OVERVIEW OF DIGITAL POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

Since the early 1990s, digital media channels have become integral components of established political elites' public outreach and engagement toolkit in the United States as well as several other countries (Johnson 2002; Kim, Heinrich et al. 2018; Dimitrova and Matthes 2018). More recently, social media services – including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, and TikTok – have provided a wide range of political actors with a "dizzying and continually changing array of often subtly different ways […] to display online advertisements to voters targeted on the basis of their geographic locations, demographics, likes and dislikes, and dispositions" during elections (Kreiss, Lawrence et al. 2019: 9). Conversely, members of the public have also been turning more and more to digital media to seek out, acquire, and share political information, voice opinions, as well as be active politically through institutional as well as more informal channels of engagement (Bode 2016; Moeller, Kühne, et al. 2018; Small, Jansen et al. 2014). From a broader perspective, the emergence and popularization of digital communication platforms have impacted profoundly the ins and outs of political communication processes.

Political communication can be defined as a set of strategic activities "aimed at attaining or retaining power but also inextricably intertwined with many other elements of politics – such as the transmission of interests and demands of citizens, the symbolic legitimation of authority, and the clarification of alternative options in policy making" (Esser and Pfetsch 2016: 328; see also: Blumler 2016) Over the last two decades, the accelerating growth, diversification, and specialization of the online mediascape have reshaped elite-led political communication in and out of elections. For example, they have furthered the mediatization of politics. It can be viewed as "a long-term process through which the importance of the media and their spill-over effects

on political processes, institutions, organizations and actors have increased." (Strömbäck and Esser, 2014: 6; see also: Blumler and Esser 2018). In other words, they have forced established political elites – including presidents, prime ministers, elected officials, political parties, and candidates during elections – to constantly rethink and retool their messaging, mobilization, and organizing tactics so they can be better adapted to and leverage more efficiently the structural and functional properties of digital media platforms.

The aforementioned dynamics have also deepened the professionalization of politics. This process is characterized by several elements: 1) political communication being a mostly non-stop, permanent activity; 2) political communication tending to be a centralized process (small number of leadership entities coordinating political communication campaigns); 3) experts playing an important role "in analyzing and reaching to member, target groups and stakeholders, in analyzing its own and the competitors' weakness and strengths and making use of that knowledge, and in news management" (Strömbäck 2007: 54; see also: Bennett and Pfetsch 2018; Karlsen and Enjolras 2016). This book chapter takes a deep dive into one aspect of this dynamic of professionalization: the role and effects of political marketers in digital politicking.

Political marketing is fundamental to political success. Established political elites are relying increasingly on marketing to pursue their goals, whether it is winning elections or affecting policy change (Lees-Marshment 2019). Once a more hidden activity, uses of marketing in politics have garnered more public attention in recent years for various reasons. Among them include the impact of big data-driven market research on online advertising during the U.S. 2016 presidential election and the 2016 Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom. At its core, "political marketing is about how political organizations and practitioners – including

candidates, politicians, leaders, parties, governments and NGOs – use marketing tools and concepts to understand, develop products in response to, to involve as well as to communicate and interact with their political market in order to achieve their goals" (Lees-Marshment et al. 2019: 2). It involves strategy, market research, branding, communication, and delivery. Political marketing can play an important role in informing the design and rolling out of political communication campaigns:

- Market research, which includes polling, focus groups, and voter profiling, can help understand the political market (e.g. what voters want, think, and how they behave);

- Market segmentation can be used to break down the electorate down into segments of varying sizes – also known as "target universes" (Schneider 2019) – based on different considerations, such as sociodemographic profile, preferences, interests, and objectives;

- Strategy can help identify and reach out to target political markets in efficient ways.

Politicians' growingly diverse uses of digital media in their day-to-day outreach and engagement activities have helped reshape dynamics of political marketing and how they contribute to political communication (Towner and Dulio 2012: Iosifidis and Wheeler 2018). Traditionally, directed marketing consisted of campaign leaflets distributed in mailboxes. But it has rapidly become more mobile, virtual, personalized, and instantaneous. First through emails followed by texting, as well as by ads on Web 1.0 media platforms and social media services such as Facebook and Instagram (e.g. Petre 2018; Kruikemeier, Sezgin et al. 2016, Metz, Kruikemeier et al. 2019; Lalancette and Raynauld 2019). In sum, this has impacted the entire political communication cycle, from the ways in which politicians identify and gain insights into their target audience to how they build and adapt their public image as well as how they conceive and deliver political and policy messages to the public. More importantly

for this chapter, this has raised a large number of profound ethical issues that have – for the most part – received limited attention from the academic community. This chapter addresses this gap in the scholarly literature and offers a discussion of specific dimensions of the role of ethics in online political communication.

In the context of this chapter, ethics in political marketing communication are defined as "standards of conduct based on moral duties and virtues derived from principles of right and wrong" (Denton, Trent et al. 2019: 142). In other words, they can be viewed as a rigid set of norms and practices guiding the behavior of individuals and organizations so it can be "right, good, appropriate," and ultimately make a positive contribution to society (Denton, Trent et al. 2019: 142). This chapter zeroes in on specific ethical issues related to digital political marketing communication. The first section focuses on how the rise of new practices in digital politicking has led to a lack of transparency in political communication. The second section takes interest in the growingly manipulative – and in some cases deceptive – nature of digital political communication. The third section discusses the negative effects of unethical forms of political marketing communication while the last section introduces ethical principles that could help guide current and future dynamics of digital political communication.

