

'Liking' Your Union: Unions and New Social Media During Election Campaigns

Tim Fowler, Carleton University

Doug Hagar, Brock University

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association

June 2012

Edmonton, Alberta

This paper not to be cited until a final version is uploaded.

Introduction

New Social Media (NSM), most commonly referring to Facebook and Twitter, has gained prominence as a political tool over the past half-decade. Barack Obama's campaign for the White House used NSM as a major element (McGirt 2009; Stelter 2008), and many prominent politicians and political parties use NSM to interact with voters and constituents. The role of NSM in the so-called 'Arab Spring' cannot be understated: it was an influential tool to coordinate demonstrations and share information (Howard & Hussain, 2011). NSM allows for instantaneous, consistent, and free communication to 'followers' that differs from the slow, costly, and unidirectional communication through traditional media and advertising strategies. The direct, unfiltered connection provided by NSM to constituents makes these tools particularly useful in political campaigns. An increased number of politicians, organizations, corporations, and citizens are using NSM for political purposes. This paper concerns itself with the use of NSM by organized labour in Canada, particularly during election campaigns.

Popular wisdom in Canada holds that the New Democratic Party (NDP) is the party of organized labour. Indeed, the NDP formed as a merger of the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), the social democratic forerunner to the NDP, and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), Canada's main labour federation. In practise, however, the relationship between organized labour and the NDP is rather complex. Organized labour remains divided along ideological, regional, and linguistic lines, and there is a deep divide between public and private sector unions. This has translated to numerous labour movements in Canada, some of which provide full-throated support to the NDP, others completely eschewing electoral politics,

with a great variety in between these two poles.

This paper explores how the Canadian labour movement used NSM in the 2011 federal election campaign and the 2011 Ontario provincial election campaign. These campaigns were chosen, firstly, out of convenience - NSM is a relatively new phenomena in electoral politics, so the 2011 federal campaign provided the first opportunity to study it closely in Canada. Many unions indicated that the 2011 elections were the first time they used NSM for electoral purposes (CUPE-N 2012, CUPE-0 2012, PSAC 2012). Additionally, there is very little research on the use of NSM by organizations and social movements for political purposes and most of the existing research focuses on the use of NSM by political leaders (Small 2008), candidates (Hagar 2011), and government organizations. Ontario was chosen as it is the province with the largest number of union members, the labour movement in the province has historically been active in electoral politics, and the emergence in the past decade of the Working Families Coalition provides for an extra dimension worth studying.

The paper starts with the hypothesis that those unions which have traditionally been strong supporters of the NDP will be much more likely to use NSM to encourage members to vote New Democrat. We believe this to be the case, in part, because the NDP and many unions have a 'shared ideological commitment' to social democracy, and their relationship and commitment to social democracy has survived dramatic changes to party finance laws in Canada which have banned union donations to political parties (Jansen & Young 2009, 658). Another set of unions has taken up a strategy of encouraging strategic voting during elections. NSM provides an avenue for unions to better co-ordinate strategic voting on a riding-by-riding basis, hence we also wish to explore how the strategic voting unions use NSM.

This paper is divided into four main sections. The first section overviews the literature

on the political uses of NSM. The second discusses the current state of union-party relations in Canada. Next, we discuss the case study of the two elections, including a discussion of our methodological approaches. The final section concludes by sketching out some remarks on how unions use NSM during elections, and suggests avenues for further research on this emerging topic.

NSM and Politics

The rise of NSM has altered the way that members of society communicate with each other, the way that organizations communicate with the public, and the way that the public interacts with organizations. Before the adoption of NSM, web-based communication was primarily unidirectional—websites would present information in the same manner that a brochure may highlight key components of a particular organization. The development of NSM platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Blogger, Wordpress, YouTube, Foursquare, LinkedIn, and many others separate themselves from traditional website-based experiences by allowing user-generated content, a high level of interaction, and the ability to cost-effectively communicate with a large number of individuals. Users are able to tweet, nudge, poke, post text, video and images with near instantaneous speed.

NSM has been found to have an impact on representative democracy, democratic participation, and the deliberative quality of democracy (della Porta 2011). Relating to representative democracy, the use of the Internet has improved communication between governments, elected officials, and citizens. Government administrators are also able to acquire feedback from the public on program implementation. NSM has improved democratic participation by allowing a larger number of voices to be heard in the political process. Dahlgren (2009, p. 190) explained “The open and accessible character of the net means that

traditional centres of power have less informational and ideational control over their environment than previously.” Political information can be directly obtained by citizens whereas in the past, the information was available after being mediated by politicians or media outlets. NSM also improves the deliberative quality of democracy by increasing the pluralism of sources of information.

The impact of NSM on democracy is mixed. Tedesco found that online interactivity made young adults feel more politically informed, and “more valuable and useful to the political process,” (2004, p. 196). A number of scholars have found that increased online participation led to greater political involvement (Boulianne, 2009; Bucy & Gregson, 2001; Hardy & Scheufele, 2005; Shah, Cho, Eveland & Kwak, 2005). In addition to encouraging engagement among citizens who are already politically active, online participation also encourages previously disengaged citizens to become more politically active (Krueger, 2002; Ward, Gibson & Lusoli, 2003). A number of scholars have raised shortcomings in the ability of NSM to create effective political change. One of the limitations presented by NSM deals with its ineffective usage. Simply having a smartphone, or a Twitter or Facebook account does not naturally lead to engagement online. Hagar (2011) found that the usage of NSM did not have an impact on the electoral success of candidates in the 2010 municipal elections but that it was largely attributed to poor usage. Candidates and voters did not go to any great length to encourage discussion online. Most online content was static and a rehashing of content was found in other platforms (eg. newspaper articles, websites). Effective usage is essential to success. Overall, the potential for effective online interaction to encourage political participation seems possible.

NSM’s ability to affect political change also appears to be divided by whether a campaign is conducted by a loose social movement network or by an established organization.

Della Porta argued that “organisations with a longer history would be more reluctant to adopt [social media] or, even when they do, they continue to use it similarly to the old media of communication without exploiting many of its more innovative aspects such as interactivity,” (2005, p. 167). NSM is often more effectively used in organizing broad-based social movements. Established organizations appear to have trouble adopting NSM into their existing communication structures and procedures. Newer organizations with limited resources appear to be most likely to use the internet most effectively (Bennett 2003).

NSM lends itself easily to large-scale mobilization over broad issues in social movements and protests. NSM was effectively used in mobilizing protest in Tunisia and Egypt during the Arab Spring as well as organizing international protests against the War in Iraq (Della Porta & Mosca 2005). The Occupy Movement was also fueled by NSM; protesters and people interested in the movement could join or follow discussions and events on Twitter by using the many location-based Twitter hashtags (ie. #OccupyWS, #OccupyTO), and produced 400,000-500,000 tweets per day as well as a constant stream of video on Livestream and YouTube (Preston 2011). In Ontario, a Facebook page protesting proposed changes to graduated licensing, with 117 000 members, was cited by Premier McGuinty as a major reason the legislation introducing the changes was aborted (Benzie & Talaga 2008).

