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International Relations 2.0: The Implications of New Media for an Old Profession[1]

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The International Relations (IR) profession has not fully taken stock of the way in which user-driven information technologies—including Blogger, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Wikipedia—are reshaping our professional activities, our subject matter, and even the constitutive rules of the discipline itself. In this study, we reflect on the ways in which our own roles and identities as IR scholars have evolved since the advent of ''Web 2.0'': the second revolution in communications technology that redefined the relationship between producers and consumers of online information. We focus on two types of new media particularly relevant to the practice and the profession of IR: blogs and social networking sites.

Keywords: Web 2.0, social networking, blogs, international studies

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Consider the following parables.

A senior International Relations (IR) scholar writes a moderately successful blog. Mired in papers that need to be graded, he procrastinates by dashing off a quick post about bad student writing, announcing a contest for his fellow IR scholars to submit the worst sentences they have seen in their papers. This post attracts a lot of amusing comments and links, as well as some interesting suggestions about how to improve student writing. Some of the professor's own students, however, take umbrage at the implied critique of their writing skills. After hearing such complaints in his comments,[2] and from a student listserv, the professor wonders if he crossed a line in his post.

A junior IR scholar goes to a job interview in 2006, and is asked about a phenomenon called ''Facebook'' over dinner. Ensconced in a graduate school of public and international affairs, the job candidate is unfamiliar with the (then) undergraduate craze. Returning home, and wondering if she blew her interview when she replied ''Facebook, what's that?'' the assistant professor starts looking into the ''Facebook'' phenomenon, not sure what she is getting into. Before she

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[2]For example, one student suggested a counter-contest entitled, ''Worst Typographical Error by a College Professor in a Blog Post Intended to Poke Fun at Typographical Errors in Student Papers.'' Accessed at http://www.danieldrezner.com/archives/003637.html#459527, February 2009.

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knows it, she has created an account—and some unanticipated, awkward interactions with her students.

Most IR professionals are, at present, at least vaguely aware of social networking technologies. A growing number of academics read, write, or use blogs in their classrooms. Facebook, a tool originally devised for college students, has expanded rapidly into the professoriate (Lampe, Ellison, and Steinfeld 2008). Some colleagues have enthusiastically latched onto these tools as opportunities to enrich their teaching, connect with students and colleagues, and generate new research synergies (Beckenham 2008). Other colleagues have expressed not only curiosity but also apprehension, encountering unanticipated pressures and pitfalls (Hurt and Yin 2006). Yet another group remains skeptical of even established Web sites, much less something like Twitter. They are leery of both the mind-numbing pace of information technology and growing demands from universities to integrate technology into their teaching.

The IR profession has not fully taken stock of the way in which user-driven information technologies—including Blogger, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Wikipedia—are reshaping our professional activities, our subject matter, and even the constitutive rules of the discipline itself. As international studies programs spread from the developed world to the rest of the globe, these technologies will become ever more important as means of engaging peers across many time zones. In this study, we reflect on the ways in which our own roles and identities as IR scholars have evolved since the advent of ''Web 2.0'': the second revolution in communications technology that redefined the relationship between producers and consumers of online information. We focus on two types of new media particularly relevant to the practice and the profession of IR: blogs and social networking sites.

To date, there has been a decided lack of scholarly discussion about the ways in which Web 2.0 affects the discipline, pedagogy, or subject matter of IR.[3] This study aims to provoke such discussion and suggest an important avenue for future reflection and research on our craft. We combine our personal experience as teachers, researchers, and public intellectuals with the emerging literature on the impact of new media on the academy to encourage thought about where these changes are leading the discipline of IR as an educational, scientific, and intellectual enterprise. This is far from the last word on the subject—indeed, our goal is to provoke many more words.

Our general argument is that advances in information technology are changing the IR discipline, offering both opportunities and challenges, particularly to those in the field who developed our professional identities in the pre-Web 2.0 era. On the one hand, the tools of Web 2.0 clearly enable creative new forms of research, teaching, and service. On the other hand, the existing power relationships in the ''real world'' occasionally clash with the emergent norms and hierarchies that exist in Web 2.0. The transaction costs of navigating these tensions are not insignificant, and will present challenges for new adopters of these technologies.

We make three specific arguments. First, if managed well, the benefits of engaging the new media can outweigh the costs. Second, IR professionals will increasingly need to contend with these technologies whether they wish to or not, so the quicker we get up to speed as a profession the better. Therefore, third, a serious discussion of how to do this well as a profession is long overdue.

[3]An electronic search of *International Studies Perspectives*, *World Politics*, *International Organization*, and *International Studies Quarterly* revealed no mention of the word ''blog,'' for example. The numerous interdisciplinary, non-peer-reviewed, online or as-yet-unpublished sources cited in this study demonstrate the absence of peer-reviewed scholarship within IR analyzing the impact of the new media on the profession and the world—a gap within political science as a whole.

The paper proceeds as follows. We begin by defining a few terms and situating ''Web 2.0'' technologies as a distinct and under-theorized development in the Internet revolution. The next three sections discuss the challenges and opportunities posed by the new media for IR professionals in research, service, and teaching, respectively. We conclude with a discussion of how these technologies have the capacity to transform the role-related-requirements associated with becoming an IR professional.

What Is Web 2.0 and Why Does It Matter?

