July 2012

Published Papers and Chapters:

Earl, Jennifer. 2012. "Private Protest? Public and Private Engagement Online." *Information, Communication & Society* 15(4): 591-608.
This article examines two historically distinct understandings of privacy and their relationship to online protest. Using a contemporary view of privacy, which focuses on information secrecy and disclosure, I examine the development of 'private protest' in which both the identities of protesters and even the number of participants is concealed. Empirically, I trace this by tracking both the percentage of protest-related websites that include privacy policies and the percentage of online protest actions that report or estimate participation figures. Data are drawn from this project. Using a much older view of privacy, which focuses on controlled access to private property, I examine the implications of online protest occurring on private servers (e.g., Facebook, YouTube). Offline protesters have increasingly had to choose between protesting in venues that enjoy substantial free speech protections or protesting in venues where large numbers of people gather; I argue that online protesters face a similar dilemma but with less recourse to protesting in legally protected spaces. By examining both definitions of privacy, this article offers a rich understanding of the privacy dilemmas facing online protest organizers and participants.

Katrina Kimport. 2012. "Organizational Dominance and its Consequences in the Online Abortion Rights and Antiabortion Movements." *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 33: 139 - 161.
This article was written by one of the former graduate research assistants on the project. It examines the role of social movement organizations (SMO) in abortion rights and antiabortion movements. Prior research points to the importance of SMOs for organizing, but has also suggested that SMOs might dull innovation. In contrast, movement entrepreneurs are thought to be good at innovation but inferior to SMOs at building lasting efforts for change. This paper uses data from this project, drawing solely from the sample of websites on abortion politics, to understand how organizations relate to innovative uses of the Web for activism. Findings show that abortion rights websites are predominately produced by SMOs, whereas antiabortion websites are not. In contrast to expectations about SMOs fueling the majority of claims-making, antiabortion claims were more common online, despite being less frequently run by SMOs. That said, websites run by SMOs were more likely to offer online protest opportunities, such as online petitions, which are viewed as innovations.

Earl, Jennifer, Katrina Kimport, Greg Prieto, Carly Rush, and Kimberly Reynoso. 2010. "Changing the World One Webpage at a Time: Conceptualizing and Explaining 'Internet Activism'" *Mobilization* 15(4):425-446.
Researchers studying "Internet activism" have disagreed over the extent to which Internet usage alters the processes driving collective action, and therefore also over the utility of existing social movement theory. We argue that some of this disagreement owes to scholars studying different kinds of Internet activism. Therefore, we introduce a typology of Internet activism, which shows that markedly different findings are associated with different types of Internet activism and that some types of Internet activism have been studied far more frequently than others. As a consequence, we ask an empirical question: is this skew in the selection of cases, and hence apparent trends in findings, a reflection of the empirical frequency of different types of Internet

activism? Troublingly, using unique data from random samples of websites discussing 20 different issue areas commonly associated with social movements, we find a mismatch between trends in research cases studied and empirical frequency. We argue there are significant implications for researchers interested in online protest because generalizations about online protest based on rare cases are likely to be inaccurate. Findings also point to the need to study forms of engagement that occur online more thoroughly.

Earl, Jennifer and Katrina Kimport. 2010. "The Diffusion of Different Types of Internet Activism: Suggestive Patterns in Website Adoption of Innovations." Pp. 125-139. in *Dynamics of Diffusion in Social Movements*, edited by Becky Givans, Kenneth Roberts and Sarah Soule. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Little is known about the diffusion processes involved in online protest, and it is not clear how far different types of diffusion have already progressed. In this chapter, we address these issues by focusing on the online spread of multiple different models of Internet activism (which we view as innovations) across 20 different cause areas, using the adoption rate of specific practices associated with these models as empirical markers of their diffusion to date. We use cross-sectional data from 2006 (drawn from this project), and hence rely on the reasonable assumption that the adoption rate we empirically find marks the extent to which these online practices have diffused over the roughly two decades since the advent of the world wide web. We find that an information provision model of Internet activism (i.e., "brochureware") has diffused furthest, although forms of Internet activism that allow for direct participation while online (e.g., online petitioning) have also diffused further than one might have anticipated. By examining the activist footprints of three movements separately-- homelessness, labor, and women's rights-- we also find that diffusion varies strongly by movement. In modeling this diffusion process, we find that websites that included blogs were more likely to be brochureware sites, while SMO-run sites and sites with a great deal of news coverage of issues were less likely to be brochureware sites. In modeling online protest opportunities like online petitions we find the opposite effects: sites with blogs are less likely to adopt these innovations, but SMO-run sites and sites that feature information on a broad range of issues are more likely to adopt these innovations. In understanding these findings, we speculate that the diffusion of online protest opportunities is becoming more prominent among SMO-run websites because adopting these kinds of online tactics marks a legitimate, professional site. We also suspect the growing business sector that develops and markets these online tactics is supporting the SMO-based diffusion of these online protest opportunities.

