases of indirect control, especially in crisis situations such as the London riots and the Israeli invasion of Gaza. I will take these two cases to open a discussion into the concept of "public order" and how disruptions to it arising from microblogging practices are dealt with by politicians and mainstream media.

Lunch   12.30 – 13.30   George Fox foyer

Parallel session 2A   13.40 – 14.10   Chair – Johnny Unger   George Fox 3
Elizabeth Merkhofer, Georgetown University @elizmerkhofer
Search as sociality: Trends as collaboration between people and platform

This paper is built off ethnographic observation of trending "micro-memes" on Twitter, short, phrasal hashtags that reach enormous popularity for hours or days before being abandoned (e.g. #ThingsYouSayToYourBestFriend, #NobodyLikes). I examine how people and platform interact to create a discourse, focusing my analysis on the real time search associated with the hashtag and on the massively multi-user environment.
Users exploit the real-time search function to create social ties rather than ties based on time-sensitivity or topic. A trending topic is displayed as a real-time search page, and a micro-meme turns rapidly-moving activity into shallow interactivity by creates a seemingly endless stream of commentary that is highly visible around the site on such a page. However, micro-meme themes are often

unrelated to actual events, instead gathering commentary on timeless scenarios like relationships. The endless stream offers no insight into the temporal course of a topic's popularity. Also, micro-memes appropriate the hashtag search function, which is used not to aggregate talk on a topic in the broader sense, but rather to call up a specific, lexically unlikely string (the micro-meme), the inclusion of which marks affiliation with the emergent discourse.

The massively multi-user environment is also analyzed. The stream on a trending topic page is highly interactive and infinitely deep: the Tweet links both in branches and recursively to connect it to the entirety of the Twitterverse, beginning with the Tweet's author. The association of each Tweet with many contexts and the fact that it is displayed in multiple collocations around the site displays what Marwick and boyd call "context collapse," in the face of which users orient to both the trend and to existing social networks. Impersonal accounts that tweet sayings or are parodies of pop culture characters, rather than apparently personal accounts, are responsible for the top Retweets. Other repeated tweets are found to be paraphrased or retyped, though offering unlikely commentary (e.g., a broad array of similarly-phrased comments about poorly drawn-on eyebrows in the stream of #LeaveItIn2012). This suggests that users resist the deeper connection, in the form of mutual linking, attendant to Retweeting another user outside their own social network. Finally, a high amount of the second-person is found, in the form of pronouns and of imperatives. This use of deixis causes Tweets to get their meanings from their present context, affiliating both with the trend and with the user's local social network.

Parallel session 2B   13.40 – 14.10   Chair – David Barton   George Fox 2
Giorgia Riboni, University of Milan @giorgia_riboni
Building rapport in conference live tweets

The language of tweeting represents an instance of Internet- and mobile phone-mediated communication which allows users to address a networked audience (i.e a stratified and interconnected audience consisting of real and potential viewers of tweets) thus cutting across the boundaries of discourse communities. As a consequence, the use of Twitter has been rapidly spreading among many professional categories which utilize this microblogging platform to reach a potentially global audience. In particular, an increasing number of scholars and academics has been exploiting Twitter to promote their work as well as the conferences they organize or attend. As a consequence, conference live-tweeting, i.e engaging on the microblogging platform Twitter for a continuous period of time with a sequence of focused entries ("tweets" of 140 characters) in order to cover an unfolding conference live event has become a very common practice in the world of academia.

Building on a previous study on conference live tweeting as a means of disseminating knowledge, this paper intends to investigate conference Twitter entries under a systemic-functional perspective, focusing on how the interpersonal function is realized. As suggested by Michele Zappavigna, "microblogging is rarely about presenting bald facts or narrating activity […] We use social media in the service of sharing values as a way of communicating our experience of the world and bonding with others". In light of these considerations, it is legitimate to expect that conference live tweets realize an interpersonal function as well as share information. In this study I investigate the main language strategies adopted by scholars in conference tweets so as to build rapport, that is to say to construct their academic identity and establish a connection with their audience.

Particular attention is devoted to those metadiscursive elements which Hyland defines engagement markers as they explicitly address the readers, either by selectively focusing their attention or by including them as participants in the text. In order to analyze engagement markers and the other language devices which carry out the interpersonal function an ad hoc corpus of conference live tweets has been collected and processed both manually and with software for corpus interrogation.

Parallel session 3A   14.15 – 14.45   Chair – Johnny Unger   George Fox 4
Sandrine Roginsky, Université Catholique de Louvain @enirdans
Polyphony of discourse on and about Twitter: Analysis of Twitter uses in the European Parliament, Commission and Council

Digital social networks appear to offer its users a tool for expression which is both personalized and institutionalized. What are the consequences for the European institutions and what is the impact on its political communication? This presentation focuses on three European institutions (the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council) and investigates whether Twitter makes it possible, or not, to articulate various types of discourses on one single platform, in particular the « neutral speech » of the institution and the « speech of truth » of its actors. To this end, the study uses a sociodiscursive approach and looks into the discourses of civil servants about Twitter, as well as analyzing the discourses they produce on Twitter. This presentation points to contradictions between the discourses about Twitter and the discourses on Twitter. Discourses on Twitter lead to the blurring of politics and to a more consensual form of communication. The presentation highlights the fluctuation in the way the issuer is presenting him or herself, resulting in instability in the way the message is produced on Twitter.
After focusing on civil servants in the European institutions, the presentation turns to Members of the European Parliament (MEP) and investigates whether Twitter has an impact not only on political communication but also on political work in the European Parliament. The single paper presentation shows that Twitter does not fundamentally alter political work and political communication but rather fits into a larger dispositif of various tools, which have distinctive objectives. Digital social networks are embedded in a more comprehensive approach to communication aiming at articulating various types of discourses of MEPs, and adjusting language to audiences.
This presentation chooses to focus on actors and practices in order to analyze discourses on and about Twitter. This standpoint justifies the proposed research methodology: participant observation, interviews and discursive analysis.

Parallel session 3B   14.15 – 14.45   Chair – David Barton   George Fox 2
Photini Vrikki, King's College London @ifotini
Titanic's journey on Twitter: An interactive narrative of myth and cultural memory

On the centenary anniversary of Titanic's sinking, The History Press, one of the UK's largest local and specialist history publishers, in the quest to carve out a niche in the great chronicle of the Titanic, created a different version of the story; one that is built up as a breaking news narrative on Twitter. By rethinking the story of the Titanic through the affordances of digital culture, the Twitter story of @TitanicRealTime will be unravelled in terms of narratology, interactivity, myth and memory. Essentially it will be argued that @TitanicRealTime allows a different interpretation to the tragic accident, one that rests between reality and myth, blurring the boundaries between history and fiction. Thus, the focus of this presentation will be to disclose two deep- seated realms that inform and influence this work: the interactive structures of a social media network narration and the mythical tropes of cultural memory presented in this creative representation of Titanic's journey.
The point is precisely that by employing the communicative affordances of Twitter, @TitanicRealTime manages to craft a new artistic endeavour that presents a story of a century old as breaking news. Looking it through Elizabeth Lenk's concept of achronie, a concept where the depth of time is eliminated and the concept of past has no precise reference to the narrative, @TitanicRealTime is seen as an interactive story that challenges the boundaries of time, space and setting. Once the ambiguity of the interactive narrative is analysed through David Herman's and Marie-Laure Ryan's narratological terms, it is easy to recognise that the story is actively designing a creative form of social communication.
By further arranging the story content in a bricolage of fragmented tweets and interlinked sources, the retelling and restructuring of the events will be discussed through the multiple proscenia notion and the multiple narrators technique, based on Lévi-Strauss's work in La Pensée sauvage. Indeed, the interactive practices of Twitter create a realm where the communicative interplay between Twitter and the story, allow the microblogging community and each reader to move freely around @TitanicRealTime and compose their own discourse, whose manifold angles can only be sufficiently explained as a multidisciplinary panorama. This makes the need all the more pressing to distinguish this kind of reading, linear or otherwise, depending on the ever- changing roles of author-reader and text-reader, as first discussed by Barthes in his essay La Mort de l'auteur.

Fascinating and perplexing the story of the Titanic has been researched, probed and investigated through numerous books, films, and documentaries; all giving a version of a history that relied, and still relies, on the schema of hubris and nemesis. As seen through the vast research of Richard Howells, mythical elements such as the attribution of the Titanic's unsinkability and the legend of the band that kept playing until the last moment, were never proven real. The presentation will examine thus how such mythical elements endow the Titanic and its victims with a place in immortality so to make meaning out of a meaningless event, creating a version of a history that relies on mythical recollections and divine intervention; fact and myth. Cultural memory and the mythical process of inducing memory will thence be paralleled to what literary critics call mimesis: a term that alludes to the narrative forms and aesthetic techniques through which a literary text, structures and imitates the workings of memory.

Through the spectrum of the new mode of artistic world construction afforded by the development of digital culture, this presentation will aim to disclose the influences of digital culture on cultural memory and the narrative.