Wikipedia (itself an example of the phenomenon) defines Web 2.0 as, ''a perceived second generation of Web development and design, that aim[s] to facilitate communication, secure information sharing, interoperability, and collaboration on the World Wide Web.'' In short, the concept describes the democratization of knowledge production that resulted from the standardization of online media platforms—podcasting, blogging, wikis, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and the Social Science Research Network, to name a few. Web 2.0 technologies make it easier for users to create and share information on the World Wide Web. They are distinct from Web 1.0 technologies in how they lower the barriers to entry for even technophobic academics.[4] In this study, we focus on two such platforms: IR blogs (a subset of political blogs which, in turn, are a subset of the blogosphere in general), and Facebook (one example of a social networking utility.)[5]

A blog is a Web page that is ''subject to minimal to no external editing, provides online commentary, and is presented in reverse chronological order with hyperlinks to other online sources'' (Farrell and Drezner 2008:16). International studies professors and students produce, consume, and critique blogs. Weblogs are increasingly being used in college classrooms as a tool of teaching pedagogy, including some IR classes.[6] Popular online outlets for IR, such as CFR.org, sponsor blogs. In 2009, *Foreign Policy* magazine hired political scientists ensconced in top-tier institutions to blog for their Website, including Stephen Walt, Peter Feaver, and Marc Lynch. This move added a patina of legitimacy to the blogging enterprise for IR scholars.

Social networking applications enable users to establish and maintain online relationships with a community of friends, colleagues, and contacts (DiMicco et al. 2008; Boyd and Ellison 2007; Joinson 2008). Professors must now contend with the fact that the average college student spends significant time on such sites both in and outside the classroom. IR professionals are increasingly creating their own social networking sites, blurring the lines between an academic's professional and social networks.[7] These sites expand voice and network opportunities for scholars that might otherwise be cut off from such discourse.

[4]See Deibert (1998) for a discussion of how IR scholars use Web 1.0 resources.

[5]Other popular social networking sites include MySpace, which was originally more popular among highschoolers, and LinkedIn, which was designed for professional networking rather than to maintain contact with former real-life friends. We focus on Facebook because it is particularly relevant to the academy.

[6]For example, the Office of Instructional Teaching at University of Massachusetts Amherst hosts its own blogging platform and makes this available to all faculty and students.

[7]When Henry Farrell (a blogger and scholar of Internet and society) joined Facebook in 2007, he wrote the following on his blog *Crooked Timber*: ''Like, it seems, umpteen others, I set up a Facebook profile for myself a couple of weeks ago. When I did, I found that plenty of friends from widely scattered parts of my social network had done the same thing, mostly around the same time. This does seem to me to be a genuine tipping phenomenon.'' However, Farrell goes on to describe his reticence about jumping on the bandwagon: See Farrell, ''Trying Not to Lose Face,'' *Crooked Timber*, July 11, 2007. Online at http://crookedtimber.org/2007/07/11/trying-not-to-lose-face/.

As blogs and social networking sites have proliferated throughout the IR profession and the academy in general, the common conception is that the costs of using these technologies outweigh the benefits to the conventional research enterprise (Cain 2008). The *Chronicle of Higher Education* has been replete with essays warning scholars against the hazards of Web 2.0 technologies (Tribble 2005a,b; Young 2009). The warnings include the perils of offending senior scholars, revealing political partisanship, and being perceived as investing too much time in a non-scholarly activity to the detriment of the traditional scholarly responsibilities (Hurt and Yin 2006). Some bloggers have quit due to the pressures of conventional academic work (Lang 2007); others have expressed the fear that integrating new forms of information technology into their professional activities has cost them time, professional opportunities, and sometimes, more controversially, social capital. (Withrow 2008). Below, we outline tradeoffs and strategies associated with integrating blogs and social networking technologies into teaching, research, and service, and conclude with thoughts about the metamorphosis of professional norms in our subfield.

New Media and the Research Enterprise

Web 2.0 technologies can facilitate conventional IR research programs in several ways.[8] A blog acts as a *de facto* online notebook for nascent ideas and research notes. An individual blog post, for example, allows the writer to link and critique news stories, research monographs, and other online publications. Because many blogs are archived and easily searchable, authors can quickly retrace their thoughts online. Most posts will not pan out into anything substantive—as is the case with most ideas formulated by scholars.[9] Nevertheless, the format permits one to play with ideas in a way that is ill-suited for other publishing venues. A blog functions like an intellectual fishing net, catching and preserving the embryonic ideas that merit further time and effort.[10]

In political science, academic blogs have facilitated scholarship by encouraging online interactions about research ideas. In recent years, political science bloggers have debated the sources of the liberal democratic peace (Gartzke 2005; Rummel 2005); the role of the political scientist as a political actor (Farrell 2007; Jackson 2007a,b; Jackson and Kaufman 2007); and arranged online discussions of noteworthy books in political science. Blogs can act as a substitute for the traditional practice of exchanges of letters in journals, and provide additional venues for book reviews.

The research benefits of a blog grow when connections are made with other social science blogs. This allows an exchange of views about politics, policy, and political science with individuals that you might not have otherwise met—an ''invisible college,'' as DeLong (2006) puts it: ''People whose views and opinions I can react to, and who will react to my reasoned and well-thought-out opinions, and to my unreasoned and off-the-cuff ones as well.'' Farrell (2005) has compared blogs to the eighteenth-century Republic of Letters, noting that the blogosphere, ''builds a space for serious conversation around and between the more considered articles and monographs that we write.''[11]

[8] The next few paragraphs draw from Drezner (2008a).

