New Media and Politics

Some Insights From Social and Political Psychology

EUGENE BORGIDA
EMILY N. STARK
University of Minnesota

Many fascinating questions have been raised about the "transformative" influence of the Internet on everyday social life. Some research suggests that the Internet has a positive and transformative influence on many lives, but other studies suggest that this influence is overstated and not always associated with such positive consequences. This article briefly discusses some of these claims, especially those grounded in research from social and political psychology. It focuses on the extent to which the Internet is providing (a) an important and increasingly influential forum for acquiring politically relevant information and (b) a new context for researchers to study traditional social-psychological processes that may be associated with the way citizens enhance their political knowledge online and bolster their political attitudes and partisan affiliations. More generally, the article suggests that there are potential theoretical and empirical payoffs associated with studying online information-seeking behavior in the political realm.

Keywords: *politics; Internet; new media; political psychology; social psychology*

During the past two decades, the Internet has become an almost routine feature in the lives of many citizens in North America and worldwide. In 2003, 59% of adults reported Internet access (Spooner, 2003). People are using the Internet for e-mail, news, health information, retail options, late-breaking weather forecasts, and many other activities in daily social life. With the advent and social penetration of this new technology, many questions have been raised about the influence of the Internet in and on society and how it may and/or will transform people and their daily lives. "No one today disputes that the Internet is likely to have a significant impact on social life; but there remains substantial disagreement as to the nature and value of this impact" (Bargh & McKenna, 2004, p.

Authors' Note: *The preparation of this article was supported by National Science Foundation Grant No. NSF9986552 and the Fesler-Lampert Chair in Urban and Regional Affairs to the first author and by research assistance funds to the second author from the National Cancer Institute/National Institute on Drug Abuse Grant No. P50DA13333. The authors wish to thank Alice Eagly, Alina Oxerdine, and Chris Federico for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this article.*

AMERICAN BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST, Vol. 48 No. 4, December 2004 467-478
DOI: 10.1177/0002764204270282

575). Disciplinary and interdisciplinary research on these questions is burgeoning in the social sciences, including social and political psychology. Psychological science on the Internet, for example, has examined the use and implications of using the Internet as another tool to examine substantive research questions (Evans, Garcia, Garcia, & Baron, 2003). The ethics of research on the Internet, in addition to scientific studies, has drawn attention in the psychological research community (Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004; Kraut et al., 2004). And more important, psychological science has begun to examine the wide-ranging influence of Internet use on people's lives (Bargh, 2002; Bargh & McKenna, 2004; McKenna & Bargh, 1998, 2000). Most of this research (e.g., Williams, Cheung, & Choi, 2002) focuses on the effects of Internet use on users' psychological well-being, personal relationships, social identity, workplace, and community involvement, and some research examines the effects of community structure on Internet use and access (Borgida et al., 2002; Sullivan, Borgida, Jackson, Riedel, & Oxendine, 2002).

In the social-psychological literature, one of the most researched topics examining the impact of the Internet has been the implications of the Internet for understanding social interaction and how mediated communication affects the expression of personal identity (McKenna & Bargh, 2000) and the pursuit of close relationships (McKenna, Green, & Gleason, 2002). Communication on the Internet erases physical and voice cues, allowing users to remain anonymous and to maintain a high degree of control over their side of the communication, all the while interacting with people across the globe. These features allow people to create new identities and roles, and interact in the context of these roles, more so than any other mode of communication. Bargh, McKenna, and Fitzsimons (2002) even suggested that people use the Internet as a laboratory to test new identities before embracing them in everyday life. Thus, one question driving many of these empirical investigations is, Do online effects on a person's identity or personal relationships transfer or generalize to offline understandings of self and face-to-face relationships?

In this article, we review some of the claims that basic patterns of social life have been transformed by the Internet revolution. We are particularly interested in those claims that are based on empirical research from social and political psychology. We make no claims whatsoever that our review is comprehensive in this regard. Rather, our primary goal is to suggest how insights from social and political psychology can contribute to a research agenda on politics and the new media (in this instance, the Internet). In the next section of the article, we discuss the extent to which the Internet may be a new way for people to do old things, as opposed to a transformative technology that has altered basic patterns of social life. In the remainder of the article, we focus on the extent to which the Internet represents an important and increasingly influential forum for acquiring politically relevant information about candidates and issues, and we go on to suggest that the study of online information-seeking behavior in the political context

affords researchers an opportunity to test hypotheses and refine theoretical thinking about traditional social-psychological processes.

