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# Behavioural Models for Identifying Authenticity in the Twitter Feeds of UK Members of Parliament

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF UK MPS' TWEETS BETWEEN 2011  
AND 2012; A LONGITUDINAL STUDY

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# PhD Thesis Summary

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## Summary

That the public distrusts politicians is prevalent in both polling and academic literature (Uberoi & Apostolova, 2017; van der Meer, 2017; YouGov, 2017a, 2017b). Whether it's true that politicians cannot actually be trusted is really immaterial. If McCombs (2004) and Lippman (1922) are correct, and the media has an enormous impact on public opinion simply by establishing this dire narrative, then the perception of mistrust has become fact. Citizens are disengaged, misinformed, and weary. Politicians issue statements to meet political expediencies. Trust is a critical component of democracy, and only by behaving in a substantively new manner can politicians restore it. The irony is that this image cannot be artificially constructed; they must behave naturally and re-introduce themselves to a public sceptical of media training and spin. To restore trust they must present themselves as they truly are. They must behave *authentically*.

This thesis examines the tweets made by UK MPs during 2011 and 2012 (n=774,467) for evidence of authenticity and establishes behavioural models that identify authentic talk in large Twitter datasets. The analytical framework that defines authenticity and informs the content analysis is broadly based on the prior work examining authentic behaviour in reality TV conducted by Coleman (2006) that reveals performative characteristics that audiences are drawn to; Hall's (2009) examination of the good and bad effects of mediated communication on reality TV audiences; Liebes's (2001) examination of sincerity and humility in the performance of authenticity by politicians; Montgomery's (2001b) work examining the presence of authenticity in the press behaviour of UK MPs and his examination of Goffman's relevance to mediated communication (Montgomery, 2001a). This study also challenges Goffman's Dramaturgical theory which positions public communication either onstage or backstage by suggesting that the backstage is now performed onstage (Goffman, 1959, 1981). Additionally, this content analysis is informed by Henneberg and Scammell's examination of how competing perceptions of democratic theory can be used to evaluate a politician's political marketing techniques (Henneberg, Scammell, & O'Shaughnessy, 2009) and positions the behavioural models within these techniques. It is also important to note that the 774,467 tweets subjected to a quantitative and qualitative content analysis, as far as can be established, is the only large-scale longitudinal study of parliamentary Twitter behaviour.

This study's contribution to knowledge is:

1. to examine of all the tweets produced by UK MPs between 2011-2012 (n=774,467) for evidence of authentic talk;
2. to memorialize their Twitter usage;

3. to establish behavioural models for identifying the presence of authenticity in the Twitter behaviour of politicians;
4. to organize these MPs into these new behavioural models;
5. to develop a mixed method research design for locating this behaviour in large sets of Twitter metadata.

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of another degree.

Signature: MM

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

That the public distrusts politicians is prevalent in both polling and academic literature (Uberoi & Apostolova, 2017; van der Meer, 2017; YouGov, 2017a, 2017b). Reams of research have acknowledged this phenomenon, and media outlets have perpetuated the notion. Whether it's true that politicians cannot actually be trusted is really immaterial. If McCombs (2004; 1972) and Lippman (1922) are correct, and the media has an enormous impact on public opinion simply by establishing this dire narrative, then the perception of mistrust has become fact. The natural result is a diminished democratic legitimacy and a public sphere that's far less functional than it ought be. Citizens are disengaged, misinformed, and weary. Politicians issue statements to meet political expediencies. Trust is waning, with politicians and citizens separated by a "wall of suspicion" (S. Coleman & Wright, 2008, p. 1). Trust is a critical component of democracy, and only by behaving in a substantively new manner can politicians restore it. The irony is that this image cannot be artificially constructed; they must behave naturally and re-introduce themselves to a public sceptical of media training and spin. To restore trust they must present themselves as they truly are. They must behave *authentically*.

"We are surely in crisis!" decree the theorists (Blumler, 1997; Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995b; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001), and collectively they have explored its causes, finding blame in an apathetic society, expansive media institutions, and the power structures that enable them (Barnett, 2002; Barnett & Gaber, 2001; Blumler & Coleman, 2010; Blumler & Gurevitch, 2001; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001; S. Coleman & Ross, 2002). The literature has examined each new form of media—from television in the 1960s (Blumler & McQuail, 1968) through blogs in the 2000s (Francoli & Ward, 2008)—and has noted that while the public desires a more informed and transparent view of government, this view materializes only anecdotally; there has been no systematic long-term behavioural change. Research into media effects has played a large role in social media's research agenda, but instead this project focuses on message construction and examines how MP's use Twitter to present themselves as authentic.