Parallel session 3C   14.15 – 14.45   Chair – Julia Gillen   George Fox 3
Emre Yağlı, Hacettepe University @eyagli
Turkish MPs use of personal pronoun "we" in Twitter community: A genre-based political discourse analysis

This study focuses on the Members of Turkish Parliaments' (MPs) use of third person plural pronoun "we" in one of the microblogging communities, namely Twitter. Following Swales' notion of "communicative purpose" which is the primary criterion for genre classification, the genre based data has been constituted. Further, among the five sub-genres of Twitter as a digital genre, which has been given in as (i) personal updates, (ii) directed dialogue, (iii) real-time sharings, (iv) business broadcasting and (v) information seeking, personal updates of Turkish MPs have been analysed in regard to the use of "we" in Twitter community. In this regard, the notion of "social activity", which is associated with "communicative purpose" and ideological functions of genres in Critical Discourse Analysis perspective, has been defined as to share personal information and opinions in personal updates of Turkish MPs. The data have been gathered through TwitterAPI which consist of tweets posted by Turkish MPs (321 out of 550 MPs) between 1st and 30th of November, 2012. In addition, the communication flow through tweets from MPs and the public, which are those who tweet and who follow respectively, have been analysed to demonstrate power relations in frame of the "territory of information": (i) The scope of reference to the personal pronoun "we" in regard to inclusion and exclusion of a specific group and (ii) intentions of the person who posted the tweet. As an initial results of the study, it can be said that while MPs of opposition use the pronoun "we" in inclusive purpose, those who are in the ruling side use the pronoun "we" in exclusive manner. Furthermore, it should be stated that the scope of reference also varies among opposition parties due to contrasting fundamental differences among them. The scope of reference of the pronoun "we" and its socio-political determinants have been highlighted in the analyses conducted.

Break   14.45 – 15.10   George Fox foyer

Parallel session 4A   15.15 – 15.45   Chair – Karin Tusting   George Fox 2
Ana Adi, Kris Erickson and **Darren Lilleker**, Bournemouth University @drdgl
Elite tweets: Analysing the twitter communication patterns of Labour Party Peers in the House of Lords

The micro-blogging platform twitter has gained notoriety for its dual status as both a tool for communication between private individuals, as well as a public forum monitored by journalists, the public, and the state. Its potential application for political communication has not gone unnoticed; politicians have used twitter to attract voters, interact with constituencies and advance issue-based campaigns. Political users of twitter also keep in touch with their allies, counteract their opposition and reach out to media. Finally, due to the blurring of public and private inherent to the platform, political users also tweet about their personal lives, their families, their interests and sometimes controversially, their private views on a range of political and social events. While a great deal of academic scholarship has explored the traditional political communication on emerging new media platforms, further research is needed to better understand these last two dynamics: How do elite networks form and operate on social networking platforms like twitter? What are their contours and dynamics? And finally how does the dual public/private nature of twitter and its content inform the way that political actors engage with the platform?
This presentation reports on the preliminary results of the research team's work with 32 peers of the Labour frontbench. It is based on the monitoring and archival of their activity on Twitter from May 16th to the end of August 2012. Using a sample of more than 850 tweets and a mixed methodology combining semantic analysis, social network analysis and quantitative analysis, this paper explores the peers' patterns of usage and communication on Twitter.

Parallel session 4B   15.15 – 15.45   Chair – Greg Myers   George Fox 4
Soureh Latif Shabgahi and Andrew Cox, Sheffield University
Uses and risks of microblogging in organisations

The latest predictions suggest that Twitter will have 250 million active users by the end of 2012. Microblogging, on Twitter and using other tools such as weibo and yammer, is the most recent social phenomena of Web 2.0 enabling users to broadcast information about their activities, opinions and status, as well as to receive quick notifications. Users can stay connected to others through their computers and mobile phones. This paper reviews research studies of the effects of microblogging in organisational settings partly with a view to establishing an empirical basis for local policies on how to manage risk.
The review is based on a thematic analysis of literature collected in October 2012, comprising around 30 papers on enterprise microblogging (EMB), defined as use of microblogging primarily with internal audiences behind the firewall. The analysis led to the development of a generic framework identifying themes of enterprise microblogging.
As regards use of microblogging, the framework identifies several concepts that have been very influential among researchers in the field, such as awareness/sense of connectedness. In addition, forming relationships, discussion, sharing knowledge/information, learning, record information for future reference, coordination and reputation management have been further uses found in EMB.
As regards risks, themes identified in EMB literature include difficulty/unfamiliarity in using microblogging, distraction and wasting time, noise-to-value ratio, privacy of users, security of the organisation and restrictions on messages.
The review discusses possible guidelines and policies to manage perceived risk. For instance, continuously emphasizing the usefulness of internal systems and providing training for early adopters and users is commonly proposed as a way to help reduce difficulty/unfamiliarity in using microblogging, distraction and issue of time.
The framework has been introduced as a useful guide for other researchers to graphically represent issues around microblogging and it is hospitable to expansion for use in further contexts. Other researchers could apply the framework and compare existing findings with microblogging users in other sectors, such as educators using microblogging for research

and in teaching. The framework could also be used for comparing other technologies apart from web2.0/microblogging.

Parallel session 4C   15.15 – 15.45   Chair – David Barton   George Fox 3
Emma Tonkin, University of Bath @emmatonkin
Of bees and belligerence: The #royalprank and the Twitter swarm

To the optimist, Twitter offers a broadening of discourse from the local to the global, allowing widely geographically distributed individuals to 'socialise across social and geographical boundaries'. Twitter as a medium of discourse has the power to amplify reactions; virtual proximity enables reactions to be shared rapidly and amplified by the group. 'Swarms' may develop as a result of incoming information, such as news stories shared through the media or information released by activist groups. Alongside virtual proximity, social or geographical, comes a 'disinhibition effect' irreverently immortalised as the Greater Internet Fuckwad Theory: dissociative anonymity insulates participants from the swarm; asynchronicity permits individuals to 'fire-and-forget', the scale of the swarm may be difficult to gauge by participants and so forth.
Goldstone et al. suggest that such swarms may occur spontaneously, in a manner emergent solely from local interactions, creating groupings that 'no individual may intend, comprehend, or even perceive', an argument extended to the Twitter platform by various commentators, such as Näkki who defines swarming as 'participation in some activities and tasks without formal commitment'. Twitter as an extensible, geographically delocalised communication network frequently displays patterns of activity that respond to to this description, at least to an abbreviated extent; these are mediated in part through hashtags, described by Bruns and Burgess as 'ad hoc publics'.
Such patterns are often viewed positively - self-organised reactions to disaster or conflict, for example. However, in this presentation, we focus on the negative, analysing the 'twitter mob' as an example of such a swarm activity, taking as our primary dataset the example of 2012's #royalprank alongside related hashtags and terms. We discuss the principles of emergence in massively parallel systems and explore the question of whether Twitter can usefully be modelled as a class of emergent system, notably a reactive system - that is, a system which 'reacts in parallel to many concurrent inputs, and its behaviours, outputs and effects, [whose responses are] not just a function of the values of its inputs but also of their variety, of the order in which they arrive, of their timing, of their arrival speeds and so forth'.

Parallel session 5A   15.50-16.20   Chair – Karin Tusting   George Fox 2
Xavier Inghilterra, Université du Sud Toulon-Var @avi_rex
Sociotechnical mediation in learning communities: Twitter in distance learning

Our proposed article highlights the potential of educational micro-blogging as a mediation system to support the process of distance learning. Noting that networking practices have invested heavily classrooms today, we postulate that this dynamic can be used to good effect to mobilize the active participation of learners and increasing their motivation. If social ties happening during training play a vital role in the learning process, Twitter is a device that is well suited to this paradigm shift by creating rich interactions from a singular model of communication.
A participant observation, conducted as part tutorial with level II students, is to place the learner at the heart of a pedagogical device allowing it to interact with peers and with the tutor during the course or off training time. In our research, immersion combined with playful community dynamics of social networks is a fruitful heuristic for individualized training pathways and suggest ways less academic promote informal learning.
After a review of the literature on educational potential of micro-blogging as in some leading universities, we describe our own use of Twitter in distance education and classroom training. If in our industrialization process of training the prerogatives of the tutor are evolving, social mediation is nonetheless essential because the use of information technology and communication education should not supplant the pedagogical. This mediation is a multimodal communication between tutor and learners based mainly on a LMS platform and blog dedicated using both the Twitter widget that displays the latest feeds. In this way, Twitter allows to effectively link teaching resources and users always "on line" in a narrative style that is more akin to the domestic sphere of students.

But to win the adhesion of the largest number, so it is essential to get into the flow of our students practice, using their own socio-technical devices and finally to establish a lasting relationship without cleavage between academic and domestic practices : the interactions that are established during a confcall can also be extended outside training time in the private sphere. The tutor finally becomes a "facilitator" who will guide the community of learners to enable easier access to learning materials and to distinguish the relevant knowledge by acquiring good reflexes in information monitoring.
Our experiment shows, in the light of socio-constructivist theories, sharing and dissemination of information, through the use of Twitter, creating new collaborative methods and develop a culture of participation in communities of learners, like review groups in particular.