A NEW WAY OF DOING OLD THINGS?

Is the Internet a "transformative technology" that has fundamentally altered interpersonal or group processes? In *Culture of the Internet* (Kiesler, 1997), a wide range of research done in the mid-1990s on the role of the Internet in people's lives is critically examined. The issues examined include how businesses use cyberspace for group meetings, how conflict and negotiation occur and are resolved on the Web, and how social communities existing only online have grown and now affect the lives of many people. Turkle (1997), for example, discussed these worlds of social interaction in a virtual space and the experiences of the individuals visiting and creating these worlds. She focused both on how, in the Internet medium, "you are who you pretend to be" and the power of these virtual worlds as places where participants can address issues of identity and intimacy. In these virtual games, players create "characters" that interact with features of the game world and other characters. These characters may or may not represent true aspects of the players. For example, many players who participate in these virtual computer games create characters of the opposite gender and through playing these characters and discussing this experience, this virtual world becomes a forum for working through and engaging with current personal, societal, and cultural beliefs and practices surrounding gender. Turkle also pointed to relevant and evocative discussions that take place in these computer games about violence, property rights, privacy issues, and the very nature of community itself, highlighting the opportunities available in these worlds not only for construction of self but also for constructions of community and culture.

McKenna and Bargh (1998) empirically examined the extent to which such online role-playing leads to possible offline identity change. They found that individuals with a marginalized aspect of their identities who participated in Internet newsgroups relevant to that identity grew to a greater acceptance of their identity and increased willingness to share their true identity offline. They suggested that the Internet offers these participants a more accepting place to work with their marginalized identity, removed from public reactions, opinions, and consequences. The resulting confidence and acceptance of their identity spread to aspects of these participants' lives away from the Internet. This research suggests that the Internet can play a self-affirming role, giving people a forum to express themselves not previously available and leading to changes in how they are perceived by others outside of the virtual environment.

Whereas this research seems to fit with the general idea that the Internet has a positive and transformative influence on many lives, other research suggests that using the Internet for social communication may have some negative conse-

quences for users. Kraut et al. (1998), for example, found that greater use of the Internet was associated with decreases in communication with family members and increases in depression and loneliness. Although a follow-up study 3 years later (Kraut et al., 2002) found that many of these effects had dissipated in the former participants, increased Internet use was still associated with reports of increased daily life stress. Also, these negative effects were mainly seen with introverted people, whereas extroverted people generally found increased social circles as a result of increased Internet use. Studies such as these and others (Nie, 2001; Nie & Erbring, 2000) suggest that use of the Internet does not necessarily lead to positive social consequences and may not be the unequivocally transformative technology that some have claimed.

Along the latter lines, there has also been concern that the ability to affirm and express identities through the Internet can apply to people with racial prejudices and/or other undesirable aims. Dovidio, Kawakami, Johnson, Johnson, and Howard (1997) have conducted research in which White participants interact with both Black and White partners. Although the participants reported acting in an equally likeable and sincere way to all partners, examination of their nonverbal behavior showed that many of the White participants made less eye contact with their Black partners. Here, racial bias was subtly transmitted. That prejudice exists but is becoming more subtle and difficult to measure has motivated social psychologists to develop implicit measures of stereotyping and prejudice. These measures do not ask participants direct questions about their preference for certain groups but instead, use more subtle ways to assess prejudiced attitudes. Although it is increasingly socially undesirable to explicitly express racist attitudes, these implicit measures have been able to detect the existence of more subtle prejudice (Fazio & Olson, 2003; Greenwald, Nosek, & Banaji, 2003). These measures range from various priming tasks that include word completion tests or reaction time differences to display participants underlying biases, to examination of nonverbal behaviors.