[9] As Rauch (1993:64) points out, ''We can all have three new ideas every day before breakfast: the trouble is, they will almost always be bad ideas. The hard part is figuring out who has a good idea.'' Rauch, *Kindly Inquisitors.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993, p. 64.

[10] Drezner (2004, 2008b) had their origins in blog posts, for example.

[11] For a dissent, see Wolfe (2004).

Of course, these kinds of exchanges happen offline as well. The blog format, however, enhances and expands these interactions in two ways. First, the networked structure of the blogosphere facilitates the inclusion of more political scientists, more academic disciplines, and more informed citizens than other venues. Compared with other kinds of networks, the blogosphere is more likely to break down disciplinary boundaries. Second, these interactions also happen much more quickly than in other formats. When presenting an idea on the blogosphere, there is near-instantaneous critical feedback. In multiple cases, when posting or linking to draft work online, we received quicker and more detailed feedback than when we solicited it from colleagues that we know well. Even with online submissions, this is *much* quicker than would be the case with a journal or university press.

A successful Weblog can also expand publication opportunities. Book publishers, magazine editors, and op-ed assistants all read Weblogs. If a political scientist can demonstrate a deft writing style and a clear expertise about an issue on a blog, it sends a signal to these gatekeepers that they can display these qualities in other publishing venues. Of course, we do not argue that blogging is a substitute for other publications, or that scholars and instructors should rely on online sources to the exclusion of print scholarship. Indeed, digital media has a variety of features that renders it ephemeral, transient, and unevenly accessible relative to its conventional counterparts. However, the same features offer distinct advantages: done correctly, these forms of knowledge production can be a powerful complement to conventional forms of publication.[12]

Scholars can also leverage social networking sites to advance their research. As the National Science Foundation (2009) recognizes, interpersonal synergy among researchers greases the wheels of intellectual ferment and creativity.[13] Yet this synergy is often lacking in an academy that incentivizes a near-monastic focus on one's own projects. Social networking provides individual scholars a low-cost means to build social capital without leaving the workplace (Ellison, Steinfeld, and Lampe 2007; Valenzuela, Park, and Kee 2008; Pasek, More, and Romer 2009b). Online social networking reinforces and rearticulates a scholar's strong ties—that is, friendships and relationships that exist in a robust form offline. Over time, however, such sites also encourage the expansion of ''weak ties.'' Because sites like Facebook encourage the expansion of one's network of friends, scholars will be encouraged to connect beyond their group of close friends and colleagues. Recent research into Facebook reveals that members are increasingly using the site to expand their network of professional contacts (DiMicco et al. 2008; Joinson 2008). This offers them exposure to a more heterogeneous menu of ideas, bolstering the opportunities for intellectual arbitrage and cross-fertilization (Levin and Cross 2004). The sociology literature suggests that the expansion of weak ties also has a positive effect on an individual's ability to advance in the job market (Granovetter 1973).

To be sure, there are also time costs associated with social networking sites—as anyone who has taken a frivolous Facebook quiz would attest.[14] We are not aware of any existing studies that evaluate the extent to which these benefits outweigh the time wasted by scholars on these sites.[15] Our own experiences, however, suggest that research-related exchanges take place among IR scholars

[12]At least one compilation of blog posts has already been converted into a university press book (Becker and Posner 2009).

[13]For example, NSF grant applicants are required to include in their biosketch a description of such ''synergistic activities'' and to include a budget for such activities in the proposal.

[14]However, one might argue that short diversions of that nature throughout a work day actually boosts scholarly productivity (see Carpenter 2008).

[15]There have been recent studies on Facebook's effect on student diligence (see Karpinski 2009; Pasek, More, and Hargittai 2009a).

within such communities. For example, queries for citations and sources are likely to be answered much more quickly on Facebook than via direct email requests. Simply put, such requests are seen as less intrusive on a social networking site than in an email inbox. The comment features on these sites also permit rapid reaction and discussion to real-time events.

Beyond their utility to abet the research enterprise, blogs and social networking sites have the potential to become the *object* of research. Scholars across several disciplines are already latching onto the potential of Facebook as a ''petri dish for the social sciences,'' mining user profiles to study everything from the formation of social networks and the nature of social capital, to citizens' attitudes toward privacy and dating patterns (Rosenbloom 2007).

Just as scholars in psychology and sociology are mining Facebook to test traditional theories in their fields, IR scholars should be considering how to exploit emerging technologies in the service of more general research questions. Given the clustering and self-identification of specific communities through platforms like Facebook, and the self-selecting samples that constitute the readership of most political blogs, one could imagine a variety of means by which such platforms would facilitate targeted research of specific communities (such as transnational networks) that are difficult to reach through conventional means. For example, the Humanitarian Law and Policy Groups' Facebook Group membership might constitute a plausible and easy-to-reach sample of humanitarian law practitioners worldwide; the commenters/readers of blogs associated with the topic ''human rights'' might be a reasonable place to begin a snowball sample of human-rights-minded persons. Data from these sources might also be captured, coded, and analyzed as indicators of political discourse.