Parallel session 5B   15.50 – 16.20   Chair – Greg Myers   George Fox 4
Tony McNeill, Kingston University @anthonymcneill
More than just passing notes in class? Twitter backchannels as new literacy practice

The focus of this study is the conference behaviours of academic users of Twitter, a social networking/microblogging service that allows users to view and send short messages from mobile phones as well as computers and other internet-enabled devices. Twitter is being used increasingly as a means of continuing and extending dialogue, commentary and networking amongst academic conference participants and is rapidly becoming the default technology used to support what is known as the 'backchannel'.
The backchannel is the term used to designate the digital communications space used to sustain primarily - but not exclusively - textual interactions alongside live spoken presentations delivered in a physical environment. The backchannel was first employed in large technology conferences in the USA and was enabled by lightweight synchronous communications tools such as IRC (internet-relay chat). The growing adoption of Twitter has led to Twitter-enabled backchannels – both 'official' and 'unofficial' - becoming an increasingly common feature of many academic conferences all over the world. What was once a marginal practice specific to technology conferences is now moving into the mainstream.
There has been some debate in the blogosphere, as well as in academic publications, about the digital backchannel in general and the Twitter-enabled backchannel in particular. However, in the context of digital backchannel practices entering the mainstream as a result of the rapid uptake of Twitter and the ubiquity of portable and hand-held devices enabling its convenient use, it's time to revisit the question of the conference backchannel and its contribution to conference participation and community learning.
This paper reports on my analysis of the backchannel interactions at one academic conference. I will argue that this Twitter-enabled backchannel constitutes a laminated discursive space in which the conference participants perform multiple identities. The Twitter-enabled backchannel raises some interesting questions about new forms of conference participation, about personal learning networks and the changing nature of collegiality in a digital age.

Parallel session 5C   15.50 – 16.20   Chair – David Barton   George Fox 3
Stefania Spina, University for Foreigners, Perugia @sspina
Twitter, politics and gender: Why are Italian women politicians less interactive than men?

Twitter is increasingly attracting the attention from Italian politicians; more than 70% of Italian Members of Parliament have a Twitter account and use it to communicate with their followers.
One of the emergent discursive features of the microblogging service - its conversationality - has been found to be a potential source of change in political discourse: while television discourse is monodirectional and does not entail an interaction between politicians and their audience, Twitter interactions are fundamentally dialogic. They can be described as short, public conversations that share a double audience: a general one (the followers), and a specific one, selected through addressivity and the use of mentions.
In order to analyse the different attitudes of women and men Italian politicians towards the use of mentions on Twitter, I extracted the 300 most recent tweets posted by a sample of 24 politicians (12 women and 12 men). Given that mentions are significantly more frequent in men's than in women's interactions, I tried to analyze the Twitter data from three different perspectives:
the use of mentions to start a conversation

the use of mentions to answer a question
the different types of words that tend to co-occur with mentions
The results of this study suggest that Italian women politicians are far less inclined than men to adopt one of the most relevant discursive features introduced in political discourse by social media: the continuous interaction with other users, sometimes giving rise to complex and extended conversations.

Plenary 2　　　　　　　　16.30 – 17.30　　Chair – Johnny Unger　　　George Fox 1
Nathan Jurgenson @nathanjurgenson
Twitter Q&A on digital dualism and the IRL fetish

Nathan Jurgenson's recent work has strongly challenged two assumptions that pervade both popular and scholarly writing on social media and mobile technology: first, the notion he disagrees with and terms 'digital dualism', i.e. that online and offline are largely separate spaces; and second, the idea that offline can be equated with real life, while the online is merely virtual, and that logging off might cure all of society's ills and makes one more human, which he calls 'the IRL fetish'.
In this Twitter-based Q&A session, participants will have a chance to ask Nathan about his work, and to discuss how his ideas pose challenges to the nascent research paradigms taking shape around Twitter and other microblogging platforms. Participants (whether physically present in Lancaster or participating from another location) are strongly encouraged to read two of Nathan's articles prior to the session:
"When Atoms Meet Bits: Social Media, the Mobile Web and Augmented Revolution" in Future Internet:
http://www.mdpi.com/1999-5903/4/1/83
"The IRL Fetish" essay in The New Inquiry:
http://thenewinquiry.com/essays/the-irl-fetish/

Break　　　　　　　　17.30- 18.50
Note: Cartmel Bar will be open from 18.00.

Dinner and Plenary 3 19.00　　　　　　Chair: Greg Myers　　　Barker House Farm
Rebekka Kill, Leeds Met @drrebekkakill
Facebook is like Disco and Twitter is like Punk

Visual presentations – available throughout

Please feel free to interact with presenters whether present at the conference or via Twitter

Penny Andrews, Leeds Metropolitan University (present) @pennyb
Social literacy, professional identity and the personal brand for the socially-impaired

Businesses like Virgin Media and Lush treat Twitter as an important part of online community management. Customer service and PR broadcast-style messages are key to online strategy, but many corporate Twitter feeds take this further. Individuals at a company may have a work Twitter feed in order to give their employer a more 'human' front, such as the community managers for games companies such as Blizzard Entertainment and BioWare.
Just as companies use Twitter to become more 'personable', it follows that private individuals can do the same - and not just celebrities and CEOs. I have Asperger Syndrome, and use Twitter to build my personal brand and find a career. Twitter has allowed me to bypass hierarchies, crowdsource answers to questions, and feel more confident about attending and contributing to professional events.
I found my career path in information science via following friends of friends, understanding more about librarianship and becoming part of the librarian community on Twitter. My struggles in the workplace were alleviated by knowing colleagues on Twitter before I started my current job, as they understood the difficulties I faced. I became involved in the Library Camp unconferences and became one of the facilitators, despite the geographic distance between myself and the other organisers.
This poster will show how Twitter has led to increased independence, confidence, social literacy and professional benefits for high-functioning adults on the autistic spectrum. In the context of microblogging, conversational turn-taking is not an issue, interrupting/leaping in to conversations between strangers is encouraged, and blunt questions can be asked; every question is blunt in 140 characters.
Twitter allows autistic individuals to easily process who said what to whom and in what context, and to observe online social behaviour. This enables interactions that would not previously have been possible, such as meeting others personally and professionally online, whatever their location or work role, prior to meeting them 'in real life'. Twitter also makes it easy also check transport problems, breaking news and other issues to alleviate potential anxiety triggers, similar to the function Google offers Powell.

Amy Antonio, University of Southern Queensland (distanced) @amyantonio86
Utilising the networking potential of Twitter at online conferences

Web-based conferencing systems have made it possible to facilitate professional development and establish learning communities whilst minimising the travel time and costs associated with face-to-face conferences. There is, however, an obvious downside. Most people like to travel and 'meet and interact with other people who are physically present' and the 'spontaneous and random socialising and networking that can happen…may be inhibited or even eliminated by online participation'. However, online conferences can be organised to utilise an array of communication modes to promote interaction. This paper thus reports on the use of Twitter in the Follow the Sun Online Learning Festival and offers suggestions for using microblogging platforms to enhance audience participation at online events. Social media platforms such as Twitter have the potential to satisfy a perceived need for networking and communication opportunities that are commensurate with the face-to-face environment but generally lacking in the online world. According to Java et al, most Twitter users can be characterised as 'friends'. This suggests that microblogging platforms are being used both for networking purposes and creating learning relationships. This is supported by Reinhardt et al who argued that the true value of Twitter is its networking potential and the 'consequent learning and connections one can make while contributing to a spontaneous pool of ideas [and] pointing to numerous links and resources'. The purpose of using Twitter during the Follow the Sun Online Learning Festival was to analyse how people are using social media during online events and to allow geographically dispersed individuals to communicate with each other. At the conclusion of the conference, tweets that utilised the conference hashtag - #fts12 - were analysed. It was found that the majority of Tweets were informative, instructional, promotional or conversational. That is, the

informative, instructional and promotional tweets invariably provided information for others regarding an upcoming presentation, change of location or link to a resource. This suggests that information sharing was the primary motivator for using Twitter during the online event and that, contrary to previous research, conference delegates did not seem to use Twitter as a friendship tool. Initial indications suggest that, when used appropriately, Twitter is extremely useful for the fast exchange of thoughts, ideas and information. However, a number of challenges need to be addressed before the networking potential of Twitter can be leveraged.