Does the Internet represent a context in which intergroup biases and prejudices are facilitated and expressed more openly (Glaser, Dixit, & Green, 2002) or as in everyday life, are these prejudices expressed in more subtle ways that require less explicit measurement strategies? Research by Evans et al. (2003), for example, suggests that the anonymity offered by the Internet can lead to a greater willingness to express opinions that are less socially desirable. A study comparing paper-and-pencil questionnaires completed in the presence of an experimenter to questionnaires completed online shows that the online responses are more likely to express racial bias. The Internet then becomes a context in which individuals ostensibly feel more willing to express the "true" nature of their attitudes. In this regard, then, the freedom of communication through the Internet may not always lead to the testing and creation of such positive identities.

Much of the research described above does not deal with any change in identity or sociopolitical attitudes; rather, participants grew into a greater

acceptance and increased expression of an identity or set of beliefs and attitudes that they already possessed. Tyler (2002), for one, has suggested that the Internet may be "a new way of doing old things" and that the basic nature of people's relationships with others and their identities and attitudes may have changed less because of the Internet than is often suggested. After reviewing a number of pertinent empirical studies, Tyler concluded that

> the Internet provides people with a technology that allows them to engage in activities that they have already had ways to engage in but provides then with some added efficiencies and opportunities to tailor their interactions to better meet their needs. However, there is nothing fundamentally different about the Internet that transforms basic psychological or social life. (p. 204)

But the questions as to whether and/or how use of the Internet can transform social life are by no means resolved. In fact, "answers" to these questions about cyberspace and social-psychological processes appear to be quite nuanced and not merely reflective of communication modality main effects (e.g., Spears, Postmes, Lea, & Wolbert, 2002). From our perspective, what domains and for whom the Internet may play a larger and more important role also remains an important and unresolved question. In the next section, we discuss the extent to which the Internet has become an increasingly important forum for acquiring politically relevant information.

THE INTERNET AND POLITICS

The use of the Internet to discover and disseminate political information seems to be growing. According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project, for example, 40% of Internet users have looked for political news and information on the Web (Cornfield & Rainie, 2003) and the number of people using the Internet for this purpose increased 39% between the summer of 2000 and the fall of 2002. This is a remarkable increase, given an overall slowing of growth in the Internet population and only a 3.8% increase in the adult population of the United States. A recent report (Cornfield & Rainie, 2003) surveys Internet-related political behaviors during the 2002 election. Sixty-four percent of Internet users surveyed reported searching for more information about candidate positions; the second most popular use of the Internet in relation to this election was searching for candidate ratings and endorsements by other groups (38%). People reported using the Internet to gain political information because of convenience and because they felt that they did not get all the information they desired from more traditional media sources such as newspapers or television. Respondents also got information on when and where to vote, contributed money to a candidate, engaged in political conversations, and found information about a candidate's voting record via the Internet. Lastly, 33% of the persons

surveyed who used the Internet to gain political information said that this information was very or somewhat useful in helping them to decide how to vote in the 2002 elections.

Thus, as a source of information about American politics, there is no question that the Internet has the potential to become more influential in the political arena, a development that has not been lost on political candidates and their campaign strategists. More and more political candidates, at local, state, and national levels, are creating and using Web sites to convey their political identities as well as issue positions to voters. According to Cornfield and Rainie (2003), candidates in the 2002 elections used the Internet to maintain press relations, seek information about the opposing candidates, recruit and mobilize volunteers, and raise funds. Potential voters used candidates' Web sites to access past voting records and gain information about candidates' positions on various issues. This explosion of readily available information could have a large impact on the development and maintenance of political identity. Questions to consider include, How do the Internet and these Web sites in particular influence the ways in which people seek information about political candidates and events? Are these Web sites designed to attract and persuade, and if so, do they work? and What are the political implications of this technology in terms of the growth and change of political identity? At the present time, these questions involving the extent to which online political behavior may shape and transform political identities have been neglected empirically. As with the research on personal or group identities (see Bargh & McKenna, 2004), it may be the case that the Internet enables people to experiment with their political identity, or it may be the case that political identity (based on more stable partisanships) may not be as malleable as other forms of identity when people use the Internet.