Finally, it is imperative that IR scholarship begin to take the new media's impact on world events seriously as a subject of research in its own right. There is a growing debate in the social sciences about the role these technologies play in the facilitation of ''smart mobs'' and other forms of transnational civic activism (Rheingold 2003; Benkler 2006). Just as conventional Websites and email drastically expanded the ability of social movement activists to organize across borders in contention against states (Deibert 2000; Warkentin and Mingst 2000), anecdotal evidence suggests Web 2.0 may be altering the balance of power between individuals and the state in ways as yet understudied. Citizens can now more easily create alliances with NGOs and diaspora communities abroad to influence the policies of their own governments. YouTube is routinely used to initiate the oft-cited ''boomerang effect'' (Keck and Sikkink 1998). Aggrieved populations record videos of repressive acts on cell phones and upload them to the Internet in order to incite a global reaction. Facebook's VP for global communications and public policy recently observed, ''Some of the most interesting uses of Facebook have been for the purpose of social action, which is essentially political action'' (quoted in Tselik 2009).

Over the past year, the effects of Web 2.0 technologies on social movements have become manifestly clear. Twitter became a means of rapidly mobilizing flashmobs in Moldova (Morozov 2009a). Facebook became an important forum for Pakistanis to discuss the future of their society (Berry 2009). In the aftermath of the June 2009 disputed presidential election in Iran, the US State Department's Policy Planning Staff requested that Twitter delay its scheduled maintenance—to allow protestors to communicate with each other and the outside world (Landler and Stelter 2009). Prominent bloggers such as Andrew Sullivan and Nico Pitney acted as information aggregators of various Twitter feeds emanating from Iran. Graphic videos of Neda Agha-Soltani being shot to death in Tehran were uploaded to YouTube, acting as a focal point for protestors in Iran (Wright 2009). Facebook released a Farsi version of its service, and Google added Farsi to its translation service. With the Iranian government imposing severe restrictions on the activities of Western media outlets, journalists began relying on Web 2.0 sources of information to supplement their news accounts.

Yet it would be a profound mistake to assume that new media uniformly benefit civic activists at the expense of states. Indeed, such tools are as easily used by elements of ''uncivil'' society, as well as for state repression (Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2005; Morozov 2009b; Drezner 2010). A broad spectrum of political actors, extremists, terrorists, and coercive organs of the state have also embraced Web 2.0 technologies to advance their agendas. Terrorists in Iraq, for example, have used text messaging from cell phones to recruit, track, intimidate, and set-off road-side bombs (Singer 2009). The Iranian government, struck back at protesters in 2009 by identifying their leadership through Facebook and Twitter. Expatriates who criticized the regime discovered that their relatives still in Iran were persecuted (Fassini 2009). Nor is this activity limited to authoritarian states—the Israeli military has formed a unit to combat anti-Israeli rhetoric on Web 2.0 platforms (Pfeffer and Izikovich 2009). These examples suggest the importance of new media to many of the conventional functions associated with the national security state, as well as domestic and transnational state-society relations. Foreign policy is increasingly mediated by information technology in ways that require serious attention from IR scholars.

As these examples suggest, Web 2.0 technologies can act either as an independent or an intervening variable in world politics. The counterfactual question—what would have happened if emerging information and communication technologies had not existed—is clearly important in tracing out causal mechanisms, and determining the independent effects of Web 2.0. In many ways, however, Web 2.0 technologies are even more important as intervening variables, amplifying deeper structural forces in society. The wealth of archived, codified information in blogs and other social networking technologies allows scholars the possibility of mapping out political conversations as they happen. They provide an excellent means for process-tracing pivotal events in world politics.

Web 2.0's codification of communications affords IR scholars the opportunity to advance ongoing debates about the circumstances, structure, and form of political discourse. Does discussion in the blogosphere facilitate collective political action? Do these technologies approximate Habermasian deliberation in any meaningful way, or do they promote cyber-balkanization instead? Does the blogosphere replicate pre-existing political inequalities at the global or national level? Debates about the Internet's effect on world politics have raged for the past decade—Web 2.0 data can provide a rich data source from which to draw. As the IR profession becomes more interested in ''network power'' (Hafner-Burton, Kahler, and Montgomery 2009), Web 2.0 technologies can provide crucial data to test the concept (Carpenter 2007).

Although Web 2.0 technologies facilitate research, they also carry significant risks. Users of these technologies have unequal distributions of online influence. The blogosphere generally follows a power law distribution of traffic and links (Shirky 2008, Chapter 5; Farrell and Drezner 2008; Hindman 2008). This means that elite bloggers will command far more readers than new entrants. Similarly, network theory suggests that Facebook users with large numbers of friends can act as ''critical nodes'' through which influence and information can pass. The most active 2% of Wikipedia users were responsible for more than 70% of all the editorial changes on the site (Swartz 2006).

If Web 2.0 technologies create new pathways to public recognition beyond the control of traditional academic gatekeepers, then these same technologies are likely to provoke a negative response from those who hold more relative power within traditional academic structures. Blogs are a form of public discourse, and a large fraction of IR scholars either do not or cannot write for a public audience (Borer 2006; Nye 2009). Any usurpation of scholarly authority is bound to upset those who benefit the most from the status quo. Any exposure to norms or hierarchies at variance with pre-existing academic structures will naturally trigger suspicion and resentment.

For example, a July 2005 pseudonymous essay in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* by a senior humanities professor on the academic job market was entitled ''Bloggers Need Not Apply'' (Tribble 2005a). The essay went on at length about the foolishness of aspiring academics writing Weblogs. Three months later, this professor responded to the volumes of online criticism with another *Chronicle* essay (Tribble 2005b), observing, ''As my original column made clear (and many amid the outcry reiterated) when it comes to blogging, 'I just don't get it.' That's right, I don't. Many in the tenured generation don't, and they'll be sitting on hiring committees for years to come.'' Political scientists have fretted about how a blog would impact a scholar's chances for tenure or promotion. Middle-East historian Juan Cole was allegedly rejected for an interdisciplinary chair at Yale because of hostility to some of the content on his blog (Liebowitz 2006). However, other scholars with prominent blogs have been promoted with a minimum of fuss (Jaschik 2005).