Daria Dayter, University of Bayreuth (present) @coocho
Self-praise and indirect complaints as self-disclosure strategies on Twitter

Self-disclosure to a large potential audience of strangers in Twitter has been subject to much misunderstanding and criticism. Yet, social psychologists have demonstrated that self-disclosure (i.e. the revealing of personally relevant experiences, thoughts, and feelings to others) is an essential element in development and maintenance of healthy social relationships. This paper focuses on the rapport-building function of self-disclosure, specifically how it is used by ballet students and amateur ballet dancers to enter an occupational community. The study takes a discourse analytical perspective to examine the speech act repertoire of self-disclosure in a corpus of ballet students' Twitters and explores the linguistic strategies employed to perform respective speech act sets. A particularly interesting finding concerns the active use of self-praise, which is considered a weighty face-threatening act in studies of face-to-face communication and therefore is socially stigmatized. In the data, self-praise constitutes less of a face threat and has rapport-building potential. This is reflected in explicit and non-mitigated linguistic realizations of self-praise, along with more traditional strategies such as mitigation by apology, self-denigration and reference to hard work. Construction of an occupational identity is accomplished by self-praising on ballet-specific values. Another important component of the self-disclosure repertoire in the ballet community is the speech act of indirect complaint. Frequent use of indirect complaint as a surface strategy for performance of self-praise suggests a close relation between the two speech acts

Georgia Gioltzidou and **Eugenia Siapera,** Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (distanced) @georgia_phd
#Elections under crisis: Twitter and the Greek political landscape

Greece is undergoing one of the most deep and intense crises of its history. The financial crisis and the deepening recession have had a ripple effect that has touched all areas of life. One area that has changed dramatically is that of politics. Traditional political parties and dominant political players have seen their popularity drop massively. Within a period of nine months, Greece had four governments and two elections. Within this context of protracted political crisis and upheaval, new political players emerge, while traditional players seek to reconfigure their own political presence. It is at this level that social media, and especially Twitter, have emerged as new spaces for the articulation and reconfiguration of politics and political presence. What do traditional politicians do on Twitter? How are their contributions received by the Twittersphere? Do new players emerge and who might they be? What does this mean for the political landscape? Is this disintermediation of politics leading to new kinds of political conduct? This paper has collected Twitter data from the period between the two elections in Greece (6 May and 17 June 2012), mapped the various political actors tweeting using the hastag #ekloges (elections) and categorised the contents of their tweets. The results are interpreted using two theoretical frameworks. Firstly, Bourdieu's field theory, and secondly, Castells' reconfiguration of power in the network society. The findings include an analysis of the shifting political landscape as it emerges from Twitter, and suggest that while power shifts are occurring, and new forms of communicative capital, especially affective ones, favour new players, there are several continuities with some traditional forms remaining, especially those associated with the professionalization of political communication. The concluding part of the paper assesses the significance of these shifts and the extent to which they can be considered more or less compatible with democratic politics. In the end, it is argued, Twitter is not really radicalizing the public sphere, although it does introduce new and important elements in public-political communication.

Nordiana Ahmad Kharman Shah and **Soureh Latif Shabgahi**, University of Sheffield (present) @nordianaaks
A comparative review of literature on microblogging use and risk in organisational and educational settings

Twitter and yammer as microblogging tools are the most recent social phenomena of Web 2.0 (Hauptmann and Gerlach, 2010) enabling users to broadcast information about their activities and opinion, as well as to receive quick notifications (Günther, 2009; Java, et al., 2007). The researchers have carried out a thematic analysis of literature collected in 2012, comprising around 30 papers on enterprise microblogging (EMB) and around 25 papers on microblogging in education (MIE). The analysis led to the development of a generic framework identifying themes of the uses and risks of microblogging in the two settings (Figures 1 and 2).

The two literatures from which the papers are drawn have their own distinctive theoretical traditions, methods and terminology and clearly the two sectors have different underlying purposes, yet it is hoped that the framework allows useful comparisons to be found. For example, the framework is suggestive of some actions that those working in education need to take to ensure experiments with microblogging maximise impact on employability.

As regards use, the framework identifies themes only found in organisational microblogging are forming relationships and coordination. Awareness/sense of connectedness through microblogging has also been an influential concept in organisational contexts (Zhao, et al., 2011; Günther, et al., 2009) much more than in educational settings, but seems to be potentially applicable there too. Themes of uses only found in MIE, include learning community (Ebner and Maurer, 2009), sustained interaction and engagement (Dunlap and Lowenthal, 2009) and collaborative learning (McWilliams et al., 2011).

As regards risks, those identified in EMB literature include difficulty in using microblogging (Grit, 2009; Grosseck and Holotescu, 2008), distraction and (Case and King, 2010; Raeth, et al., 2009) wasting time (Günther, et al., 2009; Othman and Siew, 2012), and noise- to-value ratio (Raeth, et al., 2009). Through the framework, a number of possible guidelines and policies to address such risk concerns can be discussed. For instance continuously emphasizing the usefulness of internal systems (Othman and Siew, 2012), and providing training for early users (Raeth, et al., 2009).

The framework has been introduced as a useful guide for other researchers to graphically represent issues around microblogging in different settings. The framework is hospitable to expansion for use in further contexts. Other researchers could apply the framework and compare existing findings with microblogging users in other sectors, or use the framework for comparing other technologies apart from web2.0/microblogging.

Anna Tereszkiewicz, State Higher Vocational School in Tarnow (present)
Online newspapers and Twitter: The use of Twitter by English, German and Polish newspapers

The poster presents results of a comparative cross-linguistic study devoted to online newspapers' use of Twitter. The conducted research consisted of two parts. The first part of the analysis was devoted to the investigation of the use of Twitter among selected national and regional newspapers in Poland. The second part of the study involved the analysis of the use of Twitter by English, German and Polish daily newspapers (three newspapers from each country). The aim of the study was to examine the practices and trends in the use of this microblogging platform among the newspapers. Specifically, the research involved the examination of the functional and discourse properties of the posts. The study has shown considerable discrepancies in the use of Twitter between the respective newspapers, concerning both the quantitative and qualitative aspects. The analysis has shown that although Twitter remains relatively unpopular in Poland, the frequency of its use has recently increased. Still, the study has proved that in terms of the frequency and variety in the use of Twitter, Polish newspapers remain largely behind British and German newspapers. The analysis has revealed that the newspapers differed in terms of the rate of posting, functional aspects as well as the stylistic layer of the tweets. The research has shown that while some newspapers limit themselves to posting newspaper headlines, headlines and leads, others exhibit more variety in the construction of the tweets, and place more emphasis on enhancing the informative value of the tweets and the level of interactivity with the readers. Interestingly, the tendency to enhanced interactivity was visible among selected Polish regional newspapers, as opposed to national papers, which can be seen as an attempt at attracting readers and forming a community.

Larissa Tonkin, Independent Occupational Therapist and **Emma Tonkin,** University of Bristol (present) @LarissaTonkin @emmatonkin
Social networks, social isolation and cyber-scepticism: Evaluating Twitter for users with disability?

Twitter is in principle accessible to anyone who can operate a computer or smart phone, or access the internet using a specialist communication device. In this regard, it provides a communication platform which is mechanically accessible to a wide variety of potential users, further benefiting from its requirement for users to communicate in microblog format (140 characters or less). Whilst it may give rise to undesirable communication habits such as excessively abbreviated terminology or abbreviations, reducing the semantic accessibility of postings, the length limitation further enhances access for those whom typing is arduous or for those who make use of relatively time-consuming input devices to access the system – perhaps forming the message letter by letter using a headswitch and patience.

It is often suggested that social media offers significant benefits in terms of democratisation, levelling out the effects of accessibility issues – who can tell who is behind a tweet? Following this assertion, the persona behind the tweet is accepted on trust by other users. Those who subscribe to this expectation anticipate Twitter to offer the following advantages:

Benefit of social networking enabling discourse, distribution and creation of ideas without being physically in close proximity

As a means of communication. Its use can reduce impact of disability – for example - A visually impaired individual may use Twitter to communicate with friends when in a crowded social situations where eye contact is difficult

Opportunity – communication with existing friends and like-minded people

Subject-specific discussions that user can engage in potentially with no support – such as the opportunity to involve users in service development (For example, Age UK have succesfully used Twitter input to inform future service design)

Participating in the 'Zeitgeist' - reducing social isolation

Ease of information sharing via Twitter – the most commonly used 'share' button

Benefit to businesses and marketers who have access to a communication platform for a targeted audience

Isolation in particular is known to be a serious problem for the disabled and aged – Teresa Seeman comments that 'social integration leads to reduced mortality risks, and to a better state of mental health'. Simonsick et al identified that in their study of disabled individuals, 23% visited no-one outside their home, and 17% remained within their home. Many people had at least daily interaction. There are many issues identified by people whom have a disability. Isolation is evidenced to compound the difficulties and impact on their ability to reach their optimum. Twitter offers access.

This poster aims to demonstrate the use of Twitter within these demographic groups, presenting the outcome of a series of case studies based on ethnographic methods, designed to explore the communication strategies adopted by Twitter participants with disabilities. We aim to provide a preliminary understanding for the occupational therapist community of the advantages and risks of the technology; the ad hoc usage of social technologies allows individuals to evaluate technologies for themselves, but the healthcare professional can support this more effectively if the benefits and risk factors are identified and understood.