By contrast, some researchers (Price & Cappella, 2001; Price, Goldthwaite, Cappella, & Romantan, 2003) have begun to examine how the Internet, and the opportunity for online discussion in particular, influences people's civic engagement, social trust, and overall engagement with political issues. Participants were assembled to engage in a series of online discussions about issues arising during the 2000 U.S. presidential campaign. In one study (Price & Cappella, 2001), participants also completed surveys regarding their opinions, knowledge of public affairs, civic engagement, and other related variables. The voting behavior of these participants was also assessed. The results show that participants with higher levels of political knowledge and community engagement were more likely to participate in the discussions. Also, participating in the discussion influenced the participants such that those who participated changed their opinion on several issues, opinions became better informed, and participants were more likely to understand and recall arguments for and against many issues as compared to control groups who did not participate in discussions. Also, those who participated in the online discussions were more likely to report increased social trust and community participation following the discussions.

Lastly, discussion participants also were more likely than control participants to report that they voted in the 2000 presidential election.

These data suggest that more politically interested and knowledgeable types engaged in online dialogues and were influenced by them. By implication, they must have regarded this kind of electronic forum as a credible place to try out new ideas and even to change old ideas. Those who use the Internet for discovering and debating political information seem to have more educated opinions and show increased involvement in various types of political behaviors (e.g., voting, community involvement). However, these data also show that not everyone is equally likely to use the Internet for this purpose, as people with initially higher levels of political knowledge and involvement were more likely to participate in the discussions. Political identity may influence how and/or whether people use the Internet for politically relevant discussions and information searches. Equally important, such Internet behavior may in turn reciprocally influence political identity. Whether such hypotheses receive empirical support remains to be seen. In the next section, we suggest that wired or wireless, the Internet has the potential to provide a new forum for testing hypotheses about the acquisition of politically relevant information.

ACQUIRING POLITICAL INFORMATION: EXTENDING AND REFINING THEORY

In his book *republic.com*, Cass Sunstein (2001) argued that true democracy thrives when people seek out new information and ideas rather than information that only bolsters their current beliefs and attitudes. The Internet, with its capacity to provide instant, personalized information, may work against this democratic norm if people do not actually take the time to search for information on topics they are not familiar with or for information pertinent to attitudes they do not hold. Sunstein's analysis suggests another important question to consider when examining the type of political information people are seeking on the Internet. Do they seek only to bolster current viewpoints or do people use the Internet to expand their knowledge in all directions? Again, it may be that people with a stronger sense of political identity are more motivated to seek out information on Internet Web sites as a way of enhancing their political knowledge and bolstering their extant political attitudes. But this question, as posed, has not been empirically addressed, to our knowledge. Classic social-psychological research on the role of attitudes and information processing, from our perspective, is highly pertinent to developing a research agenda on precisely this question and to demonstrating the potential for using the Internet to connect to social-psychological research in different substantive and theory-rich domains.

Research on the psychology of attitudes, for example, initially suggests that information seeking may be quite selective for congenial material (Eagly &

Chaiken, 1993). Early research in fact supports this *congeniality hypothesis*—that people have better memory for information that supports or confirms their evaluations of social or political or personal issues than for information that challenges or contradicts these attitudes. The consensus rationale for this effect was that people are motivated to defend their attitudes when faced with information that challenges them by screening out uncongenial information at all stages of information processing (i.e., they may pay less attention to such information, they may distort its meaning, or they may have difficulty retrieving uncongenial information).

However, in a more recent meta-analysis of the congeniality hypothesis, Eagly, Chen, Chaiken, and Shaw-Barnes (1999) reported evidence for the erosion in strength of support for this congeniality effect over the years. Although, overall, in 70 experimental tests of the congeniality hypothesis, they found slightly better memory for congenial than uncongenial information ($d = .23$), these congeniality effects were substantially weakened, for example, when controlling for memory measure artifacts (e.g., coding of recall protocols with knowledge of the participants' attitudes or use of recognition memory measures without controlling for guessing biases).

