University of Nevada, Reno

Watching Washington Work:
Exploring Online Home Style

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Political Science

By
Patricia A. Pizzano Miraglia

Dr. Stacy B. Fisher/Dissertation Advisor

May, 2015
Copyright by Patricia A. Pizzano Miraglia 2015
All Rights Reserved
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

We recommend that the dissertation
prepared under our supervision by

PATRICIA A. PIZZANO MIRAGLIA

entitled

Watching Washington Work: Exploring Online Home Style

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Dr. Stacy Gordon Fisher, Chair Advisor
Dr. William L. Eubank, Committee Member
Dr. John Marini, Committee Member
Dr. Gwen Hullman, Committee Member
Dr. John Dobra, Committee Member
Dr. Robert Ostergard, Graduate School Representative
Dr. David Zeh, Dean, Graduate School

May, 2015
Abstract

Understanding the relationship between U.S. Congressional representatives and their constituents is complicated. Some conclude representative behavior is determined by the representative’s perception of the district, or home style (Fenno, 1978) while others believe it is central to their role orientations and stylistic patterns (Gross, 1978; Wahlke et al., 1962). To better understand member behavior exhibited in the representative-constituent relationship, many have focused on examining roll-call voting behavior, electoral outcomes, seniority, and member home style: allocation of resources, presentation of self, and explanation of Washington activity to the district (Fenno, 1978). This dissertation advances previous research on the representative-constituent relationship by studying the concept of home style—online. I address online home style questions: 1) Are Congressional websites a rational use of resources? 2) Are MC online and offline presentation of self patterns similar? 3) Do MCs use YouTube videos to explain Washington activity? I argue that representative offline home style patterns are more likely to influence how often representatives use online technology to communicate to constituencies of district and Washington performance. By examining members in the 113th U.S. House of Representatives for online home style, I find that explanation of Washington activity rather than presentation of self more likely to affect representative behavior outcomes. Therefore, while a member’s overall home style is critical to the representative-constituent relationship, only explanation of Washington activity has a significant impact on online representative communication priorities.
Dedication

This book is dedicated to the women not privileged to attend college. Dedicated to woman who are “wives” not “needing” a college education because their husbands will “provide” for them. Women who work hard every day of their life for their family—helping out in any way possible for their brothers to attend college, but never knowing themselves the feeling of the achievement of wearing a cap and gown. Women who believe in education for their daughters and sons sake would elevate them in ways in which she had never experienced. Dedicated to the women who support their husbands, fathers, and brothers during times of disparity, sometimes working two jobs to help pay for their tuition. The hopeful women who convince themselves their education was delivered from world experience, not from the classroom. This is dedicated to women who dream of becoming a doctor to cure the cancer that took their loved ones, or a lawyer to defend the oppressed. This work is dedicated to the women who sacrifice owning nice clothes or shoes, or taking vacations, just so that their children could attend good schools, and live in healthy and safe conditions. This book is dedicated to the mothers who wake early in the morning to cook breakfast and pack school lunches for their children and give up any hope of a college education of their own just so that their children will have the opportunity to succeed. This book is for my mother, Bertina Pizzano and my grandmother (her mother), Raffella Pizzano.
Acknowledgments

There are so many to thank in such a huge project. Thank you God for the perseverance and courage needed to complete this task. My debt begins with Stacy Fisher. As my Chair and advisor, Stacy offered valuable insight and advice on writing, researching, and presenting work. She let me “skin my knees” often, and because of that experience I am a better scholar, researcher, writer, and political scientist. Stacy is a fantastic advisor, mentor, and now that this process is complete—a friend.

To my committee members: Dr. William Eubank, Dr. John Marini, Dr. Gwen Hullman, and Dr. John Dobra—thank you. Each committee member holds a very special place in my academic career. I am in debt to each of them for their guidance and support. Dr. Eubank helped me contemplate the craft of furniture building. Dr. Marini encouraged me with his cheerfulness and support, while whistling a tune. Dr. Hullman allowed me into her classroom and department to conduct communication research. Dr. Dobra persistently reminded me, “butt in chair”—that’s what gets you out of here [graduated].

My gratitude extends to members of the Department of Political Science at the University of Nevada: Kristen Kabrin, Robert Ostergard, Derik Kauneckis, Eric Herzik, Boz Welborne, Suzanne Martin, Jenny Ring, John Scire, and all the faculty and Emeritus faculty (Allan Wilcox and Leonard Weinberg) who challenged me during graduate school. Appreciation extends to the University wide system at Nevada—all the staff at MIKC, @One, technology support, and Starbucks.
I am grateful to all the support from Dr. KB Rao (UNR), Dr. Laura Umphrey (NAU), Dr. Pete Pierrera (UNR), Dr. Chris Simon (Univ. of Utah), and Dr. Dennis Gordon (SCU). Finally, but certainly not least, is my gratitude to my family. Thank you, Bertoli for nothing is possible without you. God Blessed me with you as my mom. For the rest of my days I will acknowledge the support and love, time and patience, food and money, you have given to my research and education, “molte grazie!” Uncle Frank Pizzano, thank you for the statistics tutoring, mentoring, and financial support. Marc, thank you for the financial help, support, and wine. Thank you Ski, Elvis, and Chloe, and my Charles in Heaven for warming my feet while I sat and studied. And, now to my Dominic on earth who, lays at my feet now with unconditional support. Finally, to my loving husband, Stefano: “Grazie amore mio. Più di quanto tu sai, io sono in debito per tutto quello che fai per noi. Sempre e per sempre!”
Table of Contents

Abstract .................................................................................................................................................. i

Dedication............................................................................................................................................... ii

Acknowledgments...................................................................................................................................... iii

List of Tables........................................................................................................................................... ix

List of Figures.......................................................................................................................................... x

Chapter 1: Introduction and Plan of Book ............................................................................................. 1
  1.1 Political Communication: The Cornerstone of the Representative-Constituent Relationship.......................................................................................................................... 2
    1.1.1 Understanding Political Communication................................................................................. 4
    1.1.2 Historical Communication Channels in the House................................................................. 6
    1.1.3 Summary.................................................................................................................................. 10
  1.2 Richard Fenno’s Home Style Model ............................................................................................... 11
  1.3 Social Information Processing Theory ......................................................................................... 13
  1.4 Plan of Book.................................................................................................................................. 16

Chapter 2: American Representative Democracy .................................................................................. 20
  2.1 Trials of Democracy ..................................................................................................................... 21
  2.2 Why Representation? .................................................................................................................... 23
  2.3 The Framers’ Model: Representative Democracy ......................................................................... 24
  2.4 Representative Role Theory: Trustee, Delegate, Politico ............................................................ 30
  2.5 Representative Roles .................................................................................................................... 32
    2.5.1 Legislator................................................................................................................................. 34
    2.5.2 Constituency Servant............................................................................................................... 34
    2.5.3 Mentor-communicator .......................................................................................................... 35
  2.6 Representative Tasks: Roll Call and Non-Roll Call Activities ...................................................... 35
    2.6.1 Representative Voting Activity .............................................................................................. 36
    2.6.2 Representative Speech and Debate Activity .......................................................................... 37
    2.6.3 Constituency Casework Activity ............................................................................................. 38
    2.6.4 Bill Sponsorship Activity ....................................................................................................... 39
    2.6.5 Committee Activity ............................................................................................................... 40
  2.7 Communicating Member Tasks and Activities to Constituents ...................................................... 41
  2.8 Summary: American Representative Democracy ........................................................................... 43

Chapter 3: The Internet as a Political Communication Resource ......................................................... 45
3.1 The Internet as an important part of American life.................................................. 45
3.2 The Internet: A Brief Historical Review........................................................................ 46
3.3 The Internet Enters the U.S. House of Representatives .............................................. 48
   3.3.1 Member Goals: Internet Activity, Use and Frequency ....................................... 49
   3.3.2 YouTube ........................................................................................................... 51
3.4 Allocated Resource: The Internet ................................................................................ 52
   Research Question 1 ..................................................................................................... 52
   3.4.1 Design and Methodology .................................................................................. 52
   3.4.2 Results ................................................................................................................ 53
4. Summary: The Internet as a Political Communication Resource ..................................... 57
Chapter 4: Representative Online Presentation of Self ......................................................... 58
   4.1 Presentation of Self Theory and Representative Behavior ........................................ 60
   4.2 Presentation of Self in MC Home style .................................................................... 61
   4.3 How Representatives Communicate Presentation of Self ......................................... 62
      4.3.1 Presentation of Self: Two-way Communication ................................................ 64
   4.4 Presentation of Self Patterns ................................................................................... 65
   4.5 Online and Offline Presentation of Self ..................................................................... 68
      4.5.1 MCs’ Online Presentation of Self .................................................................... 71
   4.6 Measuring Online and Offline Presentation of Self: Design and Methodology ........ 72
      4.6.1 Hypotheses ...................................................................................................... 75
      4.6.2 Data .................................................................................................................. 76
      4.6.3 Design: An Aggregate Measure to Identify Online and Offline Presentation of Self in YouTube Posts ................................................................................................................. 78
4.7 Findings ....................................................................................................................... 89
   4.7.1 Presentation of Self Survey .................................................................................. 89
   4.7.2 A Test of POS and YouTube Video Frequency ...................................................... 91
   4.7.3 A Test of POS and “Issue” YouTube Videos ......................................................... 92
   4.7.4 Test of POS and “Non-issue” Videos .................................................................. 93
   4.7.5 Tests on Independent Variables ......................................................................... 94
   4.8 Summary .................................................................................................................. 108
   4.9 Summary .................................................................................................................. 113
Chapter 5: Virtually Explaining Washington Activity ............................................................. 114
   5.1 Washington Activity ............................................................................................... 115
5.1.1 Understanding Washington Activity .......................................................... 116
5.2 Communicating Washington Activity to the Constituency .............................. 119
5.3 The Medium is in the Message .................................................................. 125
5.4 Using Computer Technology to Explain Washington Activity ....................... 127
  5.4.1 Explaining Activity: The Benefits of Computer-mediated Communication . 128
  5.4.2 The Explosion of YouTube Video to Explain Activity ......................... 129
5.5 Measuring Online Explanation of Washington Activity ................................ 130
  5.5.1 A Test of Online Explanation of Activity: Issue Videos and Party .......... 132
  5.5.2 Findings ............................................................................................... 133
  5.5.3 Summary ............................................................................................ 136
5.6 Committees and Online Explanation of Activity ............................................ 137
  5.6.1 Online v. Offline Media Outlets: How Constituents Receive MC Explanations ................................................................. 139
  5.6.2 A Test of Committee Leadership and Online Explanation of Activity ..... 140
  5.6.3 Findings ............................................................................................... 147
  5.6.4 Summary ............................................................................................ 150
5.7 Committee Characteristics, Assignments, and Online Explanation of Activity 151
  5.7.1 Committee Assignment and Jurisdiction Incentive in Online Explanation of Activity ................................................................. 151
  5.7.2 A Test of Committee Leadership, Jurisdiction, and Online Explanation of Activity: Design & Methodology ................................................................. 153
  5.7.3 Findings ............................................................................................... 156
  5.7.4 Summary ............................................................................................ 159
5.8 Summary .................................................................................................... 163
Chapter 6: Beyond Home Style ........................................................................ 167
6.1 What We Know About Home Style .............................................................. 168
6.2 Online and Offline Home Style ................................................................. 171
  6.2.1 Online v. Offline: Allocation of Resources, Presentation of Self, and Explanation of Activity ................................................................. 172
6.3 Home Style Online, Really? ...................................................................... 175
  6.3.1 Home Style and the Congressional Career in the 21st Century ............ 176
6.4 Future Research .......................................................................................... 179
6.5 Conclusion .................................................................................................. 182
7.0 Bibliography..................................................................................................................186
8.0 APPENDIX...........................................................................................................................208
  8.1 Appendix A: Internet Participation Survey...............................................................208
  8.2 Appendix B: Congressional Self-Report of Presentation of Self (Staff)........211
**List of Tables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 1</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 2</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 3</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 4</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 5</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 6</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 7</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 8</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 9</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 10</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 11</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 12</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 13</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 14</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 15</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 16</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 17</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 18</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 19</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 20</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 21</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures

FIGURE 1. EXAMPLE OF HOUSE MEMBER WEBSITE: ..................................................... 50
FIGURE 2. AGE GROUPS AND INTERNET USE OF AMERICAN ADULTS ...................... 82
FIGURE 3. MC AGE GROUPS. ......................................................................................... 84
FIGURE 4. ONLINE ASSUMPTION OF HOME STYLE MODEL......................................... 112
FIGURE 5. A DESIGN LOGIC PATH OF ONLINE HOME STYLE. ...................................... 121
Chapter 1: Introduction and Plan of Book

“Virtual representation is that in which there is a communion of interests and a sympathy in feelings and desires between those who act in the name of any description of people and the people in whose name they act.”¹—Edmund Burke, Theory of Virtual Representation (1774)

Edmund Burke’s theory of virtual representation precedes the internet by over two hundred and forty years. Indeed, Burke’s explanation of virtual representation closely resembles the form of representative government we practice today. However, his definition of “virtual” refers to then British rule over the American Colonies, and not to what today is commonly referred to as something’s existence on the internet.²

With society’s force to “internet-ize” all aspects of daily life, the ability for representatives to communicate online with constituents becomes critical. Without reinforcing the representative-constituent relationship, most candidates find reelection to office difficult to assure (Fenno, 1978). Between 1964 and 2012, on average the reelection rate in the U.S. House of Representatives was 96 percent. It maintained that average since, only dipping to 85 percent twice in 1970 and 2010. By 2012, the reelection rate was back up to 90 percent (opensecrets.org). These numbers support the notion that the professionalization of Congress is a factor in the high percentages of

² The word “internet” is used throughout this dissertation as a generic word, not a distinct term; therefore not capitalized.
reelection rates and tenure for U.S. House members (Glassman et al., 2011; Hibbing, 1991; Mayhew, 1974).

Although the reelection rates have changed little over the years, there is an underlying threat of defeat that looms over representatives while in office. David Mayhew believes the primary aim of elected politicians is to seek reelection (Mayhew, 1974). But, in seeking reelection, representatives face a problem: how much time to allocate to reelection strategies while continuing to make good public policy on Capitol Hill (Fenno, 1978; Ferber, 1971; Mayhew, 1974; Polsby, 1971). According to Mark Ferber, this problem is a communication problem. Ferber believes that “the care and feeding of the district and the problem of keeping in front of hometown media are of signal import [sic]” (Ferber, 1971, p. 403).

1.1 Political Communication: The Cornerstone of the Representative-Constituent Relationship

Aristotle believed that humans are by nature, “political beings” and asserts that what makes humans political, more so than other animals, is speech (Politics, Ch. 2, 1253a). Speech enables one freedom to voice opinion, and is critical to the American ideal of self-government. Self-government is a guarantee that citizens have to govern themselves by electing members of society to run government—representative democracy. Thus, communication has a critical role in American politics.
Communication channels used by members of the U.S. House of Representatives to communicate with constituents are critical to American core values and ideals. As a free nation—one with freedoms of speech, press, and conscience—the United States upholds opportunity to its citizens’ the liberty to voice, seek, and gather political information in various media mediums. Because of this, media fosters the representative-constituent relationship by providing avenues for MCs to communicate with constituents.

With this in mind, this dissertation is about how U.S. House Representatives use the internet to communicate within the representative-constituent relationship. I concentrate on one particular aspect of this relationship—representative home style. Home style is a model that explains the representatives’ perception of the district constituency and what consequences those perceptions have on the representatives’ behavior (Fenno, 1978). To that end, communication is critical to home style because it is the exchange of information formed by those perceptions that result in representative behavior. Therefore, home style is dependent on communication.
1.1.1 Understanding Political Communication

Political communication is the “communication of political issues” (Perloff, p. 7, 1998). Robert Denton and Gary Woodward believe the core of politics is “talk” or the interaction of people and “Nearly every topic that is fit for comment by someone contains the seeds for political and communication analysis” (Denton and Woodward, 1985, p. vii). Because politics requires the interaction of people, political communication is a process of information exchange between leadership, media outlets, and citizens by which messages related to public policy are conferred. There are four distinctive characteristics of political communication: 1) process, 2) audience, 3) message design, and 4) message content.

The first characteristic of political communication is that it’s a process. Political communication is a process because it’s not automatic. It is a complex activity that demands public officials to supply media representatives with data and information. Media journalists then assimilate raw information into news that can influence citizens and shape public agendas. Thus, media play a critical role in political communication. However, public officials and citizens do communicate directly without the media-on-one meetings. But, in most situations, media acts as a facilitator in the process of political communication in the representative-constituent relationship.

A second characteristic of political communication is competition for public spotlight and a national stage. Political leaders, the public, and the media make up the
“golden triangle” of political communication (Perloff, 1998). Entities of the golden triangle compete for the public’s attention in various ways. National, state, and local political leaders vie for media attention by using any one of the many of media outlets to achieve a maximum audience. Media outlets include television, radio, newsprint, and internet websites. Likewise, citizens seek information using the same media outlets.

The third characteristic of political communication is the principle of message design. Political communication differs from other types of communication because of how political messages are designed. Message design is important to understanding communication because the message meaning in political communication relates to public policy, government affairs, and elected officials. Message design is a purposeful method by which people receive and deliver message content, and of which its exchange and interpretation is individualistic. Therefore, political leaders, journalists, and citizens each receive and deliver information differently.

Venue also effects message design. Media medium is powerful in contemporary political communication. In the past, people would travel to hear presidents deliver speeches from train cars, or gather around the family radio to listen to “Fireside chats” made popular by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Today, modern mass media gives political leaders an edge to the public; thus reducing the process time for citizens to make decisions on public affairs. Because of this, the internet as a form of mass media communication enables public leaders to bypass journalistic interpretation and set the agenda themselves.
Finally, a fourth characteristic of political communication is message content. As previously mentioned, political communication differs from other types of communication by subject matter. Beyond elections, messages of political communication relate to public policy, government, consensus on policy issues, and official responses to national affairs. And, being that politics is about power, political communication is the mode that subsets the golden triangle MCs use to wielding control in setting the agenda.

1.1.2 Historical Communication Channels in the House

Communication is the core of American representative democracy. It is founded on core beliefs such as liberty and self-government enabling citizens to freely communicate to elected officials and voice public opinion. Likewise, representatives reciprocate, and in fulfillment of representative tasks, communicate to constituents work performance and public policy issues. But, how has communication methods changed since the American founding? Traditional methods (newsprint) are everlasting, but in light of technology, the representative-constituent relationship has experienced a number of ways to keep the lines of communication open.

During the 1800s, communication methods used by House members were limited to franking and newsprint articles. After the turn of the 20th Century, communication methods advanced from the printing press to radio and television. The following section outlines such advancements experienced by House members over the years.
Franking Privilege

The privilege to “frank” mail allows House members to send lettered mail using their official signature instead of U.S. postage. It is the traditional method representatives use to provide political information to constituents in the district. Franking allowances are determined for House members by the number of resident addresses, combined with official office expenses (Glassman, 2007). Written letters, newsletters, postcards, and press releases are the most popular forms of franked mail.

For instance, members often send mass unsolicited mailings to their district. Mass mailings are permitted (500 or more pieces) but are regulated by their intended business. Restrictions on member use forbid franking “solicit votes or contributions, to send mail regarding political campaigns or political parties, or to mail autobiographical or holiday greeting materials” (Glassman, 2007, p. CRS-3). However, the franking privilege has drawn much criticism when used for mass mailing. Some criticize the large amount of unsolicited mass mailing and underlying political motivation by representatives (Davidson and Oleszek, 2006). By example, election years see a significant increase in the amount of mass mail. As a result, House members are restricted on franking mass mailings less than 90 days from a primary or general election in which they are a candidate, or sending unsolicited mail to any other district but their own (Members’ Congressional Handbook, 112th Congress).

Newsprint
Newspaper media is the most common approach used by representatives to communicate with their district constituency (Cook, 1989; Lipinski and Neddenriep, 2004). Representatives frequently use newspapers to create their political image and demonstrate work in Washington (Yiannakis, 1982). House members mainly use local, district newspaper(s) for press releases regarding their home district (Cook, 1989). The popular notion is that “Press releases remain the key piece of press-member communication in Congress” (Denton and Woodward, 1985, p. 305). Even if member’s district boundaries overlap with that of another representative, MCs will seize a “window of opportunity” for newsprint coverage and “immediate effects” (Denton and Woodward, 1985, p. 9-10). MCs and their staff are known for befriending local reporters and newspaper editors to establish a link to the political base in the home district (Denton and Woodward, 1985). The biggest dilemma of members face is not the bad press they may receive in the newspapers, but the threat of no media coverage (Denton and Woodward, 1985).

**Radio**

Fireside Chats made famous by 32nd U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt suggested a revolutionary model for communicating political discourse to the public over the radio (Jamieson, 1988). Before Roosevelt, House members seldom used radio time for communicating to district constituencies on regular legislative business. Radio time had to be purchased, unless a radio reporter is interviewing a House member on political acts such as committee hearings or legislations. House members reserve radio time for
campaign messages and election strategies (Jamieson, 1988). Campaign messages are not funded by the House member’s office allowance and are the sole responsibility of their campaign expenditures.³

Television

Electronic media provides a national service and adds political drama to Congress (Denton and Woodward, 1985). Television is a communication channel that offers the public access to Congress from the district. Up until the technological invention of video postings on the internet (i.e., You Tube videos), television served as the only electronic media source where constituents could visually see their representatives working in Washington from their home district.

Television offers a national stage for House members to advocate their goals of reelection, policy-making, and power (Denton and Woodward, 1985; Fenno, 1973, 1977, 1978). Television plays two key roles for House members: 1) it establishes a national stage, and 2) it can be used free unrestricted and unsolicited publicity in the home district.

The acceptance by Congress of television coverage came slow. But the benefit of television was finally acknowledged by Congress in the late 1970s. The Cable-Satellite


MCs use C-SPAN coverage to demonstrate work performance in Washington, DC. Besides delivering floor speeches, conducting committee hearings, and debate, members use television medium to send messages to constituency about their district (Lipinski and Neddenriep, 2004). Television coverage of House sessions offers a unique way to access the public while continuing an internal control. Camera shots of House sessions are restricted so television cameras are confined to the House podium only. Cameras are restricted from recording other members reactions or shots of the remaining House (other than the member at the podium speaking) while a MC is commanding the camera (Denton and Woodward, 1985).

1.1.3 Summary

Communication is at the center of the representative-constituent relationship. Some argue, communication in the district is the way members secure incumbency (Bimber, 1999; Blumer and Kavanagh, 1999; Ferber, 1971). In this section, four traditional channels of communication are discussed. Franked mail, newsprint, radio, and television are all media types of mediums MCs use for communicating political information to the constituency; therefore engaging in reelection strategies and representative activities.
Advancements in communication technology continue to enhance mediums MCs use to deliver political communication and fulfill necessary representative tasks. Introduction of the internet into the representative-constituent relationship gives MCs a low-cost, rapid method of exchanging political information between them and the district. With this in mind, this dissertation’s purpose is to discuss political communication from the perspective of Richard Fenno’s model of home style.

1.2. Richard Fenno’s Home Style Model

House members seek to achieve representative goals by establishing a home style unique for their district (Fenno, 1978). The House members’ perception of their district constituencies’ helps formulate their home style. Understanding home style gives researchers knowledge on how representatives ‘see’ their district; therefore, a better understanding of how representatives communicate to constituents after perception is established.

Richard Fenno’s research on the representative-constituent relationship incorporates a district perspective. The representative’s home style is a behavioral style crafted by their perception of the member’s district constituency. But why is it important to study the representative-constituent relationship from a district perspective? One explanation given is that district-constituency behavior is predictive of voting behavior, and vice versa (Kingdon, 1991). Fenno believes because “representatives and
prospective representatives think about their constituencies because they seek support in their constituencies” (Fenno, 1978, p. 31). The goal of electoral success is in the home district, not on Capitol Hill. Thus it makes sense for the representative to strengthen support in the home district to secure reelection goals (Fenno, 1978; Mayhew, 1974). Representatives seek to secure reelection and maintain a career in Congress, unless they plan on retirement, or resignation (Fenno, 1978; Mayhew, 1974).

Richard Fenno’s home style has been researched in various ways. Initially, Richard Fenno research examined eighteen case studies. From 1970 to 1977, Fenno accompanied the eighteen Congressional representatives within each of their home districts. Each case was chosen to be demographically different from the other, and unique to their geographic district. Members were examined by their perception of the district and the resulting behavioral style, not including MC personality. The member’s behavior exhibited while working in the district would become their “home style.” In the examination, Fenno determined that there are three elements to a representative’s “home style.” These three elements are allocation of resources, presentation of self, and explanation of Washington activity. Fenno’s Congressional research has become the hallmark of assessing representative behavior. However, with the advancement of Internet technology, political science scholars have broadened Congressional behavior research to include examining home style and the Internet.

Empirical studies on home style and the internet are limited (Adler et al., 1998; Gulati, 2004). Research by Adler, et al. (1998) examined home style’s element of
allocation of resources, and if representatives had had a website, was it being used to communicate to constituents. Study findings suggest younger, Republican representatives from more affluent, computer savvy constituencies use home pages to communicate information to constituencies. Adler et al. confirmed representatives use the internet as a political communication resource. Research studies following Adler et al. test home style, but do so using one-way communication mediums such as press releases (Grimmer, 2010) and images posted on member websites (Gulati, 2004).

I believe an existing limitation on home style and internet research is how to empirically study home style and computer-mediated communication. I propose using a combination of political science and communication theories to better understand how representatives communicate home style to the constituency. Thus, in conjunction with Fenno’s home style model, I propose using social information processing theory (Walther, 1992)—a theory used to explain computer-mediated-communication—to solve the communication problem in the representative-constituent relationship. The following section explains social processing theory.

1.3. Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)

Much like face-to-face communication (FtF), computer-mediated communication involves two or more groups (or actors). However, it takes place in textual messages, and uses computer devices (Walther and Tidwell, 1995). Joseph Walther (1992) defines computer-mediated communication (CMC) as “synchronous or asynchronous electronic
mail and computer conferencing, by which senders encode in text messages that are relayed from senders’ computers to receivers’” (Walther, 1992, p. 52).

CMC differs from FtF in that nonverbal codes saturated with relational information are absent. The absence of relational information affects “users’ perceptions of the communication context” by constraining “users’ interpretation of messages” (Walther, 1992, p. 53). Therefore, messages designed by actors in CMC are motivated by the same drives as actors in other forms of communication behavior. Thus, actors in FtF develop the same motivational drives as actors in CMC.

The advent of online technology has had a major impact on communication behavior and acceptance of CMC. Despite the proliferation of CMC, early critics argue that CMC is “less personal or socioeconomical” than communication that is face-to-face (Walther, 1992, p. 53). While CMC may be appropriate for professional transactions or simple correspondence, does CMC play a role in how representatives communicate home style online? Walther (1992) believes that over time, CMC can exceed interpersonal cues typically found in FtF and become “hyperpersonal.” To that end, Walther introduced the social information processing theory that uses CMC to explain how social relationships develop online.