Twitter, founded in 2006, is now one of the most popular forms of political communication used by politicians, with a meteoric rise in adoption rates. In the summer of 2010, only 192 MPs used it (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012), and in 2018, 582 used Twitter (mpsontwitter.co.uk, 2018). During this study, which covers 2011 and 2012, 405 MPs were using Twitter to communicate with the media, their constituencies, and the greater public (Tweetminster, 2014). Its use is so prevalent and filled with the promise of an improved public communication that the House of Commons allows members to tweet from the Chamber, Westminster Hall and the committee rooms. This development is extraordinary. What was once available only with proper access is now available on citizens' mobile phones, leveraging Twitter's ubiquity into a kind of seemingly transparent communication that reintroduces MPs to their constituents. Questions may now be asked as to how, not whether, Twitter is being used by MPs to develop a more substantive para-social relationship in which MPs are seen as ordinary people, as Coleman and Moss suggest (2008).

Examining Twitter's capability to convey a new, authentic and democratically restorative image of an MP and how Twitter metadata may help identify this image in large datasets is the focus of this study. The driving hypothesis contends that viewing MPs over a long period of time, in matters political and otherwise, provides a view of an MP that is substantively different than that found within traditional media, and that this new view can establish what Henneberg (Henneberg, Scammell, & O'Shaughnessy, 2009) correctly identifies as evidence of a relational political communication that builds deeper sustained relationships with constituents instead of broadly establishing policy or campaign narratives. This political communication begins to fulfil a mediated version of deliberative democracy's face-to-face and participatory requirements and permits an examination of how politicians behave when they communicate directly with individuals.

## Contribution to Knowledge

This study's contribution to knowledge is:

1. to examine of all the tweets produced by UK MPs between 2011-2012 (n=774,467) for evidence of authentic talk;
2. to memorialize UK MPs' Twitter usage;

3. to establish behavioural models for identifying the presence of authenticity in the Twitter behaviour of politicians;
4. to organize these MPs into these new behavioural models;
5. to develop a mixed method research design for locating this behaviour in large sets of Twitter metadata.

The analytical framework that defines authenticity is broadly based on the prior work examining authentic behaviour in reality TV conducted by Coleman (2006a) that reveals performative characteristics that audiences are drawn to; Hall's (2009) examination of the good and bad effects of mediated communication on reality TV audiences; Liebes's (2001) examination of sincerity and humility in the performance of authenticity by politicians; Montgomery's (2001b) work examining the presence of authenticity in the press behaviour of UK MPs and his examination of Goffman's relevance to mediated communication (Montgomery, 2001a). This study also challenges Goffman's Dramaturgical theory which positions public communication either onstage or backstage by suggesting that the backstage is now performed onstage (Goffman, 1959, 1981). Additionally, this study is informed by Henneberg and Scammell's examination of how competing perceptions of democratic theory can be used to evaluate a politician's political marketing techniques (Henneberg et al., 2009). It is also important to note that the 774,467 tweets which make up the dataset is, as far as can be established, the only large-scale longitudinal study of parliamentary Twitter behaviour. This study also deals with message construction, rather than audience reception, and establishes behavioural models of politicians' Twitter use that can be applied to other datasets.

A prior study by the author conducted in 2010 concluded that talk which appears authentic can be located within the tweets of Scottish MPs ( $n=14,066$ ) who were heavy users of Twitter (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012), and this new study refines and extends the earlier research by establishing both a typology and a new method for managing large datasets.

This study takes a triangulated methodological approach that bridges large datasets and qualitative analysis that treats Twitter metadata as a component of the primary speech act. A tweet is not a transcript or a representation of the spoken word; it is the entire communicative act, complete with metadata that adds context (such as the time of day, or

the person or people to whom the message is directed.) This approach permits a quantitative examination of qualitative elements which reveal speech patterns (and speech) that are appropriate for a more traditional qualitative analysis. This research design begins with a content analysis to code the MPs' tweets for convention usage. It establishes, for example, how often they tweet, and how often URLs are included. After coding the metadata, the tweets provide us with 96 distinct data points that are used to tabulate the use of all Twitter conventions. This content analysis creates the models used to identify MPs who appear to be talking authentically. Finally, a qualitative content analysis is then used to examine the individual tweets for evidence of authentic talk (or its appearance.) The hypothesis is that the findings and analysis will describe and memorialize an emancipated discursive arena that permits an MP performing authentically to build healthy mediated relationships with constituents and the broader UK public.