The seriousness of these pitfalls are likely a function of one's standing in the profession. Tenured professors have little to fear from the downside of blogging—unless they aspire to being hired at an elite institution. For faculty comfortably ensconced at non-elite institutions, blogging can provide a new way to engage the scholarly and policy discourse of the day. For junior faculty and graduate students, the perils are greater and harder to avoid. The demographics of Web 2.0 suggest that, like Internet use more generally, it is skewed toward younger generations (Rainie 2005). Even if incoming graduate students are comfortable with the medium, however, they must be wary of their elders—they are clearly less comfortable.

Service in the Profession

Online writing can also be viewed as a form of service for the IR community. A blog allows a professor to interact with interested citizens beyond the ivory tower. Provided one can write in a reasonably jargon-free manner, a blog can attract readers from all walks of life. Indeed, citizens will tend to view an academic blogger they encounter online as more accessible than would be the case in a face-to-face interaction. This increases the likelihood of fruitful interaction. A blog is an accessible outlet for putting on one's public intellectual hat. Survey evidence confirms that political scientists use blogs as a form of political activism (McKenna 2007).

Perhaps the most useful service function of academic IR bloggers is when they engage in the quality control of *other* public intellectuals (Drezner 2009). Richard Posner (2002) has argued that public intellectuals are in decline because there is no market discipline for poor quality. Even if public intellectuals err, the mass public is sufficiently disinterested and disengaged for it not to matter. Scholarly blogging changes this dynamic. If Michael Ignatieff, Paul Krugman, or William Kristol pen substandard essays on IR, IR blogs provide a wide spectrum of critical feedback. When Joseph Nye (2009) accused academic IR of being completely divorced from policymaking, for example, an array of scholar-bloggers extended the conversation through both support and criticism of Nye's argument,[16] as well as satirical commentaries on the debate itself.[17]

[16]Ironically, Nye cited blogs as one example of how scholars could maintain their policy relevance (see also Gelb (2009:146).

[17]See Carpenter (2009).

Other examples of Web 2.0 technologies providing useful services are more controversial. For example, an anonymous blog called IR Rumor Mill surfaced in 2005 as an online bulletin board for rumors and hard information on the state of academic job searches. On the one hand, having such a blog serves as a focal point for rumors to be confirmed or refuted, providing a clear public good to the discipline. On the other hand, the anonymity of sites such as these led to some unanticipated developments. The president of APSA, Robert Axelrod, sent out an email to the department chairs in April 2007, warning them of the ''racist, sexist, and homophobic attacks on political scientists'' he had seen posted anonymously on such sites. This email itself was eventually (and approvingly) posted on IR Rumor Mill.[18]

At first glance, Facebook and other social networking technologies might appear to be less suitable for the promotion of service. There are nascent examples, however, that suggest their utility. These technologies have proven useful for the dissemination of online petitions and other social movements—which is one dimension of public service. Facebook's ''Causes'' application, for example, is deployed informally by many users in the way that mass email campaigns were earlier deployed by public interest organizations with mailing lists: a way of marketing petitions, or requests for donations. Social networking sites have also proven useful at organizing research communities. Facebook, for example, has research networks for international political economy, international humanitarian law, and other subspecialties. These groups function in an analogous manner to APSA or ISA sections. Other scholars have used the site to organize like-minded researchers within the same city. Facebook has therefore become one forum in which professional service and linkages between research and policy occur.

Perhaps, the most useful current function of these technologies, however, is to promote one's own research and teaching agenda. Academics have maintained personal Websites for more than 15 years as a repository for published papers, working papers, and so on. Unless someone is actively patrolling these sites, however, the generation of new content will not provoke much interest. Linking to new content via Facebook, however, creates a low-cost ''fire alarm'' that alerts other scholars within one's network of new output (McCubbins and Schwartz 1984). This reduction of search costs for others increases the ability to disseminate one's own scholarship in a more efficient manner than updating a Website—and is less intrusive or generic than the use of mass distribution emails.

Teaching IR Through New Media

A popular 2008 YouTube video provides viewers with a variety of surprising statistics about globalization, including the following:

> Did you know that the top 10 in-demand jobs in 2010 did not exist in 2004? We are currently preparing students for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies that haven't been invented, in order to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet.[19]

Whether or not these statistics are perfectly accurate, this example illustrates an important fact: college students today are increasingly absorbing information

[18]http://irrumormill.blogspot.com/2007/04/robert-axelrod-on-academic-rumor-mills.html, accessed April 2009.

[19]YouTube (2008) ''Did You Know?'' Posted by amybethhale, video originally created by Karl Fisch, Scott McLeod, and Jeff Brenman, October 21. The amybethhale remix has received 4,473,827 views on YouTube.

from sources such as these, often more readily than from traditional curriculum, and their perception of the value, rule-sets, and content of IR as it continues to be taught is being both shaped and reconstituted by new media. This suggests both challenges and opportunities for IR professors.