LACK OF TRANSPARENCY IN DIGITAL POLITICAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Recent years have been marked by political elites' growing ability to gain granular insights into the preferences, interests, and objectives of members of the public through techniques leveraging the capabilities of newer technologies (Baldwin-Philippi 2017). Among them include big data market research. It can be defined as the use of technological tools, "computation power and algorithmic accuracy" (Boyd and Crawford 2012: 663) to acquire,

archive, aggregate, and analyse large volumes of data from wide-range online and offline sources in order to have a better understanding of the preferences and goals of segments of the political market and – in many cases – specific individuals (Baldwin-Philippi 2017; Nickerson and Rogers 2014).

Market intelligence gained through big data-driven techniques can inform all aspects of political communication. For example, political ads can be developed and adapted based on which phrases would work best to sell policies and what slogans – such as Make America Great Again – would resonate with and mobilize more effectively narrow slices of the audience. Market intelligence can also be used to set the agenda, such as which policies should be discussed in order to address the demands of different specific segments of the public. The content and format of political marketing appeals is carefully thought out. The images and words are chosen carefully and direct marketing is sent directly to individuals based on their social, political, economic, or sociodemographic profile (Raynauld and Lees-Marshment 2019). Before being released widely, political appeals can be tested in order to measure "how well messages perform against one another and using that information to drive content production and further targeting" (Baldwin-Philippi 2017: 628). It is possible to question whether members of the public are aware of and understand how and to what degree data is influencing the production and circulation of political messages online (e.g. Tufekci 2014).

In the digital media space, political messages can be delivered quickly and at a low cost to a specific audience through individualized ads on websites or through social media services (Kruikemeier, Sezgin et al. 2016). Comparatively, offline-based forms of digital political marketing communication tend to be slower, more expensive, and target a broader public (e.g. campaign flyers, billboards, TV ads) (see Raynauld and Lees-Marshment 2019). When it

comes to digital political marketing communication, two key elements need to be considered: 1) it is highly direct and individualized in nature; 2) it is largely unseen by the broader public.

First, digital political marketing appeals are generally delivered to the receiver directly and are highly individualized in nature. Indeed, they are tailored to the preferences, interests, and goals of individual users, not just groups of people living in the same geographical area as is the case with more traditional campaign flyers or posters for example. In the case of social networking platforms, political appeals can be "personalized and targeted based on users' available demographic profile information, stated interests, likes, and location that users shared voluntarily" (Kruikemeier, Sezgin et al. 2016: 367; see also Papakyriakopoulos, Hegelich et al. 2018). They can also be based on information from other sources, including polls. Online direct political marketing is individualized to a significant degree. Online market research – especially with the help of big data research techniques – can help produce highly granulated psychological and political profiles of individuals. During the 2006 and 2008 federal elections in Canada, strategists for the Conservative Party of Canada generated fictional characters with the help of data in order to epitomize swing voters. Among them included: 1) "Dougie," a single white man in his late twenties working at a well-known Canadian retail store ("Canadian Tire") who agreed with the policies of the Conservative Party on crime and welfare abuse, but was more interested in recreation than politics and might fail to turn out; 2) "Rick and Brenda," a common-law couple with working-class jobs; 3) and "Mike and Theresa" who were better off and could become Conservative supporters except for their catholic background (Turcotte 2012: 85). This understanding was then used to design highly persuasive political messages, both in terms of the arguments featured as well as the visual appearance.

Second, unlike TV ads, billboards, posters, and speeches which are mostly public in nature, digital political marketing communication can be unseen. Of particular interest are "dark" targeted political ads. They can be described as political advertisement that is not shared to the public at large as it is intended for specific individuals due its distinct format and content (Cadwalladr 2017). These ads can be circulated in different ways, including through a Facebook user's private timeline. Despite the archiving power of the contemporary Internet and the current era where every word a politician says and how they look can potentially be recorded and scrutinized with the help of smartphones and other media tools (e.g. Chadwick, Dennis et al. 2015), it can prove difficult to find targeted dark ads circulated on social media. It should also be noted that the practice of darks political ads also remains largely unregulated in many national contexts.

When the content of political messages is not problematic, this does not by itself matter. It can simply mean sending details of about a specific political or policy issue to someone who has shown interest or using positive images in order to address people's interests and desire to see change. However, when manipulation is at the core of the political appeal, the lack of transparency can raise fundamental ethical issues. From a broader perspective, it can represent a threat to the integrity and legitimacy of democratic processes.

THE POTENTIALLY MANIPULATIVE NATURE OF DIGITAL POLITICAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Digital political marketing appeals can give the sender of the communication more control over how the receiver decodes and understands it. Specifically, they can target receivers directly in order to avoid the filter of mass media organizations. In doing so, less "noise" can interfere with the transmission of a message, thus rending it more potent and likely to reach its goals.