This study's structure begins with a literature review that ties democratic theory, civic participation and authentic talk to Reality TV and the notion that after a long enough period of time, MPs behave naturally on Twitter. Though discussion of authenticity spans many schools of thought, from discourse studies, TV studies, marketing, democracy, and sociology, the literature review finds the common elements that informs the creation of a series of broader behavioural models.

The next chapter describes the methodology—the initial acquisition, the coding, the creation of a bespoke analytical tool, and the creation of behavioural models used to categorize the politicians (described broadly as an Educator, a Communicator, a Promoter, a Speaker.) The Methods chapter then describes the authenticity framework, which discusses the language characteristics prevalent in each model. This triangulated, mixed methods approach connects a summative content analysis with a qualitative content analysis of the texts and is used to create additional analyses for model. An examination of hashtag use, for example cannot be used to analyse a type of user that does not use hashtags, so each type contains a variation of the quantitative/qualitative analysis method.

The first analytical chapter describes how all 405 MPs tweet by summarizing the results of the initial quantitative content analysis. The results memorialize the overall usage patterns

over the two-year study by MP, their party affiliation, Twitter convention use (e.g. @mentions, #hashtags,) and behavioural model. Examining how often MPs tweet according to party and behavioural model provides the context for applying the authenticity, marketing and democratic theory in this and subsequent chapters.

The following chapter describes the Educator type, a user who behaves as an academic who engages in sustained longer-term relationships with individual followers and who offers additional information in the form of retweets and URLs whilst also amplifying this message to interested publics by including hashtags. The language is examined for authentic talk by locating natural language cues and discursive markers, such as humour, spontaneity, and formality. These MPs are also examined for the type of civic participation that occurs and where this behaviour is located in political relationship management.

The next chapter describes the Communicator, a user who focuses almost exclusively on the discussion in hand, without a seeming need to amplify this message with hashtags or the inclusion of additional participatory offers with URLs. These personal engagements contain a high level of mentions and are conversational in both nature and action. These texts too are examined for natural language cues and the manner in which the MP presents him/her self.

The Promoter is examined in the next chapter. The Promoter makes up the majority of MP Twitter behaviour and reveals relationship management techniques that are identical to offline political marketing. They make broad statements, encourage activity, are occasionally, but safely, personal, and respond directly with citizens. This chapter examines the speech and usage patterns for evidence of authentic talk (as is done with the other types,) and for its use of political marketing techniques.

The Speaker chapter follows, which describes an MP who does not do much more on Twitter than make statements, without directing them to a citizen with mention tags, or to groups with hashtags, or encourage participation with URLs. The Speaker too is examined for authentic talk and political marketing techniques.

After the four behavioural models are examined, an analysis of an office's communication is used to reveal how authenticity manifests in a group setting. The three users—the MP and two assistants

Once the types have been examined, an examination of an office's communications is used to explain much of where exceptions to the models lie and how their political marketing efforts manifest on Twitter. The findings and discussion chapters address the research questions directly and explore the possible future directions for political Twitter research.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### Introduction

*“All the world is not, of course, a stage, but the crucial ways in which it isn’t are not easy to identify.” (Goffman, 1959, p. 72)*

Politicians are presenting themselves to a public that does not understand politics (Goffman, 1959; Habermas, 1989; Lippman, 1922). Now that politics is fully mediated, with the general public receiving the majority their political education from the media (Strömbäck, 2008), questions can now be asked as to how politicians present themselves in the media, and in the era of Donald Trump, whose Twitter behaviour is close to Goffman’s notion of authentic “fresh talk” (Goffman, 1981, pp. 145-146), it is appropriate to examine Twitter. Does Twitter permit MPs to present a version of themselves that addresses the public’s mistrust of politicians? Is it to some degree emancipatory? How do politicians behave on Twitter? Can this behaviour be classified and operationalized into a manner that permits its examination across large datasets?

This type of study requires a research design and analytical narrative that combines an analysis of Twitter metadata with case studies of key political actors—combined with theories covering democracy, the public sphere, the crisis of public communication, authentic political talk, political marketing, reality TV as well as prior research into ICTs. Positioning this work within a theoretical framework requires combining a strand of polemics, hypotheses, and empirical studies into a new school of thought that I’m describing as Crisis Theory. This school posits that the current citizen-government relationship is deeply flawed, with a mutual distrust that threatens democratic legitimacy, and that only by rebuilding this trust—possibly with the help of new communication technologies—can a long-term democratic crisis be averted. To establish this trust, MPs must appear to behave as ordinary people, and allow the public to see them as such. This notion is not new, and has preoccupied academic thinking since the 1960s, but its long-term inquiry has not been identified or viewed within a single narrative. Those I am terming Crisis theorists (Atkinson, 2005; Barnett, 2002; Barnett & Gaber, 2001; Blumler, 1997; Blumler & Gurevitch, 2001, 1995b; S. Coleman, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2004, 2005a, 2006a,