Established organizations have much more difficulty using NSM in order to raise awareness or encourage action on issues. Smith (1997) found that established organizations take a much more conservative approach to using NSM. Established organizations may be used to using traditional channels of raising awareness and protest and therefore may not feel the need to focus on NSM since they already have a method that works, or they are unaware of how to effectively use NSM. Often, organizations may be reluctant to give up some degree of control to

the general public as is required in NSM usage. Unions, which are established organizations, reinforced these findings. Based on our interviews, it was apparent that incorporating social media into existing communications divisions was a difficult decision since the responsibility often fell on individuals with other responsibilities or was shared among several individuals. As a result of what appeared to be difficulty incorporating NSM into existing communications structures, a lack of existing NSM policies or plan of action, many major Canadian trade unions simply had no presence at all on NSM, and another group had created a Facebook site or Twitter account, but had left them almost completely inactive.

Effective NSM usage depends upon a number of important factors: regular usage, interactivity, and the creation of engaging content. Regular updates, posts, and replies are important in order to keep information fresh, relevant, and to maintain user engagement. After the elections, PSAC has focused on posing questions to Facebook followers that encourage a response or encouraged an action outside of the social media platform. Since the election, PSAC has maintained engaging content that encourages responses with a creative angle. Their ‘Third Choice’ campaign features an image on a squirrel being crossed out by a big ‘X’ to represent ousting the Harper Conservatives and pose questions to followers. One post asked:

“There (will be) more people employed in a single Tim Hortons than are employed by Parks Canada nationally to preserve and care for millions of archeological historic objects in storage and on display.”
The government has cut the number of conservators from 33 to just eight. Any thoughts?

The post contained a link to a Toronto Star article on the cuts, encouraged comments by several users, and was re-shared 19 times. Another post encouraged users to share personal stories or connections to the proposed budget cuts:

Are you worried that Canadians are going to suffer long-term consequences as a result of the government's short-sighted budget cuts? Every job cut affects a person's life. Is there anyone you know who's suddenly facing an uncertain future?

Engaging content is not the only requirement for interactivity. Frequency of updates or posts increases the level of interactivity. Updates that have intervals of several weeks are not likely to receive much attention from the general public.

Interactivity is important to maintaining effective NSM usage. Websites are content rich but are primarily one-directional communication platforms and do not offer much opportunity for interaction between users online. Interactivity is defined as a near real-time two-way communication where the roles of the sender and receiver are interchangeable (Hagar 2011; Kiouisis 2002; McMillan and Hwang 2002). Facebook, Twitter, and other NSM platforms are based upon expedient interaction. They require organizations to consciously tailor their posts and tweets in order to encourage replies by followers. NSM “give users the means to generate, seek, and share content selectively, and to interact with other individuals or groups, on a scale that was impractical with traditional mass media,” (Lievrouw & Livingstone 2002, p. 9). Simply tweeting or posting links to news articles or press releases likely will not encourage much discussion on NSM platforms.

The exploration of past political usage of NSM, the lower usage by organizations in comparison to social movements, and the requirements for effective NSM usage will aid in our analysis of NSM use by unions in the 2011 federal and Ontario elections. The next section will summarize the history of union and political party relations in Canada.

Union-Party Relations In Canada (1)

The early history of both the NDP, and its forerunners the CCF, show that there was no absolute relationship between labour and the party - some unions completely supported the party, while others eschewed electoral politics or endorsed other parties (Abella 1973, Horowitz 1968, Penner 1992). With the cementing of neoliberal politics in Canada in the aftermath of the 1988

election, federal and provincial governments of every political party, including NDP provincial governments, led an assault on trade unions, and their freedoms, designed to weaken the strength of organized labour in Canada (Panitch & Swartz 2003, chapter 1). While the early relationship between labour and the party was certainly shaky, the first major rupture came in the aftermath of the 1988 federal election.

The 1988 federal election was fought almost exclusively on the single issue of the proposed free trade deal between Canada and the United States. The labour movement was almost wholly opposed to the deal, fearing loss of jobs, loss of Canadian sovereignty and a dramatic decline in welfare state programs and spending. As a result, many unions urged the NDP to campaign solely in opposition to the free trade deal; the Progressive Conservatives, led by Brian Mulroney were clear proponents of the deal and the Turner Liberals had come out in opposition. On the advice of public opinion polling, the NDP chose to downplay the issues of free trade, choosing to campaign on a multitude of issues including free trade. Almost immediately after the election, which Mulroney won, organized labour began to publically criticize the NDP. The criticism was partially led by the Bob White, then leader of the CAW, who accused the NDP of having ignored labour's concerns by not focussing on free trade during the election (Archer & Whitehorn 1997, 46).

The 1990s were a very difficult decade for the federal NDP, seeing them lose their official party status in the 1993 federal election. The federal party was further mired by the actions of its provincial cousins: the close ties between the federal and provincial parties has meant that the actions of the provincial NDP governments have implications for the federal party's electoral chances (Jansen & Young 2009, 666). Besides right-drifting provincial NDP governments in the prairies (see Savage 2010), the federal party was severely punished for the

Social Contract Act, introduced by the Ontario NDP (see this section, below). One of the major results of the 1990s was a re-evaluation of the relationship between the NDP and organized labour by both actors.

While the NDP received a good deal of their funding from the labour movement (Jansen & Young 2009), the party had never received the votes that the merger between the CCF and the CLC were expected to bring. As table 1 shows, the NDP has never received a majority of votes from trade union members - trade unionists have voted for the Liberals and even the small-c conservative party (whether they go by the moniker Reform, Canadian Alliance, or Conservative) in recent years. For its part, many unions felt that they were providing funding to the NDP, but the party was not listening to labour's concerns, let alone campaigning on them or introducing labour-friendly public policy while in office.

[table 1 about here]

The CLC has partially changed their electoral politics strategy in the 2000s; it now has a two-pronged approach to electoral politics. The CLC does maintain an active 'labour outreach committee' which involves a group of partisan unions, who work closely with the NDP. The outreach committee consists of representatives from CUPE, CEP, IAMAW, USW, UFCW, and IBEW (Savage 2010, 12). In tandem with direct partisan support through the outreach committee, the CLC has ran a 'better choices' campaign in 2004, 2006, 2008, and 2011. The 'better choices' campaign broke the election down issue-by-issue, and encouraged union members to consider these issues and make an informed decision about what the 'better choice' for working Canadians would be. While the better choices campaigns encouraged members to consider the election issue by issue, the campaigns were still thinly veiled attempts to support the NDP. Erickson & Laycock note that 'if one read even slightly between the lines in the CLC

website stories on the [2008] election, their partisan preferences were clear' (2009, 112).

Whitehorn similarly notes that in 2006 the better choices campaign involved a 'partial convergence' with the language employed by the NDP election campaign (2006, 106). In sum, the 'better choices' campaign advocated positions consistent with NDP policy, but never advocated a vote for the NDP, leaving people to draw their own conclusions (Jansen & Young 2009, 672). Indeed, as we note below, this strategy is very similar to many union's NSM strategies: presenting a policy position consistent with the NDP, and leaving members to draw their own conclusions.

Before leaving a discussion of union-party relations in the federal arena, it is worth noting that 'it is difficult to draw universalizing conclusions about union-party relationships in Canada because our labour movement appears to have no uniform electoral strategy' (Pilon, Ross & Savage 2011, 26). This is evidenced by the simple fact that beyond the dual approach by the CLC to electoral politics, numerous CLC affiliates pursue their own electoral strategy that is completely unrelated to the 'better choices' campaign or the campaign of the NDP. For example, numerous unions encourage their members to vote strategically, that is, vote for whatever candidate has the best chance of defeating the Conservative candidate in their riding. PSAC is one such union, and is has endorsed candidates from the Liberals, NDP, and BQ (Savage 2010, 13). Similarly, the CAW has recently endorsed a strategy of strategic voting after years of supporting the NDP. This is to say nothing of labour politics in Quebec, 'where the national question represents an important political cleavage, unions have bypassed the NDP in favour of sovereigntist parties' (ibid, 21).