On this basis, Eagly, Kulesa, Brannon, Shaw, and Hutson-Comeaux (2000) and Eagly, Kulesa, Chen, and Chaiken (2001) have generally challenged the notion so central to the traditional congeniality hypothesis that people inevitably avoid information that challenges the evidentiary base of their attitudes. Rather, they suggested that under certain circumstances, the defense of one's attitudes may involve more active and effortful processing of challenging information, and seeking information on the Internet may be one such context. With sufficient motivation and ability, people may expose themselves to *uncongenial* information, attend to it and scrutinize it carefully, and remember it reasonably well even though they dislike the information and remain unpersuaded by it. It is important to note that experimental evidence from Eagly et al. (2000) supported this hypothesis that uncongenial messages elicited more effortful processing and scrutiny than congenial messages. Thus, how attitudes affect information processing may well depend on whether the message information is consistent or inconsistent with the attitudes of message recipients.

For our purposes, it may well be that people with higher levels of political knowledge and a well-defined and strongly held political affiliation are especially more able and motivated to seek out uncongenial (in addition to congenial) information on the Internet as a way of bolstering the defense of their attitudes from counterattitudinal threats. Such a hypothesis about information-seeking strategies would be consistent with recent research from social psychology on persuasion and resistance processes (Wood, 2000). This research suggests that attitudes are influenced by various motives which in turn lead to the activation of different modes of processing information that mediate subsequent social judgments (Chen, Schechter, & Chaiken, 1996; Lundgren & Prislin, 1998). Lundgren and Prislin (1998), for example, found that people who

were motivated to be accurate selected arguments on both sides of a target issue, generated thoughts that were relatively balanced in their evaluation of the target issue, and generally held an open-minded processing orientation. However, people who were motivated to defend their own position, as partisans on any given issue would be expected to do, selected arguments that supported their own view, generated thoughts that were congenial with their own position, and revealed relatively polarized attitudes toward the target issue. Compared to those who were motivated by accuracy, participants in this research held a protective orientation that served to maintain their preexisting judgments.

Some research from the political communications field provides support for these ideas about the Internet and information acquisition strategies. Iyengar, Hahn, and Prior (2001), for example, examined how prospective voters deal with the enormous amount of information available to them on the Internet. The researchers created two multimedia CDs consisting of information about the candidates in the 2000 presidential elections. One CD, titled the *Candidate CD*, contains the speeches, party platforms, televised debates, and television commercials of the two major presidential candidates. The other CD, titled the *Media CD*, contain a representative selection of news reports about the candidates, their positions on the issues, and other newsworthy items. Due to the differing content of the CDs, the *Candidate CD* presents greater opportunity for participants to view favored candidates only. The *Media CD* generally presents information in a more topic-oriented format, with the views of each candidate included on the same page. The CDs were programmed to track the specific pages the participants viewed and the number and length of their viewing sessions.

Iyengar et al. (2001) were interested in whether participants would view information relating to their particular candidate only—using partisan-driven selectivity in the information they sought out. However, results show that participants did not generally spend more time viewing pages of the candidate affiliated with their own party. Instead, and contrary to the suggestion of the congeniality hypothesis discussed above, their attention was directed by interest in particular issues rather than ideological identification. This trend suggests that as people are given opportunities to seek out political information (via the Internet), they may be more selective and likely to focus their attention on specific issues, seeking to cast the net widely to determine how particular candidates stand on the key issues.

CONCLUSIONS

In this article, we suggested that the Internet has emerged as an influential forum in which people seek and acquire politically relevant information about candidates, issues, parties, and political organizations. More important, and consistent with other psychologists who advocate the Internet as a context for

data collection (Gosling et al., 2004), we discussed the extent to which the Internet context offers new opportunities for testing social-psychological theories about intrapersonal and interpersonal processes. Our working example focused on the nature of attitudinal selectivity and in particular, the so-called congeniality effect. We suggested that testing the traditional social-psychological hypothesis that people tend to avoid information that challenges their sociopolitical attitudes in an online political context would be fruitful in at least two ways. First, such an investigation would provide additional theoretical insights into the conditions under which knowledgeable and partisan people seek and remember information that is congenial as well as uncongenial with their extant attitudes. And second, research of this type would enable investigators to further examine claims about the Internet as a transformative technology in everyday life. As we reviewed in an earlier section, some research by social and political psychologists supports this transformative claim, but other research supports Tyler's (2002) assessment that these claims are somewhat overstated and that taken together thus far, the online study of intrapersonal and interpersonal behavior yields more insights about new ways of doing old things.