The design of the message can be encoded by those sending it out to make sure the message uses symbols or language likely to connect with the target audience (Robbins et al 2015; see also: Entman 1993). As mentioned previously, political messages' data-driven design can help ensure that those receiving the message decode it as intended by communication professionals. In other words, there is more control over how individual users interpret and makes sense of the message.

While this represents a practical advantage as it enables the broadcasting of strategic political appeals with limited outside interference, it can be the source of major ethical concerns. It can create room for misuse, including manipulation, that can impact negatively democratic processes. Unlike persuasion, which has been an important aspect of political communication, mobilization, and persuasion over the past decades (Mutz, Sniderman et al. 1993), manipulation restricts, denies, distorts, and degrades the ability of those receiving political messages to think rationally and make informed choices (Beckman 2018: 24). This is because digital political marketing communication can lack: 1) context and completeness, 2) prevent debate and discussion; 3) extend and bolster elite control; 4) bypass rational thinking; 5) and stand largely unchecked.

First, as digital political marketing communication can be partial or incomplete due to strategic concerns, facts and figures can be taken out of context, without consideration for the complexity of a policy issue or political viewpoints. Moreover, rather than just providing information on a specific political or policy topic to a target audience, the messaging can be more nuanced with the selective use of data, thus manipulating people's preferences, interests, and dispositions as determined with the help of market research.

Second, digital political marketing communication can influence political cognition and behavior in ways preventing the public from being rational when thinking through and making political decisions (Beckman 2018: 20). For example, the individualized nature of political appeals can lead to heightened levels of political fragmentation within the public. This can be defined as the "breakdown of broadly shared awareness, perception, and understanding of politics, which is acquired through common political knowledge, concerns, and goals, as well as the emergence of individual-based and ever-evolving micro-political realities—or enclaves—shaped by highly specific and wide-ranging interests and objectives" (Raynauld and Turcotte 2018: 14). This can in turn reduce levels of discussion, debate, and deliberation as people who are exposed to wide-ranging narrow political messages have a different understanding of the political reality (Metz, Kruikemeier et al. 2019). It can also prevent political socialization that can drive public opinion formation processes within communities, families, professional environments, or other social settings (Beckman 2018: 31). From a broader perspective, digital political marketing communication can lead to deception, misinformation, distortion of facts, as well as strategic omission of crucial information. This can ultimately reduce the intellectual autonomy of the targets of political appeals.

Third, digital political marketing communication can expand and – in many cases - reinforce political elites' control over political communication. For example, it can reduce the volume of information to be processed by the receiver. According to Beckman (2018: 31), this can enhance the ability of the sender to control all communication. Fourth, it can be designed in ways appealing to emotions in order to circumvent and manipulate "the rational thinking processes of voters" (Hacker 2014). Specifically, it can influence and – in many cases – alter cognitive processes, opinions, and behavior patterns (Beckman 2018: 40). As noted by Jones, Hoffman et al. (2012: 1133), "feelings of anger prompt citizens to engage in greater electoral

participation (Valentino et al., 2011), while feelings of anxiety lead to an increased interest in politics in general (Huddy et al., 2007), and positive feelings such as hope or enthusiasm increase awareness of one's environment and confidence that preferred outcomes will occur (Brader and Valentino, 2007; Just et al., 2007)." During the 2016 U.S. presidential election cycle, Trump's digital media director – Brad Parscale – talked about wanting to "make […] [voters] dance' by creating messages appealing to and resonating with specific segments of the electorate" (CBS 2018). Mark Thurnbull, the managing director of Cambridge Analytica which worked for the Trump campaign, reinforced that point. He argued for the need to "drop the bucket further down the well than anybody else, to understand what are those really deep-seated underlying fears, concerns, It's no good fighting an election campaign on the facts because actually it's all about emotion, it's all about emotion" (Channel 4 2018).

Finally, digital political marketing communication can stand largely unchecked. Because of the lack of transparency and relative invisibility of political communication as discussed in the previous section of this book chapter, there is room for errors or problems. In many cases, these issues cannot be singled out, investigated, and rebutted by experts, media organizations, or other politicians. This can lead to the further erosion of rational thinking due to emotive design. As argued by Beckman (2019), the lack of countervailing information can lead to the consumption of inaccurate or misleading information as well as can prevent individuals from questioning or refuting communication themselves.

DISRUPTIVE IMPACT OF UNETHICAL DIGITAL POLITICAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION

The consequences of problematic digital political communication have manifested themselves in the context of two consequential political events in recent years: 1) the 2016 UK Brexit

referendum, which led citizens to express themselves on whether the country should remain or leave the European Union; 2) the U.S. 2016 presidential election. In both cases, the results were close and largely unexpected (Raynauld and Turcotte 2018; Virdee and McGeever 2018). In November 2016, Donald Trump was elected as president with 304 electoral college votes compared to 227 for Hillary Clinton but nearly 3 million fewer individual voters and 46.1% of the popular vote compared to Clinton's 48.2%. Later that year, people in Britain voted in favour of leaving the European Union by a margin of just 4% (52% for leaving, 48% for remaining) in June 2016. These two political events have caused major disruptions in the political system of both countries. They have also reshaped dynamics of power in the international political system as the United States and the United Kingdom can be viewed as major economic, political, and diplomatic forces on the world stage.