In Ontario labour politics remain equally complex. In 1990, under the leadership of Bob Rae, the NDP formed government in Ontario for the first time. The early 1990s saw Ontario in

an economic downturn that was, at that time, the worst recession since the Great Depression. The NDP found itself with a skyrocketing deficit and, in an attempt to reduce government expenditures, unilaterally imposed a wage freeze on the Ontario public service. This freeze came through *The Social Contract Act*, introduced in 1993, which mandated a three year wage freeze, *including* a wage freeze on already previously negotiated collective agreements. The *Act* was a governmental assault on trade unions, coming from their supposed political arm in the NDP. As Panitch and Swartz convincingly argue ‘the significance of the Ontario Social Contract was that it shattered the confidence of the trade unions in their central political strategy: electing NDP governments’ (2003, 176). Besides shattering the confidence in the Ontario NDP, the federal NDP also experienced backlash to the *Act*.

The response to the *Act* was not uniform across all unions in Ontario. Many public sector unions, and the CAW, condemned the NDP for their attack on free collective bargaining and would not support the party in the 1995 Ontario election. Other unions, however, remained loyal to the NDP and continued with the electoral strategy of NDP support. These unions included many prominent private sector unions like the USW, CEP, and UFCW (Walchuk 2010, 32).

The 1995 election saw the hard-right Progressive Conservatives, under the leadership of Mike Harris, form government in Ontario. The neoliberal agenda forwarded by the Harris government, including their assaults on organized labour, led many unions in Ontario to adopt a strategy of strategic voting during the 1998 election. The strategic voting campaign in 1998 was poorly organized, and did not lead to its stated goal: the Progressive Conservatives were re-elected (Tanguay 2002). While strategic voting was a failure in 1998, the 2003 Ontario election saw the emergence of the Working Families Coalition (WFC) in Ontario; the WFC was much more successful than the previous less co-ordinated attempts at strategic voting. 2003 saw the

Liberals elected, ousting the Progressive Conservatives. While the WFC was clearly not solely responsible for the election of the Liberals, their influence is undeniable.

The WFC consists of a coalition of the CAW, IBEW, Millwrights, International Union of Operating Engineers Local 793, Ontario Provincial Council of Painters and Allied Trades, International Brotherhood of Boilermakers Local 128, Ontario Pipe Trades Council, Ironworkers Local 721, and all of the teachers' unions in the province (Walchuk 2010, 37; Pilon, Ross & Savage 2011, 26). The stated goal of the WFC was to prevent the Progressive Conservatives from being elected in 2003, and subsequently returning the Liberals to office in 2007 and 2011. The coalition of unions involved in the WFC has never directly come out and endorsed the Liberals in their advertising, relying instead on negative ads targeted at the policies of the Progressive Conservatives. While the ads themselves may be attack ads directed at the Progressive Conservatives, the WFC itself has donated substantial funds to both the Liberal Party of Ontario and individual Liberal candidates (Walchuk 2010). A close examination of the WFC shows just how murky union-party relations are in Ontario (and Canada): the IBEW, for example, is a participant in the WFC in Ontario - an organization which directly funds the Liberals and indirectly encourages votes for the Liberals - but federally remains a partisan supporter of the NDP.

This section of the paper has tried to briefly sort out the quagmire of union-party relations in Ontario and federally in Canada. As many other scholars of union-party relations have noted, this is no easy task: alliances are ever shifting, and the federal nature of Canadian politics means there are at least eleven separate labour movements in Canada. Our attempts to sort out the nature of union-party relations are summarized in table two. These linkages are important for the overall understanding of how unions have used NSM during election campaigns.

[table two about here]

NSM, Labour, and the 2011 Elections

The main hypothesis in this essay is that the traditional NDP unions will be more likely to use NSM to encourage their members to vote NDP. We came to this hypothesis through the assumption that unions will be less guarded about their politics in NSM, largely because one must ‘opt in’ to union communications on NSM. Thus, we suggest that there will be a higher proportion of like-minded activists ‘following’ their union on Facebook and Twitter, and these activists may be more open to political discussion and advice than non-activists. CUPE Ontario suggested that this thinking played into their NSM strategy noting that “the members who are active and engaged [on NSM] are left leaning. The people who are already engaged are sympathetic to the NDP” (CUPE-O 2012).

Through the course of the 2011 federal election, the following labour centrals and unions were ‘followed’ on Facebook: CLAC, The CLC, CUPE, NUPGE, The OFL, OPSEU, PSAC, SEIU, UFCW, UNITE HERE, and Workers United. The quantity and content of all their posts from 17 March 2011 to 2 May 2011 were collected and analysed. The official election period started on 26 March 2011, when Parliament was dissolved; the early start date was chosen to include as much commentary from unions as possible on the Federal budget. The budget was a major issue leading up to the election campaign, and it was a confidence motion springing from the budget debate that led to the dissolution of Parliament. ACTRA, The CAW, CEP, IAMAW, and Steelworkers were not included in this set of data collection as none of them had active Facebook pages.(2) For the 2011 Ontario Election, we followed CUPE, CUPE-Ontario, the OFL, ONA, OPSEU, OSSTF, SEIU, UFCW on Facebook and OPSEU, CLAC, UFCW, CLC, the Steelworkers., CUPE Ontario, OFL, CAW, ONA, ETFO, and the Working Families

Coalition on Twitter. Some unions continued to actively post on Facebook during the provincial election campaign, however, they did not post at all about the Ontario election, so data from these unions was omitted. We surmise that most of the chose not to participate in the Ontario election because they were primarily organized workers in under the Federal labour code, or were federal labour federations, this was confirmed during our interviews. These unions and federations were CLAC, the CLC, NUPGE, PSAC, UNITE HERE, and Workers United. Data was not collected from Twitter from NUPGE and SEIU for the same reason. Finally, the following unions had no presence on Facebook during the Ontario election: ACTRA, CAW, CEP, IAMAW, and the Steelworkers; and CUPW, and UNITE HERE did not have a Twitter presence during the same election.

Following the collection of content from Facebook and Twitter feeds, we conducted semi-structured interviews with communication representatives from selected unions to discuss their overall NSM strategy, their specific NSM strategy for the elections in question, and the overlap between communications and political action in their unions. We interviewed both private and public sector unions, unions active in both the federal and provincial elections, unions active in just one election, and ‘NDP unions’ as well as ‘non-NDP unions.’