1.3.1 Social Information Processing Theory (SIP)

Social information processing theory (SIP) model proposes that over time social relationships can develop online (Walther, 1992, 1996). SIP is based on two premises:
1) each party involved gains information on the other, and 2) that information is used to form impressions (Griffin, 2006; Walther, 1992). SIP explains how text-based CMC can build close relationships by allowing one to form impressions of another over time; hence the representative-constituent relationship.

Adoption of internet practice in Congress by MCs was expanded on by existing communication channels. Newspaper articles, radio, and television served representatives well by advertising work performance, strengthening district relationships, and building trust through presentation of self style. So, how are MCs justifying allocating internet resources away from traditional communication channels if validating presentation of self is questionable using those resources? Social information theory may provide support for this shift in favor of CMC.

Social information processing is derived on computer-mediated forms of communication which helps explain differences between FtF and electronic media communication. Walther (1992) describes SIP as the impressions given by interacting parties based on formed images of the other. To that end, SIP is formulated on two features of CMC: 1) verbal cues, communicators employ cues to “form impressions and develop relationships,” and 2) extended time, social information is formed slower than face-to-face impressions. Walther (1992, 1996) accepts the limitations of physical, facial expression, nonverbal cues, and tone of voice in CMC. He asserts that over time verbal cues and the exchange of social information are sufficient in developing impressions of others. Walther’s model offers justification for MCs to allocate internet resources
because over time, relationships between representatives and online constituents could possibly develop. Therefore, SIP explains that with sufficient time and verbal cues, MCs can pursue CMC avenues to build trust and pursue goals—both representative and electoral.

### 1.4. Plan of Book

In this dissertation, the home style model is examined separately by its three elements: 1) allocation of resources, 2) presentation of self, and 3) explanation of Washington activity. What is important to note is that previous research on home style ignores communication theory. However, using SIP will solve this problem.

Richard Fenno’s (1978) research on home style fails to adequately address the crucial role communication plays in representative behavior. Fenno (1978) only allows four pages (pages 237 through 241) of discussion on the role communication plays in the home style model, by claiming that communication among others is what Congressman do “to win and hold support” (Fenno, 1978, p. 240). “Members of Congress believe, if anything, that two way communication is more valued by their constituents than policy congruence” (Fenno, 1978, p. 241). In effort to resolve this, this study emphasizes a communication theory (SIP) and political science theory (representative role theory) to explain online home style. SIP proposes a computer-based relationship that is useful in the exchange of information because its premises include two-way communication that
leads to impression management—the primary component in Erving Goffman’s presentation of self model.

In Chapter Two, I discuss the roles of representation and provide a literature review on the principles of representation for members of the U.S. House of Representatives. I begin the chapter with an overview of representative role theory. It is important to discuss representative role theory because it is fundamental in understanding the extent of responsiveness a representative directs to their constituency. Following that section, I begin a review of Congress and why representation is an essential component in America’s principles and practice of republican democracy. The chapter concludes with representative’s responsibilities to the position and tasks important to the job description.

There are three individual studies employed, and use unique data collected from the 113th US Congress (2013-2014). In Chapter Three, I discuss the first element in home style—allocation of resources. I begin the dissertation with a literature review covering the introduction and adoption of the Internet to the House and how the internet assists in achieving house member goals. I demonstrate in a study (N=245) that the internet is a valuable resource people use to gather political information and that MCs are rational in allocating internet communication resources; thus MCs find it rational to allocate online resources for the representative-constituent relationship.

In Chapter Four, the second element in home style is examined—presentation of self. I introduce a two-part quantitative measure to test home style. This measure uses a
U.S House office survey (n=89) and dataset of House member YouTube videos to test if home style is conveyed in computer-mediated communication. Data includes video posts to MC YouTube video channel, from January 2009 through March 2013.

In Chapter Five, the third element of home style—explanation of Washington activity—is discussed. I introduce a unique study (N=422) to measure explanation of Washington activity. In this test, I analyze House member YouTube videos posted on official website homepages (N= 45,756) that prioritize videos depicting committee hearings. Data includes 7,716 videos collected from House members and the twenty-one standing committees from January 2009 through 2013. I demonstrate that party matters in the percentage of committee hearing YouTube videos that are used to explain performance in Washington, and satisfying a factor in the home style model.

The focus of this dissertation is if the exchange of information (communication) conveyed in MC offline home style patterns is similar to online home style. This study advances Fenno and other congressional researchers in an area not yet examined: computer-mediated communication and home style. And, seeks to find if online and offline home style patterns in MCs are indeed similar. I determine that home style matters in the age of the internet because 1) members use the internet as a resource to communicate to constituents political information, and 2) the public is seeking political information via the internet.
This dissertation’s contribution to the research literature is twofold. I use unique datasets to carry out analyses on home style elements to find relationships between online and offline similarities in MC behavioral patterns—a topic long overlooked by political and communication scholars alike. And, I introduce a methodological model that examines aggregate online home style. If these propositions prove to be true, then the tensions MCs experience between the home district and Washington could be possibly addressed with online communication methods; thus proposing the dual nature of Congress to be linked technologically by the internet. The next chapter begins my exploration of online home style with a literature review on representational roles and theory (offline).
Chapter 2: American Representative Democracy

The role of the representative in democracy is a puzzle. By definition, the words democracy and republic are contradictory. Yet, the American system of democratic republicanism established more than two centuries ago, has survived despite societal changes. Framers of the Constitutional Convention chose to sew together the ideals of a republic and democracy in hopes of establishing a federal government, while maintaining the people as sovereign. The result was a unique form of representative system—a constitutional democratic republic. The American system has experienced changes over the last two hundred years, e.g. suffrage, gender equality. Still, the method of governing by publically selected representatives continues today.

Chapter Two discusses the role of a House member in the U.S. Congress. Because Congress, i.e., U.S. House of Representatives, was organized to represent the people “by the people, for the people,” the representative’s tasks have not changed, but the time and era in which the representative lives, have. The developmental perspective of the American representative system of government is important to discuss. By considering why the Framers developed a representational democracy, it may shed light on how the House system has survived more than two hundred years.
2.1 Trials of Democracy

In Greek translation, democracy or *demos* refers to “the people” and *kratein* refers “to rule.” Carl Becker believes democracy is so common among people that few contemplate its definition. The meaning of democracy refers to a government form ruled “by the many” rather than “by the one” (Becker, 1941). Yet the system of government practiced in the United States is hardly a democracy. Why was developing a democracy so important to the Founders of our nation when the Ancient Greeks used the term democracy as a word of warning?

The Ancient Greeks accepted democratic government as a “source of political authority” that must exist “in the people and not in the ruler” (Becker, 1941, p. 7). According to the Ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle, the best constitution “must be the one managed by the best people,” or polity, so that “one particular person or whole family or a number of people whose virtue is superior to that of all the rest” shall rule (Aristotle, Politics, Book 3, Ch. 18, line 32). Yet Aristotle later challenged the concept of democracy by distinguishing it as a deviation from an ideal constitution of polity. He believed a democracy to be a deviation because “popular leaders” can act in a

---

4 From this point forward, ‘Greeks’ or ‘Ancients’ will refer to the period of Ancient Greek political philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and/or Aristotle.

5 Carl Becker (1941) defines the ideal of democratic government as “always meant one in which the citizens, or sufficient number of them to represent more or less effectively the common will, freely act from time to time, and according to established forms, to appoint or recall the magistrates and to enact or revoke the laws by which the community is governed” (p. 7).

6 Aristotle referred to constitution as a form of community. See Politics, Book II, Chapter 1 line 40. Also defined by Aristotle as “the organization of offices” distributed on either the “basis of power of the participants, or on the basis of some sort of equality common to them” (Aristotle, Book 4, Chapter 3, line 7). A “polity” is a “mixture of oligarchy and democracy” (Aristotle, Politics, Book 4, Ch 8, line 33).
“malicious” manner (Aristotle, Politics, Book 5, Ch. 5, line 20). This sort of variation of democracy is an important concept to discuss because Greek political power resided with the free\(^7\); subsequently, “it is not a democracy if a few free people rule over a majority who are not free” (Aristotle, Politics, Book 4, Ch. 4, line 9). While democracy is categorized in Aristotle’s Politics as a “deviant” form of rule, opposite in his typology is polity, the ideal form of government. Polity is Aristotle’s “correct constitution” arising from democracy and oligarchy (Book 3-4, Ch.9, line 30) where the constitution is “managed by the best people” (Books 3-4). A mixture of democracy and oligarchy combines to establish a polity (i.e., due to their characteristics of representational elements of organizational democracy) shaped by parts of the community\(^8\) elections and citizen participation (Aristotle, Book 4, Ch. 9). This “mixture” of Aristotelian constitutions sounds very similar to the federal, representative democratic system the Founders and Framers of the U.S. Constitution would develop during the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia during the summer of 1787.

\(^7\) Free Athenian male citizens.

\(^8\) Aristotle’s democracy denotes people make up “parts” of the city-state based on participation. These eight essential parts of his systematic account of democracy are comprised of 1) farmers; 2) craftsman; 3) traders; 4) laborers; 5) warriors; 6) priests; 7) property owners (i.e., the rich); and 8) civil servants. (Politics, Book 4, Ch. 4, 1291a, 40-5). Aristotle explains democracy in several lists throughout his Politics. Book 4, Ch.4 explains one such list of the varying democracies as 1) a democracy based on equality; 2) only property owners are the public officers; 3) citizens of clear-birth are participate aside laws; 4) law and any citizen are able to participate; and 5) popular leaders rule, not the laws. A list of democracy heavily dependent on revenue are 1) property owners have authority over the constitution which is governed by laws; 2) citizens of “uncontested birth” participate at their leisure; 3) citizens who are able to participate don’t because they have no “leisure” to do so; 4) all participate because the wealthy and poor alike are at leisure since all receive revenue (Politics, Book 4, Ch. 6, 1293a, 25).
2.2 Why Representation?

It is evident from Aristotle’s *Politics* that his many explanations of the various kinds of democracy are structured around the *polis*, a political community of people. Aristotle’s man is a “political animal,”¹ susceptible to their passions and likely to be corruptible. However, if the majority of statesmen or the collective polities of free, virtuous male citizens rule, are there fewer tyrannical opportunities? James Madison wrote in Federalist Paper No.51, “If men were angels, no government would be necessary” (Federalist Paper No. 51, 2003, p. 319).

Because men are able to unite their passions, usually in the form of factions, how will a political system protect the public good? Two remedies suggested by Madison are “by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests” (Federalist Paper No. 10, 2003, p. 72). These remedies are unattainable since giving all the same passions or opinions would be stripping them of their liberty. The solution: form a republic instead of a democracy. James Madison’s argument for this solution is made in two points. First, elected representatives facilitate a public voice. They will be elected by “a greater number of citizens” based on merit and good character. “The public voice, pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose” (Federalist Paper No. 10, 2003, p. 76). The other solution is that representatives will be better able

---

¹ See Aristotle’s *Politics*, Book 1, Ch.2, 1253a.
to serve citizens over greater territorial distances because “the greater number of citizens and extent of territory which may be brought within the compass of republican than of democratic government” serves to better represent interests and “greater variety of parties” (Federalist Paper No. 10, 2003, p. 77). Hence, the Constitutional Convention’s assembly of delegates produced a representative system of government.

2.3  The Framers’ Model: Representative Democracy

The Articles of Confederation were deemed too weak to lead a growing nation forward. Rebellion, revolt, and bankruptcy plagued the new nation. The powerful state-driven, unicameral Congress under the Articles prohibited Congress levying taxes or developing trade policies. Additionally, the Articles were nearly impossible to amend. All thirteen states had to be in agreement for any amendment to pass Congress. With a continued threat of revolt looming among the states, Congress finally supported a resolution for state delegates to meet and discuss revising the Articles of Confederation.

A convention to discuss amending the Articles of Confederation met in Philadelphia during the summer of 1787. Lawyer and biographer, George Ticknor Curtis in his notable work, *History of the Origin, Formation and Adoption of the Constitution*, argues that the primary function of the convention of 1787 was to “assemble with the great object of framing a system of government for the united interests of the thirteen States, by which the forms and spirit of republican liberty could be preserved” (Curtis, 1858, p. 5). Curtis believed it was in best interest of 1787 American society to preserve
liberty through a constitutional republic “with all that it comprehends and all that it bestows, was not only altogether lovely in their eyes, but without which their there could be no peace, no social order, no tranquility, and no safety for them and their prosperity” (Curtis, 1858, p. 6). Still, development and state acceptance of a new form of government would come to challenge the Framers, resulting in deep debate and compromise.

The republican form of government was not unbeknownst to the thirteen States of the Union. Each state had a written constitution functioning on some form of republican government (Curtis, 1858). The aim of the Constitutional Convention was to establish a system of national government that could unite the interests of the states; providing security and protection, both foreign and domestic. Since no other constitutional republic of this kind had been established, the success of the compact depended upon the union of states rather than independent state institutions or the inhabitants of each state (Curtis, 1858). Certainly the democratic form of government pursued by the Framers reflected the problems and concerns of that time. What makes American republican democracy distinct and effective in comparison to previous democracies and republics are its institutions, specifically its national legislature. Although the Constitutional Convention (1787) sustained much argument and debate on the subject of a national legislature, compromise followed with a bicameral national legislature composed of a House of Representatives (elected by the people of the states) and a Senate (appointed by the state legislatures whose representatives are elected by the inhabitants of the state). This arrangement was a “novelty in political science” (Curtis, 1858, p. 38). Because the
sovereign rested in the individual and the state spheres, such a system vested the power in
the people; upholding the concept of liberalism held so close to the principles of the
Colonists and Founders of America. Thus legislative power resides in the power and
authority of the people where “the real constituent should act directly, and without any
intermediate agency, in the appointment of the representative” electing representatives on
the principle of proportionality (Curtis, 1858, p. 39).

The Framers sought to protect the rebirth of the Union from the dangers of
“domestic causes”\(^{10}\) such as democracy with the invention of a republican democracy, or
representative system of government. Because representative government is hardly
democratic, when the Framers set forth to deliberate on a new Constitution, public
representation over distance was a key determinant. Since a pure democracy would
reduce citizen participation to location, a “confederate republic” appeared to be a remedy
to potential ills of democracy like faction and internal and external dangers. Such was
the argument made by James Madison in Federalist Paper No. 10 where he asserts that a
pure democracy limits citizen participation by being vulnerable to the “mischiefs of
faction.” It was important for the Framers to convey to citizens the advantage of a
republic, or representative government in controlling faction and safeguarding the
union.\(^{11}\)

\(^{10}\) Federalist Papers (1787-88), No. 3.
\(^{11}\) Federalist Papers (1787-88), No. 1 through No. 14.
The concept of a representative form of democracy is defended throughout the Federalist Papers. Most significant to its defense is James Madison’s Federalist Paper No. 10. In Federalist Paper No. 10, Madison remarks on two important points in creating a republic over a direct democracy. He contends the dissimilarity amid a democracy and a republic exist in the opportunities of “the delegation of the government…to a small number of citizens elected by the rest” and “the greater number of citizens, and greater sphere of country, over which the latter may be extended” (Federalist Paper No. 10). The principle of the American representative system was to become a guarantee by the United States government “to secure to the people of each State the power of governing their own community, through the action of a majority, according to the fundamental rules which they might prescribe for ascertaining the public will” (Curtis, 1858, p. 83).

Representative democracy was important to the Framers for various reasons. First and foremost, the Articles of Confederation were insufficient and defective. Alexander Hamilton wrote, “after an unequivocal experience of the inefficiency of subsisting federal government, you [the people] are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of American” (Federalist Paper No. 1, 2003, p. 27). In the second place, the principle of a republican form of government was to place the power of the government in the hands of the people. To that end, by the people transferring sovereignty to a national government “all governments [state and federal] are constituted by them as the agents and the depositaries of that power” (Curtis, 1858, p. 38). And, because original power resides in the control of the people, they can “withdraw it at their pleasure” further safeguarding the doctrine of self-government (Curtis, 1858, p. 38). A national
government would then represent the people and because of that, representatives “should act directly, and without any immediate agency, in the appointment of the people” (Curtis, 1858, p. 39). Thus, criteria for representation are elections. Granting authority through elections is the essence of representation (Pitkin, 1967, p. 43).

Requiring the House of Representatives to hold popular elections was designed to safeguard against corruption and bribery. Limits on power through popular elections were a feature to the Framers republican idea of government and advantageous over a democracy. 12 James Madison asserts in both Federalist Paper No. 10 and No. 23 that without elections, the Framers suspected their genius of a republican democracy would fail to factious behavior and mob rule. Elections were to serve as guarantee of a “true democratic principle” in the republic (Curtis, 1858, p. 37). Thus, regularly scheduled elections are written into the U.S. Constitution.

Popular, general elections are fundamental in modern representative democracy. The Framers’ remedy for potential corruption and misleading interest of constituents was biennial elections of House members. General elections presume representatives are elected on merit and subjected to popular will of those represented. Frequent elections of House members allow the polity to authorize a citizen-representative to act on their

---

12 In Federalist Paper No. 10, James Madison begins by stating, “Among the numerous advantages promised by a well-constructed Union, none deserves to be more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction” (Federalist Papers, 2013, p. 27). As an important cause for controlling faction was the realization man was capable of dissension. Madison warns the public that “The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; and we see them everywhere brought into different degrees of activity, according to the different circumstances of civil society” (Federalist Papers, 2013, p. 28).
behalf in Congress. Electing representatives create a link between the institutions of
government and the electorate. To that end, elected representatives are held accountable
of their service by term limits and threat of not being re-elected. The “risk” of re-election
is undeniably what promotes the representatives to give attention to the interests and
opinions of those whom elected them in office.

The U.S. Constitution’s Article 1 outlines Congressional powers, representative
qualifications and terms, and elections. It is the pillar of our nation’s legislature and
since its beginning has for the most part been unchanged. What has changed is how
Congress is studied (Peabody and Polsby, 1963; Polsby, 1963).

Amendments have affected the qualifications and elections of its representatives.
2.4 Representative Role Theory: Trustee, Delegate, Politico

Representative role theory explains a representative’s perception of their relationship to the constituency. As a systematic model, the concept of representative role theory describes the behavior of a representative and how they act toward their constituency. There are three representative role styles: trustee, delegate, and the politico.

In a speech to the Electors of Bristol (England) on November 3, 1774, Edmund Burke proclaimed the importance of a representative and their sacrifices they make for their constituency. Burke argued “it ought to be the happiest and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union” with their constituency, sacrificing their own judgment for the sake of their constituency (Burke, 1774). Burke suggests a representative must decide on issues for the “general good” rather than just the opinions of their constituency. On government affairs, a trustee must 1) represent the judgment of the constituency while 2) maintaining reason for what is the greater good of the community. In Federalist Paper No. 10, James Madison suggests that a representative may need to place what is best for the good of the community over the desires of the individual representative or constituent. In doing so, Madison shows support for Burke’s notion that man is capable of biased judgment stating that, “No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity” (Madison, Federalist Paper No. 10). Similarly, a delegate also acts on behalf of others. The difference between a trustee and delegate is
that delegates act with no opinion or judgment of their own. A delegate solely represents the wishes of those they represent.

Since Edmund Burke’s identification of representative roles, political scholars have continued to examine this concept. Norman Meller’s (1967) research on representational role types describes three distinct classifications of representation: trustee, politico, and delegate. Advancing on Burkean representative theory, Meller distinguishes representational roles in varying degrees of “sharpness.” Trustee and delegate roles, being polarized, are more normative and ideal than what really occurs in legislative behavior. “The Politico role constitutes nothing more than a description of what a legislator does when he fails to follow a recognized norm,” being that of a trustee or delegate (Meller, 1967, p. 476). Meller contributes to the literature that a Politico is a legislator acting in response to constituency and national demands and accommodating both trustee and delegate roles. In contemporary terms, a Politico refers to representative politician.

In 1979, Alpert questioned the literature on representational behavior. He argued, “representative roles [are] not necessarily a reflection of any adopted style of representation (i.e., a choice to represent one’s district vis-à-vis one’s own beliefs), but instead reflects a broader concern for the reduction of uncertainty about district opinion” (Alpert, 1979, p. 588). Alpert criticized representatives’ motives claiming evidence exists that delegates, trustees, or politicos are not so much concerned about the opinion of the constituency, but on winning elections (Alpert, 1979). But how has an understanding
of representational roles changed if trustee or delegate descriptions are merely normative?

Representative Role theory explains the representative’s perception of their district constituency’s interests and ideology (Eulau and Wahlke, 1978). In the next section, I will discuss representative roles in the modern Congress and the methods members use to serve the interest of the constituency.

2.5 Representative Roles

The role of traditional members of Congress has changed from strictly being a republican principle to a professionalized career (Hibbing, 1991; Polsby, 1971). In the Constitution, the qualifications of a House member are outlined. They must be twenty-five years of age, a citizen of the U.S. for at least seven years, and must reside in the state of they represent at the time of election. With those qualifications in mind, limitations on merit, age, poverty or wealth, profession, or religion are excluded (Federalist No. 52, 1787-88). As long as House qualifications (e.g., age, residence location and length) are met, anyone can become a member of the House of Representatives. Other than qualifications and prescribed duties of House members acting collectively, individual MC roles are missing from the U.S. Constitution.

---

14 Article I, section 2, U.S. Constitution.
15 Here “anyone” refers to post Civil Rights Act of 1964
The nature of Congressional membership of Congress has transitioned from one of rotation to one that is more careerist and professional (Polsby, 2005; Price, 1971). Professionalization in House membership has affected Member behavior and the roles they play in and out of Congress. The roles of House members have shifted so that the modern representative transitions from an “amateur to professional, from the status of temporary ambassador from home to that of member of the legislative group” (Polsby, 1971, p. 5). Thus, the relationship between a House Representative and their constituents has transitioned as a result. With motivation in securing a Congressional career, members respond to society by seeking innovative methods in order to present themselves to their constituencies favorably (Fenno, 1978; Hibbing, 1991).

In a survey of Congressional members, the House Commission on Administrative Review asked House members to describe their job. The House Commission on Administrative Review\textsuperscript{16} concluded members perform similar duties in their roles. From the survey, the House Commission outlined a number of administrative duties Members of the U.S. House of Representatives are expected to perform as Congressional representatives. Members are expected to act as legislators, constituency servants, and communicators.

\textsuperscript{16} Survey was conducted in the late 1970s and asked 153 members of Congress to describe their job. Results suggests members were more concerned about what other thought their job was rather than their own personal perspective (Davidson and Oleszek, 2006).
2.5.1 Legislator

As a legislator, House members duties are multi-faceted. Members of Congress are obligated to abide by particular constraints and behavior (Davidson and Oleszek, 2006). Members are subjected to a number of rules, procedures, and House traditions while performing their job as a representative. First and foremost, the predominant role of a member of the House is as legislator—making laws. The role of a legislator succumbs to the duties and routines of Capital Hill, such as committee assignments, investigative hearings, and legislative work (Davidson and Oleszek, 2006). For example, members seek committee assignments that will potentially benefit their district (e.g. earmark of a representative from a mining industry dependent district seeking assignment to the Natural Resources committee).

2.5.2 Constituency Servant

The role as a constituency servant is usually instigated by some need within the geographic constituency. Members act as a “servant” of the House “attempts to give voice to citizens’ concerns and solve their problems” (Davidson and Oleszek, 2006, p. 125). This role is performed in casework\textsuperscript{17} and typically addressed and completed by the representative’s staff. For example, a military serviceman lost his absentee ballot. If possible, staff will assist the serviceman in obtaining new ballot to secure his or her vote.

\textsuperscript{17} Casework is in district constituent service. This includes problems, issues, and concerns of constituents within the geographical district.
Constituency service is more than office resources or labor. As a constituency servant, a House member or their staff performs tasks that are directly related to requests from within the geographical district. For example, when a House member speaks at a commencement exercise or serves as grand marshal in a hometown parade.

2.5.3 Mentor-communicator

Davidson and Oleszek (2006) compare the role of mentor-communicator to a combination of policy-making and “constituency errand running” (Davidson and Oleszek, 2006, p. 126). In this role, House members develop a working knowledge of policy issues and establish good communication with district constituents. Communication with constituents is by correspondence through franked mail, district appearances, phone calls, email bulletins, or social media posts. Members communicate messages of work and constituency service to individuals within their district. As a messenger, members fulfill an obligation of responsibility to serve their constituents best interest.

2.6 Representative Tasks: Roll Call and Non-Roll Call Activities

House members fulfill representative tasks such as Bill sponsorship, drafting legislation, and delivering public speeches by performing various activities. There are two fundamental types of activities MCs perform in Congress. One is roll-call voting activity, and the other non-roll call activity. Voting on federal legislation is a critical
activity performed by House members. Non-roll call activities include floor speeches and debate, constituency casework, Bill sponsorship, and committee work. The difference between roll-call and non-roll call activities is that roll-call voting activity satisfies the national responsibility of acting as a representative of the people while the other concentrates on district related interests (Hibbing, 1991).

2.6.1 Representative Voting Activity

House members can achieve representational goals and play their role by casting their vote in Congress. Voting is fundamental to democratic principles and recognized as the most visible activity (to constituents) that is performed in Washington.

Member roll-call voting is an activity critical to the parameters of legislative behavior (Wahlke and Eulau, 1959) and subjected to popular control (Miller and Stokes, 1963). It is an activity linked to constituency, party, and interests, and is a hallmark in gauging performance in Washington DC. With popular control and influence from the electorate, the House member casts their vote on legislation based on their 1) perception of the constituency (Cnudde and McCrone, 1966) and party influence (Bartels, 2000).

Roll-call voting on legislation, motions, appointments, and measures, is considered the

---

18 Three forms of floor voting are performed in the House: 1) voice vote, 2) a division, and 3) a teller vote. Voting by voice call is frequent and conducted by yeas and nays. When a vote has a division, the Speaker counts members standing. A teller vote is depicted when members walk up the center aisle of the House to be counted. Roll-call votes are not required in every floor vote (Matthews and Stimson, 1975). Congressional voting behavior is examined by party influence (Bartels, 2000; Grose and Middlemass,

2.6.2 Representative Speech and Debate Activity

Speeches delivered on the House floor serve representational goals. Floor speeches act as a venue for members to introduce legislation, debate, represent their constituency, show influence, and side with party ideology. Kingdon describes floor speeches and debates as activity that “transpires on the floor of a legislature [and] defines the end product of the law-making apparatus” (Kingdon, 1989, p. 4).