As noted by Keaveney (2019), the outcome of the Brexit referendum has been the source of much democratic angst amongst elected officials, political parties, governmental agencies, and the public at large in the United Kingdom. Criticisms have included that claims made during the campaign were potentially inaccurate, oversimplified, or simply false. In many cases, this caused voters to make complex decisions while relying on inaccurate, faulty, or false political communication and ultimately feeling hoodwinked (Worcester, Mortimore et al. 2018). This is in line with the problems with digital political marketing communications outlined in previous sections of this chapter. For example, the Leave Campaign had a simple message on their campaign bus: "We sent the EU £350 million pounds a week. Let's fund the NHS instead. Vote Leave." Yet the reality of health funding was more complicated. First, the UK received funding back from the European Union (EU) and there was no promise that any future government would direct money saved from going to the EU to the NHS. Second, the message suggested that all the country's health problems could be solved with a simple vote on a day in

2016. The profound and huge implications of leaving the EU were never fully disclosed and discussed in online ads. Finally, the now-known hidden aspects of online ads coupled with the breaches of privacy from the data utilized in the design of those ads have led to suggestions that this type of communication caused substantial disruption to the operation of the UK government, with profound social and economic consequences.

Trump's campaign communication also drew on simplistic and negative messaging. As noted by Lalancette and Raynauld (2019: 889), he turned to Twitter and other social media services to "push out more unconventional political messages – which often consist[ed] of snarky responses to or attacks of his critics – to his millions of followers." While his attacks targeted specific social groups, such as immigrants, they also drew on the emotions of segments of society deeply dissatisfied with their living standards (Conley 2018). Cosgrove (2019) echoes that point. He notes that the digital messages were designed to be polarizing and forge an emotional bond with members of the U.S. working class (Cosgrove 2019). This was driven in part by data from Cambridge Analytica. This organization acquired through big data market research a granular understanding of the U.S. political market and helped develop compelling political appeals focused on policy issue tapping into specific discontents: the economy and immigration. For example, thousands of versions of the same Facebook-based ads specifically tailored to connect with specific slices of the market (Conley 2018; British Broadcasting Corporation 2017). According to Beckman (2019), the 2016 U.S. presidential election can be seen as breaching ethical standards in political communication due to various elements. Chief among them was the widespread use of targeted communication which repeatedly delivered messages comprising false and misleading claims to select audiences identified on the basis of sociodemographic, preferences, and behavior.

PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL DIGITAL POLITICAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION

On one hand, digital political marketing communication, which is increasingly driven by insights acquired through big data marketing research, can help established political elites better identify, understand, and respond to target audiences with specific preferences, interests, and objectives. This can have several positive outcomes, such as contributing to the inclusion of marginalized communities in the political process as well as the advancement of the public good (Lees-Marshment, Elder and Raynauld 2019). On the other hand, and more importantly for this book chapter, it can breach important ethical principles in political communication. Among them include transparency, impartiality, responsibility, inclusivity, fairness, and respect.

As Beckman (2018: 32) points out, digital political marketing communication can influence political cognition and behavior through "strategies driven by the systematic use of demographic, psychographic, and behavioral data." This has turned communication practitioners into "specialized data forensic scientists" constantly investigating, developing, and engaging in "new kinds of digital manipulation of public opinion" (see also: Hargittai 2018). Building on that logic, Hacker (2014) argues that using data and digital communication in politics can be "ethically problematic" as it can have far reaching consequences beyond a single election or campaign.

Highly targeted digital political communication also breaches the principle that political communication should be inclusive in nature, whether it is during or outside of elections. It should enable citizens to acquire information allowing them to be active politically. More importantly, it should help them be involved in formal and informal political processes in an

informed way. Strategic political messages and mobilization initiatives that are rolled out online – especially in the social mediascape – are geared towards narrow segments of the population with usually narrow interests, preferences, and objectives (Walker and Nowlin 2018). For example, campaigns can include or exclude Facebook users from targeted political appeals based on various social, political, cultural, linguistic, economic, or technological (e.g. brand of the smartphone) considerations. (Singer 2018). Uses of big data exacerbate "exclusionary segmentation" where established political elites only target individuals and organizations that are useful to them (Marland 2012: 165-166). This can lead to the exclusion of a large number of individuals or other entities, such as those who have a lower socio-economic status or members of minority communities (Howard and Kreiss 2010).

As noted previously, communication can also lack transparency. Unlike more traditional approaches to political advertising where everyone is exposed to publicly visible messages, big data can help create highly targeted "dark" political appeals that can only be seen by individuals who may not be aware they are being targeted and be less critical of the communication they absorb. It also means intentional efforts to exclude voters, which breaches principles of transparency and inclusivity. During the 2016 US presidential election, the Trump campaign deployed significant efforts to intentionally discourage certain slices of the political market from voting. For example, it turned to digital political marketing communication to keep voting blocs likely to support the Clinton campaign (e.g. African Americans, young females, and idealistic white liberals) from feeling the need to vote on Election Day (Grassegger and Krogerus 2017). It should be noted that this approach has been used by a large number of political campaigns internationally in the past decades (Bradshaw and Howard 2018).