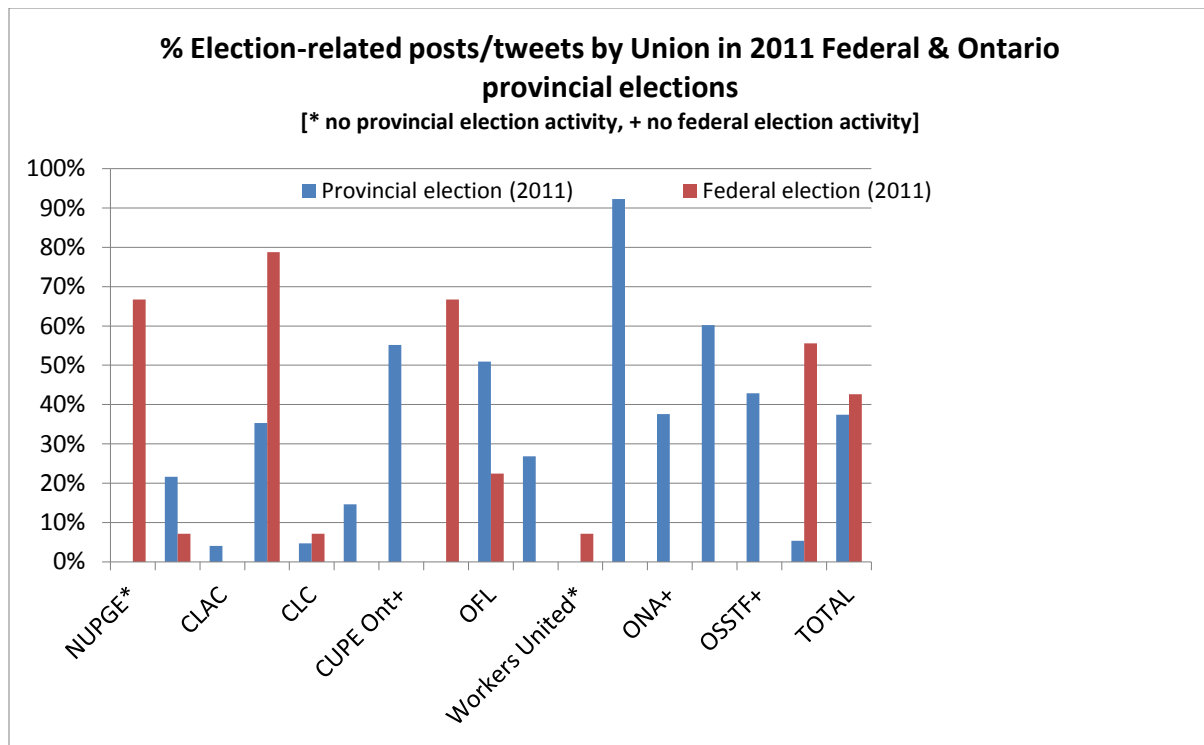
In total, 1,512 posts were analyzed in the 2011 federal and Ontario provincial election. 37.4 percent of the posts by unions were election-related in the Ontario provincial election and 42.6 percent for the federal election. 28 percent of posts were on Facebook while 72 percent were on Twitter during the Ontario provincial election. The posts in the 2011 Ontario election displayed very little interactivity. Interactivity is determined by gauging the level of two-way communication occurring online. 77.6 percent of posts were comments while only 4.9 percent were replies and 17.3 percent were re-tweets or re-posts. With less than 5% of posts being

replies, this presents a convincing case that there was very little two-way communication on Facebook and Twitter on the unions' accounts. The low interactivity could be explained by challenges faced by established organizations compared to social movements when using NSM. Many of the posts were simply re-hashed press releases, links to existing content or statements that did not encourage discussion. For example:

- Ontario NDP pledges to restore Ontario farm worker rights [weblink] (UFCW September 26 2011)
- New OFL poll shows NDP surging in 8 ridings. Poised to win new seats from #Liberals. See results: [weblink] #voteON #ONDP #OLP (CUPE-O September 30 2011)
- New OFL poll shows NDP surging ahead in 8 ridings. Poised to win new seats from #Liberals. See results: [weblink] #voteON (OFL September 30 2011)
- New @OntarioNurses video! Oct. 6: Vote to Safeguard Public #Health Care in #Ontario [weblink] #VoteON #ONpoli #ONelxn #p2ca (ONA September 20 2011)

Most posts were not written in a way to encourage discussion. There were very few questions posed to followers on Twitter that may have encouraged responses.

Type of post by unions in the Ontario provincial election	
Comment	839 77.8%
Response	53 4.9%
Retweet/Repost	186 17.3%



Relatively few unions were highly active in disseminating election-related content in both the 2011 federal and provincial elections. Most of the active unions were primarily active in either the federal election or the provincial election. UFCW, OFL, and CUPE (if you consider both the provincial entities and federal as one) were the only unions that displayed a high level of election-related usage in both elections.

Election related posts/tweets by union in the Ontario provincial election														
Election related?	OPSEU	CLAC	UFCW	CLC	SEIU	CUPE Ont	OFL	CAW	WFC Ont	ONA	ETFO	OSSTF	CUPE Nat	TOTAL
NO	69 78.4%	48 96%	22 64.7%	41 95.3%	76 85.4%	95 44.8%	57 49.1%	30 73.2%	5 7.7%	68 62.4%	37 39.8%	8 57.1%	89 94.7%	675 62.6%
YES	19 21.6%	2 4%	12 35.3%	2 4.7%	13 14.6%	117 55.2%	59 50.9%	11 26.8%	60 92.3%	41 37.6%	56 60.2%	6 42.9%	5 5.3%	403 37.4%
Total														

Party Support During the 2011 Provincial and Federal Elections

Unions suggesting NDP support during the Ontario provincial election														
Suggests NDP Support?	OPSEU	CLAC	UFCW	CLC	SEIU	CUP E Ont	OFL	CAW	WFC Ont	ONA	ETFO	OSSTF	CUP E Nat	TOTAL
NO	14	2	10	1	12	56	19	11	60	39	56	6	4	290

	73.7%	100%	83.3%	50%	92.3%	47.9%	32.2%	100%	100%	95.1%	100%	100%	80%	72%
YES	5 26.3%		2 16.7%	1 50%	1 7.7%	61 52.1%	40 67.8%			2 4.9%			1 20%	113 28%
Total	19 100%	2 100%	12 100%	2 100%	13 100%	117 100%	59 100%	11 100%	60 100%	41 100%	56 100%	6 100%	5 100%	403 100%

Unions suggesting strategic voting during the Ontario provincial election														
Suggests strategic voting	OPSEU	CLAC	UFCW	CLC	SEIU	CUPE Ont	OFL	CAW	WFC Ont	ONA	ETFO	OSSTF	CUPE Nat	TOTAL
NO	18 94.7%	2 100%	10 83.3%	2 100%	9 69.2%	117 100%	57 96.6%	9 81.8%	58 96.7%	37 90.2%	47 83.9%	2 33.3%	3 60%	371 92.1%
YES	1 5.3%		2 16.7%		4 30.8%		2 3.4%	2 18.2%	2 3.3%	4 9.8%	9 16.1%	4 66.7%	2 40%	32 7.9%
Total	19 100%	2 100%	12 100%	2 100%	13 100%	117 100%	59 100%	11 100%	60 100%	41 100%	56 100%	6 100%	5 100%	403 100%

During the Ontario provincial election, the unions that provided the most support for the NDP were CUPE Ontario, the OFL, and the CLC; each having over 50 percent of election-related posts supporting the NDP. OPSEU, UFCW, SEIU, and the ONA also had at least a few posts that supported the NDP in some way during the provincial election. 28 percent of all election-related Twitter and Facebook posts during the Ontario election supported the NDP.