The challenges posed by new media to the traditional classroom are familiar to most IR instructors. The in-class distraction of laptops and iPhones has decreased the ability of students to immerse themselves in deep textual knowledge (Carlson 2005; Bowman 2008). There are concerns about student privacy and reputation (Solove 2007). Plagiarism has become much easier to commit—and detect.[20] Already, debates are brewing over whether students waste time on Facebook to the detriment of their studies (Karpinski 2009; Pasek et al. 2009a). Faced with an overload of information from a variety of partisan and non-partisan sources, they struggle to differentiate facts from propaganda, research from advocacy, and hard reportage from yellow journalism. They too often treat Wikipedia as the final, credible source, rather than as a jumping-off point for further inquiry. They are unclear on how to properly cite Internet sources, or what constitutes a valid source.

But these challenges can also be leveraged in the service of active-learning for the twenty-first century. Some IR professors have already incorporated podcasting into their menu of teaching tools, with mixed results (Taylor 2009). In the case of Wikipedia, students' excessive reliance upon it can be criticized on the one hand, or treated as a multilayered learning opportunity. Because it is a Web 2.0 platform reliant on users for content, Wikipedia presents a unique way to teach critical thinking, IT skills, research and writing, and Web architecture all in one. For example, professors could require, as an assignment, that students learn to edit Wikipedia and identify at least one Wikipedia page relevant to the course in which there are errors; then correct the errors. In doing so, the students learn about the limits of Wikipedia as a source; how to contribute to it in an informed way; and ideally, they are forced to go beyond Wikipedia to research their subject matter, by virtue of the nature of the assignment. The assignment is low risk because if students make mistakes, other Wikipedians will likely correct them.

Some professors use blogs or other online content as a complement for more traditional assignments. Requiring students to blog necessitates a series of considerations, however. One is whether to require each student to establish a blog or to create a group blog for the class and allow each student to become an author. The former strategy allows students greater creativity and control, and is *much* easier to grade, as one can easily print out a reverse-chronological copy of every post for the semester. However, student engagement with one another's ideas is often limited in this format, as students must follow one another's separate blogs in order to provide comments. In contrast, a class blog facilitates discussion, particularly if students are graded on the number and quality of comments they leave on others' posts, and well as on their own posts.

Another issue is *how* the blogs will be graded and what kind of workload is expected. Blogs can be used as simple discussion forums, whereby students are expected to do little but post *something* regularly. Based on our own pedagogical experiences, we find that students are careful and conscientious about each post, which makes blogging a considerable time-sink for them. It is important that the grading scheme reflect a serious appraisal of the workload involved in regular blogging. Finally, professors must think carefully about student

[20]The WWW has made it easier to cut and paste original sources into a document, for example, but search engines have also made it easier to catch plagiarists who steal large chunks of text. Tool such as Turnitin have revolutionized the job of catching and punishing academic dishonesty.

confidentiality and freedom of speech when requiring blogging. Blog content is typically available to the entire world, and future employers will use search engines to learn about job candidates, including what they may or may not have said online. For blogging to be a useful extension of the classroom, students must be able to speak freely online. Pseudonymous blogging can serve this purpose.

A final pedagogical issue arises when students follow a professor's individual blog. The obvious tradeoff with blogging and teaching simultaneously is that it may become harder to retain a veneer of neutrality in the classroom. The less-obvious problem is the implicit obligation students might feel to read the blog. To the extent that readers of an IR blog are the blog author's students, the blog constitutes an extension of the classroom (or, of office hours), *whether or not this is the professor's intent.* For this reason, some professors will avoid blogging altogether.

There are several useful strategies to handle these complexities. One useful rule of thumb is to always blog with the student audience in the back of one's mind. Another is to be explicit in the beginning of a class about the relationship between the blog and the class.[21] Yet another is to leverage these interactions as ways to augment devoted and engaged students' understanding of the subject matter of world politics, and to cultivate mentoring relationships with students. A larger strategic question is the online persona teachers present on their blogs. They might choose to limit their blogging personalities to disinterested analysis, rather than political advocacy. Or they may reconcile themselves to students' knowing their political positions, and attempt to model informed, civic position-taking—outside the lecture hall.[22] Blogs, then, become a part of the professor's public intellectual life to which students are privy; they can enhance learning while allowing the professor to keep their opinions nominally divorced from their official role as instructors.

Professors face a variety of options regarding Facebook in the classroom, from banning laptops to policing the types of Websites that students are accessing, to openly embracing social networking technologies. We have found that the latter wins both student respect and engagement. Those online can be asked to look up answers to questions posed during discussion, which not only leads to better substantive information and critical thinking, but also leads to further discussions about information retrieval and knowledge construction. Teaching assistants in large general education classes also benefit from using Facebook Groups as online discussion forums, and when Powerpoint slides draw on information from Facebook as well as Websites, students react positively.

At the same time, professors should also distinguish between deploying Facebook in the classroom and allowing their personal Facebook site to become an extension of the classroom. Based on our experience, we recommend one cardinal rule: if you create you own Facebook page for personal uses, do not—ever—''friend'' students. Taking this step provides the student a portal into your personal affairs, and allows them to monitor when you are online. Although some professors might be comfortable with this degree of online intimacy, such a decision poses considerable complexities. If one student is ''friended,'' what happens when other students make the same request? Like wedding invitations, it becomes socially awkward to welcome one person into a select circle while excluding their peers from the same network. Sometimes,

[21]One of the authors provides the following announcement at the beginning of each class: ''You may or may not be aware that I write a blog. You do not have to read it to excel in this class; you certainly do not have to read it back to me.''