Professional organizations engaging in more generic digital communication and, more specifically, digital political marketing have adopted several codes of conduct and statements to guide their activities over the past decades. For example, the American Association of Political Consultants' (AAPC) (n.d.) Code of Professional Ethics mentions that its members should adhere to specific standards of practice. Among them include impartiality – "I will use no appeal to voters which is based on racism, sexism, religious intolerance or any form of unlawful discrimination and will condemn those who use such practices." The Trump campaign's digital communication efforts breached this principle during the 2016 US presidential election. Bennett and Livingston (2018: 131) notes that it emphasized forms of political appeal "blending nationalism, anti-globalism, racism, welfare nationalism, anti-immigrant and refugee themes, and the need for strong leadership and order." (see also: Ott 2017)

Another professional organization of interest is the American Marketing Association (AMA) (2019). Its statement of ethics states that marketers must "do no harm…consciously avoiding harmful actions or omissions by embodying high ethical standards"; "foster trust in the marketing system […] avoiding deception in product design, pricing, communication, and delivery of distribution"; and "embrace ethical values" to uphold "consumer confidence in the integrity of marketing by affirming these core values." These core values include honesty, responsibility, fairness, respect, transparency, and citizenship. Many digital political marketing operations around the world have not always followed these principles. For example, they have failed to "acknowledge the social obligations to stakeholders that come with increased marketing and economic power" and to "recognize our special commitments to vulnerable market segments such as children, seniors, the economically impoverished, market illiterates and others who may be substantially disadvantaged." Gusterson (2017) notes that the Leave

campaign adopted a discourse focused on specific segments of the UK public while sidelining many others, such as immigrants.

As the conclusion of this book chapter makes clear, the problematic use of digital marketing communications by a large number of media and political players – including journalistic organizations, elected officials, candidates during elections, and political parties – in recent years has raised several concerns. From a broader perspective, it has failed to upload certain standards of political communication and, by extension, has hurt democratic processes.

MOVING FORWARD:
THE CASE FOR ETHICS IN DIGITAL POLITICAL MARKETING COMMUNICATION

As mentioned previously, digital political marketing communication is a highly direct form of marketing that can be, in some cases, unseen. It gives the sender of the communication more control over how the receiver encodes it. It can also be utilized in highly manipulative ways, thus damaging political communication processes in democratic contexts. It can lack context and completeness, prevent debate and discussion, extend and reinforce elite control, bypass rational thinking, and stand largely unchecked.

It would be unrealistic to expect consultants to stop researching the market as well as using big data to identity and target specific slides of the public when designing communication. But as with many communication tools, it is important to reflect on how to best to use them in order to maximize the benefits and limit harmful effects. Doing so can be seen as part of broader efforts to adhere to certain professional standards in any field of activity.

Why political communication professionals are responsible

Communications professionals should take responsibility for their work and the effects of it, whether intentional or not. Of particular interest is the ethical dilemma related to the impact of Facebook on recent elections in the United States. This social media platform was not designed to be a tool for political communication to be used to win election campaigns. It was not meant to be a tool for journalistic organizations and individual journalists to deliver content to the public. Its core mission was to help individual and organizations connect with and communicate with each other. Despite this, following public and governmental pressure internationally, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg took responsibility publicly for how the platform was used by different political forces to engage in unethical forms of digital outreach and engagement. He noted that:

> "Facebook is an idealistic and optimistic company. For most of our existence, we focused on all the good that connecting people can bring. As Facebook has grown, people everywhere have gotten a powerful new tool to stay connected to the people they love, make their voices heard, and build communities and businesses…. But it's clear now that we didn't do enough to prevent these tools from being used for harm as well…We didn't take a broad enough view of our responsibility, and that was a big mistake. It was my mistake, and I'm sorry. I started Facebook, I run it, and I'm responsible for what happens here. So now we have to go through every part of our relationship with people and make sure we're taking a broad enough view of our responsibility.

> It's not enough to just connect people, we have to make sure those connections are positive. It's not enough to just give people a voice, we have to make sure people aren't

using it to hurt people or spread misinformation. It's not enough to give people control of their information, we have to make sure developers they've given it to are protecting it too. Across the board, we have a responsibility to not just build tools, but to make sure those tools are used for good" (Zuckerberg 2018).

It isn't enough for communication professionals to work just in the interests of their clients and not take responsibility for the impact of their actions. This is why the AAPC asks its members to sign and adhere to codes of ethics annually. It also asks them to live and work by the standards it sets, to "convey that they operate with integrity and adhere to standards of the profession, thus improving public confidence in the American political system" (American Association of Political Consultants n.d.).