Only 7.9 percent of all election-related Twitter and Facebook posts during the Ontario election supported strategic voting. Support for strategic voting was much more difficult to identify than identifying NDP support. NDP support was clear as posts would name candidates or the party explicitly. Support for strategic voting was more implicit and required more interpretation. The authors looked for directions to support candidates from multiple parties, or language that could lead voters to consider multiple parties such as “vote for education friendly candidates.” Attacks against Hudak were not considered to be comments that supported strategic voting. Our approach to identifying support for strategic voting was conservative and therefore likely was underestimated a bit. The organizations that supported strategic voting the most were

SEIU, ETFO, ONA and OSSTF.

The Working Families Coalition (WFC) was the largest NSM user during the Ontario election. WFC primarily attacked Hudak and did not place support behind any party during the election. WFC focused on a variety of issues including labour, the environment, health care and education but it was apparent that their primary goal was to discredit Hudak and the PC party. The WFC attacked individual Conservative candidates and Hudak. The WFC would respond to tweets from PC candidates that shot back at WFC and would encourage individuals to take action and speak out against individual PC candidates and Hudak.

Federal election

Election related Facebook posts during the Federal election											
Election related?	OPSEU	NUPGE	CLAC	UFCW	CLC	OFL	UNITE	PSAC	Workers United	CUPE Nat	TOTAL
NO	26 92.9%	2 33.3%	7 100%	11 21.2%	26 92.9%	45 77.6%	31 100%	16 33.3%	13 92.9%	72 44.4%	249 57.4%
YES	2 7.1%	4 66.7%		41 78.8%	2 7.1%	13 22.4%		32 66.7%	1 7.1%	90 55.6%	185 42.6%

Posts supporting NDP during Federal election											
Support NDP?	OPSEU	NUPGE	CLAC	UFCW	CLC	OFL	UNITE	PSAC	Workers United	CUPE Nat	TOTAL
NO	2 100%	4 100%		8 19.5%	1 50%	4 30.8%		27 84.4%		1 1.1%	47 25.4%
YES				33 80.5%	1 50%	9 69.2%		5 15.6%	1 100%	89 98.9%	138 74.6%

Posts suggesting strategic voting during Federal election											
Strategic voting?	OPSEU	NUPGE	CLAC	UFCW	CLC	OFL	UNITE	PSAC	Workers United	CUPE Nat	TOTAL
NO	2 100%			41 100%	2 100%	13 100%		30 93.8%	1 100%	90 100%	179 96.8%
YES		4 100%						2 6.3%			6 3.2%

CUPE, UFCW, and OFL had the highest number of posts in support of the NDP during the federal election. The CLC and Workers United had too few posts to make a judgement on their

support. The CLC has generally been supportive of the NDP during election campaigns, so these results suggest that the CLC has ignored potential uses for NSM, whether willfully or not. 74 percent of election-related Facebook posts during the 2011 federal election were in support of the NDP. NUPGE and PSAC were the only posters in support of strategic voting during the federal election. Only 3.2 percent of election-related posts during the federal election were in support of strategic voting.

Analysis of NSM use during both elections

CUPE, which is closely tied to the NDP both federally and in Ontario was, in both elections, unambiguously supportive of the NDP through both Facebook and Twitter. CUPE has had a long history of supporting the NDP, and saw the support on NSM as a natural extension of this history. CUPE National noted that the NDP is their party of choice, while CUPE Ontario relished the opportunity to talk more about the links with the NDP (CUPE-N 2012; CUPE-O 2012). During the federal election campaign CUPE posted numerous status updates urging members to vote NDP, to become involved in local NDP campaigns, and to donate time and money to the party. The union provided links to NDP candidates' profile pages, websites, and events hosted by candidates. Early on in the federal election campaign, the union provided a link to an essay written by the national president, Paul Moist, "Why I am a New Democrat." The posts by the union sought to draw members into the campaign, explaining why the policy positions the NDP was advocating were of importance to CUPE members. The communications department at CUPE national saw NSM as a way to link the overall political action strategy (elect New Democrats) with the communications department. Core issues and ideas, as well as key ridings targeted by the political action staff, were complimented with NSM use (CUPE-N 2012).

CUPE national remained relatively removed from the Ontario provincial election campaign, however the infrequent posts about the provincial election were supportive of the Ontario NDP. The Ontario Division of CUPE was openly supportive of the NDP. Their NSM posts were very similar to the posts of CUPE national during the federal election campaign - CUPE-O linked to NDP candidates pages, NDP websites and events, and encouraged members to become involved in the campaign. Further, CUPE-O engaged in some limited interactivity with some of the followers on their page. In one example a member questioned CUPE-O's support of the NDP, recalling *The Social Contract Act*, to which Fred Hahn, president of the Ontario division, commented that the NDP was the party of the labour movement in Ontario. CUPE Ontario's twitter account (@cupeontario) also contained several links to NDP candidate pages and information about NDP rallies occurring throughout the province.

The UFCW, another NDP union, was generally supportive of the party on NSM, although not to the extent that CUPE was. During the federal campaign, initially the UFCW did not post frequently, and when it did, the posts were generally anti-Conservative, rather than partisan posts for the NDP. For example, on 13 April 2011 the UFCW posted a list of the 'top 10 scandals by Harper' on their Facebook page. The page remained relatively post free until April 19th when the union hosted a "Twitter Town Hall" with Jack Layton, reposting the 'tweets' and their replies to the Facebook page. The goal of the "Town Hall" was to have followers of the UFCW (nominally members of the union) ask questions to Layton via Twitter, and have the leader respond. The "Town Hall" on Twitter was run in tandem with a phone-in "Town Hall." The Union organized approximately 8,200 members on a phone call with Layton. Contents of the call were tweeted out by the union, and responses from Twitter were also brought back into the phone conversation (UFCW 2012). The union also provided commentary on the questions and

responses in real time on Twitter. This showed a good deal of interactivity, something lacking in other unions' NSM campaigns during the election. The goal of the "Town Hall" was to mobilize young workers in 40 – 50 ridings identified as key by the union, engage these members with the NDP, and, ultimately, get them out to vote on election day with the stated purpose of switching these close ridings into the hands of the NDP (UFCW 2012).

After this town hall, the posts by the UFCW got much more partisan in nature, openly encouraging members to vote NDP in the election. A similar pattern developed during the provincial campaign in Ontario: early on, the UFCW was relatively quiet on NSM, and when the union did make posts, they were ambiguous, and generally anti-Progressive Conservative. Near the mid-point of the campaign, the UFCW became very aggressive, and openly supportive of the NDP, in their Facebook usage. The UFCW did not have as much activity online through Twitter but two out of its twelve tweets during the campaign were in support of the NDP.

The OFL also openly campaigned for the NDP on NSM during both election campaigns, however its online presence on Facebook was minimal in comparison to many of the previous unions mentioned. Indeed, its presence on Facebook, during both campaigns, was essentially limited to importing posts from Twitter to the OFL Facebook page, rather than making dedicated posts on Facebook. The OFL became much more supportive of the NDP during the final days of the Ontario election campaign, when they began to post more frequently, with posts encouraging members to vote NDP. While the OFL openly campaigned for the NDP, the very minimal CLC presence on NSM during the federal election was seemingly a version of their 'better choices' campaign. On Twitter, the OFL tweeted several times supporting NDP candidates across Ontario and focused on 'voting for healthcare'. When the CLC posted on Facebook, it tended to be links to the CLC website, which in turn outlined a policy issue, the CLC's stance on the issue,

and an encouragement to think about that issue when voting. However, there was a good deal of convergence between the CLC and the NDP on policy issues during the campaign, and it was quite clear what the CLC's partisan choice was.