[22]On this kind of ''Weberian activism,'' see Jackson and Kaufman (2007).

different social networking applications can be tailored to different audiences: Facebook can be a means to communicate with peers and colleagues, whereas Twitter might be limited to posts for public consumption only and become a much more limited extension of one's professional Webpage that excludes personal information altogether and is open to everyone, including students. At a minimum, the social consequences should always be considered before adopting any new technology, for as we discuss below, such platforms are reconstituting social relations within the profession.

New Media and the Transmogrifying IR Professional[23]

The previous sections explored the costs and benefits of Web 2.0 technologies as applied to academic practices. These sections observed the ways in which Web 2.0 affects traditional academic tasks: the nature and type of scholarly research, teaching strategies and topics, and contributions to professional service. We conclude this study with a more speculative discussion of how Web 2.0 technologies—to say nothing of the inevitable Web 3.0 and 4.0—could lead to a possible reconfiguration of disciplinary norms and hierarchies. Although there are little data to draw on as of yet, our personal experience and anecdotes from colleagues lead us to speculate that the holistic effects of these technologies might be greater than the sum of effects on research, teaching, and service. Although we are agnostic on the normative value of such trends, if indeed they are generalizable, we argue that, at a minimum, the discipline should acknowledge, investigate, take stock of, and debate the merit of these developments.

First, the availability of Web 2.0 is altering the context in which IR professionals understand both their role-related responsibilities and the level of connectivity required to meet them. For example, a number of colleagues have related concerns that Web 2.0 creates not only new opportunities, but also new social pressures to utilize such technology, changing the character of their responsibilities as professionals. This is an iterative process: new technologies enable the development of new professional norms, which then create social pressure on others to adopt the technologies.

Network effects (Shapiro and Varian 1999; Grewal 2008) explain this source of anxiety among scholars who refrain from using Web 2.0 technologies. If a critical mass of scholars adopts a practice or obligation, it quickly becomes the norm or expectation across the discipline. With the pace of technological diffusion increasing, so does the diffusion of new social norms and practices.[24] It would be virtually impossible for a current professor to *not* have an active email address, for example. Most departments publish individual Webpages for their faculty as a matter of course. Some senior scholars might fear a similar network dynamic with Web 2.0 technologies. At present, scholars do not want their blogs to be held against them professionally. It is possible, however, that more traditional scholars fear a future in which they are seen as having an obligation to maintain a blog or establish a Twitter feed (Althouse 2006) Although such tools yield benefits, they do also exact an opportunity cost in the time it takes to learn and use ever-proliferating platforms without additional salary or other compensation. To the extent that the discipline sees fit to encourage such activities (or the incorporation of other new media tools into research and teaching), some acknowledgment should be made of the time involved in maintaining requisite IT literacy, perhaps during the merit review process.

[23]With apologies to Watterson (2005).

[24]See, for example, Williams (2009).

Second, we observe a conflict of hierarchies between scholars and commentators at different ranks in the profession as a result of Web 2.0. The hierarchical structures of academic IR—by home institution, methodological approach, and/or years in the field—does not need further elaboration. The mélange of Web 2.0 outlets possess similar structures. Although few formal hierarchical structures exist in the blogosphere, for example, the informal metrics of links and traffic create informal hierarchies of power (Farrell and Drezner 2008; Hindman 2008).

The skills needed to survive and thrive in Web 2.0 are somewhat at variance with the skill sets needed in traditional academic scholarship. The latter rests on a bedrock of original research, careful fact-checking, rigorous peer review, and citations to authoritative and relevant academic literatures. Writers who excel at blogs or Twitter often possess different comparative advantages: speed, clarity, wit, and the ability to provide real-time analysis.[25] The latter set of skills crosses the multiple layers of hierarchy within the academy. An adjunct professor, graduate student, or lay person might have little power within the traditional confines of the academy; within the confines of Web 2.0, their power could be much greater.

An anecdotal example of both the existence and increasingly ''overtaken by events''-ness of some professional norms is as follows, based loosely on an actual event. A modestly well-read IR blog includes an administrator, who manages the site, and a small group of authors who blog weekly or semi-weekly about IR theory or current events in their area of expertise. The blog administrators periodically update the *blogroll*, a list of hyperlinked citations to other credible IR blogs legitimized by this particular blog as worth reading. Most of these are written by doctoral candidates, policy professionals, think-tank employees, or other tenure-track or tenured IR professors.

One of the authors often writes posts following piracy off the coast of Somalia. S/he follows the hyperlinks left by commenters on such posts, to keep track of who else is writing on this topic. One of these links leads to an extremely detailed, up-to-date, well-written, and researched blog on Somali piracy which s/he has never heard of and does not appear in the site's blogroll. S/he writes to the blog administrator suggesting the site be added to the blogroll. Later in the day, she looks more closely at the piracy blog and realizes it is actually a project of an undergraduate student doing an independent study on pirates. S/he sends a second note to the blog administrator ''coming clean'' about her earlier request. S/he asks, rather sheepishly and in deference to traditional norms about who constitutes a legitimate source of knowledge, whether it might *nonetheless* be valuable to link to the site. The administrator concludes that there is no reason why not—the material should speak for itself.

Web 2.0 technologies clearly empower scholars with various levels of rank and status to publish, disseminate, and legitimate their insights through means quite at odds with traditional mechanisms of gatekeeping within the discipline. Those traditional mechanisms are still very much present in the minds of those trained in such social norms, but they are also increasingly challenged by the nature of the technology itself. In much the same way, as it is flattening the rank structure of the discipline, Web 2.0 is also stretching the boundaries of traditional student/professor hierarchies. Sometimes this can occur by intention; sometimes inadvertently, but it is the nature of the technology to throw these relationships into flux.