Thursday 11 April

Parallel session 6A   9.35 – 10.05   Chair – Ruth Page   George Fox 4
Nordiana Ahmad Kharman Shah and Andrew Cox University of Sheffield
@nordianaaks
Factors influencing academics' use of microblogging tools in teaching and learning

There has been growing interest in the many possible uses of microblogging in higher education, for sharing research but also in learning and teaching. Yet few studies have been undertaken to examine systematically how microblogging technologies are used by academics in their teaching. Most of the studies that have been published focus on practical applications, usually of twitter, to enhance pedagogy and support collaboration in the classroom. These studies have not addressed in detail how academics' use of the technology in turn shapes teaching practice. The research presented in this paper is an exploratory study that examines how and why academics engage in microblogging in their teaching and learning. It builds up a picture of the temporal and physical rhythms of its use, how its affordances are taken up and how conventions of use emerge. In particular, it focuses on the complex factors that influence microblogging use by academics', such as their pedagogy, beliefs and prior uses of social network tools and the policy context.
The study employs a qualitative approach to uncover microblogging practices and to obtain rich descriptions of cases that give deeper insight into how twitter is used by academics and how this practice shapes their teaching. The methodological approach is based on developing a series of case studies of academics' use of twitter, drawing on interviews, observations of twitter streams and student questionnaires. Practice theory is used as a theoretical lens in mapping the reciprocal constitution of academics' ongoing interactions with microblogging, through recurrent practices, and how these in turn shape their academic routines and use of the tool. This paper reports thematic analysis of the interview data. It shows that academics use microblogging for different purposes in teaching including administration, dissemination of research, sharing of resources and class room learning activity. Academics in the study viewed Twitter as a promising communication tool to support collaborative activity, prolonging participation and interactions. They believed that Twitter enhanced active learning in a blended environment. Results highlight that academics have different beliefs about using Twitter in facilitating learning, distinct levels of expertise, and certain rules may be indeed carrying out different practices of twitter though apparently seem the same. The initial findings contribute to deepening our understanding of the decision to adopt microblogging, the consequences of use on teaching practice and students' learning experiences. There are practical implications for how the risks of using social media in the classroom can be managed and for institutional policy.

Parallel session 6B   9.35 – 10.05   Chair – Julia Gillen   George Fox 2
Mark Dang-Anh, Jessica Einspänner and Caja Thimm, University of Bonn
@mdanganh
Conceptualising Twitter as a discourse system: Discursive practices in political online communication

The mediatisation of society has spawned new ways of political communication in the digital public sphere. Innovative forms of interacting and contributing online have opened up new perspectives for participation that are accompanied by high hopes for more democratic structures. The ideal of deliberative democracy that has long been discussed by theorists like Habermas is linked with the notion of equal discursive options in an open system. Whereas questions regarding mediatisation processes often point at the macro level of political communication online, systematic analyses of discursive strategies and communicational structures provide insights into the micro level of language use.
One of the most recent positive developments in terms of participative discourse can be observed within the microblogging platform Twitter. Despite its restriction to 140 characters per posting, the microblogging system can be conceptualized as a highly complex medium in which a diverse set of communicative actions is being performed by its users on multiple dimensions. Four main Twitter-specific functions, induced by operators, can be identified that offer options for participating in the (political) discourse. The operators of @, RT, #, and http:// enable communicative functions beyond

their technical means like addressing, tagging, republishing, and linking that are used strategically to participate in tweet-conversations and to create discursive networks on Twitter.

The aim of the presentation is to discuss a functional operator model of Twitter as a discourse system. Based on a content analysis of Tweets collected during German state elections in 2011 and 2012, it can be shown that the use of the specific functional operators constitute Twitter as a multi-referential discourse system. The triangulate methodological approach for the data analysis combines quantitative measures (frequency profiles, topic profiles) with qualitative measures, i.e., interpersonal interaction (@replies and @retweets), semantic analysis (#hashtags), and speech act analysis. The presentation will exemplify the usage of functional Twitter communication by analysing cases of interaction between politicians and citizens, politicians and politicians, and citizens and citizens. It will be shown how users creatively establish particular discursive practices within the political discourse.

Parallel session 6C   9.35 – 10.05   Chair – Johnny Unger   George Fox 3
Alan Scott, University of Nottingham @alankscott
Pragmatic variation among German Twitter users

Focusing on German, this paper investigates the nature of language use on Twitter and assesses the extent to which this deviates from the norm. It is demonstrated that language use on Twitter, in common which other computer-mediated communication such as chats, exhibits a tension between medial literacy and conceptual orality, and that it is governed by pragmatic factors. The nature of pragmatic variation on Twitter is shown to differ from that found in general everyday language.
The following variables, with a non-standard (a) and standard (b) variant are investigated:
Morphosyntactic variables:
1. dative case with a preposition that assigns the genitive in the norm:
a. während dem Unterricht 'during the.DAT lesson'
b. während des Unterrichts 'during the.GEN lesson.GEN'
2. verb-second order after a conjunction with verb-final order in the norm:
a. weil es gibt maximal 10GB kostenlos
b. weil es maximal 10GB kostenlos gibt
'because there is a maximum of 10GB free'
Deviant orthography:
3. orthography reflecting pronunciation:
a. nimm dir nen Tee
b. nimm dir einen Tee
'have a tea'
4. lower-case initial letters on nouns and sentence-initially:
a. ich hätte jetzt auch gern kaffee
b. Ich hätte jetzt auch gern Kaffee
'I'd like coffee now, too'
The morphosyntactic variables are investigated using the affected prepositions and conjunctions as search terms in the Twitter advanced search function; the relative occurrences of the (a) and (b) variants for each variable are quantified. The orthographical variables are investigated by following and analysing the usage of individual users. The nature of the Twitter users who produced the data - private individuals vs. non-private organisations - is used to classify the data pragmatically. Comparable data from corpora of spoken and written German are presented.
It is found that pragmatic variation characterises language use on Twitter, with the non-standard variants more strongly represented in casual tweets produced by private individuals. Unexpectedly, the use of the non-standard variants is weaker in casual Twitter usage than in casual speech. It is posited that non-standard variants are avoided on Twitter in order to avoid criticism of one's usage by another user, such criticism being widespread among German Twitter users.

Parallel session 7A   10.10 – 10.40   Chair – Ruth Page   George Fox 3
Greg Marsden, Jeremy Shires, Antonio Ferreira and **Holly-Anne Barber**, University of Leeds @hollyannebarber
Exploring Twitter-based research methods: A critical review focused on mobility disruptions

Contemporary developed societies are utterly dependent on mobility. Massive flows of people, goods and information are a cornerstone of these economies. This means that gathering knowledge about the impacts of disruptions to mobility and how to manage them is a highly relevant enterprise if the objective is to improve the resilience of present-day social and economic practices.

Alongside an increased dependence on mobility, contemporary developed societies are growing increasingly reliant on information technologies and digital social networking tools such as Facebook and Twitter. The communicative structure and public nature of Twitter in particular has resulted in it becoming a popular tool to report, share and discuss events through real-time micro blogging, connecting topics through the use of hashtags.

This means that a colossal amount of potentially useful information is being constantly produced as a result of millions of individuals tweeting on a daily basis. The challenge that emerges from this is to devise methods to make use of this vast amount of data in high-quality academic research on mobility studies, more specifically on mobility disruptions.

This paper provides a comprehensive framework for researchers interested in utilising Twitter data in their academic work. A critical literature review on methods to gather, filter, and analyse Twitter data is provided, with a variety of case studies from a range of disciplines being presented to illustrate the potential and limitations of these methods. The paper then goes on to assess the aptitude of Twitter to be used in research focused on mobility disruptions.

The paper concludes with a critical reflection on using Twitter in academic research in general, and in the field of mobility studies and transport planning in particular. Future directions of methodological research are also suggested alongside with recommendations for policy makers and public authorities on how to approach Twitter during mobility disruptions.

Parallel session 7B   10.10 – 10.40   Chair – Julia Gillen   George Fox 4
Peter Evans, University of Edinburgh @eksploratore
Whose piper and whose tune? Discursive practices in informal learning events on Twitter

This paper investigates the discursive social practices and community-forming activities associated with professional development activities in Twitter chat events. The sample of events selected were targeted for a specific professional grouping: professionals working in the field of learning and development in organisations. While claims are made for the non-hierarchical nature of these social media and informal learning environments, as with any social practice, they also include clear relations of power. This study focuses on exploring how these relations emerge and evolve. The study explores how competing projections of power are assembled and "processed" in open Twitter chat, in terms of 'community' creation through collective meaning-making actions.

The research is framed by an Actor Network Theory (ANT) approach operationalised using Discourse Analysis. A practice-based approach focused on the interrelations between people, artefacts and language in terms of collaboration and control was appropriate here.

A sample of discursive events were analysed in terms of their discourse structure involving attempts to capture conversational 'floors' and so initiating processes of translation and enrolment over the course of the events. Networks evolved as actors enrolled others through the translations of specific professional practices, such as what constituted workplace learning and what was classified as something 'other'. The assembly of discourse communities through the reinforcement of particular discursive stances could clearly be identified. However, such processes were highly unstable through dynamic processes of enrolment and translation but also through the role of the non-human agents in these events. The study draws on the notion of symmetry in ANT to explore how technology actively participates in the shaping of the discussion event. For example, Twitter applications like Tweetdeck aggregate, organise and present Twitter 'streams', and hence shape the 'consumption' of Twitter chats, contributing to the formation? of the discussion exchanges and sequences.

Parallel session 7C   10.10 – 10.40   Chair – Johnny Unger   George Fox 2

Alexander David Pask-Hughes, Lancaster University @adpaskhughes
A discourse-historical approach to media framing of activists use of Twitter

The aim of this paper is to explore media framing of the use of Twitter by activists protesting against the current Coalition government's austerity measures, with UK Uncut and Boycott Workfare highlighted as examples of these activist networks. Recent research from within social movement

studies suggests that the definition of political opportunity structures must be broadened to include media opportunity structures. This approach contends that activists are aware of mediated political representations of their strategies, which in turn influence activist's protest repertoires.