Recommendations for principles for future practice

Building on several authors' work (e.g. Denton, Trent et al. 2019; Lees-Marshment, Elder and Raynauld 2019: 82), it can be argued that there needs to be clear ethical principles guiding digital political marketing outreach and engagement. Below are some elements that should be considered when developing an ethical framework guiding practices of digital political marketing communication:

- **Inclusivity**: Targeted political appeals should not be used in ways excluding specific segments of the public from the political process, especially if these segments can be defined as vulnerable;

- **Engagement**: Digital political communication should be designed in ways maintaining the intellectual autonomy of the public, while also being persuasive, not manipulative;

- **Transparency:** Political communication should be open and transparent so its structure and content can be scrutinized, discussed, and critiqued in informed ways;

- **Accountability**: Established political elites and communication professionals developing digital political messages should be held accountable of their effects;

- **Responsibility**: All aspects of political communication, including market research with the help of big data-driven research, should be used responsibly and accurately;

- **Professionalism**: Clear and broadly accepted standards should be put in place and upheld;

- **Common societal good**: Established political elites should consider the interests of society as a whole, not just individual candidates or campaigns. They should also avoid doing damage to society.

Incentives to adhere to and respect these principles

It is possible to identify two main incentives for professionals to adhere to and use these principles: 1) awareness of the potential impact of ethical breaches on society; 2) and professional self-interest. Ethically problematic practices negatively impact public perception and credibility of those engaging in digital political communication as well as the political message itself. In short, they can harm in a significant way the integrity of digital political communication processes and can lead to reputational and money losses.

The impact of problematic political communication can also be practical. Several government inquiries into uses of big data and online communication have been launched following the 2016 U.S. presidential election and the Brexit referendum. The CEO of Facebook as well as members of the Cambridge Analytica staff have also been called to testify before UK and U.S.

governmental lawmakers and their use of data was made the subject of documentaries and movies (British Broadcasting Corporation 2017; Channel 4 2018; Horsford and Haynes 2019; Netflix 2019). When appearing before the UK Parliament and the U.S. Congress, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg conceded that Facebook did not do enough to prevent user data from being used in harmful ways by different organizations, including Cambridge Analytica (Zuckerberg, 2018). Facebook was fined UK £500,000 – the maximum amount possible – for breaching the Data Protection Act (Hern and Pegg 2018). It also lost users concerned about privacy, which led to the decline of advertising revenue and stock value. Finally, there are calls in several countries for increased regulation of data-using companies and thus the conditions under which communication professionals operate are now more restricted.

The ethics of digital political marketing communication are both desirable and necessary, especially in a context where there are more and more concerns about the integrity and validity of political communication processes in different national contexts. Instating clear and specific ethical rules for political communication would bridge the gap and help some of the crises that are plaguing different facets of political communication (Bennett and Pfetsch 2018). Current and future practitioners in the fields of politics, communication, marketing, and public relations need to be aware of these issues as they are expected to gain in importance over the next decades. By providing a preliminary discussion of ethics of digital political communication, this book chapter lays the groundwork for researchers and practitioners to build expertise in this area. More importantly, it also provides insights that could lead to important discussions about the future of digital political communication.

References

American Association of Political Consultants, "Code of ethics," n.d., https://theaapc.org/member-center/code-of-ethics/.

American Marketing Association "Statement of ethics," 2019, https://myama.force.com/s/article/Codes-of-Conduct.

Baldwin-Philippi, Jessica. "The myths of data-driven campaigning." *Political Communication* 34, no. 4 (2017): 627-633.

Beckman, Arthur. "Political marketing and intellectual autonomy." *Journal of Political Philosophy* 26, no. 1 (2018): 24-46.

Beckman, Arthur (2019) "Democratic Debate 9.2 Political Marketing and Unfair Competition in Politics" in *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications 3rd edition* by Jennifer Lees-Marshment et al., 259-260. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Bennett, W. Lance, and Barbara Pfetsch. "Rethinking political communication in a time of disrupted public spheres." *Journal of Communication* 68, no. 2 (2018): 243-253.

Bennett, W. Lance, and Steven Livingston. "The disinformation order: Disruptive communication and the decline of democratic institutions." *European Journal of Communication* 33, no. 2 (2018): 122-139.

Bode, Leticia. "Political news in the news feed: Learning politics from social media." *Mass Communication and Society* 19, no. 1 (2016): 24-48.

Brader, Ted, and Nicholas A. Valentino. "Identities, interests, and emotions: Symbolic versus material wellsprings of fear, anger, and enthusiasm," in *The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior* edited by W. Russell Newman et al., 180-201. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Bradshaw, Samantha, and Philip N. Howard. "Challenging Truth and Trust: A Global Inventory of Organized Social Media Manipulation." The Computational Propaganda Project, 2018. http://comprop.oii.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/93/2018/07/ct2018.pdf.

British Broadcasting Corporation. "The digital guru who helped Donald Trump to the presidency." BBC., August 13, 2017, http://www.bbc.com/news/av/magazine-40852227/the-digital-guru-who-helped-donald-trump-to-the-presidency.

Cadwalladr, C. "Revealed: Tory 'dark' ads targeted voters' Facebook feeds in Welsh marginal seat." The Guardian, May 27, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/may/27/conservatives-facebookdark-ads-data-protection-election.

Chadwick, Andrew, James Dennis, and Amy P. Smith. "Politics in the age of hybrid media: Power, systems, and media logics," in *The Routledge companion to social media and politics* edited by Axel Bruns et al., 7-22. New York: Routledge, 2015.

Channel 4. "Exposed: Undercover secrets of Trump's data firm." Channel 4, March 20, 2018, https://www.channel4.com/news/exposed-undercover-secrets-of-donald-trump-data-firm-cambridge-analytica.