2006b; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001; S. Coleman & Spiller, 2003; S. Coleman & Wright, 2008; Dahlgren, 1995, 2005, 2009; Gaber, 2009; Gurevitch, Coleman, & Blumler, 2009; Henneberg et al., 2009; Margaretten & Gaber, 2012; Mutz & Byron, 2005; Norris, 2000, 2001; Postman, 1986; Putnam, 1995, 2000; Scammell, 2004) have identified ICTs as having the power to improve communications between politicians and citizens and have opened lines of inquiry into how politicians utilized new forms of media—television in the 1960's through social media in the 2000s—to engage citizens and portray themselves in manner closer to an informed colleague or friend and less like the politicians that citizens have grown to mistrust.

Again, the narrative is straightforward: an authentic view of politicians is associated with positive civic engagement and the restoration of institutional trust. Prominent themes recurring in the literature include the observation that relationship-building can be enabled by the use of new social media tools (Henneberg et al., 2009); the recognition that public trust in MPs positively impacts democratic legitimacy (S. Coleman, 2002, 2004, 2005b, 2005c; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001); that a deteriorating public sphere can be re-invigorated by technology (Dahlgren, 2005, 2009; Dahlgren & Sparks, 1993); that occurrences of authentic behaviour and the establishment of trust create conditions for rational discourse (S. Coleman, 2003b, 2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2006a; S. Coleman & Blumler, 2009; Hall, 2009); and the notion that a more democratically productive relationship with constituents is possible with a more substantive, varied, and non-traditional communication (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012). When constituents follow an MP that tweets prolifically and with an ordinary voice, the MP appears as an ordinary person, and the citizens may evaluate them as they do others in their lives.

It is important to note that social media research predating Twitter must be treated as historical, and not current. Twitter provides an immediacy that is a fundamentally different from older forms of communication and may alter theories and findings that don't address the ubiquity, impact or creation of these messages. Those studies may be instructive, and push current research down a line of inquiry, but a study analysing new media uses and gratifications, or one describing engagement or new media dating from the early 2000s references a discursive arena and a society without devices like smartphones and tablets, that does not include the political use of Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, with a much lower

overall use of messaging platforms; and on lower broadband speeds. Ten-year old literature may speak of sharing and debate, may compare it to conceptions of the public sphere, may conceive of new discursive arenas and make bold predictions, but current research can actually measure modern communicative activity.

This study recognizes that access to conversations is both self-selecting and non-exclusive; people may participate on whichever topics they find interesting and may cease to participate for reasons as diverse as censorship or boredom. A modern discursive arena will also exist regardless of its ability to impact policy; if people are deliberating democratic matters and are engaged with government, then there is a healthy relationship between citizens and policymakers.

This study deals with political communication and social media, so the literature review begins with locating political speech and democratic theory within a mediated public. In this case, Dahlgren's conception of a mediated public sphere is the most appropriate for it acknowledges mediated discourse and new forms of civic participation (Dahlgren, 2005, 2009). Next, an examination of crisis theory quantifies and qualifies the problem of engagement and apathy, trust and credibility, and the politicians whose new agency represents the possibility of engaging a disengaged public. Crisis literature reveals a framework for deploying ICTs that address engagement, trust and the information needs of a sceptical and newly active public. A critical examination of newly adopted ICT usage follows that reveals a successful, but sporadic adoption of new media—that moves past the label of Web 2.0 into one more accurately labelled ICT 2.0 because the Web is not technology's only practitioner. Some politicians are adopting these new technologies wholeheartedly as part of their daily routine, while many do so in name only. These new behaviours make up this study's analytical framework and permits the metadata to reveal usage patterns that are closely linked to authentic talk. Some of the behavioural models developed in this study reveal natural behaviour and speech, while others reveal their absence.

Though empirical studies have examined engagement and political communication across ICTs as diverse as forums, blogs and Facebook, this literature review focuses upon recent