This paper adopts a discourse-historical approach to critical discourse analysis to show how media framing of the utilisation of social media platforms, specifically Twitter, by activists is used as a discursive strategy to delegitimise the claims of protesters, extending CDA to issues surrounding social media. I argue that claims made by journalists and politicians within the field of mediated politics, such as on BBC's Newsnight, frame the use of social media for activism in a variety of negative ways. Twitter is represented both as a medium colonised by radical and extremist opinion and an instrument employed by individual activists in order to mobilise their followers. Activists' use of twitter is represented in digitally dualistic terms, where a separation between online and offline is strategically employed to discredit activists. This analysis paves the way for further questions relating to how activists respond to these representations, both within the news media and through social media.

Break   10.40 – 11.05   George Fox foyer

Plenary 4   11.15 – 12.15   Chair: Julia Gillen   George Fox 1
Greg Myers, Lancaster University @GregMyers
Working and playing on science Twitter

There have been many data-mining studies of large numbers of diverse texts from Twitter. But there is also a need for qualitative studies of Twitter use in specific communities. I consider some of the broader issues in such studies by considering one case, a set of ten Twitter feeds by UK and US academic science researchers at all stages of their careers, from post-docs to the most eminent professors. I focus on two issues: 1) how they refer to and index the time cycles of academic work, and 2) how they play with intertextual links and hashtags. I consider examples from a corpus of tweets of scientists (in such fields as astrophysics, geology, hydrology, and neurosciencde) compared to a reference corpus of tweets on other specific fields of interest (wines, dogs, schools, transit). Twitter is often treated as an ephemeral part of celebrity culture, but these feeds are an important part of contemporary scientific practice, both giving public form to the 'Invisible College' linking scientists, and projecting outside the scientific community an image of scientific work and play.

Lunch   12.15 – 13.15   George Fox foyer

Parallel session 8A   13.25 – 13.55   Chair – Greg Myers   George Fox 3
Noreen Dunett, Civica UK Education @comcultgirl
The tweeting zone

The relationship between people, context and technological tools is constantly evolving, prompting a review of notions such as space and time and their effect on learning. This paper addresses the key question: Can the social media platform Twitter provide a space or framework, within which learners might re-negotiate the boundaries between university, placement and home and create a productive learning environment? The research is informed by a hybrid theoretical framework combining connectivism and activity theory and places emphasis on the value and importance of diverse perspectives in the learning process. These multiple perspectives allow more actively engaged and independent learners to work through the contradictions between different identities. Inherent contradictions between perspectives lead to innovation and transformation in an activity system. Ethnographic action research was used in the research since it encourages the collection of a 'plurality of perspectives' to inform the research process. Data was collected through participant observation of the tweets of a cohort of trainee teachers over a 7 month period, a survey about their use of Twitter and an interview with their tutor. Social network and linguistic analysis suggested that learners were able take part in a range of different discourse types – professional, social, educational resulting in a re-negotiation of their own perception of self-identity and role. They were exposed to a range of resources and expertise which enabled them to solve real life problems e.g. assignments,

classroom practice rather than rely on the educational institution and tutor. The role of the tutor was re-negotiated but not satisfactorily resolved. Twitter appeared to provide trainees with a 'space' in which they were able to form and co-ordinate a personal learning environment and re-negotiate their role in their own learning. However, future research needs to explore whether the role of a 'tutor' is necessary in the Twitter learning ecology in order to ensure critical engagement and transformative learning.

Parallel session 8B   13.25 – 13.55   Chair – Johnny Unger   George Fox 2
Julia Gillen, Lancaster University @juliagillen
Twitter as professional practice: A case study of cricket journalism: @aggerscricket

I demonstrate a sociocultural approach to Twitter as a literacy practice, making use of a media ecology framework. I demonstrate how Jonathan Agnew, the BBC's cricket correspondent, appropriated Twitter as part of his engagement with Web 2.0 literacies. I situate this within an approach to understanding BBC Test Cricket journalism, taking into account historical, cultural and economic factors. Through deploying flexible ethnographic methods in a longitudinal study I explore three issues. I present evidence as to his attitudes, including in relation to other communications technologies he uses. I study his use of linguistic and other semiotic resources on Twitter and demonstrate the different kinds of roles played by others. His attitudes are mostly extremely positive, but vary in degrees of integration with other communications practices and fluctuate in response to abuse. His use of Twitter including with images is skilful and highly dialogic. Particularly interesting are short stories co-constructed with others, through which elements of apparently backstage identity are performed. I show how practices of this "change agent" can be approached in the context of his overall professional practice and that of cricket, as a specialist media domain in a particular era.

Parallel session 9A   14.00 – 14.30   Chair – Greg Myers   George Fox 3
Monica Lalanda, Segovia General Hospital @mlalanda
Twitter: The new stethoscope

Communication is one of the main constituents of good medical practice. Twitter is emerging as an invaluable tool to communicate with both the medical community and the wider society. From physical world observations and Twitter-mediated interactions, my categorisation of the ways in which microblogging is being used to change the ways medicine is practised is as follows:
Clinical case discussions
Filtering large amounts of daily scientific information to stay up to date
Practical clinic organization, avoiding unnecessary patients' wait
Watching out for medical information produced by non medical web pages (fighting scaremongering)
Helping to spread knowledge of good medical internet content for patients
Finding participating departments for multi-centre research studies
Providing support to medical research (finding literature, sharing experience)
Development of multi disciplinary Public Health projects
Taking part in medical politics without the "middle man"
Getting readers for your own or others' medical blogs.
Supporting the development of new or emerging medical specialties (ie: Emergency Medicine).
Taking part in the development of a true international medical community.
Using and sharing hashtags as memory tools for interesting articles on a particular subject.
Following the essence of any medical conference anywhere in the world.
Influencing healthy habits in the general population.

Parallel session 9B   14.00 – 14.30   Chair – Johnny Unger   George Fox 2

Clare Llewellyn, **Nicola Osborne**, Ewan Klein and Miranda Taylor, University of Edinburgh, @suchprettyeyes
An analysis of professional exchange and community dynamics on Twitter around the #OR2012 conference hashtag

The use of Twitter at professional conferences as part of social media "amplification" is now widespread. This practice generates large amounts of data which have the potential to reveal professional practices, connections, and meaning making around such events. Taking the Open Repositories 2012 conference's #OR2012 hashtag as an example data set, we apply computational methods for analysing Twitter conversations, developed by the Analysing Social Media Collaboration research group for the ongoing JISC Twitter Analysis Workbench project, and reflect on the process and issues raised.

Tweets are clustered into groups using features extracted from the language used within that tweet. TF-IDF extracted keywords are used to determine the most significant terms and the tweets are split into groups using cosine similarity of the textual features. There are several parameters which can be manually adapted to the specific data set such as the threshold for cluster inclusion and the life span of a tweet, how long until it is removed from a cluster. The Twitter WorkBench offers several methods for visualizing this information including, a time sliced animation where the clusters appear as the topics contained in that cluster are discussed, and as a graphical figure which indicates amongst other things the quality, persistence and growth of the clusters over the entire time period.

We find that scale of participation in a hashtag significantly impacts how such methods - originally intended for the Twitter "firehose" of public tweets - may be applied, and the type and flow of conversations detected.

This analysis method captures and cluster many tweets but can exclude those using non-standard terms or abbreviations - a challenge for any computational analysis of Twitter where 140 character restrictions make abbreviation a common practice. Hybrid human-computer methods to allow clustering of such Twitter conversations are thus considered as an area for further investigation. Further challenges raised around analysis of a hashtag with multiple strands are considered such as the identification of the different threads based on content and relevance of tweets; how cross-pollination and backchat between threads may be properly interpreted; and how noise (and spam) may be excluded. Whilst some advocate the use of unique identifiers for event sessions, such practices have not been widely adopted and risk creating silos in the Twitter back channel rather than encouraging the type of serendipitous discovery Twitter is well regarded for.

Whilst key conference themes do emerge the analysis of tweets finds travel plans, location, meals, and social plans all feature prominently in Twitter. This raises questions for those analysing Twitter discussions and for those organising events. Are such tweets relevant in the analysis of activity around a hashtag? Should these more informal discussions between professionals be removed or normalised? Can social connections between participants be mapped or inferred from these twitter interactions and indications of following/follower status - and is such analysis ethical despite the public nature of these conversations?

Break   14.30 – 15.00   George Fox foyer

Parallel session 10A   15.00 – 15.30   Chair – Greg Myers   George Fox 3
Maria Stopfner, Universität Innsbruck
The construction of identity in user comments of the far and extreme right

According to the latest reports of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, the internet has become the main hub for neo-fascist ideology. Sheltered by the anonymity of the World Wide Web, members of the far and extreme right can meet up with like-minded comrades. What is more, by exploiting the possibilities of Web 2.0, they can post and discuss their ideas in public introducing new and preferably younger users to their way of thinking through the backdoor of social contacts.
Sharing the notion of identity as a dynamic construct within social interaction, the present paper will focus on far and extreme right political identity exploring how it is shaped and maintained in public online debates. The analysis combines conversation analytic approaches to identity construction with typical far and extreme right argumentation schemes specified by critical discourse analysis.
The quantitative as well as qualitative analysis of 1047 user comments shows that political affiliation is seldom stated outright. Far and extreme right political identity is moreover conveyed by sharing certain beliefs and values serving as a communicative shibboleth through which the individual can proof "uniformity in thought and action" with the far and extreme right as a community of practice in which "ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values, power relations – in short, practices – emerge".