Conley, Brian M., "Thinking what he says: Market research and the making of Donald Trump's 2016 presidential election," in *Political Marketing in the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election* edited by Jamie Gillies, New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 29-48.

Cosgrove, Kenneth M. "Democratic Debate 4.1: Trumps political branding: expanding the participation of an underserved market?," in *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications 3rd edition* by Jennifer Lees-Marshment et al., 112-113. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Denton Jr, Robert E., Judith S. Trent, and Robert V. Friedenberg. *Political campaign communication: Principles and Practices (Ninth Edition)*. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

Dimitrova, Daniela V., and Jörg Matthes. "Social media in political campaigning around the world: Theoretical and methodological challenges." (2018): 333-342.

Esser, Frank, and Barbara Pfetsch. "Comparing political communication: An update." In *Comparative politics* edited by Daniele Caramani et al., 3–28. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Entman, Robert M. "Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm." *Journal of communication* 43, no. 4 (1993): 51-58.

Grassegger, Hannes, and Krogerus Mikael. "The data that turned the world upside down." *Motherboard,* January 28, 2017, https://motherboard.vice.com/en_us/article/mg9vvn/how-our-likes-helped-trump-win.

Gusterson, Hugh. "From Brexit to Trump: Anthropology and the rise of nationalist populism." *American Ethnologist* 44, no. 2 (2017): 209-214.

Hacker, Kenneth L. "Ethical dilemmas in the use of big data analytics (BDA) in affecting political communication and behavior." Working Paper, 2014, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261176065_Ethical_Dilemmas_in_the_Use_of_Big_Data_Analytics_BDA_In_Affecting_Political_Communication_and_Behavior,

Hargittai, Eszter. "Potential biases in big data: Omitted voices on social media." *Social Science Computer Review* (2018): DOI: 0894439318788322.

Hern, Alex and David Pegg "Facebook fined for data breaches in Cambridge Analytica scandal," The Guardian, 11 July 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/jul/11/facebook-fined-for-data-breaches-in-cambridge-analytica-scandal

Horsford, Lynn and Haynes, Toby. *Brexit: The Uncivil War* [Motion Picture]. United Kingdom: House Productions, 2019.

Huddy, Leonie, Stanley Feldman, and Erin Cassese. "On the distinct political effects of anxiety and anger," In *The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior* edited by W. Russell Newman et al., 202-230. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007

Iosifidis, Petros, and Mark Wheeler. "Modern political communication and web 2.0 in representative democracies." *Javnost-The Public* 25, no. 1-2 (2018): 110-118

Johnson, Dennis W. "Campaign website: Another tool, but no killer app." *Journal of Political Marketing* 1, no. 1 (2002): 213-215.

Jones, Philip Edward, Lindsay H. Hoffman, and Danna G. Young. "Online emotional appeals and political participation: The effect of candidate affect on mass behavior." *New Media & Society* 15, no. 7 (2013): 1132-1150.

Just, Marion R., Ann N. Crigler, and Todd L. Belt. (2007) "Don't give up hope: emotions, candidate appraisals, and votes," in *The Affect Effect: Dynamics of Emotion in Political Thinking and Behavior* edited by W. Russell Newman et al., 231-260. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007

Karlsen, Rune, and Bernard Enjolras. "Styles of social media campaigning and influence in a hybrid political communication system: Linking candidate survey data with Twitter data." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 21, no. 3 (2016): 338-357

Keaveney, Paula, **"**Democratic Debate 9.1: The Brexit Referendum and the limitations of consumer choice in political decisions," in *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications 3rd Revised Edition* by Jennifer Lees-Marshment et al., 257-259. New York: Routledge, 2019

Kreiss, Daniel, Regina G. Lawrence, and Shannon C. McGregor. "In their own words: Political practitioner accounts of candidates, audiences, affordances, genres, and timing in strategic social media use." *Political Communication* 35, no. 1 (2018): 8-31

Kruikemeier, Sanne, Minem Sezgin, and Sophie C. Boerman. "Political microtargeting: Relationship between personalized advertising on facebook and voters' responses." *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking* 19, no. 6 (2016): 367-372

Lalancette, Mireille, and Vincent Raynauld. "The power of political image: Justin Trudeau, Instagram, and celebrity politics." *American Behavioral Scientist* 63, no. 7 (2019): 888-924

Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. "Marketing Scholars and Political Marketing: the Pragmatic and Principled Reasons for Why Marketing Academics Should Research the Use of Marketing in the Political Arena." *Customer Needs and Solutions* (2019): 1-8

Lees-Marshment, J. et al. *Political marketing: Principles and Applications 3rd Edition*. New York: Routledge., 2019.

Lees-Marshment, Jennifer, Edward Elder and Vincent Raynauld (2019). "Democratic debate 3.1 The ethical issues around big data in politics," in *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications 3rd Revised Edition* by Jennifer Lees-Marshment et al., 80-82. New York: Routledge, 2019

Marland, Alex. "Yes we can (fundraise)," in *Routledge Handbook of Political Marketing* edited by Jennifer Lees-Marshment, 164-176. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Metz, Manon, Sanne Kruikemeier, and Sophie Lecheler. "Personalization of politics on Facebook: examining the content and effects of professional, emotional and private self-personalization." *Information, Communication & Society* (2019): 1-18.