NUPGE, and their Ontario affiliate OPSEU, have both espoused strategic voting as an electoral strategy for labour. Both of these unions barely used NSM for political purposes during the election: OPSEU's posts were few and far between, and the most direct political message from the union was to urge followers to 'vote for public services,' an appeal made on election day. NUPGE's posts were also infrequent, and were exclusively anti-Harper in their nature. Interestingly, neither OPSEU nor NUPGE advocated a party or politician to vote *for*. The message from their posts, which could only be inferred by reading between the lines, was vote for any party that was not the Conservatives. All of NUPGE's election related posts were in support of strategic voting for the federal election. It is not surprising that this strategy did not produce the desired results: strategic voting only has a chance of working when voters are completely informed as to who the strategic choice is (Blais et. al 2001, 244; Blais & Turgeon 2004; Merolla & Stephenson 2007, 237).

During the Ontario campaign, five unions used NSM to further a strategic voting agenda to varying degrees. SEIU, a union which has traditionally supported the NDP, encouraged its followers to cast their vote on a single issue, health care, for the 2011 Ontario provincial election. This was an implicit call for strategic voting, as the SEIU suggested that the Progressive Conservatives could not be trusted to support well funded public health care in Ontario. The SEIU went so far as to change the name of their Facebook page from "SEIU" to "Vote4HealthCare" for the election campaign (4). That said, their NSM presence was quite minimal in comparison to other unions and union federations. The ONA and OSSTF also

participated in the election campaign on their Facebook page, and both unions have embraced strategic voting in the past, with the OSSTF a member of the WFC. It is strange, then, that the OSSTF's Facebook page, which was quite active during the campaign period, had almost no mention of the election. During the last day of the campaign, however, the OSSTF posted a picture of rank-and-file members with their arms around Dalton McGuinty - a clear message to the followers of the OSSTF.

The ONA used their Facebook page and Twitter account to advance health care as a major issue in the Ontario election campaign. A common theme of the posts and tweets by the ONA was to 'remember' the cuts to health care and labour unrest in the public service under the Harris government, of which Hudak had been a member. The union also used their Facebook page to call on all party leaders to promise to spend more money on hospital beds and to address the shortfall in funding for hospitals. While the ONA focussed on this single issue, it did not make a clear statement on which party they were endorsing, and indeed, only implicitly suggested that its members should not vote for Hudak by linking Hudak to the previous Harris government.

PSAC utilized a great deal of NSM during the federal election campaign, and presented a cohesive strategy coherent with their larger electoral strategy of strategic voting to keep the Conservatives out of office. The union used their Facebook page to endorse individual candidates, mostly from the BQ and the NDP, in ridings in the National Capital Region. The union also used NSM to endorse specific policies from all non-Conservative parties that the union believed were important to its members. This draws upon the PSAC's general electoral strategy of targeting ridings where Conservative incumbents can be defeated, and trying to relate the election campaign to specific workplace issues (PSAC 2012). The union also used a

combination of Facebook and YouTube for their “If I Were An MP” campaign. This campaign was used to both involve rank-and-file union members in the election campaign, and to attempt to advance specific policy goals of interest of the union. The campaign involved a total of 46 photos and 5 videos, all of rank-and-file members of the union, explaining their job, and an issue that was of particular importance to them. The focus of the campaign was to select rank-and-file members of the union, have them identify that they were a public service worker, explain the job that they do, and then explain what concrete changes they would make to their area of work if they were an MP (ibid).

The policy goals and issues were from a wide selection of PSAC members working in virtually all areas that PSAC organizes in. For example, this early post called for more medical spending:

Hi, my name is Babatunde Adegbamige, I work for Service Canada as a medical adjudicator in the disability unit of of the Canada pension plan. If I were an MP, I would hire international graduate doctors and nurses and put their knowledge and experience into good use. This so we can render prompt and professional service of excellence to Canadians.

This can be contrasted some of the other posts, where the PSAC members advocated for larger changes, not just specific policy goals:

Hello friends. My name is Reuben Marulanda. I work for for Natural Resources Canada. I am a geomatics specialist in the National Capital Region. If I were an MP, I would improve and protect the employment equity policies in the Public Service. Would you vote for me?

The policy positions that the members advocated for ranged from specific ones like universal child care, universal education, protection of public pensions, to more broad policies for social change such as protecting employment equity, hiring more equity seekers in the public service, protection of trade union rights, and the implementation of a more progressive taxation system. What is especially interesting about the public policy goals highlighted in the “If I were an MP campaign” is that they were all chosen by the rank-and-file; neither the union executive or

political action department had a hand in selecting key issues (ibid). This campaign represented a convergence of issues that were important to both the overall political strategy of the union, but also of individual rank-and-file members.

What is particularly interesting about this campaign is that the activists chosen to participate represented the very diverse membership of PSAC: many of the profiled members were women, racialized workers, young workers, and disabled workers were all represented as well. Further, the campaign involved a great deal of interactivity between the union and the members who ‘followed’ the union on Facebook. Many members commented on the “If I were an MP” pictures, and on other posts related to the election. The majority of these comments were positive, however, some members took issue with the union involving itself in electoral politics. Interestingly, PSAC responded to many of these criticisms, defending their positions.

The ETFO heavily promoted its #RefuseToVoteAgainstKids campaign on Twitter in conjunction with its heavy use of TV advertisements that mocked US-style attack ads that attempted to keep education on the political agenda without putting support behind any political party. Most tweets contained links to the advertisements or to the ETFO website that contained information that subtly praised previous education investment by the Liberals. Near the end of the election, one tweet contained a link to a YouTube video with ETFO president Hammond that suggested voting for education and praised the support that has been received in the last few years with the development of full day Kindergarten, educational assistants for youth, and increased education funding. Although the Liberals are not explicitly endorsed, the video does praise many Liberal actions without making any reference to the other political parties.

The CAW did not use Twitter to a large extent during the provincial election, but the tweets that were produced mainly attacked Hudak and provided links to the ‘Vote Smart Ontario’

campaign. The campaign was developed by the CAW and provided information on how to vote strategically in order to stop the development of a Hudak Conservative government in Ontario.

Conclusions

Our findings seem to confirm our initial hypothesis: unions that were traditionally supportive of the NDP used Facebook and Twitter more actively during the campaign, and did so to support a partisan position. The UFCW noted that supporting the CCF, NDP, and social democrats in Canada is “a big part of who we are. We don’t make any apologies for that” (UFCW 2012). This was very similar to positions taken by CUPE National and CUPE Ontario, both of which used NSM to compliment a long history of supporting the NDP. The unions seemed to be able to go further with their vocal support of the NDP through NSM, as members have to choose to be an active recipient of NSM, and these members are more likely to be politically engaged.

The unions that have endorsed strategic voting did not seem to use NSM as much. There are a number of possible reasons for this. Strategic voting would, first, require an explanation to the members of *why* strategic voting is necessary and how one votes strategically. Further, getting access to accurate riding level polling, to assist in making strategic voting choices, is difficult. The strategic voting unions were effective in conveying their “anything but conservative” message to the followers, however they lacked a follow up which would show what candidates were the strategic choice in individual ridings. Even the PSAC, which ran the excellent ‘If I were an MP’ campaign did not translate the policy goals articulated in the campaign into strategic voting choices on a riding-by-riding basis.