Twitter research and links an MP's Twitter behaviour to the notion that authenticity is revealed when the MP's behaviour is examined over a long and sustained period time in a manner closer to watching a reality TV show. Though each tweet is certainly immediate, like a press release or TV sound bite, a series of tweets over a longer timeline appears as a live view of their MP's life. It allows followers to recognize discursive patterns, such as tweeting about work during the day and leisure at night, or the use of recurring phrases and the preoccupation with topics such as trouble in the Middle East or a debate on an alternative voting system. Followers can view a life unfolding, during what I describe as a *perceived now*—behaviour that is created live, but witnessed en masse, just like an edited reality or news TV show—and thus followers can evaluate their MP accordingly. Finally, the literature review explores reality TV's ability to influence viewers into those fascinated with, and trusting of, ordinary individuals, which creates new challenges for politicians who in many ways function within performative arenas similar to reality TV and wish to retain existing or create new bonds with voters and citizens operating under a more deliberative democracy. The analytical framework is also informed by reality TV's ability to link voting behaviour with trust, conceptions of authenticity, and candidate selection (S. Coleman, 2006a). The UK's edition of the reality TV show Big Brother presents viewers with mediated candidates and motivates viewers to vote. By treating long-term Twitter exposure to an MP as being analogous to the amount of screen time a contestant receives in a reality TV show this study can examine an MP's Twitter behaviour over a two-year period for evidence of behaviour that fosters believability and trust, precisely the form of communication desired by crisis theorists.

Defining what constitutes authenticity begins with Goffman's notion of authenticity & fresh talk (Goffman, 1981) and its critiques associated with mediated communications (Frosh, 2001; Liebes, 2001; Liebes & Williams, 2001; Montgomery, 2001b; Richardson, 2001; Tolson, 2001). To this, research concerning reality TV and the presentation of candidates in reality TV reveals various personal characteristics (S. Coleman, 2006a; Hall, 2009) that when combined point to a view of authenticity that is richer and more detailed than past polemic arguments such as Goffman's Dramaturgical theory (1959). Goffman generally describes communications as operating in two separate spaces, one performative for public consumption, and one private which contains no artificial construction and therefore represents the real person (Goffman, 1959, 1981). What Goffman doesn't allow for is a merging of these two spheres. All of his work begins with this separation of places and a

distrust of the performed communication. For Goffman, the speaker must always prove him or herself as being unconstructed and truthful. He speaks of actors being in front of an audience—the *front stage*—and then behind the scenes—the *backstage*—(1959, pp. 72-76) and continually suggests that negotiating these different personas is the essence of *self* and *presentation*. This study's application of authenticity theory suggests that these two spaces collapse into one in the Twittersphere and that authenticity is revealed in the process. This is precisely where authenticity strengthens trust; it reinforces the idea that trusting the speaker is a good decision. This study takes the view that despite Goffman's notion that the separate roles of being an *animator* who speaks the words; an *author* who writes the words; and a *principal* who is the source of the words; are rarely together in the same place at the same (Goffman, 1959, 1981), Twitter provides a space Goffman's roles to appear simultaneously and that MPs often act within it. Goffman also suggests that "fresh talk itself is something of an illusion of itself, never being as fresh as it seems," (Goffman, 1959, as cited in Montgomery, 2001a). This is an outdated suggestion that would not support the idea that the Twitter public, and perhaps all of social media, begins from a place of trust due to the self-selecting nature of these communications (S. Coleman, 2006a), and has a careful ear for manipulation (Hall, 2009).

## Locating Democracy in a Situational Discursive Arena

In the aftermath of Prime Minister David Cameron's 2013 failure to deliver a Parliamentary vote in favour of military intervention in the Syrian civil war following the discovery of chemical weapon use, a *Daily Telegraph* editorial observed that...

*"WHATEVER the international fallout from the Syrian crisis, it has changed forever the terms of trade between the public and their leaders. The Coalition's defeat over plans for military action has underlined as never before the voters' distrust of the elite; it is changing the balance of power in Parliament, showing the extent to which ordinary people can use social media to bring their will to bear on MPs, prime ministers and presidents. The implications are huge, yet politicians are only just beginning to comprehend the change..."*

*... Online campaigns mean that MPs can defy the whips with greater impunity than ever before, explaining that they can't support the party line because their constituents are against it. Nor can the Twitterati be dismissed as a bunch of cranks: the strength of online feeling can be verified by polling. On the eve of the Syria vote, a YouGov poll showed that the public were two to one against action. This put backbenchers in a far stronger position to resist the edicts of party managers." (Cameron, 2013; note: journalist Sarah Cameron, not Prime Minister Cameron)*