Moeller, Judith, Rinaldo Kühne, and Claes De Vreese. "Mobilizing youth in the 21st century: How digital media use fosters civic duty, information efficacy, and political participation." *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 62, no. 3 (2018): 445-460

Mutz, Diana Carole, Paul M. Sniderman, and Richard A. Brody, eds. *Political Persuasion and Attitude Change*. University of Michigan Press, 1996.

Nickerson, David W., and Todd Rogers. "Political campaigns and big data." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 28, no. 2 (2014): 51-74.

Netflix. "The Great Hack." Netflix, July 24, 2019, https://www.netflix.com/watch/80117542?source=35.

Ott, Brian L. "The age of Twitter: Donald J. Trump and the politics of debasement." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 34, no. 1 (2017): 59-68.

Papakyriakopoulos, Orestis, Simon Hegelich, Morteza Shahrezaye, and Juan Carlos Medina Serrano. "Social media and microtargeting: Political data processing and the consequences for Germany." *Big Data & Society* 5, no. 2 (2018): DOI: 2053951718811844.

CBS. Trump campaign digital media director and 2020 Trump campaign manager quoted in 'Who is Brad Parscale'. CBS, February 27, 2018. https://www.cbs.com/shows/60_minutes/video/elHhrLFmOS2ZYFqRG68KQPAu0_aUKPKC/who-is-brad-parscale-/.

Petre, Elizabeth A. "Encouraging identification with the larger campaign narrative: Grassroots organizing texts in Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign." *Communication Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (2018): 283-307

Raynauld, Vincent, and André Turcotte. "'Different strokes for different folks': Implications of voter micro-targeting and appeal in the age of Donald Trump," in *Political Marketing in the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election* edited by Jamie Gillies, New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 29-48.

Raynauld, Vincent and Jennifer Lees-Marshment. "Broadcast political marketing communication," in *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications 3rd Revised Edition* by Jennifer Lees-Marshment et al., 152-182. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Kim, Young Mie, Heinrich, Richard James et al. "Campaigns go social: Are Facebook, Youtube and Twitter changing elections?." in *New Directions in Media and Politics* edited by Travis N. Ridout, 100-117. New York: Routledge, 2018.

Schneider, Mike. "How to Break Through When Political Ads Have Never Been More Competitive." Campaigns & Elections, July 15, 2019. https://www.campaignsandelections.com/campaign-insider/how-to-break-through-when-political-ads-have-never-been-more-competitive.

Small, Tamara A., Harold Jansen, Frédérick Bastien, Thierry Giasson, and Royce Koop. "Online political activity in Canada: the hype and the facts." *Canadian Parliamentary Review* 37, no. 4 (2014): 9-16

Strömbäck, Jesper. "Political marketing and professionalized campaigning: A conceptual analysis." *Journal of Political Marketing* 6, no. 2-3 (2007): 49-67.

Strömbäck, Jesper, and Frank Esser. "Mediatization of politics: Towards a theoretical framework." In *Mediatization of Politics* edited by Frank Esser et al., 3-28. Palgrave Macmillan: London, 2014

Thurnbull, Mark (2018) quoted in Channel 4. "Cambridge Analytica uncovered: Secret filming reveals election tricks," Channel 4, March 19, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=mpbeOCKZFfQ.

Towner, Terri L., and David A. Dulio. "New media and political marketing in the United States: 2012 and beyond." *Journal of Political Marketing* 11, no. 1-2 (2012): 95-119

Tufekci, Zeynep. "Engineering the public: Big data, surveillance and computational politics." *First Monday* 19, no. 7 (2014). https://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/4901/4097%22%20%5Ct%20%22_new #author.

Turcotte, André. "Under new management: market intelligence and the Conservative resurrection," in *Political Marketing in Canada* edited by Alex Marland et al., 76-80. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012.

Turcotte, André and Jennifer Lees-Marshment (2019). "Political market research," in *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications 3rd Revised Edition* by Jennifer Lees-Marshment et al., 53-85. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Valentino, Nicholas A., Ted Brader, Eric W. Groenendyk, Krysha Gregorowicz, and Vincent L. Hutchings. "Election night's alright for fighting: The role of emotions in political participation." *The Journal of Politics* 73, no. 1 (2011): 156-170.

Virdee, Satnam, and Brendan McGeever. "Racism, crisis, Brexit." *Ethnic and racial studies* 41, no. 10 (2018): 1802-1819

Walker, Doug, and Edward L. Nowlin. "Data-Driven Precision and Selectiveness in Political Campaign Fundraising." *Journal of Political Marketing* (2018): DOI: 10.1080/15377857.2018.1457590.

Worcester, Robert, Roger Mortimore, Paul Baines, and Mark Gill. "Brexit Britain, two years on." *Significance* 15, no. 3 (2018): 30-33

Zuckerberg, Mark (2018) "Facebook, Social Media Privacy, and the Use and Abuse of Data | United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary" Senate Judiciary Committee,. April 10, 218. https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/meetings/facebook-social-media-privacy-and-the-use-and-abuse-of-data.