Invited Presentations:

Earl, Jennifer. 2012. "Digital Contention: Studying Web Activism." Paper presented at the Youth and Participatory Politics MacArthur Research Network Meeting. Los Angeles, California, February 23, 2012.

In this presentation, I focused on the methodological design of my NSF CAREER project and findings from a recent book of mine that draws on an earlier dataset, *Digitally Enabled Social Change*. The main substantive focus was on the ability of youth to use the Web to engage in protest about non-traditional issues, such as protest about consumer and entertainment issues. I

summarized evidence from both projects in favor of this argument. The goal of this presentation was scholarly outreach about this project.

Earl, Jennifer. 2011. "Protest Online: Theorizing the Consequences of Online Engagement." Paper presented at Outcomes of Social Movements and Protest Conference, Wissenschaftszentrum, Berlin, Germany, June 24, 2011.
    In this presentation, I draw on a variety of sources to assert that existing arguments about the impacts of online protest are very unstructured and don't take into account cutting edge findings from technology and society research. Instead, I offer a structured assessment of research on the impacts of both online and offline activism, since a comparison is necessarily implied in the literature. Based on this assessment, I argue that there are certain goals for which offline protest will have a greater chance of success (e.g., long term opinion change about deeply held beliefs) but there are also other goals for which online protest has a far greater chance of success (e.g., efforts to affect a decision that will occur on a date-certain). I also demonstrate that there are situations in which offline protest will prove impractical, but online protest will be possible, making it the only viable alternative. Data is primarily used to anecdotally illustrate different lines of argumentation. This paper is presently being revised for submission to a journal.

Earl, Jennifer. 2011. "Digital Contention: New Findings in the Study of Web Activism." Paper presented at the University of Arizona Colloquium. May 6, 2011.
    In this presentation, I outlined my larger research agenda on Internet activism, of which this CAREER award is an important part. In particular, I reviewed early important findings on Internet activism and the need for a new methodological approach to collecting online data that those findings suggested. I then reviewed the way in which the methods used in this CAREER award represent the kind of new approach that was required for forward research. I then reviewed findings from Earl et al. (2010), which used data from this project. I closed with an introduction to the theoretical paradigm that my co-author and I introduced in our book, *Digitally Enabled Social Change*. The goal of this presentation was scholarly outreach.

Earl, Jennifer. 2011. "Digital Protest: Activism in the Internet Age." Paper presented at the College of William and Mary, Virginia, March 17, 2011.
    This presentation was a lay version of the 2011 talk given at University of Arizona. The primary audience was undergraduate students at the William and Mary. The goal of this presentation was public outreach.

Earl, Jennifer. 2010. "Digital Contention: Emerging Trends in Web Activism." Paper presented at the Department of Sociology Colloquium, University of California, Santa Barbara. April 14, 2010.
    This presentation covered the same topics as the 2011 talk given at University of Arizona. The goal of this presentation was scholarly outreach.

Earl, Jennifer. 2010. "Changing the World One Webpage at a Time: Conceptualizing and Explaining 'Internet Activism." Paper presented at Culture, Law, and Technology Reading Group, University of California, Irvine, March 12, 2010.

July 2012

This presentation covered Earl et al. (2010). It was a discussion group where graduate students and faculty who read Earl et al. (2010) asked questions about the paper and the larger project. The goal of this presentation was scholarly outreach.

Earl, Jennifer. 2010. "Spillover as Movement Agenda Setting: How Movement Issues Spillover Online." Paper presented at the MOVEOUT Workshop, Geneva, Switzerland, February 16, 2010.

This paper was presented at a small, invitation-only international workshop on social movement outcomes held in Geneva in 2010. This paper analyzes 3 years of panel and cross-section data on 20 different issue areas to understand how issues moved between movements across time and how online forms of action spread across different movement areas across time. The primary theoretical question revolves around agenda-setting between social movements. The paper is still in draft form and will be presented again at another invitation-only international workshop to be held in Sweden in the Fall of 2012.

Earl, Jennifer. 2009. "Societal Impacts of Internet Usage" Paper presented at the RTI Workshop, Chapel Hill, NC, November 18-20, 2009.

This presentation focused on the role on Internet usage in protest and attempted to translate findings about online protest into speculation about the dynamics of online terrorist networks. The workshop was sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security. In addition to reviewing the methods used in this NSF CAREER project, theoretical arguments from *Digitally Enabled Social Change* were discussed. The primary argument was that the fundamental dynamics of online terrorist networks were likely to follow well known and emerging theoretical expectations drawn from social movements research.