But as Bargh and McKenna (2004) have recently suggested, online versus offline comparisons of intrapersonal and interpersonal behaviors, linked to politics or not, have the potential in the years ahead to advance theory and research in psychological science and in the social sciences more generally. Whether online behavior resembles or generalizes to offline contexts should be of considerable interest to anyone interested in the effects of the Internet and other new media on everyday social and civic life. The tremendous value and potential of the Internet is indeed the extent to which it provides an alternative environment to the kinds of settings that psychologists have traditionally used to study intrapersonal and interpersonal processes. It may well be that important new and overlooked insights about everyday social life, guided by theory and research in fields such as social and political psychology, will emerge from these juxtapositions.

REFERENCES

Bargh, J. A. (2002). Beyond simple truths: The human-Internet interaction. *Journal of Social Issues*, *58*(1), 1-8.

Bargh, J. A., & McKenna, K. Y. A. (2004). The Internet and social life. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *55*, 573-590.

Bargh, J. A., McKenna, K. Y. A., & Fitzsimons, G. M. (2002). Can you see the real me? Activation and expression of the "true self" on the Internet. *Journal of Social Issues*, *58*(1), 33-48.

Borgida, E., Sullivan, J. L., Oxendine, A., Jackson, M. S., Riedel, E., & Gangl, A. (2002). Civic culture meets the digital divide: The role of community electronic networks. *Journal of Social Issues*, *58*(1), 125-142.

Chen, S., Schechter, D., & Chaiken, S. (1996). Getting at the truth or getting along: Accuracy- versus impression-motivated heuristic and systematic processing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *71*, 262-275.

Cornfield, M., & Rainie, L. (2003, March 21). *Untuned keyboards: Online campaigners, citizens, and portals in the 2002 elections* (Report from the Pew Internet and American Life Project and the Institute for Politics, Democracy, and the Internet). Retrieved from http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_IPDI_Politics_Report.pdf%AO

Dovidio, J., Kawakami, K., Johnson, C., Johnson, B., & Howard, A. (1997). The nature of prejudice: Automatic and controlled processes. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *33*, 510-540.

Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). *The psychology of attitudes*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Eagly, A. H., Chen, S., Chaiken, S., & Shaw-Barnes, K. (1999). The impact of attitudes on memory: An affair to remember. *Psychological Bulletin*, *125*(1), 64-89.

Eagly, A. H., Kulesa, P., Brannon, L. A., Shaw, K., & Hutson-Comeaux, S. (2000). Why counter-attitudinal messages are as memorable as proattitudinal messages: The importance of active defense against attack. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *26*(11), 1392-1408.

Eagly, A. H., Kulesa, P., Chen, S., & Chaiken, S. (2001). Do attitudes affect memory? Tests of the congeniality hypothesis. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *10*(1), 5-9.

Evans, D. C., Garcia, D. J., Garcia, D. M., & Baron, R. S. (2003). In the privacy of their own homes: Using the Internet to assess racial bias. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *29*(2), 273-284.

Fazio, R. H., & Olson, M. A. (2003). Implicit measures in social cognition research: Their meaning and use. *Annual Review of Psychology, 54*, 297-327.

Glaser, J., Dixit, J., & Green, D. P. (2002). Studying hate crime with the Internet: What makes racists advocate racial violence? *Journal of Social Issues, 58*(1), 177-194.

Gosling, S. D., Vazire, S., Srivastava, S., & John, O. P. (2004). Should we trust Web-based studies? A comparative analysis of six preconceptions about Internet questionnaires. *American Psychologist*, *59*(2), 93-104.

Greenwald, A. G., Nosek, B. A., & Banaji, M. R. (2003). Understanding and using the Implicit Association Test: I. An improved scoring algorithm. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *85*, 197-216.

Iyengar, S., Hahn, K., & Prior, M. (2001, September). *Has technology made attention to political campaigns more selective? An experimental study of the 2000 Presidential campaign.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco.