The unions did not display a high level of interactivity. There were very few replies or re-tweets on Twitter for most unions. Only 4.9% of tweets were replies, which was quite a low

figure. The content of the tweets did not encourage much discussion, which might explain the low interactivity. The tweets were mostly re-hashed press release-style messages that did not pose questions to voters. Many of the tweets linked to newspaper articles and other webpages that contained content that was from traditional media sources. Also, the low interactivity may have been the result of most unions having a small number of followers. As the number of followers grows, unions may receive an increased amount of interactivity from followers.

It was apparent that NSM was not well utilized during the 2011 federal and Ontario provincial elections by unions. This could be, partially, that many unions saw the 2011 election campaigns as their first real opportunity to use NSM for electoral purposes, and they are still finding the ropes (CUPE-N 2012, CUPE-O 2012, UFCW 2012). Since unions are established organizations, developing NSM use policies and strategies takes time to be incorporated into existing communications systems. NSM offers unions a great opportunity to raise awareness about key issues to union members and put political pressure on candidates who are making use of NSM to a greater extent in their campaigns for office. Many of the Tweets produced by the unions were more like re-hashed press releases rather than the type of content that would encourage online discussion and responses from followers. There were few questions posed to voters or any substantive discussion of most political issues.

Unions have the potential to use NSM to their advantage both during and outside of elections. On Twitter, unions must focus on developing their base of followers. Most of the unions followed had between 700-1,400 followers. Most unions only followed 300 users or less. This compares with the number of followers for most individual MP accounts-not for regional, provincial or national organizations. This means that currently, unions are not listening to many different voices and are not broadcasting their messages to many followers either. Following

more users usually results in them following back and therefore this is one of the basic strategies for increasing followers. Second, unions need to tweet more regularly: if unions are going to have a Twitter account, they should have someone actively tweeting regularly and monitoring discussion on a daily basis. Third, it is not enough to tweet regularly, but tweets must also be dynamic, engaging and actively seek to encourage responses from followers. Posing questions to followers, asking for feedback on links, commenting on followers' tweets will help build discussion online. Unions can develop unique hashtags for each topic to help monitor online discussion.

Many unions have suggested that NSM gives unions the opportunity to “reach out to the rank-and-file” (CUPE-O 2012), to “give tools to the members to run campaigns from the grass roots” (PSAC 2012), and to “increase solidarity as [nsm] gives activists a chance to stick up for the union” (UFCW 2012). These are all excellent potential uses for NSM in the labour movement, but the first step to developing these uses is to build a solid base of followers on both Twitter and Facebook, and have a good deal of interactivity between the aforementioned grass roots rank-and-file and the political action departments of the unions. Between elections, unions can use social media to spread information on labour issues and conflicts as well as maintain pressure on elected officials. With approximately two-thirds of MPs on Twitter, unions can easily organize coordinated twitter campaigns on MPs.

As mentioned before, Bennett (2003) found that established organizations have difficulty finding how to use NSM effectively than newer, looser organizations and social movements. This study appears consistent with those findings. Unions appeared to have great difficulty in effectively using NSM. This difficulty for established organizations often is the result of having multiple authors, a larger communication team and several layers of approval that

communication strategies have to travel through before being disseminated. Some of the unions were still developing NSM use policies or strategies or used the last elections as a test for future NSM election strategies (CUPE-N 2012, CUPE-O 2012, PSAC 2012). The existing communication strategies work well for traditional print and broadcast media that operates at a slower pace than NSM.

NSM can play a key role in union renewal and coalition building between unions and other progressive social movements. Many unions use their NSM to post about organization drives, successful ratification votes, strikes, coalitions with other progressive movements, and days of action. This allows unions to coordinate larger actions and strategies, however, there is always the problem of translating followers on Facebook into boots on the ground at actions and protests (CUPE-O 2012). The UFCW has noted that NSM has a role to play in union renewal, as it allows the union to reach out to young workers, “the future of labour” (UFCW 2012). The union sees NSM as “the new church basement and tavern,” where workers can congregate and discuss issues of importance (ibid). CUPE National has recognized that NSM allows broader cooperation on progressive movements online, and has worked with the anti-asbestos campaign “Canada Causes Cancer” as well as the anti-Conservative website “Shit Harper Did.” CUPE National notes that working with these campaigns, as well as broader political work on NSM, give members tools so they can do political action work themselves (CUPE-N 2012).

NSM gives trade unions an excellent opportunity to connect with their rank-and-file members, to work and communicate with other unions and other progressive movements, and to allow fast communication to both members and the public. Besides short messages, innovative unions can create a cohesive political action campaign, drawing on components of traditional media and NSM. The PSAC is currently engaged in a campaign against austerity measures, the

so-called “third choice campaign” which utilizes traditional web based communication, NSM, print media, and internal union communication. Many of the unions that are engaged in NSM now note that they are relative newcomers to NSM, and that they have many areas that can be improved upon. Given time and a cohesive strategy, unions can use NSM very effectively in upcoming elections, as well as in political campaigns between elections.

Appendix I: Abbreviations Used

ACTRA: Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists

BQ: Bloc Québécois

CAW: Canadian Auto Workers, fully the National Automobile, Aerospace, Transportation and General Workers Union of Canada

CCF: Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation

CEP: Communications, Energy, and Paperworkers Union of Canada

CLAC: The Christian Labour Association of Canada

CLC: Canadian Labour Congress

CUPE: The Canadian Union of Public Employees

ETFO: Elementary Teacher’s Federation of Ontario

IAMAW: International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

NDP: New Democratic Party

NSM: New Social Media

NUPGE: National Union of Public and General Employees

OFL: The Ontario Federation of Labour

ONA: Ontario Nurses Association

OPSEU: The Ontario Public Service Employees Union

OSSTF: The Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation

PSAC: The Public Service Alliance of Canada

SEIU: Service Employees International Union

UFCW: The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union

UNITE HERE: The union of workers in the hotel, gaming, food service, manufacturing, textile, laundry, and airport industries.

WFC: Working Families Coalition

Notes

1. This section reviews the literature on the relationship between the NDP and the labour movement at the federal level and in Ontario, as these two jurisdictions are where the data for our case study was collected. For the sake of brevity, the literature focuses primarily on the relationship after the 1988 federal election, considered a major breaking point in the relationship between the NDP and the labour movement. For those interested in a deeper historical overview, or for labour-party relationships in other provinces, see Carroll & Ratner (2005), Horowitz (1968), Savage (2010)
2. The initial research project surrounded only Facebook, which is why no data was collected from Twitter during the federal election. It was decided, after the federal election, to expand the dataset to include Twitter in the data collection for the Ontario election.
3. We interviewed communication representatives from CUPE National, CUPE Ontario, PSAC, and UFCW. The communication representatives have not been identified by name, but rather by the union they work for. We made repeated attempts to interview the communications staff at the OFL, however our interview requests went unanswered.

4. As an interesting aside, at the time of writing, eight months after the Ontario Election, the SEIU has not changed their name back to “SEIU” from “Vote4HealthCare.” This indicates that there is a good chance that the SEIU has completely abandoned NSM as a way to interact with their members.