Representatives use time on the House floor to perform non-roll-call activities such as pursuing personal and political goals (Maltzman and Sigelman, 1996). Floor

---

19 Members are allotted time to speak on the floor on a first come-first served basis, and permitted to “speak on issues of their choosing” (Maltzman and Sigelman, 1996, p. 819). There are three time limits on House floor speech: 1) One-minute, 2) Five-minute, and 3) Sixty-minute, or special order speeches. The one-minute speech, also known as “one minutes” allow House members to debate on non-legislative business (Schneider, 2013). Member One-minute speech is not outlined in the Rules of the House. Instead, minute speeches are result of an evolving Congress and demand unanimous consent of the House deliver a one-minute speech (Schneider, 2013). Members are allotted time to speak on the floor on a first come-first served basis, and permitted to “speak on issues of their choosing” (Maltzman and Sigelman, 1996, p. 819). There are three time limits on House floor speech: 1) One-minute, 2) Five-minute, and 3) Sixty, or special order speeches. The one-minute speech, also known as “one minutes” allow House members to debate on non-legislative business (Schneider, 2013). Members must only address the House during speeches. If they are unable to finish their speech in one-minute they must ask for permission to add undelivered portion of speech to the Congressional Record.
time is a communication tool for members to publicize media and communication strategies, formulate their platform to share information, explain future amendments, deliver eulogies or tributes, express personal views and debate, and advertise party leadership. There are three types of House floor speeches. “One-minutes” are brief speeches that members are able to speak at will on any subject at the beginning of the legislative day. These speeches are delivered frequently by members and more strategic for electoral incentives (Mayhew, 1974; Maltzman and Sigelman, 1996) and notoriety. Like one-minute speeches, five-minute speeches are granted to House members at the beginning of the legislative business day and may cover topics on legislation, policy, or bill sponsorship. Special Order speeches are party-centered and only permitted during leadership hour on business days (www.repcloakroom.house.gov). Special Order speeches are more infrequent than other speech types because they are delivered by party leadership and require more strategy and preparation.

2.6.3 Constituency Casework Activity

---

20 Majority and minority parties alternate the first hour of Special Order time (www.repcloakroom.house.gov)
Casework is constituency service. It serves as an opportunity for House members to solve problems for their constituency in the district on the local level. Therefore, House members use casework to achieve representational and electoral goals.

Constituency based casework is a task performed by the member or their staff. Casework is assistance or “congressional favors” (Mayhew, 1974, p. 54) with resolving conflict or issues with state level bureaucracies or federal government. Richard Fenno explains casework as the “most time-consuming activity” absolutely necessary to maintain incumbency, because casework is a “powerful reelection medicine” (Fenno, 1978, p. 101). Casework is a task that authenticates (Fenno, 2007) a House member in their district. It is a necessary task representatives use to secure their seat in Congress and justify time spent in the home district (Fenno, 1978; Mayhew, 1974).

2.6.4 Bill Sponsorship Activity

An enumerated power of Congress is the ability to create and amend legislation. Part of the law making process is bill sponsorship. A major task of House members is sponsoring legislation, either by introducing bills or co-sponsoring support for a bill introduced by other House members. Only Congressional members of the house in which the bill is introduced are allowed to introduce that bill on the floor.
Sponsoring a bill\textsuperscript{21} is a task that holds enormous responsibility for House members. Organizational steps in drafting legislation are tedious and time-consuming and is primarily the responsibility of the bill sponsor House representatives are mindful of the complexity involved in crafting legislation because “words are the building blocks of policy” and all that contribute to sculpting legislation influence how it will be potential viewed by the public (Davidson and Oleszek, 2006, p. 240). Hence, representative electoral outcomes may be affected by bill sponsorship success.

\textbf{2.6.5 Committee Activity}

If Congress is the home, the committee is the kitchen. In committees, representatives are cooking legislation, drafting recipes to make the best bill, and stirring up debate. Assignment to committees is an important representative task. In each of the twenty-one House committees are work groups of House members acting as experts on varying subjects. Committee and subcommittee assignments deliberatively function to achieve representation goals; often competing with member caseloads of constituency casework, where members compete for assignments dictated by district pork or state earmarks.

\textsuperscript{21} Because cosponsoring a bill in the modern Congress is relatively casual, Co-sponsorship to bills will not be discussed. For more information see Davidson and Oleszek, 2006.
Service to House committees is a task in which each member must participate (Fenno, 1973). Galloway describes the function of Congress “not as a unified institution, but as a collection of autonomous committees that seldom act in unison” (Galloway, 1961, p. 99-100). Because each standing committee works separately, committee assignments function to fulfill the federal power of check and balances. Members of committees may hold hearings to investigate governmental branches, evaluate programs, hear testimony, and approve appointments; thus, checking other governmental agencies, the Administration, and Congress itself.

### 2.7 Communicating Member Tasks and Activities to Constituents

A principle of our representative system is to “re-present” on a national stage the constituency back in the home district (Pitkin, 1967). A representative communicating directly to their constituency places them within the public’s reach (Mueller, 1973), and to best represent the people, MCs must “connect” with their district constituency on some plane. Representatives decide to communicate with their district in order to explain behavior, claim credit for casework or voting decisions (Mayhew, 1974), and receive constituent feedback. But how does the modern representative communicate with their constituencies while working in Congress away from the district? House members and

---

22 Richard Fenno, Jr. in his book, *Congressmen in Committees* (1973) sets the foundation that Congressmen in general seek three goals: 1) re-election, 2) influence, and 3) make good public policy. The third goal listed (making good public policy) is an essential task House members hold. Note: the Speaker of the House is not assigned to committees because of the large role they play in the Committee of the Whole.
their staff communicate with the constituency using traditional methods of franking privileges, telephone calls, and in-the-district appearances.

The methods representatives use to connect, explain, and communicate with constituents has evolved with technological advances such as the pen, typewriter, radio, television, and computer-internet technology. Because communicating to constituencies is important in the political-life cycle of the representative’s Congressional career (Mayhew, 1974; Fenno, 1978; Hibbing, 1991) members seek innovative ways to make communicating with constituencies better and more efficient. Benefits of information technology in communicating between representatives and constituents are numerous. Computer information technologies act as a bridge between government and the people by providing society an avenue to connect representatives and transparency. Therefore, modern technology closes the “mileage” gap between district constituents and Congressional proceedings in Washington DC.

Communication and explanation of performance behavior between the representative and constituents is an important task for members to perform while working in Congress to secure electoral incumbency. David Mayhew (1974) suggests representatives focus on three elements to maintain incumbency: 1) advertising, 2) position-taking, and 3) credit-claiming of work performance. In his book on “Home Style,” Fenno (1978) introduces the styles representatives choose when developing perception of district constituencies. These models are essential in the modern career of MCs. Understanding how MCs may communicate these elements gives insight on
representative perceptions of their constituent relationship. The goal in either model is to obtain support from constituencies; thus assuring incumbency for the representative.

2.8 Summary: American Representative Democracy

The Framers made an educated guess as to what type of government would best suit the growing nation of the United States. In many ways, the U.S. Constitution was drafted in response to government failures and successes. From its adoption, the American Constitution has served as the contractual bond between the individual citizens and those who act as agents on their behalf. To that end, representatives in Congress perform both as political actors and legislators. Requirements and qualifications for House members have changed little over time, while the role of representatives in American society continually conform to their perception of district preferences.

Representational role theory explains elected officials perception of the relationship with their district constituency. Tasks and activities MCs perform are in response to both district and national interests. But how have advances in information technology effected how representatives communicate with constituencies; thus perceive voters?

The age of digital technology stemmed from history’s communication tools such as the pen, printing press, type-setter, type-writer, telegraph, radio, telephone, and television—all ways in which society receives political information. In Chapter Two, I
discussed MC tasks and activities House MCs perform. Activities such as voting and lawmakers help secure electoral security for careerist MCs. Critical to securing electoral incumbency is communicating with constituent’s member work performance. The next chapter will discuss communication mediums House members use in their roles to carry out tasks and activities as Congressional representatives.
Chapter 3: The Internet as a Political Communication Resource

Chapter Two discusses the roles of American representative democracy, and the activities of those representatives who are elected to act on behalf of the peoples’ interests. A critical activity of representatives is to communicate political information. With the introduction of the internet, communication media has shaped how MCs connect with their constituencies and provide political information on district affairs (Adler et al., 1998; Borgman, 1999; Davis, 1999; Dertouzos, 1997; Owen et al., 1999; Sussman, 1997). In Chapter Three, I discuss Congressional adoption and acceptance of internet technology and how the internet offers a low-cost, effective avenue for MCs to exchange political information with voters (Adler et al., 1998).

I begin this Chapter with a discussion on the internet as a contemporary, Congressional channel for political communication. Internet technology is transforming how MCs pursue electoral goals (Adler, 1998) and, how voters seek political information. I conclude the Chapter with an internet political participation study to support that MCs should allocate internet resources because it is rational to do so.

3.1 The Internet as an important part of American life

There are numerous studies on the internet’s impact on representation in Congress (Esterling, et al., 2011; Esterling, et al. 2013; Gulati and Williams, 2007; Lipinski and Neddenriep, 2004; Muntz and Martin, 2001; Owen et al., 1999). Much of the scholarship
discusses benefits the internet has contributed to the representative-constituent relationship. Owens, Davis, and Strickler (1999) suggest that cyberspace offers a “virtual Washington” resolving the conflict House members face in sharing time between Washington work and time spent in the district. House members use internet resources to communicate with constituents by electronic mail, Congressional web sites, and social media. Staff is often assigned the task of posting text, audio, video, and messages of member’s work to Congressional websites and social media sites. Daniel Lipinski believes members use online resources to communicate political information that is likely to be “viewed favorably by constituents,” helping secure reelection (Lipinski, 2004) and thus strengthens the representative-constituent relationship.

3.2 The Internet: A Brief Historical Review

Computer technology revolutionized the modern world. Born from computer innovation, the internet was developed as a networking tool connecting two or more computer devices. As a creation of both information technology and computer science (Moschovitis et al., 1999), the internet is now a technology without borders (Pool, 1990).

During the 1960s the U.S. Federal government "fostered" a computer mainframe designed for military defense purposes. The computer mainframe was large in scale and required specific tools and processors to carry out tasks. Under the Department of Defense, the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA), an agency specializing in military technology was developed as a strategic response to the Soviet Union’s space
program (Chadwick, 2006). As the U.S. Cold War defense programs began to take shape, a group of systems among several U.S. universities began networking. This network would become ARPANET. By the 1970s a network of over forty computers between the Department of Defense and various universities (i.e., Stanford, UCSB, UCLA, and Utah) were developed. These initial email programs were created in 1972, leading to a communication explosion.

The development of internet technology grew rapidly over the next few decades, affecting military defense systems, private households, business and personal computers, and medical science. By 1990 the introduction of the World Wide Web remedied the problem of accessibility, which leads to an increased connectivity of network participants (Chadwick, 2006). The networking powerhouse of the World Wide Web pieced together computers from all over the world, and internet communication methods began to present themselves in daily American life. Richard Davis believes the “most coveted activity of most American—leisure—increasingly has included the Web” (Davis, 1999, p. 9). Now in the 21st Century, internet technology is a large part of everyday life—on and off Capitol Hill.
3.3 The Internet Enters the U.S. House of Representatives

After a brief email pilot-program during the 102nd Congress\textsuperscript{23}, the U.S. House of Representatives went “online.” Then House Chairman of the House Administration Committee, Representative Charlie Rose (D-NC) led efforts to bring email capabilities into the U.S. House of Representatives, and by 1992 House staff were able to send and receive email (@hr.house.gov). From an insider’s perspective, author Chris Casey gives a description of why “the Hill” needed to get on the internet:

“…the reason Congress needs to get on the internet is because members of Congress are the representatives of the citizens who send them to Washington”… “They are sent to the nation’s capital to act on their constituents’ behalf, and they have a duty to report back to and inform their constituents about the legislative efforts they are undertaking” (Casey, 1996, p. 1).

By 1995, the House as a whole was using the internet to inform citizens on government information and political issues (Owen et al., 1999). With the start of the 104th Congress, ninety-one House members and five committees were online depicting a significant rise in internet use acceptance. In 1996, 222 House members and eight committees were online. By the start of 106th Congress (1999-2000), all members and each standing committee in the House were online, i.e., displaying an interactive website (Davis, 1999). The 113th Congress (2013-2014) is completely online having each House member, staff member, standing committee, and institutional office with connectivity to email and a website (clerk.house.gov).

\textsuperscript{23} The 102nd Congress duration was from January 1991 to January 1993.
3.3.1 Member Goals: Internet Activity, Use and Frequency

Internet-based technology is transforming how members achieve their electoral goals (Adler et al., 1998; Casey, 1996; Esterling, et al., Esterling, et al., 2011; 2013; Gulati, 2004; Gulati and Williams, 2007; Johnson, 2003, 2004; Owen et. al., 1999; Vergeer et al., 2011). David Mayhew proclaims the primary goal of representatives is reelection (Mayhew, 1974). As reelection seekers, House members engage in electoral incentives of 1) advertising, or creating a favorable image, 2) credit claiming, or individual accomplishment, and 3) position taking, or making a political judgment (Mayhew, 1974). Clearly, these incentives have become the hallmark for the modern Congressperson in their electoral career (Hibbing, 1991). But, how does the internet help representatives achieve electoral goals?

Internet-based technology is transforming how legislators communicate with their constituency (Adler et al., 1998; Casey, 1996; Esterling, et al., Esterling, et al., 2011; 2013; Gulati, 2004; Gulati and Williams, 2007; Johnson, 2003, 2004; Owen et. al., 1999; Vergeer et al., 2011). Indeed, constituency casework and campaigning happen within the geographic district, but the internet can help members meet constituency needs by fulfilling representative tasks and activities—regardless of time and distance.

Members (and staff) use the internet to operate official website homepages. See Figure 1. MCs use the home page to seek electoral incentives such as advertising, credit
claiming, and position taking (Mayhew, 1974). The Congressional home page enables people to politically participate, and communicate with MC staff. But, what do people view when visiting MC Websites? David Johnson suggests seven common features critical for MCs to display on their home page: 1) a constituency focus, 2) casework information, 3) how they voted on issues, 4) schedules, 5) newsletters, 6) interactivity on issues/polls, and 7) student/educational information (Johnson, 2004). For example, Representative Amodei’s website homepage depicts these seven common features. See Figure 1.

Figure 1: Example of House Member Website. Website home page of Nevada’s Representative Mark Amodei (R-NV2). His official website is located at http://amodei.house

Congressional Web sites have not always been as interactive and visually appealing as those of the current Congress. Still, features on a House member’s homepage permit members to present themselves through posts and images (Adler et al., 1998; Koop and Marland, 2012), and videos.
3.3.2 YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing website. Launched in 2005, YouTube (www.youtube.com) is a website that enables users to upload video content for shared public viewing.\textsuperscript{24} As of today, YouTube has more than one-billion users. According to YouTube statistics, “300 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute” (www.youtube.com/yt/press).

Considered a social-media\textsuperscript{25} networking website, YouTube has become a social trend where video-sharers and “vloggers,” (individual users blogging videos) are now considered a community (Jones, 2008). A recent Business Insider article claims that YouTube users watch 4 billion hours of video monthly, and upload 72 hours of video every minute (Dickey, 2013). Pew Research Center data shows that as of May 2013, 72 percent of adults (18-65+) use some type of social networking site.

With enormous possibilities of reaching millions of viewers, it makes sense that politics would collide with YouTube. Pew Research reports that seven of the 16, 2008 presidential candidates made their presidential campaign announcements on YouTube. In 2008, CNN and YouTube together hosted the 2008 U.S. Presidential campaign debate.

\textsuperscript{24} Privacy settings are available.
\textsuperscript{25} Merriam-Webster defines Social-media as “forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)” (www.i.word.com).
This was the first ever video-shared presidential debate to be aired on YouTube (Pew Research data, Aug. 2012). In the following year, the House of Representatives, (111th Congress) launched official, individual Congressional YouTube channels (Pew Research data, Aug., 2012). As a resource, YouTube quickly became an important tool for representatives to allocate in their office.

3.4 Allocated Resource: The Internet

Members have limited resources to invest in to create and maintain relationships with constituents (Adler et al., 1998; Chadwick, 2006; Evans and Oleszek, 2003; Lipinski and Neddenriep, 2004; Owen et al., 1999). We shouldn’t expect members to invest resources into home pages if they are uncertain constituents are seeking political information there. Therefore, is it rational for MCs to allocate internet resources? Thus, I propose the following research question:

Research Question 1:
Are Congressional websites a rational use of resources?

3.4.1 Design and Methodology

If MCs allocate internet resources to develop official websites, it is because people are seeking out political information from them. Therefore, I developed a questionnaire based on Best and Krueger’s internet political participation survey (2005)
to measure if people use the internet to communicate with House members and gather political information from MC Websites. As part of exploring home style online, I include a modified version of Best and Krueger’s survey to better understand if MCs are being rational by allocating internet resources. See Appendix A for complete survey questionnaire.

If MCs use their websites to communicate to constituents is rational behavior, then the following activities must occur in the sample: 1) a large proportion of participants are online and use the internet, regardless of party and age, 2) a large proportion use the internet to gather political information, and 3) sample participants participate politically.

### 3.4.2 Results

If MCs are rational in allocating internet resources, then a large proportion of participants must be online and use the internet, regardless of party and age. Findings indicate that 100 percent (or 240) have access to the internet. This finding is important in justifying if MC allocation of internet resources is rational because if people are not online, how is allocating internet resources rational?

---

26 Sample population (N=240) is based on a convenience sample of college students at the University of Nevada, Reno.
Sample participants were asked to report party affiliation and age. 30 percent (or 73) responded as Republican, 35 percent (or 84) as Democrat, 21 percent (or 50) as independent, and 8 percent (or 18) claimed “other” for party identification. Sample ages varied from 18 to 32.

The second stipulation in showing MC allocation of internet resources is rational, is that a large proportion of sample participants use the internet to gather political information. Findings show 69 percent (or 162) of respondents use the internet rather than other common sources as their primary resource to gather political news information. See Table 1. This finding is important in understanding MC behavior in allocating internet resources because it shows people are in fact using the internet. It would not be prudent for MCs to allocate time and staff resources to website production if people were not utilizing the internet at all. This finding suggests that a significant proportion of the sample is using the internet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Obs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1
Political Information Resources

27 6 percent (n= 15) of sample respondents reported as “non-registered.”
The third stipulation in showing MC allocation of internet resources is rational, is
to demonstrate people are using the internet to participate politically. To further support
that people are using the internet to gather political information, sample participants were
asked if they 1) visit their Member’s Congressional website, 2) contact MCs by using the
internet (email), and 3) viewed MC YouTube channel for political information. See
Table 2.

Results show that more than half of the sample participants (57 percent) have
never visited their MC website or contacted their MC using the internet (58 percent).
And, 45 percent reported never to have viewed MC YouTube channels. Although these
findings are dramatic, what is important to note is that on average, 8 percent of the
sample reported “sometimes” and 6 percent reported “occasionally” in visiting MC
Websites, contacting MCs via the internet, and viewing MC YouTube channels. Despite
being low, this percentage indicates that people acting politically “sometimes” and
“occasionally” total 14 percent of the total sample. See Table 2. Comparatively, the Pew
Research Center\textsuperscript{28} reports that only 39 percent of Americans “engaged in some sort of civic or political activity via social-networking site such as Facebook or Twitter” (Pewresearch.org, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Viewing Frequency</th>
<th>Visit MC Website</th>
<th>Contact MC via Internet</th>
<th>Viewed MC YouTube Channel</th>
<th>Mean %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{28} Article “Seven in Ten Americans Politically Active, Online and Off” may be found at www.pewresearch.org, dated May 2, 2013. N=2,253 adults, 18 years and older were surveyed.
(N=240)
Note: Of the 245 participants in the population, five participant surveys were dropped due to incomplete survey responses.

In seeking to justify if MCs act rationally when allocating internet resources, findings support that 1) a large proportion of participants are online and use the internet, regardless of party and age, 2) a large proportion do use the internet to gather political information, and 3) comparatively, sample participants do participate politically.

4. Summary: The Internet as a Political Communication Resource

Chapter Three’s focus is home style’s first element: allocation of resources, and the internet. This analysis shows that it is rational for MCs to allocate internet resources because people are using the internet to gather political information. Despite the findings that show respondents are not significantly active with their MC online, what is important
is that people are online and some are seeking political information on their MCs. These results equate with the political participation trends that the percentage of adult Americans with access to online technology is increasing annually (Pewinternet.org).

This chapter discussed the internet as a resource, and why MCs allocate time to develop website homepages because it’s rational to do so. Survey findings support that representatives should allocate time and resources in going online to communicate with constituents because constituents are online seeking political information.

Chapter Four continues my exploration of home style and the internet by examining the next element of home style: presentation of self. I examine reported MC presentation of self styles and YouTube video uploads on member websites. Richard Davis reported in 1996 that 46 million people in America had internet access (Davis, 1999), and Pew Research’s Internet and American Life Project (Smith, 2014) reported an estimated 86 percent of all American adults go online; therefore, it is clear representatives harness online technology to communicate with voters.

**Chapter 4: Representative Online Presentation of Self**

As internet usage among Americans increases, representatives seek to optimize using official websites to communicate with district constituencies, thereby depicting a home style (Adler et al., 1998; Davis, 1999; Grimmer, 2010). Chapter Three discusses the internet, and why it is rational for MCs to allocate time and resources to it as a form of
communication. In this chapter, I examine the second element of home style—presentation of self—by measuring online and offline MC presentation of self.

I begin this chapter with a discussion on presentation of self theory (Goffman, 1959). As an element of Richard Fenno’s home style model, I discuss presentation of self and explain why Goffman’s theory suits representative behavior research. Fenno notes that “Politicians, like actors, speak to and act before audiences from whom they must draw both support and legitimacy” (Fenno, 1978, p. 54). Because of this, support and legitimacy—elements of trust—are both critical factors in home style. I continue with a discussion of home style patterns members establish to acquire trust from constituents, and conclude the chapter by introducing a way to measure online presentation of self.
4.1 Presentation of Self Theory and Representative Behavior

Introduced by Erving Goffman, presentation of self is a theory of impression management. According to Goffman, “When an individual enters the presence of others, they commonly seek to acquire information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed” (Goffman, 1959, p. 1). Hence, the theory of presentation of self is useful in representative behavior research because it can explain the perception representative’s hold of their constituents in the immediate presence of the district.

As an impression management model, the theory supposes that presentation of self occurs only in the immediate presence of others. Erving Goffman presumes that in the immediate presence of others an individual will have “promissory character” in which others are likely to “accept the individual on faith” until the individual has left their presence (Goffman, 1959). Again, the theory of presentation of self corroborates representative role theory (Chapter Two) in such that representation is formulated on the perception of relationship between the MC and their constituents.

Goffman’s model is a hallmark in research on representative behavior and is an integral component in Richard Fenno’s work on representative’s perceptions of constituency, ultimately leading to the development of the home style model. Fenno’s model of home style (Fenno, 1977; 1978) is determined by MC perception of district constituency and how they [MCs] behave (perception response) when they are among district constituencies. Therefore, a determinant of home style is the establishment of
trust between the representative and constituent. Fenno believes trust is key when building the representative-constituent relationship. Objectively, a representative presents herself as a “person in such a way that the inferences drawn by those watching will be supportive” (Fenno, 1978, p. 55). Therefore, trust is the foundation of the representatives’ home style; necessitating representatives to communicate with constituents.

### 4.2 Presentation of Self in MC Home style

Home style is defined as a behavior based on the relationship between a representative and their constituents. MCs display a “home style” behavior when they discuss their performance to district constituents for the sole “achievement” of getting reelected (Fenno, 1978). The three elements of home style behavior are 1) allocation of resources, 2) presentation of self, and 3) explanation of Washington activity. In this chapter, I will concentrate on the second element of home style—presentation of self.

Why is it important for an MC to present self? In presenting self to constituents, MCs make an impression to prove their abilities for the job and get reelected (Fenno, 1973; 1978; Mayhew, 1974). Representatives do this in three ways: 1) qualifying their abilities, 2) identifying with their constituents, and 3) empathizing (Fenno, 1978).

In qualifying for a House member position, candidates (or incumbents) must express to constituents that they can do a good job. By listing their background,
experience, accomplishments, and education, Congressional candidates convey they are competent and qualified to be sent to Washington and identify with, and act on the behalf of their constituents.

Identifying with constituents is equally important as qualifying one’s abilities for the job. Fenno matches a political actor’s identifying with constituents to giving the impression that they are like the constituency in some way. Impressions like “I am one of you” and “I think the way you do and care about the same things you do” convey a sense of identification to constituencies and builds trust (Fenno, 1978).

MCs convey a sense of empathy to build trust in the relationship with the district constituents. Because empathy is the act of caring, showing empathy depicts emotion and feeling while conveying to the constituency that “I [MC] understand[s] your situation and I care about it” (Fenno, 1978, p. 59). Collectively, MCs communicate these three ways of proving their abilities to constituents to help build trust and support representatives seek for electoral incentives.

4.3 How Representatives Communicate Presentation of Self

In explaining Home style, Fenno argues that a principle of democratic theory is responsiveness from both voters and representatives, and that “the greater the proportion of two-way communication, the more likely is there to be both electoral accountability and responsiveness on the part of the representative” (Fenno, 1978, p. 238). To that end,
the concept of presentation of self is formulated on two expressive communication elements: 1) verbal (language component), and 2) nonverbal (physical component). These are common forms of expressive communication and ways of sending messages to a receiver. Because communication is a process with a convergence of defining concepts, I will use the following description of communication (political) in this study:

“The process by which a nation’s leadership, media, and citizenry exchange and confer meaning upon messages that relate to the conduct of public policy.” (Perfloff, 1998, p. 8)

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is a “social vehicle” and distinguished by language (Miller, 2005). It is semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic. And, because communication is often conceptualized as intentional, the phrase, “you cannot not communicate” (Watzlawick et al., 1967) lends to the understanding that verbal communication are signs and referents, grammatical rules, and constructs of language to help coordinate desired behaviors from others.

Nonverbal Communication

As explained in Chapter One, the process of communication is defined as “the process by which an individual (the communicator) transmits stimuli (usually verbal) to modify the behavior of other individuals (the audience)” (Hovland, Janis, and Kelly (1953). This definition supports a narrow, one-way view of communication; however, Weaver (1949) defines communication as “all of the procedures by which one mind can affect another” (Miller, 2005). What is important about explaining the process of communication is that there is not one adopted definition. Rather, the definition of communication is a convergence of process definitions “because they have really become truisms about communication rather than issues of theoretical contention” (Miller, 2005, p. 5).
Nonverbal communication is symptomatic, symbolic, or analogic. It is widely accepted as what is not said, but acted out. Facial expressions are an example of nonverbal communication. But, nonverbal communication is also arbitrary. For instance, how casual a Member dresses when in the home district, such as in blue jeans and tennis shoes is symbolic and conveys a comfort behavior. As an analogical behavior, like faking a yawn to show exhaustion, nonverbal communication exhibits a consciousness, or unconsciousness, such as when one yawns because they are really exhausted. Regardless, nonverbal communication is often “guided by cultural scripts and ingrained habits” (Miller, 2005, p. 11).