[25]To be sure, there are also skills that lead to success in both areas—such as the ability to network with like-minded writers.

To give another example based loosely on real events: a professor begins to investigate Facebook, and while setting up an account inadvertently sends a friend request to a student without understanding what the Website is asking her to do. A somewhat awkward social exchange follows through email as this student patiently ''schools'' his professor on the social norms, jargon, and functionality of the social networking site. The professor quickly adopts a policy of exercising care in building her network of colleagues and friends, and enacts a policy of never friending students. The student she initially friended remains in her network, however; she fears it would be socially awkward to unfriend him. This student, after graduation, becomes a genuine friend and peer, even opening up professional networking opportunities for the professor once he secures a job inside a beltway think-tank. In small ways, the presence of the technology has reconfigured the nature of the relationship.

Third, the use of blogging and social networking sites generate new forums for communication and engagement among IR scholars. At one level, this shift is simply in form rather than in nature: blogs and social networking sites are increasingly locations for trying out new ideas, seeking input and engaging in a semi-social forum, an electronic version of the campus coffee-house or conference hotel wine-bar. But in another sense, the nature of Web 2.0 technologies has reconstituted the nature of these interactions in ways that have fewer offline parallels.

For example, online conversations among IR scholars about epistemology or methods or current events are taking place in ways that are enhancing transparency, and therefore creating new norms of reflexivity, on how we interface as individuals with our subject matter. Many IR scholars are now documenting their personal as well as professional thoughts online—and, to some degree, the interrelationship between the two. Because of this, it is now much easier to reflect empirically on how any particular scholar's situated-self impacts his/her orientation to his/her work. Whereas professional norms persist that limit the amount of self-disclosure appropriate in even the biographical note accompanying scholarly publications, even ''non-reflectivist'' scholars are becoming more openly reflective as individuals vis-à-vis their personal lives and histories and their relationship to their work, and documenting these reflections online. Arguably, this could represent a modest shift in the direction so long advocated by post-positivist scholars (Smith 2003; Aydinli and Rosenau 2004).

Finally, blogs, social networking sites, and the new media generally have altered the way in which research may be disseminated, what may be legitimately cited, and even what counts as research, with significant implications for regulatory and constitutive norms about publishing. Historically, for example, the discipline has rewarded the publication of peer-review articles in a few highly ranked print journals; by encouraging younger scholars to privilege citations of works that appeared in these journals, these norms reinforced legitimate topics of disciplinary inquiry and the status and prestige of those journals themselves.

This is changing in practice, even if these changes are not formally acknowledged. Maron and Smith (2008) found that academics are increasingly publishing in and drawing on sources and outlets other than articles published in peer-review print journals. These include electronic journals: preprints and working papers, blogs, email lists, and Web portals. With the lag in publishing in top IR journals, political science is beginning to resemble economics, in which a draft paper submitted to the Social Science Research Network becomes cited more frequently than the published, gated version.

The practice and meaning of seeking peer review is changing as well. Although the system of double-blind scientific peer review has always been supplemented by informal feedback from colleagues and friends, in a few cases scholars are increasingly arguing for the right to be judged by a more systematized version of these informal processes because they make for the development of better, smarter research.[26] The Modern Language Association (2006) has issued new guidelines for how departments should appraise online and interactive scholarly content when making tenure decisions. Jeffrey Young (2008) asks, ''What if scholarly books were peer reviewed by anonymous blog comments rather than by traditional, selected peer reviewers?''[27] According to Ben Vershbow of the Institute for the Future of the Book, ''The conversational modes of reading and writing on the Web in things like blogs and wikis really chime well with the essential idea of peer review, which is putting out work in development to a peer group and refining the work'' (quoted in Young 2008).

More radical examples of this emerging trend come from scholars who rely on Web 2.0 consumers to assist in publishing. The Center for Global Development's David Roodman is using a blog to publish draft chapters and solicit feedback for a book on microcredit.[28] Law professor Lawrence Lessig allowed users to assist him in creating the second edition of his book on Internet architecture (Lessig 2000). By placing the manuscript on an open-source wiki, Lessig permitted readers and commenters not only to provide feedback, but also to alter the manuscript itself. He then edited the final version and published it under the name *Codev2*.[29]

To be sure, these examples do not constitute conclusive evidence of a new professional norm. Moreover, there are many reasons why members of the IR discipline or the academy in general will oppose a shift in this direction. There *should* be a vigorous debate on these questions as we process the effects of new technologies on our professional traditions.

Experiments in crowd-sourcing manuscript revisions nevertheless demonstrate how Web 2.0 concepts and technologies have the potential to radically alter the rules governing the relationship between producers and consumers of scholarly media. Indeed, the central argument of Lessig's original book was precisely that citizens, policymakers, and social scientists ignore or take for granted the emergent architecture of new media at the risk of seriously underestimating its impact on all forms of social interaction. A serious discussion is warranted within the field of IR about the ways in which this new media landscape can or should alter our practices of teaching research and service, and even the meaning of ''doing international relations'' itself.

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[26]Indeed, the World Wide Web calls into question the very institution of double-blind peer review, as authorship of papers was already easily determined through Google searches, and the dissemination of working papers and preliminary research on blogs and social networking sites makes this even more the case.

[27]See also Boynton (2005).

[28]http://blogs.cgdev.org/open_book/.

[29]For a description of this process, see http://codev2.cc/.

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