Parallel session 10B   15.00 – 15.30   Chair – Karin Tusting   George Fox 2
Tom Van Hout, University of Antwerp and Leiden University and Piia Varis, Tilburg University @tomvanhout
Authenticating leadership 'like a boss'

 'Like a boss' is a 2009 hip-hop spoof by The Lonely Island. The song describes a day in the life of a brash business leader played by American actor Andy Samberg, who shouts 'like a boss' after every activity. These activities start out with the mundane ('direct workflow…like a boss') but quickly turn to the personal ('swallow sadness…like a boss'), then to the absurd ('turn into a jet…like a boss') before crashing into the sun and dying ('now I'm dead…like a boss').
The song was an instant hit on social media, spawning an even more popular catchphrase in the process: 'like a boss' is a meme that has captured the imagination of social media users in images and videos that feature people, animals and even inanimate objects doing things 'their way', i.e. with authority, flair and aloofness, even if these things involve 'peeling onions like a boss' or 'high-fiving a smiling shark like a boss'.
In this paper we examine the identity practices around the meme's use in a multilingual corpus of messages posted to microblogging service Twitter with the hashtag #likeaboss. Following Blommaert and Varis, we define identity practices as "discursive orientations towards sets of emblematic resources". In this particular case, these emblematic resources center around loosely defined and ever-changing evaluations of business leadership. As Zappavigna has shown, Twitter offers a rich and diverse empirical space for studying such evaluative meaning relations.
In the analysis we examine how the like a boss meme
indexes what leadership does: i.e. authorize agency
extends the range of indexical meanings of leadership
metacomments on the corporate use of the term.
We illustrate these findings and compare them to the meme characteristics that Knobel and Lankshear, and Shifman discern. In conclusion, we take a step back and consider how the like a boss meme speaks to the sociolinguistics of superdiversity and to notions of leadership in (critical) management studies.

Parallel session 11A   15.35 – 16.05   Chair – Greg Myers   George Fox 3
Fabio Massimo D'Amato and **Fabio Poroli**, University of Rome @fabioporoli
"Formulaic" discourse in Twitter: the case of commercials

The paper concerns the analysis of a particular feature of the spontaneous linguistic interaction in Twitter which is empirically definable as "formulaic" and that consists of the production of tweets on the basis of pre-formed segments, drawn from advertising slogans and treated as autonomous rhetorical patterns. In this research – which is a spin-out of an analogous work centred on two specific commercials aired in the last years on the Italian national broadcasts – is detected an uniformity of treatment of specific slogans within extended corpora of tweets. That leads to notice that this sort of clause- and sentence-patterns characterize, cross-linguistically, the discourse in Twitter:
1. "La prima di una lunga serie di spesa online! Ci sono cose che non si possono comprare, per tutto il resto c'è #Mastercard!"
2. "Desayuno servido en la cama, un buen libro y un sol espectacular en mi ventanal. Para todo lo demás existe mastercard..."
3. "Spending an afternoon in Mumbai wrapped in a sweater! Priceless. For everything else there's Mastercard"
The equable re-use of the MasterCard advertising campaign slogan in 1, 2 and 3 (respectively, Italian, Spanish and English tweets) give an idea of the kind of parallel treatment is at issue here.Through a formal syntactic analysis, with particular attention to the change of the information structure, the paper seeks to provide a description of the particular rhetorical and stylistic statute of this phenomenon of linguistic reworking and to relate it to the set of features which define the discourse in Twitter. Micro-blogging as source of micro-textuality and advertising language share many existence conditions, starting from the brevity of the message. The influence of the latter on the first, definitely spread by sociolinguistic factors, underlines the need of the language to recover known patterns to comply with requirements related to others already known.

Parallel session 11B   15.35 – 16.05   Chair – Karin Tusting   George Fox 2
Todd Graham, Karin Hazelhoff and Marcel Broersma, University of Groningen @tsgraham1
The personal in political tweets: The use of Twitter during the 2010 British and Dutch General Elections

Twitter, once created to share personal status updates, has become one of the most prominent social networks. This site has grown from a sharing platform for the internet savvy to a worldwide known microblog, attracting over 500 million users generating about 340 million tweets daily. Thus, it was only a matter of time before politicians entered this brave new world. Indeed, politicians across Western democracies are increasingly experimenting with Twitter, particularly during election time. Besides campaign updates and promotion, Twitter is being used to give citizens a glimpse into a candidate's personal life, e.g. to raise confidence and establish a closer relationship with the public. This paper investigates the personal in political candidates' tweets during the 2010 British and Dutch general election campaigns. The aim is to map the various ways in which candidates use the personal in a political context. First, a content analysis of tweets (n = 54,327) from all twittering British (Conservatives, Labour and LibDems) and Dutch (10 seat-holding parties) candidates was conducted. This was followed by a qualitative analysis of a group of selected candidates' personal tweets. The analysis showed that politicians share their private lives on Twitter to a certain extent. A notable percentage of tweets (5% in the British case and 9% in the Dutch case) contained purely personal information, e.g. about family and leisure, whereas in many of the political tweets, the personal gets intermingled with the political for more strategic purposes. The qualitative analysis will show how these personal stories and experiences are mingled with the political and how this may create a sense of intimacy with the public (followers).

Plenary 5   16.15 – 17.15   Chair: Greg Myers   George Fox 1
Twitter panel

Drinks reception and book launch   19.00   Lancaster House Hotel
Please turn up promptly to help us celebrate the launch of a new book by **David Barton** @DvdBarton and Carmen Lee, "Language Online: investigating digital texts and practices." The reception is sponsored by Routledge.

After the reception follows the Conference Dinner.
Note that drinks with dinner will have to be ordered and paid for on the night.

Friday 12 April

Parallel session 12A   9.35 – 10.05   Chair – Johnny Unger   George Fox 4
Rhiannon Bury, Athabasca University @television2pt0
Cracking the code: Towards a semiotic understanding of Twitter and its use by media fans

Since Twitter joined the social media club in 2006, its use has increased steadily, particularly since 2009. Although it has received a lot of attention in the traditional media because of its use in relation to protests in Iran and then Egypt, the percentage of users in the US context remains well below social networking sites like Facebook—8% vs 65% according to the Pew Internet and American Life Project. That said, Twitter has gained traction among media fans. Between September 2010 and April 2011, I collected survey (n= 671) and interview data (n = 71) for a large-scale study on multi-screen television viewing and participatory culture. Just over 36% of the survey respondents said that they used twitter for fan-related activity. Only 10% more said that they had "liked" a TV series on Facebook. Further statistical analysis showed that younger viewers were more likely to use Twitter than older ones.
As more quantitative and qualitative data, produced by industry and the academy alike, becomes available, the time is ripe to formulate more complex understandings of Twitter as a code. Drawing on Barthes and Fiske, I take a socially-oriented semiological approach, conceptualizing Twitter as a shared system of meaning in order to critically examine its underlying structural relations. Specifically I map out the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of Twitter at the micro-level of the tweet and then at the macro-level of the aggregation feed. As an empirical researcher, my interest in Twitter as a code is not an end in itself but rather a basis upon which to build a more rigorous analysis of its uses by media fans. To move from system to use, I draw on Barthes' notion of second order of signification. After outlining the structural relations of Twitter, I will focus on user aggregation and the specific pleasures fans get from following favourite television actors, reality stars, characters and showrunners. The study of fan practices helps media scholars better understand uses and meanings of new technologies in general and social media in particular.

Parallel session 12B   9.35 – 10.05   Chair – David Pask-Hughes George Fox 2
Maurice Vergeer, Radboud University Nijmegen
Reciprocity and preaching to the converted: A cross-national comparative analysis of politicians' social and communication networks

Twitter is the most microblogging service globally. Particularly politicians consider Twitter a useful campaign tool, especially those in the Netherlands. However there is some debate whether Twitter is to be considered a social media (a medium where people connect with each other, cf. Facebook) where reciprocity is very important, or is to be viewed as a news medium, spreading information through a social system by means of more or less connected people. There is some evidence that at least popularity of politicians leads them to use Twitter more as a traditional news medium.
1. Can the nature of the network determine whether Twitter is a news medium or a social medium? The prediction is that the Twitter as a social network will have a large centrality, whereas a social medium will have a lower centrality. Not only will this study look at the more or less static social networks, but also at the dynamic communication networks on Twitter. The research questions regarding these communication networks are:
1. how does tweeting within political parties takes place, for instance, is this communication amongst each other, or promotion of each other's tweets?
2. how does tweeting between political parties take place?
This addresses the issue regarding the degree parties use Twitter as a real debate platform and whether the debate is more fierce between some parties than between other parties.
To understand the nature of these different types of networks we compare them across four countries, three from the western hemisphere (UK 2010 elections, Canada 2011 elections, the Netherlands 2012 elections) and one from the eastern hemisphere (South Korea 2012 elections). The availability of cross-national comparative data enables to look at cultural or political system differences affecting the use of social media. Regarding cultural differences, the strongest differences are expected between South Korea and the other - Western - countries. In South Korea, the nature of social relationships between people are greatly determined by Confucianism, where social harmony and mutuality are considered to be very important, we expect a large degree of reciprocity. In Western countries societies, having undergone a process of modernization of societies, characterized by individualization, we expect far less reciprocity.
Another expectation is that the nature of the political system (two- or multi-party system) affects the way these social networks and communication networks will be shaped.