4.3.1 Presentation of Self: Two-way Communication

Goffman’s presentation of self model stipulates that nonverbal performance, or the expressions “given off” by one are done so because she believes nonverbal expressions from political actors are what help constituents determine a representatives “promissory character” (Fenno, 1978p. 54-55). Because verbal communication is manipulated by the sender, nonverbal cues received by the receiver act as a “check” on their verbal communication.

Presentation of self is not advertising (Fenno, 1978; Mayhew, 1974). Advertising is based on the concept of one-way communication, or a linear model of a source presenting a message to an audience. Because presentation of self relies on members being responsive to constituents, it is based on two-way communication, or a
transactional model that includes feedback. Fenno supports the idea that presentation of self style is constructed on two-way communication, because “Every congressman’s home style is a blend of two-way and one-way communication, of efforts to listen to and talk to supportive constituents and of efforts to gain visibility” (Fenno, 1978, p.238). Using a two-way communication model reinforces member presentation styles because they depend on people discussing their actions, and then making conclusions about them.

Presentation of self is communicated in many ways. Fenno believes that presentation of self is communicated to people by how the MC perceives the district constituency; therefore, a presentational style. In Fenno’s analysis of relationship behavior between representatives and constituents, he developed a spectrum of presentational styles ranging from developing personal relationships to policy-centered discussion. Although in Fenno’s research he assigned presentational styles for each case study, there are predominantly two very different, yet common presentational stylistic patterns: person-to-person and issue-oriented.

4.4 Presentation of Self Patterns

Home style types should not be considered as a “cameo performance or as a snapshot personality projection” but as patterns recognizable and accepted by their constituencies (Fenno, 1978, p. 125). There are two common types of representative presentation of self: 1) person-to-person, and 2) issue-oriented. Distinctive patterns ranging from cultivating personal relationships to discussing policy issues depict how members
communicate with district constituents based on how she perceives her constituency (Fenno, 1978).

Some elements of both styles are recognizable in a representative’s home style; however, Richard Fenno differentiates the two predominant types separately as person-to-person and issue-oriented. In this study, I use these two most common types. See Table 3 for a description of issue-oriented and person-to-person presentation of self styles.

Table 3
Richard Fenno’s Predominant Home style Types
When a representative exhibits a “person-to-person” presentation of self style, she believes she is a “good fit” within her geographical district. MCs using this style attempt to connect with each constituent by remembering names, faces, dates, and family connections. Person-to-person types are described as knowing constituents, and feel as a person who is all “part of the same community,” making “favorable inferences” about the representative (Fenno, 1978, p. 64-65). Personal attention to the constituency is the core of this home style type. She avoids discussing hard issues, and seeks to protect support by not alienating constituencies on any controversy. These types are also verbal and prefer public speech.
Issue-oriented presentation style articulates the issues by conveying the impression of their knowledge and mental “agility” (Fenno, 1978, p. 95). MCs with this acquired style prefer to present self as the “antipolitician,” or one who is “just as fed up with government and the people who run it as you are” (Fenno, 1978, p. 97). Issue-oriented types are accessible and communicative using the open meeting as an opportunity to build constituency relations, rather than stabilizing them (as in person-to-person).

4.5 Online and Offline Presentation of Self

Home style was developed with the understanding that members would be “in the immediate presence” of constituents while depicting home style behavior; therefore, offline. The term “offline” refers to something occurring without the use of the internet. Hence, online refers to something that occurs with the use of the internet. In the following section, I discuss the concepts of both online and offline presentation of self.

Offline

Richard Fenno established home style behavior patterns by following eighteen members (case studies) around their respective districts and analyzing displayed behavior(s). Fenno chose these case studies based on certain criteria, such as member party, district homogeneity, or heterogeneity, and district ideologies. Internet technology or resources were not accounted for as variables of the original concept of home style.
Home style assumes the MC is “in-district” and among her constituency while exhibiting a home style behavior. As the “centerpiece” of home style, presentation of self assumes MCs are in front of their constituency building trust and reinforcing the representative-constituency relationship (Fiorina and Rhodes, 1991).

Home style research supposes that home style happens in the district (Fenno, 1978; Fiorina and Rhodes, 1991; Parker and Parker, 1985). Because of this assumption, until the mid-1990s, home style was examined by in-district variables and either case study or aggregate methodology. After the introduction of the internet and its seemingly limitless possibilities to connect with constituencies, research focus shifted from the “offline” member-in-the-district to how members “perceive” or are perceived online.

**Online**

Home style predates internet technology. However, since its world-wide adoption, members “going online” and using the internet is subject to numerous research studies (Adler, et al., 1998). Adler et al. (1998) were the first among many to examine member home style and the impact of the internet. Their findings show that most members in the study who use their Congressional Website to convey a particular home style were Republican, younger than their counterparts, and from affluent districts. Democrats were more likely than Republicans to convey constituency service through

---

Adler et al. (1998) examined the 105th Congress during June through August of 1997.
their Web sites (Adler et al., 1998). Despite the research by Adler et al. on home style and the internet, since their research, presentation of self, more specifically, had yet to be studied (Gulati, 2004).

Adding to the growing body of research on presentation of self, Gulati examines presentation of self by using images (image subject and design) on representative home pages. Gulati believes images posted on members’ home pages imply either an outsider or insider style (Polsby, 1968). Images posted by an outsider depict national imagery; comparatively, an insider posts local district imagery (Gulati, 2004).

Gulati believes the home page is what gives the viewer a “first impression” of the representative because “there is no one presentation style that dominates on the Web” (Gulati, 2004, p. 37). But, is presentation of self online similar to presentation of self in presence of others, as suggested by Erving Goffman? Gulati claims that online presentation of self lacks the personal contact needed in presentation of self theory. Researchers who support Gulati’s claim suggest that no relationship exists between online and offline presentation of self (Koop and Marland, 2012). Although, presentation of self research about online technology and offline contexts argues the potential of “future face-to-face interaction,” not only indicates presentation of self, but does so more accurately (Ellison, Heino, and Gibbs, 2006).
Goffman’s presentation of self model\textsuperscript{31} stipulates that the impression one gives is performed in the immediate presence of others, or offline. Because of this condition, Gulati believes presenting self—person-to-person, online is “not possible” (Gulati, 2004, p. 24). Hence, if Goffman’s model posits presenting self is obtainable only “in the immediate presence of others,” how can representatives legitimately achieve those same goals online?

I argue, MCs’ online and offline presentation self patterns are similar, and online presentation of self does matter in MC home style.

4.5.1 MCs’ Online Presentation of Self

Computer technology is continually advancing informational resources. Research suggests online political participation patterns exist, even if only moderately (Best and Krueger, 2005). Internet technology proves to open lines of political communication; therefore, representatives are optimizing computer-mediated methods of communication in their constituency relationship. Therefore, I ask the following research question:

\textbf{Research Question}

Are MC online and offline presentation of self patterns similar?

\footnote{\textsuperscript{31} The theory is based on formulated expressions from verbal or non-verbal cues.}
4.6 Measuring Online and Offline Presentation of Self: Design and Methodology

Previous studies on the elements of home style and the internet focus on home page images (Adler 1998; Gulati, 2004; Koop and Marland, 2012). In this study, I also focus on elements of home style and the internet, but from a slightly different perspective. I believe to effectively study online and offline presentation of self, both communication and representative theories should be used to explain results. Second, I argue that computer-mediated communication medium such as YouTube video posts are more likely than images to represent MC presentation of self styles than are other forms of internet communication.

Theoretical Aspects

Presentation of self is a subjective action. While being in the presence of others, members communicate to constituents’ representative behaviors. I believe, since home style is member-independent, two theoretical concepts should be used to explain it.

In Chapter Two, I discussed representational role theory. It is important to understand the role a representative holds in the overall function of representative government. Because representative role theory explains the representative’s perception of the relationship between her and the constituency, the manner in which she exchanges information matters. Hence, how representatives communicate their perceived relationship also matters. To that end, I recommend a collaboration of theories: social
information processing theory (Chapter One) and representative role theory (Chapter Two) is suggested to explain such relationship.

**Why YouTube?**

YouTube is a computer-mediated communication medium. It provides a low-cost way for members to communicate to constituents and seek electoral initiatives. But why do MCs choose to post YouTube videos (sharing) to home pages in addition to still images? Xu Cheng (2008) argues that YouTube is successful because it is a social networking site. Being a “social networking” site, unlike traditional video streaming sites (e.g., vimeo) YouTube characteristics has wide-range visibility and uniqueness (Burgess and Green, 2013). Unlike still images that are flat and arbitrary, YouTube videos are participatory.

YouTube is different from still images for apparent reasons. First, YouTube is an online social networking, video-sharing platform. Second, membership is free, and has few restrictions on what can be posted, and whom it targets.

**YouTube and POS**

Videos are unique because they capture an actor’s behavior as if the audience is viewing the action for the first time. This gives members an opportunity to record

---

32 Presentation of self (POS).
behavior and action in the present so that their performance can be viewed at a later time, or reviewed for content. But, how is presentation of self categorically identified in YouTube videos? Because this study only examines the two predominant presentation of self styles identified by Fenno’s original work in Home Style (1973; 1978), Table 4 categorizes presentation of self style and video type. In Table 4, the lowest common denominator is compared with YouTube video type and presentation of self style to explain what depicts the types of videos MCs post with a presentation of self style. For example, issue-oriented style is identified in floor speeches and committee hearings because in these arenas public policy and the “issues” are discussed. Alternatively, person-to-person style is associated with media clips and direct talk videos because one of the lowest common denominator is “constituents want personal attention,” not discussing the issues, per se but feelings of empathy and concern.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POS Type</th>
<th>YouTube Video Type</th>
<th>Lowest Common Denominator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue-oriented</td>
<td></td>
<td>Talks about public policy at home “I think like you do”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>House floor speeches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Committee hearings</td>
<td>“Prefers speech when presenting self”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4
Identified Presentation of Self Style, by YouTube Video Type
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person-to-person</th>
<th>Media clips</th>
<th>Direct talk</th>
<th>Identifies with constituents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“They know me” and “trust me”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Constituents want personal attention”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Will not want to alienate supporters by issues”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“A stabilizer, a maintainer”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Lowest common denominator taken from Fenno’s case study research (1978).

MCs are believed to pursue three essential goals in their career: reelection, Congressional power, and make good public policy (Fenno, 1973; 1977; 1978). The internet provides such a way to achieve these goals both offline and online, so that members can pursue these same goals at home while in the district, and away while pursuing power and policy in Washington. Therefore, I propose the following hypotheses about presentation of self style patterns and the types of YouTube videos MCs post to official House home pages (via YouTube channel).

4.6.1 Hypotheses

H1: MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self styles will post more YouTube videos on their official website than will MCs identified with person-to-person presentation of self styles.

H2: MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self styles will post a higher percentage of issue-oriented YouTube videos than MCs identified with a person-to-person style.
H3: MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self will post a smaller percentage of non-issue-oriented YouTube videos are MCs identified with a person-to-person style.

4.6.2 Data

To address my argument that presentation of self can exist online, and represent MC offline presentation of self style patterns, I will examine the members of the 113th U.S. House of Representatives. As previously discussed, there are no known studies measuring presentation of self and YouTube video posts. This study will resolve that problem. One staffer from the office of every House member\textsuperscript{33} was surveyed to report on their assigned House member’s preferred presentation of self style. Of the 412 House staff asked to participate in the survey, only 107 responded\textsuperscript{34}. (See Appendix B for complete survey).

I argue members posting more total YouTube videos should identify with issue-oriented presentation of self style, whereas members posting fewer videos should identify

\textsuperscript{33} House leadership and non-voting delegates were omitted. Also not included are members having no YouTube channel (n=11).

\textsuperscript{34} Staff members were used for reporting on MC presentation of self for two reasons. First, staff members are the initial contact in accessing House members. House members rarely, if ever are first to answer their office phone. Second, Washington DC or district staff is briefed daily on MC initiatives, national policy, and legislative issues. Therefore, staff has an understanding of MCs feelings of the district, but is restricted from speaking on behalf of the MC, but is permitted to discuss MC feelings on issues of importance.
with person-to-person style. And, if my theory is correct, then MCs who identify with issue-oriented style should therefore post fewer non-issue related YouTube videos such as media and direct talk. I expect these relationships because if we assume “online” as a geographical constituency\(^{35}\) (Anstead and Chadwick, 2008; Bimber and Davis, 2003), then by Fenno’s definition issue-oriented identified subjects in Fenno’s case study will be “more distant more impersonal—almost as if he does, indeed perceive demographic groupings rather than individuals to whom he feels warm-blooded attachments” (Fenno, 1978, p. 74). Whereas, a person-to-person identified MC believes he “knows” the constituency and therefore would find presenting self online would be insincere, less personable. Fenno’s Congressmen A is an example of Person-to-person. Although Congressman A did not travel home a lot,\(^{36}\) he perceives [all] his constituencies and people he meets as his “primary constituency,” not in “demographic terms, but in terms of personal contacts” (Fenno, 1978, p. 66).

From a communication perspective, what is important to understand is that presentation of self is about impression management (Goffman, 1959). Expressions MCs give are verbal, and the expressions given off are nonverbal; subsequently, Goffman’s theory of presentation of self supports the nonverbal elements because nonverbal signs

\(^{35}\) Fenno describes the geographical constituency as a “legally bounded space” (Fenno, 1978, p. 1). In other words, it is the geographic area with boundaries, and all the people within said boundaries are constituents. Previous research on Internet technology and political institutions discuss “online” as a location, different from traditional medium of communication like television (Anstead and Chadwick, 2008; Bimber and Davis (2003).

\(^{36}\) Congressman A traveled home thirteen times and styed only seventy-nine days in the district during 1973 (Fenno, 1978).
are “a check on the reliability of his verbal “signs”” (Fenno, 1978, p. 54). But, this understanding supports my theory of online presentation of self, too, because in YouTube videos, unlike still images (Adler, et al., 1998; Gulati, 2004; Koop and Marland, 2012), videos give both expressions given and given off by the MC in the video—only virtually.

4.6.3 Design: An Aggregate Measure to Identify Online and Offline Presentation of Self in YouTube Posts

I am examining MCs for 1) staff identified presentation of self style (dependent variable), and 2) percentages of total YouTube video type uploads (House floor speeches, committee hearing, media clips, and direct talk). One hundred and seven participants are included (of 412 surveyed) and 13,022 Total YouTube videos are examined in the analysis.

I viewed every House member’s YouTube channel for content and the videos (N=45,756) were coded by setting. Videos depicted four predominant video types: House floor speeches, committee hearings, media clips, and direct talk. House floor speeches are recorded and publicly accessible on webcast or YouTube channel. Floor speech occurs in the House and depicted by a podium, tan chairs, and a member standing at the microphone delivering a speech. Committee hearing posts are coded for dark brown

37 Refer to Edmund Burke’s definition of “virtual” in Chapter One.
chairs, a member or members sitting behind a desk, a name plate, and a microphone. News channel banner, journalist interviews, and radio spots depict media posts. Videos with informal, intimate settings of an MC’s office are identified as direct talk posts. In these video types, members are casually dressed, and tend to have the American flag in the background, bookshelves, and family photographs in the frame.

Of the total number of YouTube videos observed (N=45,756) 83 percent are House floor speeches, 40 percent are committee hearings, 63 percent are media clip posts, and only 20 percent are direct talk posts. In descriptive terms, floor speeches are the most popular type of YouTube videos MCs post to home pages. I believe this is because House members seek one to five minute speeches often to strategically use House floor time to pursue policy (Maltzman and Sigelman, 1996).

Variables

The unit of analysis is an individual House member. The dependent variable is presentation of self style (issue-oriented, person-to-person). The dependent variable is coded as a dummy variable with issue-oriented coded zero (0), or person-to-person coded one (1) (n= 89). Independent variables include the percentage of floor speeches, committee hearings, media clips, and direct talk videos uploaded to individual MC home page. I control for party identification, age, gender, tenure, and district distance form DC. Control variables are discussed in detail below.

38 For responses answering that MCs had characteristics of both styles were dropped for analysis.
MC POS and Video Uploads

I expect a relationship exists between MC presentation of self style and YouTube video uploads. YouTube video uploads, having identifiable issue-based content, such as legislative floor debate and committee hearings, should indicate an issue-oriented presentation of style pattern. If the Member is a “work horse,” or avoids publicity while attending to her legislative duties (Payne, 1980), then issues are more important to discuss in securing (protectionists) electoral incentives in the constituency; thus, more videos of House members working in Washington will be posted, indicating an issue-oriented style (Fenno, 1978).

YouTube video uploads having identifiable person-to-person content, such as viewing the member “in-the-district” reported by the media or speaking directly to the camera such as in public service announcements, should be representative of a person-to-person style pattern. Therefore, we should expect members with higher posting frequency of media-related or direct talk videos to report a person-to-person presentation style. I include the following variables to examine any other relationships between online and offline presentation of self: party identification, age, gender, time in office (tenure), and district distance from DC.39

39 Party identification is coded as a dummy variable (zero (0) for democrat, one (1) for republican). Gender is coded as a dummy variable (zero (0) for female, one (1) for male). Distance is coded as a dummy variable (zero (0) for MC districts ≤ 400 miles from DC, one (1) for district ≥ 400 miles from DC).
Party Identification

Unlike voting behavior, predicting party identification and internet use proves challenging. In my research on this particular subject, no definitive studies were found concluding which party posts more to YouTube. Richard Fenno’s research on representative behavior examined a total of eighteen members—ten Democrats and eight Republicans. His research spanned from 1970 through 1977, all years during which the Democratic Party controlled the U.S. House of Representatives.40

Best and Krueger’s (2005) research on internet political participation suggest people identifying with liberal political dispositions participate more online. Their research findings show study participants identified more liberal and indicate less support for the executive administration (President George W. Bush). Best and Krueger explain this finding determinant upon the survey questions and liberal skews, for example, predispositions on foreign affairs, abortion, and military defense. Yet, Best and Krueger assert, “no relationship can be confidently established between online participation and party identification” (Best and Krueger, 2005, p. 199). Therefore, if there is any relationship between party identification and online participation, we should expect it to be a weak, positive relationship between YouTube post frequency and House Democrats.

40 Important to note: Fenno’s research fails to associate presentation of self style with parties. Poole and Rosenthal (2001) claim that party identification is a major predictor when examining Congress and its functions. In the 113th Congress, Republicans hold the majority with 233 Republicans to 199 Democrats.
**Age**

A 2010 Pew Research Center study determined the generational gap for online use is shrinking. Data reported a significant increase in internet users 50 years and older had doubled between 2009 and 2010 (Madden, 2010). Pew Research on internet use (2014) reports 87 percent of all American adults use the internet. It would seem that younger generations are the predominant demographic of internet users with more than 90 percent of the adult population 18 to 49 years, but that is not the case. 88 percent of adults aged 50 to 64 are internet users, dropping to 57 percent in the 65 + age category. See Figure 2.

---

**Figure 2.** Age Groups and Internet Use of American Adults, 2014. Source: 2014 Pew Research Report, “Internet User Demographics.”
The average age of U.S. House Representatives in the 113th Congress is 57 years (House.gov). See Figure 2. Considering MCs average age, and reports showing that a majority of adults 50 to 64 years are using the internet, we should see that no relationship exists between MCs 25 to 64 years and total YouTube video upload frequency. In offices with older MCs (65+), MCs possibly exploit their younger-aged staffers to maintain MC home pages. In 2010, it was reported that 80 percent of House legislative aides were 20 to 29 years\(^1\). Therefore, if emerging digital technology is a link between Washington and the home district, then we should see no relationship between the age of MCs and percentages of YouTube video types. This expectation is partly due to House members acceptance of internet technology as a resource allocation, but also because MCs allow younger legislative aides to post videos to website home pages.

\[^1\] Data from a 2010 House Compensation Study (112th Congress) developed by ICF International for the Chief Administration Office of the U.S. House of Representatives.
Gender

Recent research on presentation of self style and gender is limited. However, in the existing research, findings show that in some instances gender does matter in presentation of self. For example, Fridkin and Kenney (2010) examine press releases for differences in topics from male to female U.S. Senators (N=32). Results show that female Senators provide information that explains experience and their views on public policy, whereas male Senators focused on caring and empathetic topics. Obviously, this study demonstrates male and female representatives play to the opposite of gender stereotypes. Fridkin and Kenney offer an explanation for these results. First, issues dictate press release content. Second, leadership roles matter to women because it reinforces competence and abilities. Fridkin and Kenney discovered that female Senators “strove to tell citizens that they were experienced and decisive by generating press releases on the important positions they hold in the U.S. Senate and by pronouncing clear positions on matters of public policy” (Fridkin and Kenney, 2010, p. 1). Because of this, I believe female MCs will post more media clips of policy explanations via YouTube video uploads to set their policy agenda through press releases, but also to reinforce position of policy using traditional forms of media (Bimber and Davis, 2003).

Gender is examined in this study for any relationships between online and offline presentation of self. Among YouTube videos types tested (floor speech, committee
hearing, media clips, and direct talk), I expect female MCs to post a higher percentage of media video posts than their male counterparts because like the research by Fridkin and Kenney (2010), I believe female representatives will attempt to stress competence and legislative abilities. Media videos demonstrate to televised audiences popularity and give members a local stage to present self and their qualifications. In this study population (N=422), 18 percent of observations are female compared to 82 percent male House members. Of those reporting a presentation style (n = 89), similarly 18 percent are female House members and 82 percent are male House members.

Tenure

Richard Fenno explains tenure in two forms: 1) expansionist, and 2) protectionist (Fenno, 1978). The expansionist stage describes the member pre-campaign, during campaigning for office, and the early terms in office, while the protectionist stage describes past the initial two terms and subsequent years in office. The expansionist and protectionist “stages” of member careerism is district oriented. The first stage is about expanding constituency support. It comes as a “thrust” before the person is elected to office, and carries through to the primary and general election gathering supporters and “backbone” of the campaign (Fenno, 1978). This stage essentially gathers financial support and boots on the ground to help secure and win the candidates first election and following two terms. The second stage, or protectionist stage occurs after the candidate wins her third election to office and continues during the member’s time in Congress. In
this stage, members are less interested in building a support constituency and more interested in maintaining the support they already have. Fenno refers to the protectionist stage as “preventive maintenance” (Fenno, 1978, p. 173). By this, Fenno suggests that while the first stage (expansionists) cultivates and establishes strong supporters (primary constituency) within the electorate, the second stage affirms her reelection constituency. However, not all representatives behave equally and often events within the district impact electoral outcomes.

The importance of discussing these stages is centered on the career of the representative and what can happen to affect it. Fenno (1978) believes the career is vulnerable to events in which MCs can easily revert to the expansionist stage long after the career has begun. Two events that can affect these stages of the MC career are: 1) deterioration of the primary constituency, and 2) redistricting. The primary constituency is the MC’s strongest supporters. They are responsible for giving the most political activity and loyalty to the MC, mostly because they share strong political values on issues. If the primary constituency should deteriorate because the one major issue shared between the constituency and MC changes, or a loss of political legitimacy on behalf of the MC develops, the MC then reverts from protectionist back to the expansionist stage. Another event that affects careerism is the threat of redistricting. Redistricting effects career stages when district boundaries are redrawn after an official Census. When districts are redrawn, MCs expand to include a new constituency of strong supporters while incorporating the established primary constituencies, or expanding the constituency. In either event, the MCs ultimate goal is winning reelection.
Having this discussion, does tenure influence how members perceive the district? Hibbing disagrees with Fenno’s description of the congressional career by claiming that members do not expand their constituency in the first few terms, but rather become more focused on issues (Hibbing, 1991). If so, then, we should expect as member tenure increases, reasons to expand constituency support by posting YouTube videos of MC district activities decrease. Therefore, lower percentage of media and direct talk video posts (nonissue video) should indicate an issue-oriented presentation style in the House member.

**Distance**

Time is a very special and precious resource to representatives. Because of this, representatives work, live, and socialize by strict schedules. One scheduling concern is allocating time to travel away from Washington back to the home district. For many members, traveling home means time to spend with family, but also time to aim focus to constituency service and casework, and electoral causes.

Trips home mean time away from Washington. Frequency of trips made home is often determined by budget, family, distance, and electoral dangers. Each Chamber in Congress sets a fixed limit for member spending. MCs follow strict budgetary rules, or Member Representational Allowances (MRA) for allocating expenses. MRA varies and is determined by district distance from Washington, district office rentals, and postal
service. According to the Congressional Management Foundation, on average each MCs MRA is about 1.4 million dollars annually.

Beyond budgetary expenditures, trips home use time. Time consumption is problematic for MC resource allocations and often lost on travel (airplane flights, train rides, and driving in cars). Fenno’s analysis of frequency of district trips\(^{42}\) examined electoral margin, seniority, region, family, and staff expenditures. Fenno’s findings show weak correlations and little relationship between these factors and trips afforded home. Because these factors show little relationship to trips made to the district, it can be assumed that time is the critical variable in determining how often to travel home and length of stay. For this reason, computer-mediated communication is rational for MCs to allocate as a resource. And, with the advancements of digital technology such as social media, time traveling home is no longer appears to such a critical factor. Because digital technology is affordable and easy to implement, MCs may find travel home not so problematic.

As shown in previous research on home style, MC frequency of trips home had no relationship with presentation of self style (Fenno, 1978). However, I believe that digital technology can serve as a surrogate for House members in distance-challenged districts where MCs are unable to travel home to the district often due to travel time away from

\(^{42}\) Fenno (1978) determined low (less than 24 trips), medium (24 to 42 trips), and high (more than 42 trips) trips during 1973. Fenno’s results show electoral margin (gamma = -.03), seniority (gamma = -.30), region, family, and staff expenditures (gamma = .28).
Washington. So, if my theory is correct, MCs with districts located more than four hundred miles from DC should post a higher percentage of direct talk YouTube videos.

4.7 Findings

I first surveyed staff members for reported presentation of self style. The results are presented in Table 5. Second, I examined each House member’s YouTube channel, for type and frequency of YouTube videos. A test for each of the hypotheses was run and results are discussed in the following section.

4.7.1 Presentation of Self Survey

Of the 422 offices surveyed, 305 (74%) respondents declined to answer the survey claiming it was against office policy to participate in any survey questionnaires.

Distance is measured by driving miles from the district to Washington, DC. It is set at four hundred miles because it is reasonable distance to drive in one-day.