At first glance, normative notions of active citizenship in a liberal democracy seems straightforward: citizens affect policy through a considered, regimented voting system, and do so within a discursive arena that is inclusive and provides for free and vigorous debate. But as the nature of communication evolves beyond the unidirectional Transmission, Hypodermic (in which messages are metaphorically injected directly into the transmission system,) and Two-Step (in which the message begins with a sender before being distributed by an opinion leader) models into a fully-mediated, multi-directional one that straddles the public and the private, normative claims about democracy appear in the literature that are often at odds with one another. Dahl's Neo-Pluralism (1998) suggests that a democratic government tends to serve large corporate interests. Neo-Pluralism is therefore in tension with notions of deliberative democracy, which grants more power to the ordinary citizens whose engagement has grown beyond merely voting once every five years. A Schumpeterian Competitive Elitist view (Schumpeter, 1942) takes the view that elites must govern a public incapable of doing so, and is therefore loath to substantively engage with its citizens, putting it at odds with a Habermasian view of the public sphere and Deliberative Democracy's insistence on an inclusive and productive rational discourse (Habermas, 1989). But must there be tension? Don't these systems co-exist? Might democracy, in practice, be situational? In a system of diverse communication methods and an evolving discursive arena, this study takes the view that democracy's unique nature takes shape within the scope of whichever discursive arena it functions within. Democracy is often deliberative when politicians debate local issues, and elitist when debating international issues. Which in turn asks the question: which conception of democracy applies when citizens have personal discussions with MPs in a public manner? How can Democracy be described when MPs and their public develop a Twitter-based relationship?

This study also treats Twitter as being part of a politician's political marketing activity<sup>1</sup>, and while framing speech as marketing raises notions of disingenuous discourse that is "less savoury" (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995b, p. 1), a broader view of what constitutes marketing is required that allows political speech to be positioned within democratic theory (Henneberg et al., 2009). In their examination of political marketing management activity

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<sup>1</sup> Henneberg and Scammell (2009) examine democracy's relationship to politicians' political marketing activities and do not discuss Twitter.

and its relationship to democracy, Henneberg et al (2009) identifies a *relational* model of political marketing, in which long-term relationships with constituents are nurtured, benefiting both the constituency and society-at-large. This model includes activities familiar to product marketing, such as public conversations and the promotion of events, interactions and discussions that strengthen the emotional bond between product and consumer. This marketing model requires trust in the speaker and a public that views the MP as an authentic, rational actor. This approach is conceptualised as a move towards a more deliberative democracy, where the pursuit of a rational discourse creates a more enlightened, trusting, civically engaged, and therefore democratically healthier society (Blumler, 1997; Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995a; S. Coleman & Blumler, 2009; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001).

Building political relationships requires two-way communication, and while a face-to-face communication is ideal, for it creates conditions for debate and agreement, politicians cannot be expected to meet or develop a rapport with each and every constituent. Relational political marketing activity quite naturally utilizes the mediated communication integral to social media by fostering activity both strategic—such as the pursuit of long term dialogue and its relationship to policy formation—and practical—such as the management of events, activities and message-related speech (Henneberg et al., 2009). Politicians may participate with citizens directly in the common pursuit of a healthy relationship between government and the governed. Margaretten & Gaber (2012) examined this dynamic in the context of Scottish MPs' tweets, and found evidence of the relational activity described by Henneberg (2009). That study found that MPs who tweet several times per day engage with citizens on a wide variety of issues, from discussions of iPhones and TV shows, to civics lessons and displays of emotion. Questions are asked; answers are offered; and conversation exists. Mood is conveyed. These mediated political activities meet deliberative democracy's more normative claims, because "anonymous audiences grant a feedback between an informed elite discourse and a responsive civil society" (Habermas, 2006, p. 411) and that this kind of activity enhances the relationship between citizens and politicians.

Habermas's tacit recognition of a mediated discursive arena (2006, pp. 411-412) requires that both an anonymous audience and a receptive political elite utilize an independent

media system, and that rational discussions take place therein. His examination allows Twitter communication, with its quasi-anonymous nature, and direct interaction with MPs (the informed elite), to be viewed through the lens of a mediated public sphere. Both Dahlgren (2005) and Coleman & Gotze (2001), and in fact many Crisis theorists, agree with the notion that technology can foster a functional public sphere (Bennett & Entman, 2001; Chadwick, 2006; S. Coleman, 2005b; S. Coleman & Blumler, 2009; Dahlberg, 2001; Gurevitch et al., 2009; Margaretten & Gaber, 2012; Poster, 1995; Trend, 1997; Williamson, 2009).