Parallel session 12C   9.35 – 10.05   Chair – Greg Myers   George Fox 3
Sheng Li, University of Birmingham @acepor
What is a stock tweet? A corpus-driven analysis on linguistic features of stock tweets

In recent years, a lot interests have emerged in the correlation between Twitter contents and stock market trends; particularly in the area of natural language processing, many sentiment analysis studies have conducted large-scale investigations of tweets. However, so far, in terms of its linguistic features, there is not a detailed discussion of what a stock tweet is. Thus, present research aims to answer this question to develop an automated process to recognize stock tweets from those not related to the stock market.
For this research we collected nearly 7000 tweets related to a Dow Jones ticker - General Electrics in five months from April to August, 2012, and then manually classified tweets into three categories according to their relevance to the GE ticker: non-stock-related tweets, non-ticker-related tweets and ticker-related tweets with different polarities (negative, neutral and positive). We then investigated the internal and external linguistic features of each group of tweets.
There is a custom in many sentiment analysis studies that if the polarity of a tweet cannot be identified, then it is put into the neutral polarity category. However, the there are problems with this classification. From the manual classification, the conventionally 'neutral' tweet does not necessarily mean 'neutral', because they might have an indirect influence to the ticker's price movements. Therefore, if the unidentified tweets talk about stock-related topics, they are considered as stock-related tweets as well, but classified as non-ticker-related tweets; if not relevant to stock topics, they are considered as non-stock-related tweets.
With such a classification criteria, we then analyse the external and internal linguistic features of classified tweets. Indeed, the non-stock-related tweets, non-ticker-related tweets differ from ticker-related tweets significantly in many aspects, such as the number of ticker-tags, the length of tweets,

and the frequency of retweets. From these features, it is therefore possible to develop an automated classifier to extract ticker-related tweets, in order to improve the accuracy of following sentiment analysis.

The research provides a rethinking of current sentiment analysis approaches, and the result shows that extracting ticker-relevant tweets can improve the quality of sentiment analysis.

Parallel session 13A   10.10 – 10.40   Chair – Johnny Unger   George Fox 4
Paula Hearsum, University of Brighton
Twitteraction: Twitter, musician's deaths and celebrity reactions

The intense media coverage of the death of a well known cultural figure has always drawn on the reaction of other well known personalities to comment on their legacies as well as to give vocality to public grief. Ten years ago this would well have taken the form of a journalist sent to interview someone in the same field, but roll forward a decade and the role of the journalist is now as a micro-content aggregator to search related hash tags or lists of celebrity twitter feeds.

The music industry had embraced Twitter from the outset with some of the earliest proponents being musicians. Focusing on this collision of professions (journalism and music) offers a very visibility display of grief and views, sometimes controversial, within a otherwise closed set of communities. With the deaths of three musicians in the last three years (Michael Jackson, Amy Winehouse and Whitney Houston) having previously had very public demises within the media, it would be appropriate to build on work already undertaken in the construction of the news journalism covering their deaths and obituaries. This paper will draw on the use of social media to both simultaneously move rumour into narrowcast and feed into broadcast, become part of the dominant news discourse and narrative, as well as play a role in public grief and mourning.

Drawing on both new analysis of the microblog as well as the author's current research into the representations of the deaths of musicians, this paper will consider the production, text and consumption of Twitter in relation to its use to mediate the deaths of musicians by addressing three specific questions and then undertaking a critical discourse analysis of three data sets:

1. An evaluation of the production processes of the 'ambient' journalist – is the professional journalist now a hunter-gatherer or scavenger?
2. Considering the consumption of grief – are fans bypassing the cultural intermediaries and now able to share their views on an equal platform with celebrities, creating a 'sense of intimacy'
3. The cultural commoditisation of the 'reaction' where the tweeter becomes as visible as the person who has died creating a sense of 'vortextuality'
4. A critical discourse analysis of the 140 character eulogy a 'normalisation' of Twitter's use comparing the coverage of Michael Jackson, Amy Winehouse and Whitney Houston's deaths.

Parallel session 13B   10.10 – 10.40   Chair – David Pask-Hughes George Fox 2
Pieter Verdegem and Evelien D'heer, Ghent University @pverdegem
The role of Twitter in political agenda-setting during elections: Findings from the 2012 Elections in Belgium

Mass media have traditionally functioned as an intermediary system between society and political institutions. The rise of social media – such as Twitter – offers the potential for both politicians and citizens to circumvent the media, and directly influence each other within the networked media ecology. This is based on understandings of the interactive and participatory nature of social media, which contribute to a social space where "citizens can travel upward from civil society to the political public sphere".

The main research question of this paper examines how and to what extent Twitter has an impact on communication flows and power relationships between political elites, journalists, and the public. We have harvested all tweets (N=50.496) concerned with the 2012 elections in Belgium, which allows us to create a catalogue of topics central to the election discourse and identify the main voices contributing to the debate. In this paper we employ a multimodal content analysis approach to examine the topics and tone of the contributions, but we also focus on aspects that are specific to the Twitter platform, e.g. the inclusion of hyperlinks and meaningful self-created hashtags. The content analysis will be combined with social network analysis to identify opinion leaders and map their relationships with other participants in the Twittersphere.

Agenda-setting theory, often applied in election campaign research, provides a useful framework to investigate the shifting and dynamic power relationships between the three main actors, political elites, media, and citizens, who each have their own issue agenda. While agenda-setting studies traditionally concentrate on the effects of political elites on mass media and public opinion, applying a social network approach to agenda-setting allows us to analyze the complex and multidirectional interplay between political agendas, media agendas, and public opinion, in the construction of deliberative debate in the public sphere.

The research presented in this paper draws on the 2012 local elections in Belgium. We will both report on our data and analysis, and also where possible compare our results with recent Twitter election research in other countries. With this comparative analysis, we will be able to assess the potential of social media to serve as a networked public sphere in different contexts with different political systems and media systems.

Parallel session 13C   10.10 – 10.40   Chair – Greg Myers   George Fox 3
Nick Pearce, Durham University and Yimei Zhu, Manchester University
@drnickpearce
Use of Weibo by UK universities and Chinese students: A study of intercultural micro-blogging

Social media provides an opportunity for globalised communication between individuals and organizations. In the higher education sector social media has been used by universities such as the Open University to engage with the public and promote the university's research. Facebook is used by most of the Russell group of top universities, although with varying levels of interaction. However these technologies are not truly global as their use is restricted in China and other countries.

This paper will analyse the use of the popular Chinese micro-blogging site Weibo by UK universities. Many UK universities have a presence on Weibo, whether through formal verified accounts or informal alumni groups. We will analyse the various ways in which Weibo is used for marketing, alumni and community development or public engagement. This paper will also examine the use of these sites, representing UK institutions, by Chinese students.

Through looking at the use of Weibo by UK universities and Chinese students we will be able to examine the intercultural interactions which take place in this complex social, linguistic and cultural space. This will help inform wider discussions of the impact of globalization on social media, and the importance of social media on the global flow of students from China to the UK.

Break   10.40 – 11.05   George Fox foyer
Use the taxi sign up sheet if you wish us to order you a taxi.

Plenary 6   11.15 – 12.15   Chair – Johnny Unger   George Fox 1
Ruth Page University of Leicester @ruthtweetpage
Saying 'sorry': Corporate apologies posted on Twitter

Twitter offers companies an influential environment in which to enhance their reputation and build rapport with existing and potential clients. The growth of customer care talk on Twitter is evident in the changing patterns of interactions as observed in a dataset of 177, 735 tweets gathered between 2010 and 2012. One important aspect of the customer care talk is the apologies made by companies in response to customer complaints. The analysis focuses on 1183 apologies, and considers the distinctive forms of their semantic components (the Illocutionary Force Indicating Device, Explanations, Offers of Repair) and their rapport building potential (as indicated through opening and closing moves, such as greetings, nominations, discourse markers and emoticons). Corporate apologies are distinctive for their under-use of Explanations, and their over-use of Offers of Repair, especially when combined with follow up moves such as imperatives and questions. They are also distinctive in their repeated, somewhat formulaic use of greetings and signatures which did not appear in the apologies posted by ordinary Twitter members. As such, the rapport building strategies used by companies appear less personalised and more formal, with less associative expressiveness than in the interactions of ordinary apologies. I interpret the distinctive distribution of these semantic and stylistic features in light of the companies' imperative to save face and rebuild rapport with their customers, and to maintain a client base through Twitter.

Packed Lunch   12.15 – 12.30   George Fox foyer
A small packed lunch is available for you to pick up and take with you, if you wish.

If you want to carry on talking with delegates, please adjourn to another space as the George Fox building has to be cleared at 12.30 for another use.

Let's carry on the conversation elsewhere!

Taxis will be ordered to take people to the station. Please use the sign up sheets during the break.