Kiesler, S. (Ed.). (1997). *Culture of the Internet*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Kraut, R. E., Kiesler, S., Boneva, B., Cummings, J., Helgeson, V., & Crawford, A. (2002). Internet paradox revisited. *Journal of Social Issues*, *58*(1), 49-74.

Kraut, R., Olson, J., Banaji, M., Bruckman, A., Cohen, J., & Couper, M. (2004). Psychological research online: Report of Board of Scientific Affairs' Advisory Group on the conduct of research on the Internet. *American Psychologist*, *59*(2), 105-117.

Kraut, R. E., Patterson, M., Lundmark, V., Kiesler, S., Mukhopadhyay, T., & Scherlis, W. (1998). Internet paradox: A social technology that reduces social involvement and psychological well-being? *American Psychologist*, *53*(9), 1017-1032.

Lundgren, S. R., & Prislin, R. (1998). Motivated cognitive processing and attitude change. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *24*, 715-726.

McKenna, K. Y. A., & Bargh, J. A. (1998). Coming out in the age of the Internet: Identity "demarginalization" through virtual group participation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *75*, 681-694.

McKenna, K. Y. A., & Bargh, J. A. (2000). Plan 9 from cyberspace: The implications of the Internet for personality and social psychology. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *4*, 57-75.

McKenna, K. Y. A., Green, A. S., & Gleason, M. J. (2002). Relationship formation on the Internet: What's the big attraction? *Journal of Social Issues*, *58*(1), 9-31.

Nie, N. H. (2001). Sociability, interpersonal relations, and the Internet: Reconciling conflicting findings. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *45*, 420-435.

Nie, N. H., & Erbring, L. (2000). *Internet and society: A preliminary report*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Institute Quantitative Study Society.

Price, V., & Cappella, J. N. (2001, May). *Online deliberation and its influence: The Electronic Dialogue Project in campaign 2000*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Price, V., Goldthwaite, D., Cappella, J. N., & Romantan, A. (2003, September). *Online discussion, civic engagement, and social trust*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Philadelphia.

Spears, R., Postmes, T., Lea, M., & Wolbert, A. (2002). When are Net effects gross products? The power of influence and the influence of power in computer-mediated communication. *Journal of Social Issues*, *58*(1), 91-108.

Spooner, T. (2003, August 27). *Internet use by region in the United States* (Report from the Pew Internet and American Life Project). Retrieved from http://www.pewinternet.org/reports

Sullivan, J. L., Borgida, E., Jackson, M. S., Riedel, E., & Oxendine, A. R. (2002). A tale of two towns: Assessing the role of political resources in a community electronic network. *Political Behavior*, *24*(1), 55-84.

Sunstein, C. (2001). *republic.com*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Turkle, S. (1997). Constructions and reconstructions of self in virtual reality: Playing in the MUDs. In S. Kiesler (Ed.), *Culture of the Internet* (pp. 143-156). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Tyler, T. R. (2002). Is the Internet changing social life? It seems the more things change, the more they stay the same. *Journal of Social Issues*, *58*(1), 195-205.

Williams, K. D., Cheung, C. K. T., & Choi, W. (2000). Cyberostracism: Effects of being ignored over the Internet. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *79*(5), 748-762.

Wood, W. (2000). Attitude change: Persuasion and social influence. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *51*, 539-570.

EUGENE BORGIDA *is professor of psychology and law at the University of Minnesota. He is also Morse-Alumni Distinguished Teaching Professor of Psychology. He holds a B.A. (psychology and sociology) from Wesleyan University and a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan (psychology). At the University of Minnesota, Borgida is also an adjunct professor of political science and serves as codirector of the University's Center for the Study of Political Psychology. He has served as associate dean and executive officer of the College of Liberal Arts and as chair of the Psychology Department. His research has been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the Pew Trusts. His research interests include social cognition and attitude theory, political psychology, and psychology and law.*

EMILY N. STARK *(B.A., English and psychology, Hamline University) is a Ph.D. student in the Psychology Department at the University of Minnesota–Minneapolis St. Paul. She will complete her degree in social psychology with a minor in child psychology in 2006. Her research interests focus on human decision making in adults and children and the emotional and cognitive processes that drive judgments and attitudinal preferences.*