Citizens learn and do not form extreme or confrontational opinions when rational discussions take place under these conditions (Habermas, 2006), a notion supported by Hall (2009), who examines cognition and learning in the context of reality TV; and Papacharissi & Rubin (2000) who recognize that mediated communication can substitute for face-to-face communication. Hall's study of reality TV viewers suggests that when cognitively involved, and/or emotionally invested, viewers perceive themselves as more informed about the issues and characters presented. These viewers are sensitive to and react negatively to the appearance of a manipulated truth, just as citizens do when presented with political spin, a clear indication that audiences value and pursue authenticity when consuming mediated events. Habermas notes that real deliberation of the sort considered productive is manifest only in small groups (2006), a characteristic of Twitter discussions, where rational discursive elements exist in small discussions conducted in the presence of a wider audience. The larger group witnesses, and is in the social presence of a discussion, and therefore participates and learns (Hall, 2009), in accordance with Blumleresque ideals. This one-to-one-in-the-presence-of-many Twitter dynamic allows for the closeness of a personal communication to be experienced by the broader public, a condition not often experienced in the non-Twitter world. In this sense, critiques of the internet as a public sphere (Dean, 2003) are weakened when they rely upon the negative impact of too much inclusion (presumably the irrational and uninformed) because silent witnessing can be treated as participation. This silence mitigates the discursive damage of the uninformed, while preserving the ideal of rationality and participation. Silence therefore becomes rational behaviour and serves the greater good espoused by Habermas.

Mediated communication also raises issues about power, the public, censorship, and the evolving nature of communication between citizens and their representatives. In an unmediated world, a citizen may make an appointment or show up at their representative's office; they may phone, or write, or sit down for a chat. The meetings may be private, or part of a group discussion. They may have a cup of tea and be polite or use harsh language; they might take visual clues from each other, and notice boredom or fatigue and offer to continue the discussion later. They may laugh. The meeting might end on time, or go long, or get cut short. Someone may get called in. Such are the conditions of an unmediated world, and while initially it may claim to offer a Habermassian ideal speech condition, or be part of an angry dispute and constitutive of a Mouffian Agonism (Mouffe, 1999)—where arguments don't resolve but instead end without resolution—what actually exists is far too fluid to be described by a single conception of a discursive arena, which in turn asks the question: can actual speech conditions ever meet ideal conditions? And what exactly is the reality and the ideal? Can the answer be found in the writings of Chantal Mouffe? Habermas? Dahlgren? Twitter exhibits qualities of all these public sphere conceptions. Must the notion that a mediated discursive arena is situational be acknowledged?

The notion of deliberative closure provides the initial description of this discursive arena. Are participants bound to agree or agree-to-disagree, and within which description of the public sphere can it be found? On Twitter, the conversation doesn't end with consensus or disagreement or an agreement to disagree; it ends when one side is finished with the other. In this sense, neither a Habermassian Public Sphere nor a Mouffian Agonism applies. Twitter communications defy their closure requirements. There is no barrier—either agreement or disagreement—to closure, nor is there an expectation of one.

Combining deliberative democracy and relationship marketing requires placing the Twittersphere within a public sphere conception that acknowledges and describes mediated participation. For this examination, Dahlgren's conception of a discursive arena expands deliberative democracy to include mediated civic participation and goes so far as to create a typology for online activity (2005). He describes multiple new sectors in which civic participation is formed and practised online and lists five sectors within which it occurs. These sectors—e-government; the advocacy/activist domain; civic forums; the

para-political domain; and the journalist domain—describe forums and discursive arenas that are largely organized and dependent upon discursive honesty. A sector describing interaction of the sort found on Twitter, however, is missing. I suggest that a *public meeting domain*—which allows for direct, personal access to politicians in a *perceived now*, quasi-live arena—is the natural extension of Dahlgren’s observations. Twitter exchanges with MPs are possible in this domain because the high availability of MPs using Twitter heavily allows citizens to participate directly and individually without the need to formally organize and is indicative of what Dahlgren describes as “expansion... of available communicative spaces for politics” (2005, p. 153) made possible by internet communications. In this situation—Twitter exchanges between the public and MPs—the public meeting domain is a *one-to-one-in-the-presence-of-many* form of communication and is a valid discursive arena. The MP on Twitter that responds to a follower is making a personal gesture—“*speak with me*”—in the presence of a much wider audience and cultivates trust as a result. A politician who communicates directly with a constituent in the presence of others is performing a private act in public, and the voyeur’s natural response is to treat it as authentic. In this case, truth and meaning is constructed from both the content of the communication and the manner in which it’s conducted. This study acknowledges a truthful intimacy that emanates from witnessing a private conversation.