<u>Conference Presentations:</u>

Earl, Jennifer. 2011. "From Twitter to Online Petitioning: Comparing Styles of Online Protest Mobilization." Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association, Las Vegas, Nevada, August 2011.

This paper had two main components. First, the paper used panel data from this project from 2006-2010 to show that the findings reported in Earl et al. (2010) hold over time. The paper discussed the implications of this finding, which suggest that the literature needs to re-orient research around more empirically common types of online activism. Second, the paper discussed how often newer kinds of Internet technologies, such as Twitter, appear in the panel and cross-sectional datasets. Findings suggest that while these technologies may play important roles in specific protest events, they have not yet outpaced websites as a space for online activism. This paper is currently being revised for submission to a journal.

Earl, Jennifer. 2011. "Private Protest? Public and Private Engagement Online." Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association, Las Vegas, Nevada, August 2011.

This paper was the conference presentation was published as Earl (2012). See that entry for a description.

July 2012

Earl, Jennifer. 2010. "Issue Industries: Social Movements and Their Online Political Ecologies."
	Plenary Paper Presentation at the Collective Behavior and Social Movements Section
	Pre-conference Workshop, Las Vegas, Nevada, August 2011.
	This conference paper updated arguments from my 2009 AoIR presentation using panel
and cross-sectional data from 2006-2010. The primary theoretical argument was that social
movement scholars needed to map the position of social movements within larger issue
industries, which include a variety of other actors such as educational institutions, non-profits,
for-profit corporations, news organizations, and commercial entities. I also use data from this
project to map these larger ecologies for 20 movement areas over 5 years. Once those maps are
described, we can begin the complicated task of explaining how different political ecologies
develop and determining whether social movement dynamics differ across different types of
ecologies.

Earl, Jennifer. 2010. "The Internet, Activism, and Social Movements: An NSF CAREER Award
	Project." Paper presented at the Collective Behavior and Social Movements Section Pre-
	conference Workshop, Las Vegas, Nevada, August 2011.
	This was a session I organized and ran on how to distribute data from this project. It was
meant as open discussion with potential data users about how to stage the release of the data,
how to train potential users in the complex design of the datasets, and how to ensure the
development of a reviewing community with sufficient skills to assess the usage of this dataset. I
began by outlining the project and my intentions to make the data public through a new process
that I wanted input on designing. The discussion that followed focused on audience suggestions
about how to design that process. The leading suggestion that resulted from this workshop was
the use of a staged release process for the data. Stage 1 would be a pre-release phase (which I am
currently in) in which I and other project members (i.e., graduate and undergraduate students)
analyze the data during a short embargo period. This stage ensures that there is sufficient reward
for the major effort put in to collect the data. Stage 2 would be a limited release phase where
potential users are paired with project members through an editorial board so that project
members can teach potential users about the dataset as they develop specific papers. This stage
will also ensure that competent external reviewers are cultivated. I am currently working on the
planning for this stage. Stage 3 will be a full public release where data and training materials are
released to improve users' understanding of the datasets and their complexities.

Earl, Jennifer. 2010. "Spreading the Word versus Shaping the Conversation: The Use of Web
	2.0 Tools in Protest Websites." Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the American
	Sociological Association, Atlanta, GA, August 2010.
	Research on internet and society has consistently shown that Internet usage is associated
with the breakdown of traditional distinctions between producers and consumers. For instance,
the rise of citizen journalism represents an amateur challenge to professional news production.
Similarly, YouTube demonstrates the ability of consumers to also produce music and videos.
However, social movement scholarship has documented the increasing professionalization of
protest, which has reinforced distinctions between organizers and participants. In this paper, I
analyze the extent to which technology and society trends have encroached into the protest arena,
reducing the distinctions between organizers and participants. To do this, I introduce a
continuum that plots different online practices that variously support or undermine
organizer/participant distinctions against one another. I then use 2006 data from this project to

measure the prevalence of different practices along this continuum. I find that social movements have not yet seen much challenge to traditional organizer/participant distinctions. I am currently revising this paper by using the full time series to analyze trends in the use of these practices over time. I expect to submit this paper to a journal in late summer of 2012.

Earl, Jennifer. 2009. "Issue Industries Online: Social Movements and Their Online Political Ecologies." Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the Association of Internet Researchers, Milwaukee, WI, October 2009.
    This paper was an earlier version of the 2011 Plenary presentation discussed above. Please see that entry for a description of questions, methods, and findings.

Earl, Jennifer, Katrina Kimport, Greg Prieto, Carly Rush, and Kimberly Reynoso. 2009. "Changing the World One Webpage at a Time: Conceptualizing and Explaining 'Internet Activism.'" Paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, August 2009.
    This paper was eventually published as Earl et al. (2010). Please see that entry for a description of questions, methods, and findings.