The telephone survey consisted of two simple questions (coded as dummy variable): 1) How do you identify your MC presenting self to their district constituency? a) Issue-oriented, coded = 0, or b) person-to-person, coded = 1. Data frequency of posting YouTube videos to official websites (Likert scale 1-5, 1=never, 5=very frequently) was also collected.
Forty-three staff respondents (10%) reported a MC with issue-oriented presentation style. Forty-six staff respondents (11%) reported a MC with person-to-person presentation style. Eighteen staff respondents (4%) reported a mixed style of both issue-oriented and person-to-person style. The 4% mixed style was dropped from sample due to respondent uncertainty on member behavior. The sample size remained at just under ninety complete observations (n=89). Descriptive results are presented in Table 5.

### Table 5
Presentation of Self Style, by Party*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POS</th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Total Videos</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
<th>Total Videos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Max</td>
<td>Avg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue-oriented</td>
<td>44% (23)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-to-Person</td>
<td>37% (19)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>19% (10)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*As reported by staff.

Notes: Leadership and non-voting delegates were dropped. Total surveyed (N=422); total respondents (N=107); 18 responses were dropped due to responding “both” POS types; therefore, sample size is (N=89).
Statistics in Table 5 are based on total YouTube video posts on official home pages per MC examined from members in the 113th House beginning from 2009 through 2014. Respondents indicating “unsure” or “both” styles for MC presentation of self were not calculated in statistical testing, but are shown in Table 5. Surveyed Democratic MC offices (n = 52) posted 5,510 total videos and surveyed Republican MC offices (n = 55) posted 7,512. The findings show that 44 percent of staffers from Democratic offices (n=52) identify their assigned MC with having an issue-oriented presentation of self style, where as 36 percent of staff respondents (n=55) report Republican MCs as issue-oriented. Person-to-person style among Democrats was reported at 37 percent of the total as opposed to Republicans at 49 percent. (See Table 5).

4.7.2 A Test of POS and YouTube Video Frequency

I believe frequency of YouTube posts is an indicator for MC presentation of self styles. In my first hypothesis, I proposed that MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self post more YouTube videos on official website than those MCs identified as person-to-person. However, the findings show no relationship. A two-tailed t-test with equal variances was conducted to measure direction and significance of the relationship. At the $p < .05$ confidence level, significance was not found in the difference of issue-oriented scores ($M=114.53, SE= 15.07$) and person-to-person scores ($M=125.5, SE=19.06$); $t(87) = -0.45, p = 0.65$, and so I fail to reject the null. These results suggest that YouTube video postings are not likely an indicator of member presentation of self style. See Table 6.
Table 6
Hypothesis One: Test of POS and YouTube Video Frequency *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation of Self (DV)</th>
<th>Total YouTube Videos (IV)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue-oriented</td>
<td>114.53</td>
<td>15.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-to-person</td>
<td>125.46</td>
<td>19.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=89)
*p < .05, Two-tailed t-test, equal variance
Notes: POS = Presentation of self style.

4.7.3 A Test of POS and “Issue” YouTube Videos

In my second hypothesis, I proposed that MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self style were more likely than person-to-person style to post an increased percentage of issue-oriented YouTube videos such as House floor speeches and committee hearings. A two-tailed t-test with equal variances was conducted to measure direction and significance of the relationship. At the $p < .05$ confidence level, significance was not found in the difference of issue-oriented scores ($M=57.21$, $SE=11.25$) and person-to-person scores ($M=55.95$, $SE=14.12$); $t(87) = 0.07$, $p = 0.53$, and I fail to reject the null. These results suggest that issue-oriented YouTube videos are not likely an indicator of member presentation of self style. See Table 7.
Hypothesis Two: Test POS and Percentage of “Issue” YouTube Videos *

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation of Self (DV)</th>
<th>YouTube Videos: Issue-Oriented (IV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue-oriented</td>
<td>57.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-to-person</td>
<td>55.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=89)

*p < .05, Two-tailed t-test, equal variance

Notes: “Issue-oriented” videos depict communication on policy. They are combined total House floor speeches and committee hearing videos for individual members. POS = Presentation of self style.

4.7.4 Test of POS and “Non-issue” Videos

In the third hypothesis, I proposed that MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self style would post a lower percentage of “non-issue” oriented YouTube videos, such as media clips and direct talk videos. A two-tailed t-test with unequal variances was conducted to measure direction and significance of the relationship. At the p < .05 confidence level, significance was not found in the difference of issue-oriented scores (M=32.67, SE= 5.54) and person-to-person scores (M=37.84, SE=8.91); t(87) = -.49 p = 0.63, and I fail to reject the null. These results suggest that non-issue YouTube video types are not likely an indicator of member presentation of self style. Results are presented in Table 8.
Table 8
Hypothesis Three Test: POS and Percentage of “Non-issue” Videos *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation of Self (DV)</th>
<th>YouTube Videos: Non-issue oriented (IV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue-oriented</td>
<td>32.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-to-person</td>
<td>37.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=89)
*p < .05, Two-tailed t-test
Notes: A Levene test on equal variance shows a significant alpha at 95%. (W0 = 4.65, p = 0.03), so unequal variances were specified. “Non-issue” oriented videos depict communication on personal feelings and empathy. They are combined total media clips and direct talk videos for individual members.
POS = Presentation of self style.

4.7.5 Tests on Independent Variables

The testing outcomes of my hypotheses concluded to be insignificant. Online presentation of self appears to be indistinguishable in YouTube videos. However, I believe it is still important to look at a number of variables considered critical to presentation of self—offline or online. If no relationship exists between presentation of self and YouTube videos, then what explains variation in uploads? Further analysis is warranted in examining variables (independent) and the percentages of YouTube videos uploaded to member home pages.

It is important to keep in mind that research on the internet and Congressional communication has become common over the past decade in social science research. Because the internet provides a low-cost, effective way to communicate, politicians utilize it to announce political information and candidacy. In 2008, seven presidential
candidates declared their candidacy with online YouTube videos (May, 2010). Online YouTube video use is a popular medium for candidate and elected representatives alike to communicate to the general population (Church, 2010; May, 2010; Straus et al., 2013). However, little work has focused on YouTube video uploads and MC demographics. I believe member demographics to be an important factor in why MCs use YouTube to fulfill representative tasks.

In the following sections, I offer statistical and descriptive findings between MC demographics and YouTube video use. Additionally, I perform a multivariate regression of the percentage of issue videos (DV) and the percentage of each YouTube video type (IV) to analyze any relationships. I feel this information is useful to researchers in determining online representative behavior and adds to the literature a basis for YouTube use among MCs.

Party Identification

Considering Best and Krueger’s (2005) research that suggests liberals disproportionately participate more online, a weak positive relationship between Democratic Party identification and online participation was expected. YouTube post frequency and House Democrats was not significant; however, party identification and percentages of each YouTube video type are significant. Findings in Table 9 present scores that show Democrats upload a higher percentage of YouTube videos depicting House floor speeches, t(87) = 1.96 p = 0.03. Republicans post a higher percentage of Committee hearing videos, t(87) = -2.20 p = 0.03. Republicans upload a slightly higher
percentage of media clips videos than Democrats, but Democrats lead over Republicans when it comes to uploading direct talk videos. The relationship between Republicans and media clips is possibly due to conservative media outlets such as Fox News, which seek conservative commentary from Republican MCs. These findings support my belief and Best and Krueger’s findings that Democrats participate more online than Republicans by the percentage of YouTube video types uploaded to homepages. See Table 9.

**Table 9**

Party Identification and YouTube Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Republican Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Democrat Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YouTube Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>130.31</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>108.83</td>
<td>17.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YouTube Video Type</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(in percentages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Floor Speech</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Committee Hearing</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Media Clips</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Direct Talk</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=89)

**p < .05, Two-tailed t-test; *p < .10, Two-tailed t-test.
Notes: A Levene test on equal variance shows a significant alpha of media clips at 90%. (W0 = 3.88, p = 0.052), so unequal variances were specified. A Levene test on equal variance shows a significant of direct talk videos at 90%. (W0 = 3.03, p = 0.09), so unequal variances were specified.

**Age**

Due to generational factors such as accessibility and acceptance, younger MCs are more likely to post online YouTube videos of self in comparison to their older counterparts. However, I believe older MCs compensate online posting activity with
younger legislative staff knowledge of internet technology; therefore an age-technology equilibrium presents itself in Congressional social media outlets. However, it is critical to understand that member age in Congress is not indicative of seniority (Fenno, 1978).

Significance was not found in the total YouTube upload frequency of MCs younger than 64 compared to MCs 65 years and older, \( t(87) = -0.254 \) \( p = 0.80 \). However, significance was found in the percentage of media clips and MCs 64 years and younger, \( t(87) = 2.05 \) \( p = 0.04 \). These findings suggest that while younger MCs do post more media clips, older MCs (65+) post a higher percentage of House floor speeches compared to younger MCs.

See Table 10.

### Table 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age and YouTube Type</th>
<th>Age ( \leq 64 )</th>
<th>Age ( \geq 65(+) )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YouTube Video Type Frequency</strong></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube Video Type Frequency</td>
<td>118.02</td>
<td>11.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube Video Type (in percentages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Floor Speech</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Committee Hearing</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Media Clips</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Direct Talk</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( (N=89) \)

\( **p < .05 \), Two-tailed t-test

Notes: A dummy variable (agedummy) was created for this measure. Age less than and equal to 64 is coded zero (0), age greater than and equal to 65 are coded one (1).
Research on relationships between Congressional members and age is limited. Related work on Congressional communication and social media (Straus et al., 2013) find that MC age and computer-mediated communication (e.g., Twitter) are significantly related. Results from Straus et al. (2013) found that members 65+ are less likely to adopt a Twitter account. Although different mediums, one being a microblog (Twitter) and the other a video channel (YouTube), both are forms of internet based computer-mediated communication used for networking. Straus et al. expected older MCs (65+) to be less likely to have a Twitter account and find this to be significant ($r = -0.02$), but falls short in offering an explanation for their findings. My findings show a significant relationship between younger MCs and percentage of media clip video uploads. I believe this is attributed more to MC seniority rather than their age. Granted, while age is not indicative of seniority, for those members who age while serving in Congress and become senior members during tenure, they possess a greater access to news media press coverage.

Gender

Results from Fridkin and Kenney (2010) indicate that female representatives provide information explaining their experience and their views on public policy, which are both important topics to the electorate. As previously stated, issues dictate press

45 Twitter is a form of computer-mediated communication, also known as microblogging. Straus et al.’s (2013) findings support that members 65+ have a 0.04 lower probability of maintaining a Twitter account ($r = -0.021$) $p < 0.05$. 
release content, and women in leadership roles matter because it reinforces competence and abilities. Because of this, I feel female MCs fulfill agenda setting measures by using traditional, newsworthy mainstream media to demonstrate their abilities. Therefore, I believe female MCs post a higher percentage of media clips than their male counterparts to deliver messages to the constituency of their competency and leadership. Significance was not found in scores of media clip percentages and gender, t(87) = -0.56 p = 0.57, p < .05. However, results show significance in the percentage of direct talk videos and gender t(87) = 2.05 p = 0.04. Direct talk videos are similar to media clips in that they both are interview-like videos. I believe this finding is important. These results indicate that female MCs are not discussing what the media is seeking from them, which have been traditionally gender related issues (Gershom, 2008) but rather the issues that are important to them and their district. Therefore, female MCs are setting their own agenda, not supplementing the agenda of the media. See Table 11.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender and YouTube Type*</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YouTube Video Type</strong></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upload Frequency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YouTube Video Type</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(in percentages)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Floor Speech</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Committee Hearing</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Media Clips</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tenure

I expect as member tenure increases, reasons to expand constituency support by posting YouTube videos of MC district activities decrease\textsuperscript{46}. Therefore, the lower frequency of media and direct talk video posts (nonissue video) should indicate an issue-oriented presentation style in the House member. Results indicate that MCs with longer service in office post more total YouTube videos, $t(87) = -3.05$, $p = 0.003$. This particular result is not surprising because the longer one is in office the more service there is to discuss and opportunity to post videos. See Table 12. The findings in Table 12 presents percentages of floor speech, committee hearings, and media clips of YouTube videos show no significance, except for direct talk videos. At the 90\% confidence level, significance was found in the percentage of direct talk videos MCs upload during their first two terms (four years) in office (expansionist stage), $t(87) = 1.57$, $p = 0.06$.

Despite being weak ($p < .10$), these findings suggest that freshman MCs continue to reinforce their primary constituency and strongest supporters by reaching out to them through computer-mediated communication efforts. These, results support Fenno’s

\textsuperscript{46} A dummy variable (tenuredummy) was created. Time in office less than or equal to four years (two terms) is coded zero (0) and time in office greater than five years (more than two terms) are coded one (1).
description of representative careerism that unfolds in two stages (expansionist and protectionist), effecting younger MCs during their initial two terms in office.

**Table 12**

Tenure and YouTube Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In office Two or fewer terms</th>
<th>In office More than two terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total frequency</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>148.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Floor Speech</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Committee Hearing</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Media Clips</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Direct Talk</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=89)

**p < .05, Two-tailed t-test; *p < .10, Two-tailed t-test.

Distance

I believe MCs with districts located more than four hundred miles\(^{47}\) from DC post a higher percentage of direct talk YouTube video postings\(^{48}\). Results show no relationship between percentages of direct talk video uploads and distance. Descriptive findings indicate that MC districts further from Washington DC (400 miles or more) do

\(^{47}\) Distance is measured by driving miles from the district to Washington, DC. It is reasonable for a MC to drive four hundred miles, or one-day’s of driving to return to the home district.

\(^{48}\) A dummy variable was created. Districts with distance less than or equal to four hundred miles is coded zero (0) and distance greater than four hundred miles are coded one (1).
not post a higher frequency of total YouTube video posts (Mean = 121.25). See Table 13.

Social media has become a political tool representatives use to communicate to constituents (Straus et al., 2013). Social media is viewed as a “surrogate” medium in which MCs use to supplement their casework and representativeness (Adler et al., 1998; Grimmer, 2010; Gulati, 2004; Straus et al., 2013). Therefore, MCs find beneficial online resources and are adding social media to their communication toolbox as resource to help communicate political information to constituents. For members with districts challenged by distance from DC (e.g., Alaska or Hawaii), it seems rational to upload videos in order to demonstrate representative activities; however, these findings do not support my theory.49 As of March 2013, Representative Don Young (R-AK) total video uploads was 237. He represents Alaska At-Large where his district office in Anchorage is over four thousand miles from Washington, DC. Representative Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) total video uploads was four (4). She represents District 2 (Honolulu, HI) which is close to five thousand miles from Washington DC.

49 Except for this study, there is no known research examining district distance and YouTube video uploads to compare analysis. Research is limited to YouTube analysis and campaigning.
### Table 13
Distance and YouTube Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance (400 miles&lt;DC)</th>
<th>Distance (400 miles&gt;DC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total frequency</td>
<td>115.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Floor Speech</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Committee Hearing</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Media Clips</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Direct Talk</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=89)

**p < .05, Two-tailed t-test

**Multivariate Regression Analysis**

It would seem that MC online presentation of self is similar to offline presentation of self and is therefore depicted in YouTube videos similarly. However, I failed to reject the null in any of the three proposed hypotheses suggesting that similarity in this study.

To further estimate any relationships between online presentation of self and YouTube videos, I ran a multivariate regression analysis of the percentage of issue-oriented video uploads (DV) and percentages of YouTube video types (DV). Results are presented below in Table 14.

So far, this study has examined the frequency of total video types uploaded and the percentages of video types (floor speeches, committee hearing, media clips, direct
talk) MCs post to their home pages. Therefore, if my theory is correct, then a multivariate analysis should show relationships between the percentage of issue-oriented videos MCs upload (percentage of total combined MC floor speeches and committee hearings) and dependent variables.

The findings from the multivariate regression suggest that MCs use online resources to demonstrate performance to constituents. These findings show significance and thus are important to discuss. Results are presented in Table 14 following separate discussions on individual (independent) variables showing significance.

The analysis indicates that a relationship exists among party affiliation and the percentages of House floor speeches, Committee hearing posts, and direct talk posts. Most importantly, findings show that individual parties differ in the positive relationships of video types. For instance Democrats (House minority) are more likely to upload videos of House floor speeches, whereas Republicans (House majority) post more committee hearing and direct talk videos. This predicates a notion that majority party members use committee hearing and direct talk videos to “explain” legislative behavior in Washington, while Democrats seek floor time to debate and introduce legislation. Both floor speeches and committee hearings are categorized as “issue” video types. I believe these findings to be significant not because of party identification, but rather a dynamic of majority and minority initiatives, or party leadership organization within the House. In his book on Congressional Action, R. Douglas Arnold (1990) notes that when it comes to policy making, “legislators themselves help to determine how visible their own tracks will be”
Therefore, legislators are strategically choosing the way constituents “see” them at-work in Washington (uploading specific YouTube videos of work performance), suggesting that this behavior may be more about House control (i.e., electoral outcomes) rather than specific party ideology. Thus, if the majority party controls the House floor, there seems no reason to vie for floor time to debate.

Analysis shows relationship between MC age, the percentage of media clip videos, and the overall percentage of issue videos. Results indicate that MCs 64 years and younger post a slightly higher percentage of media clips (-.11), while members 65+ post an overall higher percentage of issue videos (.20). This finding is interesting since media clips are categorized as non-issue video type, and the average age of MCs elected to office has been stable in recent Congresses. Perhaps media clips offer a way for freshman members, and those continuing to expand their primary and reinforce their reelection constituencies, by reposting news interviews already aired on local television or radio; thus advertising self for reelection incentives through non-issue video uploads.

Consider Fenno’s theory of careerism. Younger MCs in their first term would more likely travel home more frequently, and thus be available in district to be interviewed by media outlets; therefore, potentially expanding their reelection constituency. Older MCs, in efforts to protect their primary constituency post more issue

---

50 Congressional Research Service (CRS) reports the average House member’s age of the 112th Congress was 56.7 years (Manning, 2011).
videos because they are more secure in their seat; thus “protecting” their reelection constituency. Therefore, we can infer that MC age matters when posting issue or non-issue videos to home pages because younger MCs are expanding their reelection constituency while older MCs are protecting their constituency.

Analysis of MC tenure shows that freshman MCs post more direct talk videos (-08). Here again, this is possibly related to MC career position if we consider Fenno’s theory of careerism that suggests two phases of member career: expansionist and protectionist. Recall, the expansionist phase develops prior to the first term and continues to the second term elected to office. MCs that have expanded their primary constituency will transition into the protectionist phase, which develops after election and carries over to the second term to office. The protectionist phase continues throughout MC tenure unless other circumstances develop, such as scandal or electoral uncertainty (Fenno, 1978). Careerism is important when discussing tenure since member political life cycle is heavily determined by successful electoral outcomes (Hibbing, 1991). My results (-.08) support Fenno’s careerism theory and suggest that freshman continue “expanding” their primary constituency through campaigning in direct talk videos.51

51 Direct talk videos are coded as having direct dialogue between the member and the camera. The intention is to speak directly into the camera so that the receiver is the viewer. Public service announcements (PSA) were also coded as direct talk.
Table 14
Regression Analysis, by Dependent Variable Percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable(s)</th>
<th>% of House Floor Speeches</th>
<th>% of Committee Hearings</th>
<th>% of Media Clips</th>
<th>% of Direct Talk</th>
<th>% of Issue Videos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of Self (POS)</td>
<td>.013 (.053)</td>
<td>.011 (.036)</td>
<td>-.014 (.047)</td>
<td>-.014 (.036)</td>
<td>-.034 (.093)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td>-.001** (.0006)</td>
<td>.0009** (.0004)</td>
<td>.0008 (.0005)</td>
<td>-.0007* (.0007)</td>
<td>-.002 (.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.06 (.058)</td>
<td>.02 (.039)</td>
<td>-.106** (.05)</td>
<td>-.038 (.039)</td>
<td>.20** (.103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.11 (.074)</td>
<td>-.012 (.051)</td>
<td>-.023 (.066)</td>
<td>-.071 (.050)</td>
<td>.033 (.134)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>.004 (.057)</td>
<td>.014 (.039)</td>
<td>.062 (.05)</td>
<td>-.080** (.038)</td>
<td>-.145 (.103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>.01 (.069)</td>
<td>-.03 (.047)</td>
<td>-.019 (.06)</td>
<td>.04 (.046)</td>
<td>-.025 (.119)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>.538*** (.109)</td>
<td>.052 (.077)</td>
<td>.166 (.099)</td>
<td>.214*** (.074)</td>
<td>-.216 (.207)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=89) Adj R^2 = 0.0093  F (6, 82) = 2.02  Prob. Of F = 0.348
(N=89) Adj R^2 = -0.0007 F (6, 82) = 0.0019 Prob. Of F = 0.438
(N=89) Adj R^2 = 0.019  F (6, 82) = 0.0007 Prob. Of F = 0.27
(N=89) Adj R^2 = - 0.0007 F (5, 83) = 1.19 Prob. Of F = 0.182
(N=87) Adj R^2 = 0.0134 F (6, 80) = 0.318

*** p ≤ .001, ** p ≤ .05, * p ≤ .10
Notes: (ttest was run on each DV (four) and POS—no significance found.)
4.8 Summary

I began this chapter with one research question in mind: Are MC online and offline presentation of self patterns similar? To answer this question, I hypothesized that MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self styles are 1) more likely to post YouTube videos on an official website than are MCs identified with person-to-person presentation of self styles, 2) more likely to post an increased percentage of issue-oriented YouTube videos than are MCs identified with a person-to-person style, and 3) more likely to post a smaller percentage of non-issue-oriented YouTube videos are MCs identified with a person-to-person style. Following is a summarization and conclusion of the findings presented in the study.

Hypothesis One (H1) proposed that MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self post more YouTube videos on official website than those MCs identified as person-to-person. Significance was not found in the difference of issue-oriented and person-to-person scores, suggesting that YouTube video postings are not likely an indicator of member presentation of self style.

Hypothesis Two (H2) proposed that MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self style were more likely than person-to-person style to post an increased percentage of issue-oriented YouTube videos such as House floor speeches and committee hearings. Significance was not found in the difference of issue-oriented and person-to-person scores, failing to reject the null, and suggesting that issue-oriented YouTube videos are not likely an indicator of member presentation of self style.
Hypothesis Three (H3) proposed that MCs identified with issue-oriented presentation of self style would post a lower percentage of “non-issue” oriented YouTube videos. Significance was not found in the difference of issue-oriented person-to-person and so again I failed to reject the null suggesting that non-issue YouTube video types are not likely an indicator of member presentation of self style.

Test results of some independent variables showed significance and need further discussion. First, results indicated that MCs 64 years and younger post more media clips than their older (65+) counterparts. Important to mention is that age does not denote seniority, but MCs older in age are often more experienced. Thus I attribute this correlated relationship to experience and the use of traditional media to advertise competency. Traditional media outlets provide a venue for MCs to be recognized as a household name, or advertise their job for reelection incentives (Mayhew, 1974). Whereas computer-mediated communication or social processing theory stipulates, a user must pursue another through online technology to be present for the exchange of information. Although mainstream television medium is only one-way communication, it does give MCs advantages to be seen in the district.

Second, results between female MCs and direct talk videos show significance. Sarah Allen Gershom (2008) believes that female representatives use mainstream media to communicate policy issues. She argues that female representatives, especially minority female representatives, face challenges of only being interviewed on negative
policy issues at hand and not the policy issues specifically important to the MC and their district. Knowing this, I believe female MCs use direct talk videos to discuss policy issues that they choose to discuss, not what mainstream media seek to discuss with them.

Finally, a weak relationship exists in the percentage of direct talk videos and tenure. MCs upload slightly higher percentage of direct talk videos during their first two terms (four years) in office. This seems reasonable considering Fenno’s description of careerism. Fenno explains that MCs fall into a two-stage career path, which places MCs either within an expansionist or protectionist stage during their Congressional political life. Having more direct talk video posts suggests freshman MCs during the initial two terms in Congress are concerned with electoral strategy and “expanding” their reelection constituency by posting non-issue video types, or campaigning to a primary constituency. Because non-issue videos (media clips, direct talk) imply electoral strategies rather than issue videos (floor speech, committee hearing), we can justify MCs with fewer years in office are continuing to expand their reelection and primary constituencies.

Overall, hypotheses tests show no significance. For this, I offer two explanations. First, small sample size is attributed to weak significance (Cohen, 1988; de Winter, 2013). With only 26 percent of the sample population responding, I believe sample size to have an impact on testing the null hypotheses. Second, staff and not the individual member reported MC presentations of self styles. Because of this limitation, exact measurements of presentation of self styles are vulnerable to both sampling error and measurement error. However, correlation results of independent variables do show
significance. Because of this, I believe that reconstructing the MC questionnaire with only MC responses would prove to have significant results.

Lastly, a multivariate regression analysis produced significant results suggesting that presentation of self is not best represented in the representative, but in the percentages of the videos the representative (and their staff) post to home pages. This finding is indicative of Fenno’s research that home style is the representative’s perception of the district, not of individual constituents. Therefore, results suggest that MCs will post a higher percentage of issue-oriented videos (MCs transfer POS to video type) because they perceive the district will view those most compared to the other types (committee hearing, media clips, direct talk). Thus, video types assume presentation of self because the video is what is presented to the constituents, not the MC. See Figure 4.
My general theory that home style’s element of presentation of self is depicted similarly offline and online, and distinguishable in the types of YouTube videos MC upload to their home page is open for further examination. Future research should examine MC self-identified presentation of self style, rather than staff respondents. These results present a need for further research in communication and political behavior. Despite limitations of small sample size and survey composition, YouTube videos suggest an innovative method to develop aggregate data for quantitative research of online presentation of self behavior(s). The online dimension of communication surpasses traditional two-way communication methods, and because of that
communication methods examining patterns of home style exist on multiple levels as well.

4.9 Summary

In this chapter, home style element of presentation of self and computer-mediated communication was examined for relationships. Presentation of self is subjective. While some claim that online presentation of self lacks the personal contact needed in presentation of self theory (Gulati, 2004), others believe no relationship exists between online and offline presentation of self (Koop and Marland, 2012). Despite the results of the hypotheses test, we found that age, tenure, and gender do matter in the percentage of YouTube video types MCs upload to their home pages.

Since 2009, 90 percent of the total U.S. House of Representatives (voting and non-voting delegates) maintain and upload videos to YouTube channels. It is clear that YouTube videos are a valuable resource MCs use to communicate with constituents—virtually. The next chapter continues the exploration of online home style with an analysis of explanation of Washington activity and computer-mediated communication.
Chapter 5: Virtually Explaining Washington Activity

“Congress in session is Congress on public exhibition.” --Woodrow Wilson, Congressional Government (1885).

Woodrow Wilson made his assertion of Congressional behavior over a Century ago. Representatives are obligated by the principles of representative democracy to be accountable to the people. While working on Capitol Hill making legislation, voting on policy, and exhibiting their representational style, representatives are subject to public assessment and criticism; thus public exhibition.

