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Anti-war activism in the Information Age



Workshop

Saturday 17th November 2007

DLG03 and DLG08 in the Social Sciences Building, City University, London

Supported by:



What is this research project about?

This project is about new forms of political activity, the anti-war movement, the harnessing of new media, and a changing information environment:

1. The project's core interest is in **new forms of political activity**.
2. The **anti-war movement** because it has been especially prominent in recent years, notably with regard to the Iraq invasion and subsequent conflict.
3. We use the term **internet activism** to signal as a special concern ways in which information and communications technologies are integrated into these 'new politics', whether it be e-mail used for protesting, web sites to increase the effectiveness of information to supporters, or hacking with a political bent.
4. Another reason we are especially interested in anti-war groups is because of the changing **information environment** that surrounds war today. Nowadays there is much more information available about wars - from reporters in the field as well as from protest groups around the world. Together this makes for a much more complicated information environment than before.

We have explored these themes through multiple research methods including 60 interviews across a broad range of campaign groups, including : CND, Society of Friends, British Muslim Initiative, Justice Not Vengeance, Faslane 365, Stop the War Coalition, and a variety of smaller groups in London, Leicester, Manchester and Bradford.

Researchers involved in the project

Kevin Gillan is a lecture in Sociology at the University of Manchester. Before working as full-time research assistant on this project he completed his PhD at the University of Sheffield. That study explored the multiple political ideologies expressed in activism against neoliberal globalisation and war.

Jenny Pickerill is a lecturer in Human Geography at Leicester University. She is interested in how collective action, participation, spaces for dialogue, autonomy and anarchism can create pathways towards environmental and social justice. She has written a book (*Cyberprotest*, Manchester University Press, 2003), a number of articles and book chapters, about environmental activism, eco-building, the use of internet technologies for campaigning, the anti-war movement in Britain, and Indigenous politics in Australia.

Frank Webster is Professor of Sociology, City University London. His most recent book is *Journalists under Fire: Information War and Journalistic Practices* (with Howard Tumber), Sage, 2006



Publications from the project:

Gillan, K, Pickerill, J and Webster, F. *forthcoming*. Anti-War Activism: New Media and Protest. Palgrave McMillan.

Gillan, K, Pickerill, J and Webster, F. *forthcoming*. 'Campaigning in a Changing Information Environment: the Anti-War and Peace Movement in Britain' in Jeremy Husinger, Matthew Allen and Lisbeth Klastrup (eds), International Handbook of Internet Research (Springer)

Gillan, K and Pickerill, J. *forthcoming*. 'Transnational anti-war activism: solidarity, diversity and the internet in Australia, Britain and the United States after 9/11' Australian Journal of Political Science.

Gillan, K. *forthcoming*. 'The UK Anti-War Movement Online: Uses and Limitations of Internet Technologies for Contemporary Activism' in Information, Communications and Technology.

Pickerill, J, Webster, F and Gillan, K. 2007. 'Muslim anti-war activism as positive political engagement' Chatham House Briefing Paper

Pickerill, J and Webster, F. 2006. 'The Anti-War/Peace Movement in Britain and the conditions of Information War' International Relations, 20, 4, 407-423

Pickerill, J. 2006. 'Radical politics on the net' Parliamentary Affairs, Vol.59, No.2, pp.266-282

If you would like copies of any of these please contact us.

Programme for today:

Welcome to a workshop to discuss the findings from a research project exploring *Anti-war Activism in the Information Age* by Frank Webster, Jenny Pickerill and Kevin Gillan at City and Leicester Universities.

The day will be structured around some short presentations, a number of discussion groups, and a broader feedback session. We intend the day to be interactive, allowing plenty of space for discussion.

10 - 10.30	Arrival and Coffee
10.30 - 11.30	Introduction and Information Environment of War (Frank Webster)
11.30 - 12.30	Alliances and Coalitions (Jenny Pickerill)
12.30 - 1.30	Lunch
1.30 - 2.30	Information and Communications Technologies and Antiwar Activism (Kevin Gillan).
2.30 - 3.00	Q&A/Open Discussion
3.00	Finish



Forthcoming book:

Anti-War Activism: New Media and Protest. Published by Palgrave McMillan.

CONTENTS:

Preface

Ch.1 Post 9/11

Ch. 2 Changing Information Environment

Ch. 3 Representation, Beliefs and Identities

Ch. 4 Power and Borders

Ch. 5 Alliances and Fractures

Ch. 6 Coping with Activism

Ch. 7 Communications Technologies: Practices and Possibilities

Ch. 8 Conclusion