References

- Abella, Irving Martin. 1973. *Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour*. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- Archer, Keith & Alan Whitehorn. 1997. *Political Activists: The NDP in Convention*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Bennett, W. 2003. “Communicating Global Activism.” *Information, Communication & Society* 6:2, 143-168.
- Blais, André, Richard Nadeau, Elisabeth Gidengil, & Neil Nevitte. 2001. “Measuring strategic voting in multiparty plurality election.” *Electoral Studies* 20, 343 - 352.
- Blais, André & Mathieu Turgeon. 2004. “How good are voters at sorting out the weakest candidate in their constituency?” *Electoral Studies* 23, 455 – 461.
- Boczkowski, P. and E. Mitchelstein. 2012. “How users take advantage of different forms of interactivity on online news sites: clicking, e-mailing, and commenting,” *Human Communication Research* 38: 1-22.
- Boulianne, S. 2009. “Does Internet Use Affect Engagement? A Meta-Analysis of Research,” *Political Communication* 26:2, 193 — 211.
- Bucy, E. and K. Gregson. 2001. “Media participation: A legitimizing mechanism of mass democracy.” *New Media & Society* 3, 357-380.
- Carroll, William & R.S. Ratner, eds. 2005. *Challenges and Perils: Social Democracy in Neoliberal Times*. Halifax: Fernwood.
- CUPE-N. 2012. Semi-structured interview with communications staff at The National division of CUPE, conducted 15 May 2012.
- CUPE-O. 2012. Semi-structured interview with communications staff at CUPE Ontario, conducted 27 April 2012.
- Dahlgren, P. 2009. *Media and Political Engagement: Citizens, Communication and Democracy* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Della Porta, D. 2011. “Communication in movement.” *Information, Communication & Society* 14:6, 800-819.
- Della Porta, D. and L. Mosca. 2005. “Global-net for global movements? A network of networks or a movement of movements.” *Journal of Public Policy* 25, 165-190.
- Erickson, Lynda & David Laycock. 2009. “Modernization, Incremental Progress, and the Challenge of Relevance: The NDP’s 2008 Campaign.” In *The Canadian Federal Election of 2008*, edited by Jon H. Pammett & Christopher Dornan, ##-##. Toronto: Dundurn Press.

- Hagar, D. 2001. "The use of social media in the 2010 Niagara municipal elections." *Niagara Community Observatory*, St. Catharines: Brock University. Accessed January 2012 http://www.brocku.ca/webfm_send/16552
- Hardy, B. and D. Scheufele. 2005. "Examining differential gains from internet use: Comparing the moderating role of talk and online interactions." *Journal of Communication* 55, 71-84.
- Horowitz, Gad. 1968. *Canadian Labour in Politics*. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- Howard, P. and M. Hussain. 2011. "The upheavals in Egypt and Tunisia: The role of digital media." *Journal of Democracy* 22, 35-48.
- Jansen, Harold J & Lisa Young. 2009. "Solidarity Forever? The NDP, Organized Labour, and the Changing Face of Party Finance in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 42(3): 657 - 678.
- Kiousis, S. 2002. "Interactivity: a concept of explication." *New Media & Society* 4, 355-383.
- Krueger, B.S. 2002. "Assessing the potential of Internet political participation in the United States: A resource approach." *American Politics Research* 30, 476-498.
- Lievrouw, L. and S. Livingstone. 2002. "Introduction: The social shaping and consequences of ICTs," in *The handbook of new media* edited by L. Lievrouw & S. Livingstone, 1-15. London: Sage.
- Loader, B. and D. Mercea. 2011. "Networking democracy?" *Information, Communication & Society* 14, 757-769.
- McMillan, S.J. and J.S. Hwang. 2002. "Measures of perceived interactivity: an exploration of the role of direction of communication, user control, and time in shaping perceptions of interactivity." *Journal of Advertising* 31, 29-42.
- Merolla, Jennifer L. & Laura B. Stephenson. 2007. "Strategic voting in Canada: A Cross Time Analysis." *Electoral Studies* 26, 235 - 246.
- McGirt, Ellen. 2009. "How Chris Hughes helped launch Facebook and the Barack Obama Campaign." *Fast Company*, April 1, 2009. Accessed from <http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/134/boy-wonder.html>
- Panitch, Leo & Donald Swartz. 2003. *From Consent to Coercion: The Assault on Trade Union Freedoms, third edition*. Aurora: Garamond.
- Penner, Norman. 1992. *From Protest to Power: Social Democracy in Canada 1900 - Present*. Toronto: James Lorimer & Company.
- Pilon, Dennis, Stephanie Ross & Larry Savage. 2011. "Solidarity Revisited: Organized Labour and the New Democratic Party." *Canadian Political Science Review* 5(1): 20 - 37.
- Preston, J. "Protestors look for ways to feed the web," *New York Times*, November 25, Section A: 28.
- PSAC. 2012. Semi-structured interview with communication staff at the Public Service Alliance of Canada, conducted 15 May 2012.
- Rucht, D. 2003. *Media strategies and media resonance in transnational protest campaigns* paper presented at the conference 'Transnational Processes and Social Movements' Bellagio, Italy.
- Savage, Larry. 2010. "Contemporary Party-Union Relations in Canada." *Labor Studies Journal* 35 (1): 8 - 26.

- Shah, D., J. Cho, W. Eveland and N. Kwak. 2005. "Information and expression in a digital age: Modeling Internet effects on civic participation." *Communication Research* 32, 531-565.
- Small, Tamara. 2008. "The Facebook Effect? On-line campaigning in the 2008 Canadian and US Elections," *Policy Options*. November 2008, 84 – 87.
- Small, Tamara 2011. "What the hashtag?" *Information, Communication & Society* 14, 872-895.
- Smith, J. 1997. "Characteristics of the modern transnational social movement sector," in *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics. Solidarity Beyond the State* edited by J. Smith, C. Chatfield and R. Pagnucco. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Stelter, Brian. "The Facebooker Who Friendened Obama." *The New York Times*, July 7, 2008. Accessed from http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/07/technology/07hughes.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=barack%20obama%20chris%20hughes&st=cse
- Tanguay, Brian A. 2002. "Parties, Organized Interests and Electoral Democracy: The 1999 Ontario Provincial Election." In *Political Parties, Representation, and Electoral Democracy in Canada*. Edited by William Cross, 145 - 160. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tedesco, J. 2004. "Web interactivity and young adult political efficacy," in *The Internet election: Perspectives on the web in campaign 2004* edited by A. Williams & J. Tedesco, 187-202. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- UFCW. 2012. Semi-structured interview with communications staff at the Canadian division of the united Food and Commercial Workers, conducted 27 April 2012.
- Walchuk, Bradley. 2010. "Changing Union-Party Relations in Canada: The Rise of the Working Families Coalition." *Labor Studies Journal* 35 (1): 27 - 50.
- Ward, S., R. Gibson and W. Lusoli. 2003. "Online participation and mobilisation in Britain: Hype, hope and reality." *Parliamentary Affairs* 56, 652–668.
- Whitehorn, Alan. 2006. "The NDP and the Enigma of Strategic Voting." In *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*. Edited by Jon H. Pammett & Christopher Dornan, ##-##. Toronto: Dundurn Press.

TABLES

Table 1: Union Vote across time (tim to add)

Table 2: Party Relations (tim to add)