Richard Fenno’s home style model established a theory for a representative’s perception of their constituency. If elements of home style are driven by how the representative “sees” the district, then home style determinants effect how the representative “speaks” to the district. Once the representative-constituent relationship is developed with the district, a representative’s allocation of resources, established presentation of self style, and methods to explain activity follows.

Chapter Four discussed relationships of online and offline presentation of self. Here in Chapter Five, I continue studying online congressional behavior by examining Fenno’s third element of home style: explanation of Washington activity. If we assume Wilson’s statement is true that “Congress in session is Congress on public exhibition,”

---

52 Home style consists of three elements: 1) allocation of resources, 2) presentation of self, and 3) explanation of Washington activity (Fenno, 1978).
then representatives are most visible to the public while working in committees. To that end, in this chapter I discuss the purpose of MCs explaining activity, and introduce a new model of explaining activity of committee work to constituents—virtually—by measuring the percentage of committee hearing YouTube postings MCs post to their official home page.

5.1 Washington Activity

Committees are central to the legislative and decision-making process. Woodrow Wilson coined the phrase “Congress in committees is Congress at work” because committees succumb to national and local criticism on performance and behavior, membership power, influence, and ranking.

Continually under the assessment of media and constituents, House committees are exposed to judgment under the watchful eye of the media, other policy-makers, and the public. Whether in committee hearings, legislative decision-making, or appointment proceedings, House members in committees are member-goal oriented. Even though committees differ from one another, members are seeking the same basic objectives: reelection, influence and power, and crafting good public policy (Fenno, 1973; 1978). Because home style is dependent on three components: allocation of resources, presentation of self, and explanation of activity, MCs use committee assignment work performance to explain to constituents their productivity while on Capitol Hill; therefore, fulfilling member goals.
5.1.1 Understanding Washington Activity

The hallmark definition of “Washington” activity is “what they [representatives] have done while they have been away from home”… which includes “description, the interpretation, and the justification of their behavior” [sic] (Fenno, 1978, p. 136). Washington activity takes place on Capitol Hill and includes voting behavior, committee hearings, assignments, legislative roles, appointment confirmations, and national policy and events.

Explaining performance behavior to the home district constituency is done to achieve three goals: reelection, power in Congress, and crafting good public policy (Fenno, 1973; 1978) and to harness political support. An objective representatives seek, in addition to reelection strategies, is to give the impression to constituents that they are qualified, competent, and knowledgeable in being a U.S. Congressperson (Fenno, 1978; Hibbing, 1991). To that end, explaining performance behavior in Washington to constituencies occurs mostly in the home district, because explaining legislative behavior and work matters to both incumbents and districts (Fenno, 1978).

District Demographics
Having a solid, working knowledge of the district is critical in MCs explanation of work [Washington] performance. One premise of MC home style is establishing the representative’s contextual perception of “me-in-the-district” (Fenno, 1978). Contextual perception is the concept of how a MC thinks about their district without inferences of Washington influences. When members place themselves physically in the district with the intent on establishing a relationship with constituents, their objective is to develop an explanatory style technique. Members attending coffee shops, ribbon-cuttings, meeting with constituents who pass them by on the street, or cold-calling constituents to gather their public opinion, achieve this technique. Once the contextual relationship is established, MCs will choose letter writing, telephone (robo) calls, private conversations, newsletter/mailings, press releases, radio interviews, and television interviews to best explain Congressional activity because after establishing a contextual district perception, MCs know how their constituents will best receive and accept messages explaining behavior.

Trust and Credibility

Richard Fenno’s case study research suggests level of trust and credibility between MC and the constituency is important in explanation acceptance. Fenno states, “credibility of any given explanation probably depends less on the content of the explanation itself than on its compatibility with some previously established perception of the explainer, “as a person” [sic] (Fenno, 1978, p. 149). Therefore, the behavior, or manner in which an MC explains business can “make or break” constituency perception
of them; thus, harming trust and weakening the representative-constituency relationship.

Trust and credibility are critical in gaining political support because without it explanation is not legitimation.

**Explanation and Presentation Style**

Members explain Washington activity for a number of reasons. As previously discussed, some reasons are to gain reelection, power, influence, and political support. Important to understanding MC explanation of activity is that presentation of self and explanation of activity are two separate elements of home style that connect constituents and MCs; therefore, presentational style and explanatory styles are interrelated (Fenno, 1978).

Presentation of self is constructed of member-in-the-district behavior dependent on the representative’s perception of their constituency relationship. In this relationship, trust is imperative. Explanation of Washington activity is comparable to MC presentational style because if constituents hold trust with the MC, constituents are more likely to accept explanation (Fenno, 1978). While members are in Washington working, upon return to the district they are sought out to report on performance and explain legislative activity. Because of this, Fenno believes that “the acceptability of explanations depends on compatibility between explanatory and presentational styles” (Fenno, 1978, p. 150). Therefore, Fenno makes the following assertion:
“Presentation of self enhances trust; trust enhances the acceptability of explanations; the acceptability of explanations enhances voting leeway, therefore, presentation of self enhances voting leeway.” (Fenno, 1978, p. 151)

In reporting on legislative behavior on Capitol Hill, MCs describe, interpret, and justify their performance during session in Congress (Fenno, 1978). Therefore, Members’ explanation of legislative behavior is critical in electoral safety and strategy, power, and policy-making (Fenno, 1973; 1977; 1978). To that end, when members return to the home district resources are allocated to communicate voting behavior and legislative effectiveness to the constituency.

### 5.2 Communicating Washington Activity to the Constituency

Explaining Washington work performance is important to members for reelection strategies, power and influence, and policy-making purposes. But, how is explaining Washington activity “explained” to constituencies? Kingdon (1977; 1989) in his research on representative voting behavior lends insight on why MCs explain decisions the way they do.

In Kingdon’s model of legislative voting, he describes three goals essential in member decision-making: constituency, Washington influence, and public policy. These goals are critical in member success and should be considered in the decision-making process because “their [MCs’] behavior is purposive, and is not simply reaction to external forces” (Kingdon, 1977, p. 569). In summarization, the decision outcome of
MCs is critical in gaining or losing electoral support. In support of Kingdon’s belief, Fenno (1973) adds that “explaining explanations” is far more critical to representative behavior than explaining votes. Furthermore, researchers should spend more time examining how members “explain” the explanations on decision-making than explaining voting behavior (Fenno, 1978). Explaining activity [decision] is important because MCs “believe that they can win and lose constituent support through their explanations as well as through their votes” (Fenno, 1978, p. 141). However, the factors involved in explaining activity extend beyond message design. It depends on ascertaining trust in the representative-constituent relationship.

Richard Fenno defines explanation of Washington activity as a way for MCs to build trust and confidence in the representative-constituent relationship through explaining “what they have done while they have been away from home” (Fenno, 1978, p. 136) after the fact (such as voting), not on future decision-making. Once trust is established between a representative and electorate, member speech becomes more valuable to constituents rather than empty rhetoric (Fenno, 1978). Therefore, explanation of activity functions as a trust-building machine that describes, interprets, and justifies behavior. In constructing that explanation machine, MCs focus on shaping personal, contextual, and strategic behavioral elements that are critical in the representative-constituent relationship.

Fenno (1978) describes three guiding variables that construct a member’s home style. Fenno explains these variables as contextual, personal, and strategic elements,
which are present in both member presentation of self style and explanation style. Although these guiding variables are subjective and individualistic, the member’s choice in how to explain activity is compatible with presentation of self style (Fenno, 1978). For instance, MCs who are issue-oriented and discuss a large volume of policy issues are likely to also display a large number of policy explanations. In the following sections, I will discuss these home style variables (contextual, personal, and strategic) in relation to explanation of activity because it is important to understand how MCs frame their message, and whether it is issue or service oriented based on the member’s perception of the district. See Figure 5.

(FIGURE 5)

**Contextual**
Contextual factors place the MC within the district. The method that members use to explain behavior contextually is formulated by their perception of “me-in-the-district” (Fenno, 1978). And, the explanation is framed on the context of the information in which they are explaining. A MC should contemplate their audience well in advance before delivering a speech explaining activity. For example, a MC would less likely give a speech about her voting behavior on an open-carry gun bill to a heterogeneous liberal district, where the public sentiment is to outlaw handguns. More than likely, the MC would be aware of her audience and the policy issues that are sensitive to those constituents. The MC would have to craft her explanatory message in such a fashion in which the voters have already perceived the MC (Fenno, 1978).

**Personal**

Personal factors affect explanation of activity. Similar to presentation of self style, personal factors affect how MCs will explain activity to constituents. For example, the same explanatory style MCs use will mirror presentation style, like members who prefer to discuss local policy issues, will gear and prepare for numerous explanations on local policy issues in the district. The personal factor comes down to how comfortable the MC feels in their district and among her constituents.

**Strategic**
Explaining activity is strategic. Fenno’s research produced little evidence that members explain activity differently to various constituencies. His findings indicate that MCs “give the same explanations for their Washington activity before people who disagree with them as they give before people who agree with them” (Fenno, 1978, p. 157). Fenno gives the following explanation for his finding:

“As for explaining, however, the lack of demagoguery and the patient doggedness with which most members explained their votes or their voting record before unsympathetic reelection constituents surprise me”... “Cleary, however, each believed that he could minimize any prospective losses because of the cushion of trust he had already developed with his supporters” (Fenno, 1978, p. 158).

Being strategic in ones’ explanatory style also means that members are more strategic in their behaviors for reelection purposes. MCs also craft explanations for political support in Congress. Fenno notes that explanatory style is equally important for explanatory acceptability on the local level as it is for his national performance.

Indeed, explaining activity to the district is important to reelection incentives; however, they are not critical to incumbency. Control in designing explanatory messages is strategic and important to the MC because it allows them to direct constituency attention towards the subjects the MC is most comfortable in discussing; thus reinforcing electoral support.

**Message Design**
In Chapter One, I briefly discussed communication theory. Communication theory is important in our discussion of home style’s element of explanation of Washington activity for several reasons. Communication scholar Barbara O’Keefe (1998) believes that all (everyday actors) benefit from understanding the conceptualizations of “implicit” communication theories, or message design logics because it helps guide message production and interpretation (Edwards and Shepard, 2004). According to Edwards and Shepard (2004) O’Keefe’s theory of message design logics are the “distinct ways of thinking about communication situations, selecting thoughts for expression, and modifying expression to meet goals” (Edwards and Shepard, 2004, p. 198).

Having discussed the factors (personal, contextual, strategic) that formulate a member’s home style pattern (based on district demographics), I now direct the discussion to explaining how MCs formulate messages to the district. Based on a member’s adoption of home style pattern of their district, it is important to discuss briefly message design composition. If we take into account John Kingdon’s (1989) discussion on explaining performance (voting), MC design logic explains that members anticipate an explanation long before the explanation (message) is delivered. For this reason alone, it is critical for members to acknowledge a contextual, personal, or strategic approach to communicating an explanation of activity to the constituency.
5.3 The Medium is in the Message\textsuperscript{53}

The majority of “explaining of Washington activity” is delivered through communication mediums like public speeches or written public service announcements. Additionally, members and staff use telephone calls, letter writing, one-on-one conversations, public speech/talks, franked mailings/newsletters, press releases, and media (television and radio) appearances to communicate explanations of legislative activity. MCs use these traditional methods of communication to explain to constituents work activity, but also reinforce the linkage in the representative-constituent relationship (Yiannakis, 1982).

In a 1979 study on Congressional information needs, Stephen Frantzich suggests four characteristics of desired information Congress needs to fulfill its functions: 1) completeness, 2) accuracy, 3) relevance, and 4) confidentiality. Frantzich argues that these four characteristics needed in Congressional information are supported by computer information technology (Frantzich, 1979), despite that the “computer system cannot make the strategy decisions” (Frantzich, 1979, p. 262). While computer technology was introduced as beneficial to House members, research examining communication styles would come later to support the relationship between the member and constituency.

\textsuperscript{53} The book, “The Medium is the Massage” was written by Marshall McLuhan in 1967 (Bantam Books/Random House). The title was incorrectly spelled “massage” instead of the correct “message.” However, McLuhan felt it was more appropriately titled “Massage, or mass age” and kept the misspelled title.
In her 1982 study on communication between House members and constituents, Diana E. Yiannakis discovered the circumstances of the members’ district environment influence member communication styles. Yiannakis examines the three tenets of David Mayhew’s electoral strategies: advertising, position taking, and credit claiming, as communication styles. Her findings show that more position taking is communicated on national issues (57.1 percent), and credit claiming is used for particularized benefits for the districts such as bridges and dams (Yiannakis, 1982). This study is worth mentioning because it demonstrates the function of communication styles used to achieve member activities (Mayhew, 1978), but that they matter in how members explain activity to constituents.

Thus far, I have touched on some of the more popular medium types members use to explain activity to constituents, such as using television, radio, newsletters, mailings, public speeches, and email. Despite that previous research has included these mediums to examine home style, the literature continues to lack in definitive examination of home style as a whole. Research is restricted to an analysis of allocation of resources (Adler et al., 1998), presentation of self (Gulati, 2004), or explanation of activity (Grimmer, 2010; 2014) singularly rather than as a specific type of measure.

54 DE Yiannakis (1982) study applies David Mayhew’s electoral activities: 1) advertising, 2) position taking, and 3) credit claiming as communication styles House members use to communicate to constituencies. She employs a content analysis of press releases and newsletters from the 94th and 95th Congress. 55 Yiannakis’ hypotheses only use two of the three tenets of Mayhew: position taking and credit claiming. She hypothesizes that communication styles are a function of both member and district characteristics. See Yiannakis (1982) page 1055.
If we take into consideration, Adler et al.’s (1998) study on home style and the internet, which focuses on MC decisions to use online communication resources, we attempt to understand the determining factors MCs consider when going online in the first place. Their examination used Richard Fenno’s (1978) home style element—allocation of resources—to better understand district factor styles (personal, contextual, and strategic) and allocation of resources. Their 1998 findings suggest that House members use the internet similarly with other traditional means of communication, and that “Republicans, younger legislators, and representatives of more affluent populations” were more likely to use [internet] home pages to communicate to constituents (Adler et al., 1998, p. 592).

Indeed, Adler et al.’s results suggest that party, age and income matter when allocating resources; however, these factors may no longer be relevant. Andrew Chadwick and Phillip Howard (2009) believe that in the developed world, internet use had been largely underestimated up until 2003. They assert that current internet research on political communication supports that not only are the affluent going online, but that technology is becoming more convenient and available to various demographics and incomes (Chadwick and Howard, 2009) versus the adage that the internet is privatized communication (Murdock and Golding, 2006).

5.4 Using Computer Technology to Explain Washington Activity

Despite critics that argue home style only exists in the physical presence of others (Fenno, 1978; Goffman, 1959; Gulati, 2004), previous research supports the assertion
that computer technology gives members a communication tool that fills the gap of political information inequalities among constituencies by using low-cost, highly accessible internet resources (Adler et al., 1998; Frantzich, 1979; Yiannakis, 1982). Therefore, because of computer internet technology, MCs can benefit from communicating home style elements (allocation of resources, presentation of self, and explanation of activity) online.

5.4.1 Explaining Activity: The Benefits of Computer-mediated Communication

Research on representative behavior and the internet provide insight on home style and the benefits to constituent-viewers (Adler et al., 1998; Esterling et al., 2005, 2011; Gulati, 2004; Koop and Marland, 2012; Niven and Zibler, 2001). The most comprehensive approach used in researching web-based home style is by analysis of images on official home pages (Adler et al., 1989; Gulati, 2004; Koop and Marland, 2012) and newsletters and press releases (Grimmer, 2010; Yiannakis, 1982). However, still image and content analysis are absent of exchange of nonverbal and verbal communication.

An alternative to still image frames and content is computer-mediated communication methods—YouTube videos. Computer technology offers a convenient, low-cost, and effective way for members to explain activity and show themselves virtually within the district. Benefits of computer-mediated communication include low-costs allocated resources (Adler et al., 1998; Yiannakis, 1982), effectiveness in social
character (Walther, 1992), and, an educational vehicle in gathering information (McCombs, 1994). These benefits alone contribute to the vast possibilities MCs have available to communicate to constituents work performance. Beyond the benefits of computer-mediated communication is the emergence of ways to exchange information.

5.4.2 The Explosion of YouTube Video to Explain Activity

Perhaps the wide-spread use of digital technology (media) is in the exchange of video-sharing YouTube videos. Bruce Bimber (2014) makes the claim that America has adjusted to an online political environment; therefore, because society has adopted digital media as a source in gathering political information (Chapter Four), it is rational for MCs to allocate internet resources to communicate (explain) Washington work activity. Worth mentioning is that YouTube videos are, for the most part, developed by amateurs. Despite lack of professionalized videography, unlike television commercials, YouTube videos have become “one of the most popular online applications” (Chadwick and Howard, 2009, p. 8). Thus, YouTube videos create a digital media exchange of raw, or choreographed, political information that MCs have to explain work performance within the framework of explanatory styles (personal, contextual, and strategic).

YouTube videos place the member within the physical realm of constituents, and, at a convenient time to view them as well. A Pew Research study on digital video news finds “News audiences are watching more digital news video than ever before” (Olmstead, Pew Research.org, 2014). Because the public seeks news information online and in the form of YouTube video feed, members find it rational to seek use YouTube
video-sharing to explain work activity. In the State of The Media Report for 2014 (Journalism.org), news surveys on the web shows that more than six in ten American adults watch news videos online (Olmstead et al., 2014).

Technology improvements and dissemination of the digital divide are two contributing factors in an increased video-watching audience (Olmstead et al., 2014). To that end, the YouTube Channel site (YouTube.com) report more than one billion viewers visit YouTube and over six billion hours of video are watched on a monthly basis (Statistics, www.YouTube.com). And, Nielson ratings show that YouTube reaches “more US adults ages 18-34 than any cable network” (Statistics, www.YouTube.com). Therefore, because American adults are seeking news video feed online, YouTube offers a digital resource medium for representatives to communicate Washington activity.

With MCs rational acceptance of digital media and computer-mediated communication methods to communicate home style, I ask the following research question:

Research Question:

Do MCs use YouTube videos to explain Washington activity?

5.5 Measuring Online Explanation of Washington Activity
Observing members is a common method used to measure explanation of Washington activity in Congressional members (Fenno, 1978). Richard Fenno’s case study covered seven years of analysis, demanding intense traveling and expense. Since Fenno’s research on home style, various research analyses have focused on explaining behavior and performance activities by examining newsletters (Lipinski, 2004; Yiannakis, 1982), images (Adler et al., 1998), and press releases (Grimmer, 2010; Sigelman and Buell, 2004; Yiannakis, 1982). While newsletters, images, and press releases all provide reliable qualitative and quantitative methodologies for analyzing explanation of activity, content analysis limits data to static, indirect print media communication.

As noted by Wilson (1885), Congress in committees is Congress at work. Indeed, when members are “working” in Congress, how does the public know they are working? Members must demonstrate policy making to constituents through advertising (Mayhew, 1974). Demonstration of policy decisions and debate are seen in committee hearings. But, which members are drawing more exhibition on policy debate in committee hearings? Cox and McCubbins (2005) make a claim that the key to controlling the House by party government is by policy enactment. Therefore, I believe that members of the majority party intentionally draw more public examination on policy issues to maintain party control and status quo of the “party” legislative agenda. One way members of the majority party can optimize demonstrating performance is by using computer-mediated communication, because it is fast and low-cost avenue to the constituency.
5.5.1 A Test of Online Explanation of Activity: Issue Videos and Party

We know that representative roles as elected agents acting on behalf of constituents are duplicated in both the constituency and in Congress. And, for reelection incentives it is critical for members to explain policy-issue decisions to the electorate to achieve reelection goals. Upon analysis of videos uploaded to House members YouTube channels for policy-issue content, I conclude that members carry-out their legislative roles (work) of policy issues in committee hearing videos. To that end, I believe that House majority members are even more concerned with demonstrating work and explaining legislative decisions to achieve/maintain party control in the House. Therefore, I propose my first hypothesis:

H1: House majority members are more likely to post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos to official YouTube channel than minority party members.

Design

To best test member use of online explanation of Washington activity by the likelihood of majority party members posting a higher percentage of issue-based videos such as committee hearings, I will first develop a unique dataset of House members (N=422). This dataset includes member party and the percentage of committee hearing videos posted to House members YouTube channel. Because the individual member is the unit of analysis, all members are examined except for House Leadership members and non-voting delegates. The dependent variable is the percentage of committee hearing videos and the independent variable is party.
Methodology

I will test the null hypothesis for the difference in means. Knowing that party government is critical in legislative roles, I believe that the majority party in control of the House will be more likely to post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos. Cox and McCubbins (2005) point out in their theory of cartel\(^56\) and coalitions that coalitions exist in Congress because parties seek pay-offs (control and power). Because of this theory, I expect the majority party (Republicans) will post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos. I offer the following explanation to support my theory.

Considering party cartels (Cox and McCubbins, 2005) parties operate as “voting coalitions” (Cox and McCubbins, 2005, p. 37); thereby controlling the House agenda (Calendar, Legislative schedule), which can further advocate for setting the House agenda. This allows the majority party to illustrate to the constituencies (party and district) demonstrate of control and power.

5.5.2 Findings

Because members of the majority party are responsible to party platforms and an adopted legislative agenda (Cox and McCubbins, 2005), I expected House majority members to post a higher percentage of committee hearing YouTube videos than

\(^56\) The Cartel Theory by Cox and McCubbins (2005) suggests Congress is a “party legislative organization” (p. 33).
minority party members with the intention of explaining Washington activity (online home style). If this is correct, then Washington activity can be explained by computer-mediated communication medium, (YouTube videos); thus supporting my hypothesis of online home style. A two-tailed t-test with equal variances was conducted to measure significance. At the \( p < .001 \) confidence level, significance was found in the difference of majority members (M= .21, SE= .01) and minority members (M= .12, SE= .01); \( t(420) = -6.04, p = 0.001 \), and so I am able to reject the null. These results indicate that party (House majority) does matter in explaining policy issues in the form of committee hearing videos. Thus, majority members are more likely to post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos to official YouTube channel than members of the minority party. See Table 15.

### Table 15

Hypothesis 1: House Majority Party Members and Minority Party Members, by the Percentage of Committee Hearing Videos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majority Party</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>9%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Republican)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Party</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Democrat)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**\( p < .05 \); *** \( p < .001 \)

Note: (N=422). House Majority Leadership, non-voting delegates, and vacancies were omitted.

### Regression Analysis

A multivariate regression analysis shows significance in the relationship of party and percentage of committee hearings. See Table 16. However weak, the Republican Party continues to show a positive relationship (.0009), \( p < .001 \) with the percentage of
committee hearing videos posted. This finding suggests that party majority (Republican) members are using committee hearing videos to possibly explain activity, but also exhibit legislative agendas.

**Control Variables**

The regression analysis included control variables tenure and age. These variables were included to find any relationships between them and percentage of committee hearing videos (DV), and because tenure and age were controlled for in previous tests. Results show no relationships between the dependent variable and control variables. The findings are presented in Table 16.

### Table 16

Hypothesis 1: Regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Committee Hearing Videos (DV)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable</td>
<td>Coefficient (Std. error)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td>.0009</td>
<td>(.0001)***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 5.5.3 Summary

I proposed that House majority members are more likely to post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos to official YouTube channel than minority party members in effort to explain activity online. The hypothesis test indicated significance in the difference of means; thus I am able to reject the null. Members of the House majority party (Republicans) do post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos. This finding suggests two things pertaining to online home style determinant explanation of activity. First, majority party members find it rational to allocate online resources by uploading issue-based videos to demonstrate behavior while carrying out legislative roles. And, this behavior suggests that committees are an important platform for explaining activity in Washington.
Aldrich and Rhode (2000) contribute to the literature on party government that majority party leaders delegate power to committee leaders when party preferences need to be met during disagreements between parties, especially on policy issue legislation. Therefore, the next section will discuss the role of committee leaders (majority) and the representativeness of committees in explaining activity using online home style and computer-mediated communication.

5.6 Committees and Online Explanation of Activity

Research on Congressional committees includes a number of member activities such as representational style, power, influence, decision-making behaviors (Davidson and Oleszek, 2006; Deering and Smith, 1997; Fenno, 1973; Fenno 1978; Goodwin, 1970; Maltzman, 1998; Weber, 1991), and career positioning (Fenno, 2012; Hibbing, 1991). Committee activity includes committee assignments, hearings, appointments, events, policy, and lawmaking process. Because Washington work is critical to member goals, explanation of work performance in committees to the home district becomes important to examine when analyzing online home style.

U.S. House members are publically “exhibited” by committee assignments. There are twenty-one standing committees\(^{57}\) and over one hundred subcommittees.\(^{58}\)

\(^{57}\) Agriculture, Appropriations, Armed Services, Budget, Education, Energy and Commerce, Ethics, Financial Services, Foreign Affairs, Homeland Security, House Administration, Judiciary, Natural Resources,
Committees have an important function in that they offer a place for legislators to work, debate, hear testimony, and make decisions. Each committee has a unique jurisdiction and set of roles, so, it is logical that members want committee assignments reflective of constituency priorities (Davidson and Oleszek, 2005; Deering and Smith, 1997; Weber, 1991).

Previous research on committee assignments finds that committee membership and assignments are strategically pursued (Frisch and Kelly, 2004; Rhode and Shepsle, 1973; Shepsle and Weingast, 1995). While the role of House committees in the legislative process is unchanging, assignments and rankings within those committees are not. With each Congressional session, assignments are assigned or reassigned, often elevating members to new ranking. Additionally, House Committee assignments are strategically influenced by state interests, party, and a Member’s time in office (Deering and Smith, 1997; Frisch and Kelly, 2004; Shepsle and Weingast, 1995). Committee assignments are understood as being goal-oriented, and essential for incumbency incentives, decision-making, and policy production.

Committee assignments are important to House members because they are critical in member direct goals. YouTube videos are a good resource to explain committee assignment performance. For example, Fenno states that House members “justify their Washington activity in ways that encourage the acceptance of their activity as legitimate”

Science, Space and Technology, Small Business, Transportation and Infrastructure, Veteran’s Affairs, Ways and Means, and Intelligence (house.gov). Homeland Security is the most recently added committee.  
58 The number of subcommittees fluctuates; whereas the numbers of standing committees are permanent.
Because of this justification, we can assume that YouTube videos of committee hearings should demonstrate to constituencies’ proof of performance of members work in Washington, an explanatory technique of activity.

5.6.1 Online v. Offline Media Outlets: How Constituents Receive MC Explanations

The news media is often regarded as setting the political agenda in Washington (Lippmann, 1955; McCombs, 2013). Because of this, members rely on media outlets to funnel Congressional behavior home to the constituencies. Aside from traditional mediums such as press releases, photographic images, voice recordings, television interviews, and videography of committee proceedings (CSPAN) computer-mediated communication in the form of YouTube videos also demonstrate MC performance in Washington. But, are YouTube videos an effective measurement of online (home style) explanation of MC activity? I believe the percentage of YouTube committee video uploads are systematically an ideal method to measure member explanation of Washington activity. Thereby resolving communication limitations of previously used methodologies.

If media coverage of committee rooms focus on members in leadership roles (e.g., Chair, Vice Chair, Ranking member) then media coverage of members in committee leadership role happens because 1) leadership sits in the center of the room, and 2) they control order of committee proceedings. Because of this, MCs in leadership roles are
possibly more “on exhibition” than other committee members; therefore, leadership should explain committee activity more than members in non-leadership roles.

Committee leadership roles serve as an ideal sample to examine home style’s element of explanation of activity for a number of reasons. First, committees are the legislative workhorses of Congress. It is in the committee (hearings) where MCs debate on proposed legislation and redefine policy. Essentially, the committee satisfies the legislative function of the representative role in Congress. Another justification for using committee leaders as the unit of analysis is that the role of committee leader is at the center of the room. Leaders gain more media coverage and are more likely to be recognized on the national stage. Thus, I propose the following hypothesis: H2: House Members in committee leadership roles are more likely to post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos to official YouTube channel than members in non-leadership roles.

5.6.2 A Test of Committee Leadership and Online Explanation of Activity

Design

A dataset on YouTube channels of House members in the 113th Congress shows that House members (N=422) uploaded a total of 45,756 videos between January 2009 and March 2014 (Pizzano-Miraglia, 2014). Of that total, 7,716 (or 17 percent) are
committee hearings videos, or policy issue directed videos. In addition, data indicates that members in committee leadership roles\(^{59}\) post a total of 5,255 YouTube videos (or 11 percent) to their individual YouTube channel. Despite that committee hearing videos comprise only a small percentage of the total videos uploaded (compared to floor speeches at 43 percent), findings show that members of the majority party are posting a higher percentage of committee hearing videos (Section 5.5). Therefore, this suggests that House members in committee leadership roles, similarly to majority party members, are allocating resources for online computer-mediated communication and posting videos to YouTube channels, too. Therefore, if online home style does depict explanation of activity then we should see a significant relationship between members in committee leadership roles and the percentage of committee hearing videos posted in comparison to their non-committee leadership counterparts.

**Methodology**

To test online home style and the effect of YouTube videos to explain activity, I develop a unique dataset of U.S. House of Representatives Standing Committee YouTube videos posted to individual member of the 113\(^{th}\) Congress YouTube channels, from 2009 to 2014. As previously mentioned, there is no known measure quantitatively analyzing the explanation of Washington activity without content analysis of indirect print media messages or still imagery. The YouTube data resolves this problem.

\(^{59}\) Member Bob Goodlatte holds two leadership positions.
But, how do members inform constituents of activity in Washington? Fenno’s home style purports that only members can explain Washington activity to constituents, and that that explanation only exists while members are physically in the district. However, scholars of political communication argue that building political capital is worthwhile when seeking online participation from constituents (Jackson and Lilleker, 2011; Lilleker and Koc-Michalska, 2013). And, that forms of online social media is replacing traditional media outlets (Bruhn, Schoenmueller, and Schafer, 2012). Even though trends suggest that news media is often regarded as setting the political agenda in Washington (Lippmann, 1955; McCombs, 2013), and that media outlets air intended television feed to constituents regarding certain policy issues, how are MCs explaining activity without traditional forms of media, such as YouTube videos of policy issues from committee hearings? Knowing that members rely on media outlets to funnel explanations of Congressional behavior home to the constituencies, are committee leaders posting a higher percentage of work videos (committee hearings) to YouTube channels so that they control the legislative agendas; thus party control?

Considering the traditional media mediums such as press releases, photographic images, voice recordings, television interviews, and videography of committee proceedings (CSPAN), are MCs using computer-mediated communication in the form of YouTube videos to demonstrate MC performance in Washington; hence, online home style of activity explanation? I believe YouTube videos are an effective measurement of online (home style) explanation of MC activity because MCs can control the [majority] party legislative agenda, and thus wield reelection support while building political capital
online. Additionally, I argue that the percentage of YouTube committee video uploads MCs post are systematically an ideal method to measure member explanation of Washington activity; thereby resolving communication limitations of previously used methodologies.

If media coverage of committee rooms focus on members in leadership roles (e.g., Chair, Vice Chair, Ranking member) then media coverage of members in committee leadership role happens because 1) leadership sits in the center of the room, and 2) they control order of committee proceedings. Because of this, MCs in leadership roles are possibly more “on exhibition” than other committee members; therefore, committee leadership roles should seek to explain committee activity more than members in non-leadership roles.

Members in committee leadership roles are an ideal sample to examine online home style’s element of explanation of activity for a number of reasons. First, committees are the legislative workhorses of Congress. It is in the committee (hearings) where MCs debate on proposed legislation, reaffirm party preferences and control, and redefine policy. Fundamentally, House committees satisfy the legislative functions of the representative tasks in Congress. Another justification for using committee leaders as the unit of analysis is that the role of committee leader is at the center of the room. Leaders gain more media coverage and are more likely to be recognized on the national stage.
Variables

In this study, the unit of analysis is an individual member in a leadership role of all twenty-one House standing committees. The dependent variable is the percentage of committee hearing videos uploaded to a MCs’ YouTube channel. A dichotomous independent variable was generated for leadership, and is coded zero (0) if the member is non-leadership, and one (1) if the member holds a leadership position (e.g., Chairman, Vice Chairman, or Ranking member). The sample population omits members of House leadership, non-voting delegates, and vacancies (N= 422). Control variables include member’s party affiliation, age, and time in office (tenure). As mentioned in the previous section, these variables are controlled throughout the study for any relationships across variables.

Party

Party is coded as a dummy variable of zero (0) if the member is of the minority party (Democrat), and one (1) if a member of the majority party (Republican). We should expect members of majority party affiliation to be positively related to a higher percentage of committee hearing posts uploaded to their official YouTube channel. This relationship is expected because while majority members are assigned to Chair and Vice

60 the five following members holding leadership roles do not maintain an official YouTube channel: 1) Henry Waxman (D-CA), 2) Nick Rahall (D-WV), 3) Colin Peterson (D-MN), 4) Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD), and 5) Sam Graves (R-MO) and were counted as zero (0) in the data.
Chair leadership roles per House rules, they are urged to demonstrate Washington activity to their districts in order to maintain incumbency and party government control.

According to Deering and Smith (1997) the partisan structure of committees is the outcome of the modern House committee system. As the majority party became the dominant force in committees, tensions developed between leaders and non-leaders. Non-leaders saw party dominance in committees as a threat of party control. Although I do not examine party control in House committees, I do believe that party affiliation should be controlled for any relationships because the majority party establishes committee leadership.

Age

Although, members more years in age do not indicate seniority (Deering and Smith, 1997), we should not expect age to have any relationship with the percentage of committee hearing posts to MC home pages. This expectation is based on the concept that technology is widely accepted and accessible in the U.S. (Wilson, Wallin, and Reiser, 2003). Furthermore, the digital gap is changing (Norris, 2001) with 59 percent of older Americans (65 +) now using the internet daily (Zickuhr, 2014). Knowing this, regardless if MCs personally post videos or delegate staff (younger) to upload videos, age should not have any relationship with the percentage of committee hearing video uploads.
Despite my expectation that age is not related to the percentage of committee hearing videos, it is important to keep it as a control variable.

**Tenure**

I have included a control variable for time served in office. Time in office does indicate seniority; however, rules have changed over time to allow freshmen and other members with less time in office to attain powerful positions on committees (Deering and Smith, 1997). Customarily, members with the longest continuous service are awarded to leadership positions, but reforms in House rules established a process for selecting committee leaders. First, seniority can be challenged if needed. There are now formal procedures in the House for appointing members to committees and leadership roles. Second, the number of leadership positions assigned to members is limited. And third, members are subject to elections and term limits. Because of this, we should expect time in office to have a weak positive relationship with members in committee leadership roles.

To that end, I believe the percentage of committee hearing videos (issue-oriented) offer a quantitative method to measure home style’s element of explanation of Washington activity. Because the internet is possibly the missing link between the district and Washington, I expect members in committee leadership roles to have a higher percentage of committee hearing videos than non-leadership members.
5.6.3 Findings

I expect committee members in leadership roles use YouTube videos more than non-leadership members to explain Washington activity online. If this is correct, then Washington activity can be explained by computer-mediated communication medium, (YouTube videos); thus supporting my second hypothesis of online home style. I proposed that committee leaders are more likely to post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos than members in non-leadership roles.

A two-tailed t-test with equal variances was conducted to measure significance. At the $p < .05$ confidence level, significance was not found in the difference of members in committee leadership roles$^{61}$ ($M= .15, SE=.02$) and non-leadership members ($M= .17, SE= .008$); $t(420) = 0.70, p = 0.48$, and so I am not able to reject the null. These results indicate that committee leaders are not likely to post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos to official YouTube channel than members in non-leadership roles in efforts to explain Washington activity. See Table 17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis 2: Committee Leadership and Non-Leadership members, by the Percentage of Hearing Videos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^{61}$ A dichotomous variable was created to represent committee members in leadership roles in committees. Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen, and Ranking members were coded one (1) and members with no committee leadership roles were coded zero (0).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee leadership</th>
<th>49</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>.02</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Committee non-leadership</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .05

Note: (N=422). Committee leadership includes Chairmen, Vice Chairs, and Ranking Members. House Leadership, non-voting delegates, and vacancies are excluded. Bob Goodlatte, (R-WV) holds two Leadership positions, therefore was counted for only position. Of the total twenty-one House Standing Committees, there are sixty-three (63) possible leadership positions. Of those 63 positions, there are currently thirteen (13) vacancies.

Regression Analysis

A multivariate regression analysis was run to measure outcomes between the percentage of committee hearing videos (DV) and MCs in committee leadership roles. The findings are presented in Table 18. Results indicate that relationship exists between the percentage of committee hearing videos and members holding a committee leadership role. The results suggest no significance between the percentage of committee hearing videos and members holding a Committee leadership role (Chair, Vice Chair, or Ranking member). Of the variables controlled for, only party has any significant relationship (.0009, p < .001). However, the analysis supports a weak positive relationship between Republicans and the percentage of committee hearings. I believe party government can explain this finding. Because parties form legislative “cartel” groups (Cox and McCubbins, 1993), party power, influence, and incumbency are factors in committee leadership assignments (Deering and Smith, 1997; Fenno, 1973; Mayhew, 1974); thus, it is possible that committee leaders (majority party/Republican) post more policy issue
videos due to the fact they are more on exhibition because of their leadership role, not only in the committee but in the party as well. 62

### Table 18

**Hypothesis 2: Regression analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Committee Hearing Videos (DV)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variables</td>
<td>Coefficient (Std. error)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee leadership role</td>
<td>-.02 (.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Variables</td>
<td>Coefficient (Std. error)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td>.0009*** (.0001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>.0003 (.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.0007 (.0008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.01 (.051)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. of Obs. = (N=422)
Adj R² = 0.08
F(4, 418) = 9.67

62 In regards to explaining activity through YouTube channels, it is important to reiterate that as of March 2014, of total members in the study (N=424), of the MCs in leadership roles (n=49) (21 Chairs, 7 Vice-Chairs, and 21Ranking Members) one (1) Republican MC (majority) and four (4) Democrat MCs (minority) maintain no YouTube channel. One member holds two leadership assignments.
Thus far, this study demonstrates that all members can, and a vast majority of members and committee leaders do, use online computer-mediated communication in the form of YouTube videos to explain Washington activity to the public. But, do committee characteristics indicate how often members post YouTube videos to explain Washington activity?

It is true that committee leadership positions are chosen by party leader’s recommendation and members’ seniority (Fenno, 1973; Frisch and Kelly, 2006). Therefore, members do have a choice in committee assignments; therefore the jurisdiction type of the committee. This being said, does committee jurisdiction matter when explaining activity to district constituents? For instance, are members in broad jurisdictions possibly using YouTube videos more because they are on exhibition?

In the long run, I believe committee characteristics matter in the percentage of committee hearing videos committee members post. In the following section, I discuss two types of committees: broad and narrow jurisdictions and test if these jurisdiction types affect the percentage of committee hearing videos members post are used to explain activity.
5.7 Committee Characteristics, Assignments, and Online Explanation of Activity

Committee characteristics are important to discuss when examining committees because committees are a legislative machine that wield enormous power and influence in Congress (King, 1994; Shipan, 1995). There are two types of committee jurisdiction: narrow and broad. Committees with narrow jurisdiction attend to issues that unlikely vary from the committee focus. For example, the Committee on Agriculture concentrates specifically on bills related to agriculture and agriculture-based states. On the other hand, those with broad jurisdictions such as the Committee on Ways and Means, address a multitude of issue areas. A description of broad and narrow jurisdictions is warranted, but first it is important to discuss the role of committee assignments.

5.7.1 Committee Assignment and Jurisdiction Incentive in Online Explanation of Activity

A committee’s jurisdiction plays a role when members self-select committee assignment(s). According to Deering and Smith (1997), issue interest alone does not encourage MC self-selection to particular committees. MCs are issue-centric when selecting committee assignments and are typically in pursuit of constituent interests when seeking committee assignments (Hardin, 1998). But, pursuing constituency interest alone is not the only factor in MC committee assignment selection. Hardin (1998) argues that while committee selection is important in representing constituency interests, it benefits their reelection goals and strategy. In this case, members in leadership roles, in addition to being on exhibition in committee hearings, are in an ideal position to further reelection
strategies. Knowing this, I believe the percentage of committee hearing videos vary across broad and narrow committee jurisdictions because when it comes down to committee assignments, it is more that professional background that dictates assignment. It is about political achievement and motivation.

As discussed in the previous section, committee leadership sets aside members who seek only to gain better policy for their district from those members seeking to gain political power and influence. Deering and Smith (1997) believe a member’s committee assignment is grounded in the type of committee sought after by the member. By this, the committee jurisdiction (broad or narrow) is separated by its prestige and exclusivity (Rules, Budget, and Appropriations) and constituency-oriented (issue-based) committees (Armed Services, Agriculture). Despite the priorities committee leaders seek in the types of committees assigned, committee jurisdiction is equally important in the face of committee leader assignments. Thus, MCs seek assignments in specific committee jurisdiction because it will possibly elevate party recognition for that member. Therefore, members are not only posting videos (committee hearing) to explain Washington activity to their district constituencies, but they are campaigning for party influence and power in the House. With this in mind, committee jurisdiction elevates member advertising audiences (Mayhew, 1974). For example, committees of broad jurisdiction (Appropriations, Budget, and Ways and Means) focus on power and influence in party government in Washington, while narrow committees (Agriculture, Armed Services, Veteran Affairs) focus on power and influence in the district. Hence, MC committee assignments may matter when explaining activity to constituents.
Knowing that committee members choose their assignments for either party or district priorities (Cox and McCubbins, 2005) do committee jurisdictions matter in online home style? I believe MCs in broad jurisdictions are more on exhibition due to their role in Washington and therefore post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos to garner both party and district support. Therefore, I propose the following hypothesis:

H3: House Members in broad committee jurisdictions are more likely to have a higher percentage of committee hearing video posts to YouTube channel than members with assignments to narrow committee jurisdictions.

5.7.2 A Test of Committee Jurisdiction, and Online Explanation of Activity: Design & Methodology

Design

A unique dataset was compiled of House members from a select sample of broad (n=3) and narrow (n=3) committee jurisdictions (N=245). In this sample population, MCs combined leaders and non-leaders uploaded a total of 29,352 videos between January 2009 and March 2014 (Pizzano-Miraglia, 2014). Of that total, 4,781 (or 16 percent) are committee hearings videos.

Methodology
To test online home style’ explanation of activity and committee jurisdictions I use the existing dataset of U.S. House of Representatives of the 113th Congress and selected only six (6) Standing committees; three (3) broad (Appropriations, Budget, Ways and Means) and three (3) narrow (Agriculture, Armed Services, Veteran Affairs).

Because previous research omits committee jurisdiction and YouTube videos to examine online home style, I believe this study will resolve this problem and add to the literature a measure in which to analyze representative behavior.

Variables

In this study, the unit of analysis is an individual member in either broad or narrow jurisdictions of House Standing Committees. The dependent variable is the percentage of committee hearing videos. A dichotomous independent variable jurisdiction characteristic is coded zero (0) if the jurisdiction is broad and one (1) if the jurisdiction is narrow. The sample population omits members of House leadership, non-voting delegates, and vacancies (N= 245). Control variables include member’s party affiliation, age, and time in office (tenure).

It is important to note that five members included in the test do not maintain an official YouTube channel: 1) Colin Peterson (D-MN), Agriculture, 2) Susan Davis (D-63 Only a sample of committee jurisdictions were used in the test because I believe the sample (n=6) serves as an accurate representative of all twenty-one House Standing Committees jurisdictions, respectively.
CA), Armed Services, 3) Ed Pastor (D-AZ), Appropriations, 4) Filemon Vela (D-TX), Agriculture, and 5) Vance McAllister (R-LA), Agriculture and were counted as zero (0) in the data.

**Party**

Party is coded as a dummy variable of zero (0) if the member is of the minority party (Democrat), and one (1) if a member of the majority party (Republican). We should expect members in broad committee jurisdictions and of majority party affiliation to be positively related to a higher percentage of committee hearing posts uploaded to their official YouTube channel. This relationship is expected because majority members possibly pursue explaining Washington activity to both their districts and party to gain influence and power.

**Age**

As previously noted by Deering and Smith, 1997, MC age does not necessarily imply House power and influence. Therefore, once again I expect no relationship to exist between the percentage of committee hearing posts, jurisdiction, and leadership role in committee. This expectation is based on the concept that technology is widely accepted and accessible in the U.S. (Wilson, Wallin, and Reiser, 2003) and effects of the change in the digital gap (Norris, 2001).
Tenure

Time served in office is controlled for. Because tenure has been controlled in the previous two hypotheses, I will continue to seek any relationship for time served in office, jurisdiction, and percentage of committee hearing videos. Important to reiterate is that members with the longest continuous service are typically awarded leadership positions. And, therefore, I believe broad committee jurisdictions impacts the type of influence sought after by MCs. For example, MCs seeking committee assignments in broad committees possibly seek power and influence in Washington and party, while MCs seeking assignments in narrow jurisdictions possibly seek influence and power among their district constituents. Because of this, we should expect time in office to have no relationship with leaders in either broad or narrow jurisdictions since leaders are seeking influence despite jurisdiction characteristic.

To that end, I believe the percentage of committee hearing videos (issue-oriented) offer a quantitative method to measure home style’s element of explanation of Washington activity. Because of the internet’s capability to link the district and Washington, I expect members in with committee assignments in broad committees to have a higher percentage of committee hearing videos than their counterparts in narrow committee assignments.

5.7.3 Findings
I expect that broad committee members post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos to explain Washington activity. If this is correct, then not only can Washington activity can be explained by computer-mediated communication medium, (YouTube videos), but also committee jurisdiction is an indicator of explaining activity to party government; thus supporting my third hypothesis of online home style.

I proposed that broad committee members are more likely to post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos than members in narrow committee jurisdictions. I believe this approach to measuring online home style matters because it reinforces Fenno’s linkage between representative career strategies (Fenno, 1978; Hibbing, 1991) and reelection strategies in the district electorate. Despite reason, MCs seek influence and power in both district and Washington (Cain et al., 1987; Fenno, 1978) through explanation of activity. Issue-based videos such as committee hearings offer a possible method of measuring how MCs explain activity online home style to achieve that influence.

A two-tailed t-test with equal variances was conducted to measure significance. At the $p < .05$ confidence level, significance was not found in the difference of members in broad committees ($M=.17$, $SE=.01$) and narrow committees ($M=.18$, $SE=.02$); $t(243) = -0.38$, $p = 0.71$, and so I am not able to reject the null. These results indicate that members in broad jurisdictions are not likely to post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos to official YouTube channel than members in narrow committee jurisdictions. See Table 19.
Regression Analysis

A multivariate regression analysis was run to measure outcomes between the percentages of committee hearing videos (DV) and committee jurisdiction types. The findings are presented in Table 20. The results suggest no significance between the percentage of committee hearing videos and members in broad committee jurisdictions. Findings do present significance in control variable party (Republican) (.0007) and the percentage of committee hearing videos. These results support my findings that party matters in the percentage of committee videos posted by MCs.

Table 19
Hypothesis 3: Committee Jurisdiction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broad</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .05
Note: (N=245).
Table 20

Hypothesis 3: Regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Committee Hearing Videos (DV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Committee Jurisdiction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Control Variables | Coefficient | (Std. error) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td>.0007***</td>
<td>(.0002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>(.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>(.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>(.08)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No. of Obs. = (N=245)
Adj $R^2 = 0.04$
F(4, 240) = 3.48
Prob. > F = .0087
***p < .001

5.7.4 Summary

The dynamics of committee jurisdiction is important to examine in this context for a number of reasons. First, committees are policy gatekeepers. As a result, committees are powerful legislative workhorses, and depending on jurisdiction they can influence policy outcomes by their members’ incentives (de Figueiredo, 2013). And, committee jurisdiction plays an important function in the member behavior—cohesive behavior (Hinckley, 1975). Hinckley (1975) describes cohesive committee behavior as
members acting as a group within the committee. But, as Hinckley also points out, measuring cohesive behavior is challenging, especially when measured by roll-call votes, which can change from committee to the floor (Dodd, 1972; Dyson and Soule, 1970). Instead, Hinckley (1975) measures cohesive behavior by the “percent of nonunanimous recommendations” of the committee. If taken into account Hinckley’s study on cohesive committee behavior, we can assume that members seek broad committee assignments to gain congressional influence. Therefore, members of the majority party would possibly find committee assignments in broad jurisdictions for their attractiveness in party power.

Six committees are used to examine the percentage of committee hearing videos (DV) by committee jurisdiction (IV). It is important to mention that these committees have distinct characteristics, and thus policy environments (Fenno, 1973). Under the broad jurisdiction category, Appropriations, Budget, and Ways and Means are committees in which policy is fundamentally directed by the executive branch, or executive-led; therefore members seeking membership to such committees are pursuing power and influence. Fenno (1973) notes that executive-led committees also maintain a heavy element of party leadership influence. On the other hand, narrow jurisdiction committees such as Agriculture, Armed Services, and Veteran’s Affairs are more clientele-led; therefore member seeking this committee membership are likely securing reelection strategies and district-party support.
If, then, both types of committee jurisdiction were party-led\textsuperscript{64}, a possible relationship between party and percentage of committee hearing videos would offer insight to party majority coalitions. That being said, policy issues driven by the party majority possibly influence the percentages of committee hearing videos uploaded.

As previously stated, committees are legislative workhorses and much of the policy work committees do is set by party leadership agenda (Cox and McCubbins, 1993). Cox and McCubbins (1993) believe that when it comes to committees and House agenda setting, how party leaders schedule bills to be heard on the floor are greatly influenced by the expected return from committees. Therefore, majority party scheduling efforts affect policy outcomes to the effect that “the payoffs of majority leadership reflect the collective interests of the party” (Cox and McCubbins, 1993, p. 233). Therefore, it’s rational to expect results showing a positive significance between the majority party (Republican) and the percentage of committee videos, rather than leadership and percentage of committee videos. One possible explanation for this is assumption is that party majority desires to control the policy environment in committees. That control is demonstrated in a medium that is controlled by the individual MC, not the media, such as YouTube videos. Therefore, broad committees are important to maintaining House party control.

\textsuperscript{64} Revisiting Fenno’s (1973) research on committee behavior we know that committees form “distinct patterns of coalition leadership” that is distinguished into four groups: 1) executive-led, 2) party-led, 3) clientele-led, and 4) House-led (Fenno, 1973, p. 22).
I expected committee members in broad jurisdictions were more likely to upload a higher percentage of YouTube videos of committee activity in effort to explain Washington activity compared to members in narrow committee jurisdictions that cater to constituency policy. I believe this to be case because members in broad committees are motivated to demonstrate party activity and therefore explain Washington activity more by using computer-mediated communication (YouTube videos) and a higher percentage of committee hearing videos. Results were inconclusive to my theory. However, if we take a descriptive analysis of the committee jurisdiction sample, it is evident that broad committee members do post a higher percentage of videos to the committee YouTube channel compared to narrow committees. See Table 21.

Table 21
Committee Jurisdiction Sample and Percentage of YouTube videos, by Committee YouTube Channel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad</th>
<th>Narrow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriations</td>
<td>Armed Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ways and Means</td>
<td>Veteran’s Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 61%                      Total 39%

Notes: Total members in jurisdiction sample (n=245). Committee jurisdiction sample (n=6), total number of videos posted to committee jurisdiction sample YouTube channels (n=1,157).

Notwithstanding the regression analysis falling short in providing any significance in variance in broad and narrow jurisdiction and the percentage of committee videos, it does shed light on party cohesiveness. Study findings show that a positive relationship exists between party (.0007) \( p < .001 \) and percentage of committee videos.
This suggests that Republicans (party majority) post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos. Despite lack of significance in hypotheses testing, we know that MCs are posting videos of work for a purpose, either to explain activity, and/or gain influence and power in Congress or with the electorate (Fenno, 1978; Mayhew, 1974). Motivation for MCs posting videos of committee hearings for party cohesiveness, policy, or constituencies, is inconclusive and open for further research and beyond the scope of this study.

5.8 Summary

Richard Fenno makes the following statement on House members and explanation of Washington activity:

“When House members are at home they do something that is closely connected to, yet separable from, the presentation of self to their constituencies. They explain what they have done while they have been away from home.” --Richard Fenno, “Home Style” 1978.

Fenno’s statement is supportive of members’ need to fulfill the activity of explanation of work to their constituencies. But, it leaves room to grow into the saturation of digital technology. Other channels of communication such as franking, telephone calls, letters, personal appearances, continue to be used by members to explain Washington activity. However, in Fenno’s statement above, he argues that members are only “at home” in the district when explaining activity.
The findings presented in this chapter illustrate otherwise. Results confirm that explanation of Washington activity does matter to members in committee leadership roles because they are uploading videos in with the expectation they will be viewed—by party or district constituency. A positive relationship exists between party majority (Republican) members and the percentage of committee hearing video uploads. Because Republicans hold the majority in the House, it can be surmised that control of the House (majority) influences how members communicate their explanation of Washington activity in the form YouTube videos.

Committee jurisdiction type (broad or narrow) was examined for any relationship between percentages of committee video uploads. Again, the significance falls short in jurisdiction type and committee video percentages, but findings show significance in party of jurisdictions and committee hearing videos. This is explained in the context as party-led jurisdictions rather than whether committee leaders of broad or narrow committees are posting a higher percentage of committee videos.

The intent of this chapter was to examine if explanation of Washington activity—online—exists in home style. By researching committee leadership roles in the House, I found that explaining activity does matter to those of the majority party despite committee jurisdiction. Because no known research studies’ of evaluating home style and YouTube video uploads have yet been published, this study is limited in comparing findings in other studies. With the presented findings, I can assertively conclude that YouTube videos bridge the gap of how members can effectively explain work activity to
the district constituency while still “working” in Washington, but at what purpose of the explanation is still unknown and open for further research.

It is important to note that D.E. Yiannakis’ study on Congressional communication styles expected a relationship between House leadership and credit claiming, also referred to as advertising work (Mayhew, 1974), or explaining activity (Fenno, 1978). Her findings show no such relationship. Despite this study’s falling short on establishing significant relationships between House leadership and committee hearing posts (credit-claiming), it presents a significant positive relationship between majority party and the percentage of committee hearings. In other words, committee leaders are mostly majority party members and they are posting a higher percentage of committee hearing videos—explaining activity and taking credit.

The findings presented in this chapter support that measuring aggregate percentage of committee hearings is a statistically significant methodology in testing home style’s element explanation of Washington activity if party majority is considered. Therefore, it can be surmised that YouTube videos explaining Washington activity are a variation of credit claiming for electoral incentives (Mayhew, 1974) and advertising work on policy creation (Fenno, 1978).

I believe committee hearing video posts address several activities MCs undertake. First, committee hearings are issue-oriented. Because policy issues and legislation direct them [committee hearings], members and committee leaders alike, in committee hearings
meet the legislative functions of Congress. Second, it is in committees where MCs make decisions. MC performance in committees is a Washington activity—one in which most constituents only hear or see on news channels, not in person, and for decades been isolated, only granting those giving testimony or visiting Washington the opportunity to watch Washington work. Therefore, YouTube videos possibly link the committee with the constituency, thus reinforcing electoral certainty for members and electoral incentives.

In the next chapter, I will conclude this dissertation with a summarization of findings. Additionally, I offer a discussion on home style elements—online—and give limitations and suggestions, and need of future research in home style.
Chapter 6: Beyond Home Style

“No man can be a competent legislator who does not add to an upright intention and a sound judgment a certain degree of knowledge of the subjects on which he is to legislate. A part of this knowledge may be acquired by means of information that lie within the compass of men in private as well as public stations. Another part can only be attained, or at least thoroughly attained, by actual experience in the station which requires the use of it.” James Madison, Federalist Paper No. 53

“…Most political science research in the representative-constituency linkage is conducted at one end of the linkage—in the world of legislative combat and not in the world of the shopping bags.” Richard Fenno, Jr., Home style

The opening statements reflect the Framer’s notion that elected agents of the people should know whom they are indeed representing. Fenno’s statement reiterates that up until his home style model, research on the representative-constituency relationship was largely one-sided, examined with a Congressional lens not the district. This, of course, changed with Fenno (1978) and others who redirected Congressional behavior research to include the district’s perspective (Erikson and Wright, 1980; Eulau and Karps, 1977; Fiorina, 1974; Kuklinski, 1978; Mayhew, 1974; Page et al., 1984). This dissertation continued that quest for political science research in the representative-constituent relationship—online. My focus was to explore relationships of online and offline home style elements, and to determine if actually, an adaptation of home style patterns are recognizable and measurable online.

If, home style is ubiquitous, and constituencies in Washington and the district are linked by internet-based computer-mediated communication, then home style is no longer “home” style, but rather a universal representative style not unique only to offline
medium (physical MC presence in the district). Despite the internet’s existence during the 1970s, Fenno’s home style model was limited to research of the 1970s, and the internet was hardly used in the same capacities as it is today. That being said, has Fenno’s home style transcended time? Because the internet extends beyond geographic boundaries, is home style no longer restricted to the “concentric circles” of the district?

6.1 What We Know About Home Style

Home style is a district-centric model of MC behavior adopted and displayed when MCs are in their district and seeking electoral goals. In developing home style, Fenno (1978) asked a very simple question about MCs and their districts: “What does an elected representative see when he or she sees a constituency?” (Fenno, 1978, p. xiii). And, with what they see, how can it help electoral goals to achieve incumbency?

Allegorically, the home style model is straightforward, yet it functions in a circular movement. The cycle begins with a candidate’s win to public office. While cultivating their constituencies during the campaign they build trust within the district. In doing so, trust building affords members to maintain electoral goals such as incumbency, developing power and influence in Congress, and creating good public policy (Fenno, 1977; 1978). And, the cycle is continuous until it is upset by electoral defeat.

---

65 See Richard Fenno’s Home Style (1978). The four concentric circles of constituency are 1) primary, 2) geographic, 3) reelection, and 4) intimate.
Furthermore, the cycle is supported by home style elements: allocation of resources, presentation of self in the district, and explanation of Washington activity—all of which are critical to achieving electoral goals.

Before this study, researchers have only used individual elements of home style such as allocation of resources or presentation of self to find relationships of online home style and communication in the representative-constituent relationship. What those scholars have noted is that while home style over the Web is not synonymous with district home style, it gives insight to MC “home style” patterns. But, insight alone is not enough to fully understand the online communication dynamics in the representative-constituent relationship. Study results suggest two trends of computer-mediated communication that influence online home style determinants.

First, MCs find it rational to allocate online resources. Research on the 105th Congress by Adler et al. (1998) studied MC decisions to create online home pages in the early stages of the internet. Their findings showed that younger, Republican legislators from more affluent districts were allocating resources to go online. As of the 113th Congress, each House member operates a Congressional website (home page), including email. This is because the public goes online to gather political information (Purcell and Rainie, 2014; Pizzano-Miraglia, 2014). Additionally, online resources have not replaced traditional communication methods. According to a report by the Congressional Research Service, House Members in 2012 sent over 61.4 million pieces of mail (mass mailings) to district constituents at a cost of $22.9 million dollars (Glassman, 2013).
Despite the low cost of online communication, such as emails, MCs must report all forms of mass communications to House Administration and related costs. Mass communications are separate from mass mailings and differ in that communications refer to television, radio, internet advertisements, automated phone calls, or mass emails to non-subscriber list serves. Mass communications is defined by the House Administration as, “any unsolicited mass communication of substantially identical content to 500 or more persons in a session of Congress” (House.gov). In 2012, House Members spent $7.4 million to send 1.11 billion pieces of mass communications (Glassman, 2013). By in large, MCs are not replacing mail with online communication mediums to solely communicate with their district, but rather adding to an existing body of communication mediums.

The findings presented here in this study fulfill two gaps in the literature. One is that MCs do successfully use computer-mediated communication (YouTube videos) to express home style online. Data confirms people are viewing MC videos by the number of YouTube subscribers and number of views recorded by YouTube statistics on individual member channels. (http://www.youtube.com/yt/press/statistics.html). The other is that home style can be measured in aggregate versus a case study approach. Previous research has shown only an examination of distinct elements of home style represented online, and not an “online home style.” Furthermore, dependent variables have tended to focus on linear, one-way communication methods such as press releases or images. This study examines aggregate YouTube data (videos) as a two-way communication form that MCs use to show home style patterns online. YouTube can
function as a form of two-way communication (versus one-way) because the receiving audiences can send feedback to the sender through similar YouTube videos, email, or other forms of communication. Finally, this research has given clarification of online and offline home style patterns.

6.2 Online and Offline Home Style

What is the relationship between offline and online home style? We know that home style (offline) is a MC’s learned behavioral response to her perception of the district. We also know that home style is a district-oriented-goal driven behavior. Goffman’s (1957) impression management model used by Fenno (1978) to premise home style’s second element, presentation of self, was developed dramatURGically for the “immediate presence of others.” These concepts have suited the established home style model because members in the district are in the physical presence of their constituents when in the district. But, what is most important to understanding home style is that it’s a reelection tool.

Fenno (1973; 1977; 1978) argues that there are three predominant goals of the congressional member: 1) reelection, 2) power, and 3) to create policy. The goal of reelection gives home style purpose because without it, home style does not exist to achieve congressional power or policy. Online home style shares these goals with offline home style, albeit the physical presence. Instead, the virtual surrogates the physical.
6.2.1 Online v. Offline: Allocation of Resources, Presentation of Self, and Explanation of Activity

What makes online and offline home style determinants similar? Findings from Chapter Three show that MCs find it rational to allocate online resources because people are going online to gather political information. Similarly, offline resources are staff addressing casework, people gather at member’s district events, town hall meetings, or coffee with your Congressman in the district. What online resources do through the use of computer-mediated communication mediums (YouTube videos) is reinforce those in-district meetings. The outcomes of the allocated resources are similar. Constituents are probably attending the town hall meetings, but also viewing the YouTube video online via their MC’s website. And, in the event constituents miss the event or choose not to attend for prior commitments, they are free to view the (past) event online. The video allows the viewer to see and hear exactly what happened in the district; thus placing them in the presence of the MC—virtually.

The analysis in Chapter Four addressed presentation of self. Results were inconclusive of online presentation of self, but I believe the short falling in the hypothesis testing was due to sample data. In future research, coding of MC presentation of self should rely on actual member responses, and coders examining behavior, not of staff interpretation of member behavior. Similar in offline and online presentation of self patterns (person-to-person, issue-oriented) are members “seen” virtually of them physically in the district. YouTube videos presented members in the district at events or speaking to individual constituents, with headings on the video explaining the event.
This representation of presentation of self types is conclusive with Fenno’s depiction of member behavior (e.g., local boy, issue-only). An additional limitation of this study was hypothesizing presentation of self type could be depicted by the percentage of video type. What was critical in examining for similarities of offline and online home style is the realization that presentation of self is a human behavior, not to be replicated by a video. Presentation of self can be depicted in video, but not measurable by videos because it is the fickle home style element. That being said, the implication of online and offline presentation of self similarities is that presentation of self happens in the moment in the physical realm, not the virtual. This is done so that viewers can “see” MCs presenting self in the district; however, this research finds that this data cannot be gathered by a virtual variable, but by human coding human behavior.

Aside from the physical presence of MCs in the district, credibility is one aspect of home style difficult to measure online. Considering home style element explanation of Washington activity, how do constituents assimilate MC credibility? Fenno (1978) believes “the credibility of any given explanation probably depends less on the content of the explanation itself than on its compatibility with some previously established perception of the explainer, “as a person” (Fenno, 1978, p. 149). Therefore, it is the act of explaining that MCs create and reinforce the perception constituents has of them. By these terms, credibility can be measured by acts. Therefore, coding acts using YouTube videos seems rational. However, again, measuring credible acts are limited to incorporating human coders.
Chapter Five presents data on explanation of activity. Hypothesis testing indicates significance in the percentage of committee hearing videos and party affiliation. However, significance falls short in determining relationship between the percentage of committee hearing and leadership and jurisdiction. Despite the inability to reject the null, it is important to note that in all three tests party was significant when tested as a control variable. I believe the short falling of reliability is denoted by the measurement rather than the data. In hindsight, I argue online home style can be measured by videos, but requires coding the acts of explanation of activity.

Knowing this, what assures MCs that those constituents viewing YouTube videos in the home district will accept their “online” explanations? I believe, like offline home style, online home style is established on trust. When members win the trust of their district, it is more likely that their activity in Washington will be accepted (Fenno, 1978). One frequent activity by Washington members is participating in committee hearings. A possible implication of member credibility is committee leadership positions. Results presented in Chapter Five show those members from the majority party post a higher percentage of committee hearing videos. Because majority party members hold committee leadership, it is justified that members in committee leadership positions would desire to build trust with constituents, and strengthen reelection strategy. Similar to explanation of activity offline, online explanation of activity demonstrates work performance away from the district. On the other hand, online differs from offline explanations in videos by real time. Online explanations (committee hearing videos)
offer the viewer-constituent proof of activity, whereas offline explanation (MC in the district) is left to the constituent trusting the MC’s word of performance.

6.3 Home Style Online, Really?

Home style is a district-centric theory that associates representative perception about their constituents with a specific behavioral pattern (Fenno, 1978). The theoretical model, which includes: allocation of resources, presentation of self, and explanation of activity, was first introduced by Richard Fenno in 1978 and continues to be examined decades later by researchers too many list.

Since Fenno’s initial examination (home style) was on the perceptions members have about what they saw when they traveled “home” to their districts, the perspective of the member-in-the-district is traditionally examined in the district—a dilemma Fenno believed existed prior to his home style research. But, despite Fenno’s concentration on the district, home style research expanded to types of communication mediums that may represent home style patterns (newsprint, images, press releases). Researchers continue to research home style because it matters. It matters because tensions of reelection, constituent communication, and legislative competence are huge, and intensifying with every member election. For example, in 2012, total costs of Congressional races nearly topped $4 Billion (opensecrets.org). Therefore, research on the activities of maintaining a career in Congress—home style—is critical to examine, too.
6.3.1 Home Style and the Congressional Career in the 21st Century

In Morris Fiorina’s book, “Congress, Keystone of the Washington Establishment,” Fiorina states that “the professionalization of Congress is a twentieth-century phenomenon” (Fiorina, 1977, p. 7). Fiorina draws attention to Congress’ transition from solely being a legislative body to a career-oriented institution is a result of advertising. He argues that congressmen “advertise” work more today than twenty years ago, but that representatives get more votes today, too (Fiorina, 1977). Indeed, representatives’ advertising work activity is about telling citizens of their accomplishments in Washington, but it is also about drawing attention to policy-issues and raising money for campaigns (Mayhew, 1974).

Here again, home style research matters because it is important to study how representative behavior (priorities and performance) reflects district perception when MCs seek a career (objectives and electoral incentives) in Congress (Hibbing, 1991). Continued home style research is important because Congressional member activities have become more difficult to achieve. As Fenno argues, the representative-constituent relationship is constrained because the “quality of their contact has suffered” (Fenno, 1978, p. 222). This said, does “home style” still exist, or has home style faded into the silhouette of the Congressional career?
Home style research in the 21st Century has become a dilemma. Justin Grimmer ends his 2010 book with the following statement:

“…To understand how legislators represent their constituents inside the institution, it is crucial to know what legislators say outside the institution” (Grimmer, 2010, p. 195).

The dilemma Grimmer and numerous researchers are continuing to examine is Congress separately—inside versus outside.

**The Home Style Dilemma**

In the course of this dissertation three challenges to home style have been implied: 1) home style is only a guideline, 2) online access helps the representative, rather than the constituent, and 3) online resources are reinforcements, not replacements. I offer the following discussion as a remedy to the home style dilemma.

Understanding what is important to MCs and their constituent’s possibly influence member decision making and political outcomes (Arnold, 1992; Fenno, 1978; Kingdon, 1973). Therefore, home style’s value should be as a general guideline rather than prescription of behavior (especially since Fenno’s 1978 study clearly states that that it does not “compare attitudes” of constituents or members). Second, home style is a tool. Perhaps if a definitive linkage between the home district and Washington continue

---

66 Dissertation book titled “
to build, and networking strengthens the representative-constituent relationship, the concept of online representation could possibly weaken in-district behavior. But can computer-mediate communication replace physical representation? For example, let’s turn to the dollar bill. In 21st American society, the likelihood an individual carries a one-dollar bill in cash, or four quarters is minimal. Instead of paper money (cash), people are carrying cards or iPhones. Money is now available without ever touching it or seeing it in your hand. Money exists even without consumers and merchants not physically seeing it. Similarly, constituents in the district can’t “see” MCs in DC, but know representatives are working even if only on a digital plane.

This final thought brings me to the third challenge of home style: the institution. Reflecting on Grimmer’s (2010) final statement, that to better understand representatives inside the institution, Congressional scholars must research what members say outside the institution, I offer the following remedy: the internet is a powerful tool. Seeking the human element in the representative-constituent relationship is what connects the institution of Congress with the institution of self-government. Rather than saying home style is a drifting theory of an institution that separated the place of representation with the represented, it needs reinvention. Representatives and researchers alike need to be mindful not to confuse home style with home pages.

Computer-mediated communication is a tool that connects representatives and citizenry in an exchange of political information; therefore, satisfying a principle in the American doctrine of representative democracy. To that end, representative’s perceptions
of the district should not be limited to only-while-in-the-district. However, if the internet
is the linkage between Washington and district constituencies, does “home” style still
matter?

6.4 Future Research

An aggregate, longitudinal research study on the member district perception has yet to be
conducted. Since Richard Fenno developed home style in 1978, scholars have taken on
elements of home style and applied it to theories, but none have yet to retest the model in
the 21st Century beyond case studies, and for good reason.

First, the home style model was a seven-year commitment. It took time traveling
with members, investigating members and staff in the district, and financial costs.
Another measurement restriction is that home style was derived from eighteen case
studies and not from aggregate data. How could researchers examine all 435 members to
find how they each perceive their constituency? Despite the research parameters, I
believe that measuring aggregate data online using videos rather than press releases or
images solves the problem. The reason being is that videos offer reviewers (researchers)
opportunity to study both verbal and non-verbal communication behavior. That leads to
the second reason: home style should be examined with a communication lens. The
foundation of the representative-constituent relationship is communication and because
of this, it is fundamental in how MCs allocate resources, present self, and explain
activity—home style.
I offer using a communication theory—social information processing (SIP) theory—to approach research of online “home” style. One reason is that if applied to home style theory, SIP addresses impressions over time that form within the representative-constituent relationship. SIP can be used to explain how parties/individuals engaged in exchanging computer-mediated communication gain information on the other, and how that information is used to form impressions of the other (Griffin, 2006; Walther, 1992). In other words, SIP acts as online impression management (Goffman, 1957). Subsequently, researchers possibly could gain a better understanding of online representative-constituent relationship by applying communication theory such as SIP.

Study Limitations

The research presented here are not without research limitations. As I have mentioned briefly in the previous paragraphs, limitations to the dissertation are fundamentally confined in data gathering. There were three separate models employed: 1) online allocation of resources, 2) online presentation of self, and 3) online explanation of activity. Significance was found in variables in each study; however, I believe the nulls would have been rejected if the data had been coded with an alternative method.

In the first test (Chapter Three), a convenience sample was used to measure online political participation. The sample consisted of university students of varying ages (N=245). Of course, a convenience sample of only university students restricted data, but in this case was justified because it targeted a demographic typically apathetic to politics.
Study findings show that MCs find allocation of online resources rational because the public is seeking online mediums to gather political information.

In the second test (Chapter Four), YouTube channels for each member of the House YouTube channel (N=422) were reviewed for content. A unique dataset was developed of videos on house floor speeches, committee hearings, media clips, and direct talk (N= 45,756). These were the predominant four types of videos collectively posted on each member’s channel. The chapter’s focus was on similarities of online and offline presentation of self measured by two stylistic patterns (person-to-person and issue-oriented) in which House staff members were surveyed for their analysis of MC (assigned) presentation of self style. Despite minimal responses from staff (n=89), findings support that MCs do post YouTube videos; however, results from hypothesis testing were unable to reject the null that YouTube videos can depict an online presentation of self style.

Chapter Five presents results that support a relationship between party and explanation of activity—home style’s third element. What is important about these findings is that Republican Party MCs were nearly 30 percent more likely to post committee hearing videos (.28) compared to their Democrat counterparts. Although I was unable to reject the null that committee leadership posted a higher percentage of committee hearing videos, analysis shows significance at the 99% confidence level (.0007) between majority party members from broad jurisdictions and the percentage of
committee hearing videos posted. This finding supports my belief that the percentage of committee hearing videos can indicate an online homes style (explanation of activity).

Throughout Chapter Five’s study on the percentage of committee hearing videos and committee leadership, one variable maintained significance: party. Party does matter in the percentage of committee hearing videos posted to MC YouTube channels, where as in Chapter Four, findings indicate significance between Democratic Party members and the percentage of House floor speeches (.52). I have determined that the difference in percentages of video type matters. For House Republicans, (in control of the House during 113th Congress) policy issues matter in party control government. The Democrats (minority House party) concentration on House floor speech and debate suggests that minority party members use the House floor to debate policy issues majority members are making inside committee hearings. Therefore, I conclude that uploading video type does matter to MCs; thus presenting a home style online matters, too. The shortcoming is that further research is demanded to help define how to accurately measure presentation of self online—a fundamentally in-district behavior.

6.5 Conclusion

I began this dissertation believing that the internet had in some way linked MC activities, combining the forces of representative responsibilities at home and Washington. Despite excluding a constituent measure, I used social information processing theory (SIP) to explain how over time, MCs exchanging computer-mediated communication gains
information on the other, and that information is used to form impressions of the other (Griffin, 2006; Walther, 1992). I argue that SIP is a useful communication approach because online avenues support two-way communication. Because MCs continue to post online videos and seek responses (communication) from constituents through feedback (over time), SIP is attained. If applied to representative role theory, it is evident that over time, information and impressions will form in the representative-constituent relationship as well; thus fulfilling the incentives of home style.

The fundamental shape of the MC “agent” has changed since the 18th Century. Members now seek stable careers and political life in Congress (Hibbing, 1991); thus, MCs are investing in incumbency, and methods for “campaigning” for incumbency. Because MCs seek reelection incentives, MCs depend on internet based representative-constituent relationship building strategies. Social information processing gives members (and staff) a medium for which to connect with constituents and advertise their personal, and party platforms. If existing impressions from constituents is considered, it may not be that MCs “present” self online, but members are using online resources to present work both in the district (media and direct talk videos) and Washington (floor speeches and committee hearing videos).

In conclusion, this analysis of home style supports my theory that home style is conveyed using computer-mediated communication channels. And, that both representatives and constituents alike find it rational to incorporate seeking political communication daily activities. One aspect in future research is that we should direct
research to House member, self-identification of home style patterns. Indeed, home style is a representative’s perception of the district, but only until the representative recognizes their personal home style pattern can we really understand home style—who it effects, and how to communicate it.

In my examination of Richard Fenno’s home style model, I have discovered that the representative-constituent relationship extends past what was once considered “home-centric” representative style. Instead, internet technology synergizes the relationship between the representative and constituent into a “virtual reality conjecture.” Understood in quantum physics as when “the physical world arises from quantum processing as images arise on a computer screen” (Whitworth, 2010), virtual reality in itself must “contain” reality. This explanation of virtual reality is true, too, in the online relationship between representatives and constituents. Therefore, online, or virtual “home style” exists because a representative’s home style exists in the physical realm. Hence, representative role theory and social processing theory—together—should explain online home style patterns that members use to communicate their perception of the district.

Additionally, in this dissertation I have advanced previous quantitative research methodologies limited by indirect communication methods such as press releases, newsprint, images, (Grimmer, 2010; Gulati, 2004; Yiannakis, 1983), and since introduced an innovative methodology to better examine the representative-constituent relationship through YouTube videos. To that end, I present a systematic methodology based on
House members' portrayal of specific home style patterns that are depicted through video uploads on members' official YouTube channels.
7.0 Bibliography


Chicago Press.


8.0 APPENDIX

8.1 Appendix A: Internet Participation Survey

Survey Questionnaire on Internet Political Participation

(University of Nevada, Reno Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved)

“The following are some activities that people perform on the Internet. For each question, think about the activities you have done in the last twelve (12) months. Please circle the number best describing your answer from “0=Never to 7=Very Often” or as specified. After survey is complete, please return to investigator. You are not obligated to complete the survey and may decide to stop the survey at any time. Thank you.”

1. Have you used the Internet to contact an elected representative, government official, or candidate for office to express your opinion about a local, national, or international issue?
   Never 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Very Often

2. Have you signed an Internet petition about a local, national, or international issue?
   Never 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Very Often

3. Have you used the Internet to try to persuade another person about your view on a local, national, or international issue?
   Never 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Very Often

4. Have you worked together with others in an Internet community to try to deal with a local issue or problem?
   Never 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Very Often

5. Have you personally gone to see, made a phone call to, or sent a postal letter to an elected representative, government official, or candidate for office to express your opinion about local, national, or international issue?
   Never 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Very Often

6. Have you signed a written petition about local, national, or international issue?
   Never 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Very Often

7. Have you telephoned, written a postal mail letter, or spoken with someone in an effort to persuade that person about your view on a local, national, or international issue?
   Never 0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Very Often
8. Have you worked together with others in your community to try to deal with a local issue or problem?
   Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

9. Do you ever use the Internet from home?
   Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

10. Did anyone from a political party, campaign, or political organization contact you over the Internet about a local, national, or international issue?
    Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

11. Did anyone from a political party, campaign, or political organization call you on the telephone, send you a letter in the mail, or come around and talk to you about a local, national, or international issue?
    Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

12. Using a scale of 0 to 7, with 0 being “a total lack of interest” and 7 being “a great deal of interest,” how interested are you in politics?
    Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

13. In general, about how many hours each day do you have free from responsibilities of employment, home care, child-care, and school to relax, socialize, and recreate. In other words, about how many hours a day do you have free from any immediate responsibility?
    Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

The following tasks are performed on the Internet. For each please indicate if you have done any in the last 12 months...

14. Have you sent an attachment with an email?
    Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

15. Have you posted an audio, video, or image file to the Internet?
    Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

16. Have you personally designed a webpage?
    Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

17. Have you downloaded a software program to your computer from the Internet?
    Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

18. What is the primary media source you use to access political information news?
    1= printed newspaper; 2= television; 3= Internet; 4= friends; 5= radio; 6= none; 7= other

19. Party Affiliation
    1= Republican; 2= Democrat; 3= Independent; 4= Other; 5= Not Registered
20. Did you vote in 2012 Presidential Election?
1= Yes; 0= No

21. What is the primary tool you use to access the Internet?
1= Mobile cellular device; 2= Tablet/iPad; 3= Personal Computer; 4= Public Computer;
5= Other; 6= None; 7= No Internet Access Available

22. How often do you access Congressional Websites for information?
Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

23. How often do you access government Websites for information?
Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

24. How often do you view the website of your Congressional Representative?
Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

25. How often do you view YouTube videos on your Congressional Websites for information?
Never 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Very Often

26. Are you eligible to vote in the United States?
1= Yes; 0= No

27. Are you registered to vote in your county of residence?
1= Yes; 0= No

28. Have you ever visited any of your Congressional Representatives Website?
1= Yes; 0= No

29. As of today, what is your age? _________ (write in how old you are)

30. What is your level in college?
1 = Freshman; 2 = Sophomore; 3 = Junior; 4 = Senior; 5 = Other

8.2 Appendix B: Congressional Self-Report of Presentation of Self (Staff)

8.2 Appendix B: Congressional Presentation of Self Survey

(University of Nevada, Reno Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved)

Narrative:

“Hello, my name is ______________________.

I am a student at the University of Nevada, Reno.

I'm working on a project for school regarding our Congressman/woman.”

Could you help me by answering a few questions for me? Thanks.

1) How does the Congresssman/woman present self to the district constituency?

   A) By presenting the issues first?

      (Explanation: Is the most important task of the Congresswoman that she discusses policy
      issues related to the district, or nation, when meeting with constituents in the district?)

      OR

   B) Meeting with constituents person to person?

      (Explanation: Is the most important task of the Congresswoman that she shows district
      constituents that she is approachable and easy to speak with and build trust?)

   AND

2) How often does the Congressman post videos to YouTube?