## Crisis Theory and Democratic Legitimacy

Benjamin’s lament on the loss of soul in the mechanical reproduction of art (Benjamin, 1969) is closely aligned with Habermas’s insistence on face-to-face communication in that they both strive to identify something missing in the mediated transference of ideas that would otherwise exist in the physical presence of the real artefact or person. For Benjamin, whose general line of inquiry questions notions of subjectivity and objectivity in what a current thinker might describe as mediated art, something is lost when art is reproduced mechanically; its location in time and space is lost; its aura is lost. Habermas, and in one sense the entire output of the Frankfurt School, mirrors this view and applies it to rational discussions, and suggests that a conversation’s visual cues and tone is lost when reproduced mechanically, or in modern terms, mediated. Valuable experience is lost during mediation. People don’t see each other during mediated communications; the aura is lost, and it is why Habermas yearns for a warm coffee shop and the intimacy of deep

conversation. But recordings and photographs and phone calls and emails and mediated communication are now a permanent part of modern communications, with an enormous impact on political discourse and democracy, so it's appropriate to investigate how this academic discourse manifests, and to examine its line of inquiry.

Early studies into television's political impact (Blumler & McQuail, 1968; McLuhan, 2001) were at odds in their conclusions about TV's impact, with McLuhan suggesting an enormous impact, and Blumler and McQuail finding a less dramatic and difficult to quantify one. Blumler and McQuail surveyed voters in the Leeds West and Pudsey constituency during the 1964 General Election and found that political *attitudes* intensified and shifted when exposed to political coverage on television, but that *voting behaviour*—specifically party affiliation—did not. The notion that something was different in the way citizens formed their political views and conducted their deliberations was beginning to take hold in academia. In 1977, Blumler and Gurevitch argued that in the context of how politics and the mass media intertwine, media institutions should be treated as holistic communication systems—and analysed as a complete unit of study. Their argument implicitly suggested that new institutions (such as social media and other forms of relational communications) could be treated similarly (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995b, see chapter 2). This study treats mediated communication in the post-Facebook many-to-many CMC (“Computer-Mediated Communication”) world similarly. Later, in another major examination of media systems, Postman posited that television had reduced the public's capacity for rational discourse, and that democratic legitimacy was endangered (1986).

Then, in 1995, Blumler and Gurevitch asked whether a crisis had formed that exaggerated the schism between government, citizens and a public communications system whose normative role was to ensure that informed and rational active citizens were enabled to interact with a receptive government; they found that a crisis did exist that was having profound implications for democratic legitimacy (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995b). Citizens must trust government and become or remain informed and active. Once again, a diminishing democratic legitimacy was raised as a possible outcome of a disengaged public and an unresponsive government.

Blumler's next inquiry (1997) located the origins of this crisis in a deteriorating social fabric, a notion echoed by Putnam (2000), and countered by both Norris (2000) and Coleman (S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001). Putnam's work, which relied heavily upon research conducted in the early 1990s was unable to identify a direct cause for a decline in civic engagement in his quantitative, but ultimately polemical study, but noted that mediated communications may help reverse the trend. Norris's study (2000) argued that the critical moments for the active citizen are the initial engagement and each subsequently successful one—her hypothesis being that once engaged a citizen will remain so until derailed. This dynamic manifests on Twitter every day that a follower continues following an MP. This study takes the view that authentic talk keeps the follower engaged. Coleman and Gotze extended, and perhaps clarified Putnam's initial contention—that citizens are disengaging—but offered a prescription for using ICTs that modernized the idea of using deliberative democracy to account for new forms of government-citizen interaction (S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001). This study takes the view that Twitter meets Coleman and Gotze's requirements of increased accessibility, simple usability, clear readability, and easy levels of entry (2001, see chapter 4).

With a fundamental question now established—how are ICTs affecting civic participation and democratic legitimacy? —researchers began staking claims to several lines of inquiry, the most relevant to this study being those examining representation and political participation on the Internet. What followed was a 10-year run of reconceptions of discursive arenas (Dahlgren, 2005; Dean, 2003; Ferree, Gamson, Gerhards, & Rucht, 2002; Habermas, 2006; Ruitenberg, 2008; Tumber, 2001); changing perceptions of self-representation on social media (Page, 2012; Papacharissi, 2012; Schmierbach & Oeldorf-Hirsch, 2012; Street, 2004; Street, Inthorn, & Scott, 2012); and inquiries into civic participation (Blumler & Gurevitch, 2001; R. Coleman, Lieber, Mendelson, & Kurpius, 2008; S. Coleman, 2005b, 2005c, 2008; S. Coleman & Blumler, 2009; Dahlgren, 2007, 2009; Olsson & Dahlgren, 2010; Shifman, Coleman, & Ward, 2007; Stanley & Weare, 2004). Broadly, these studies identify difficulties in establishing public spaces in which communication between citizens and government is democratically productive, both from a policy, participation, and legitimacy standpoint; and examine online practices for evidence of a developing productive arena. They are addressing a crisis in the context of how an engaged public communicates with government. Of particular interest is the notion that people are aware of audience reaction and message reception in social situations, both on and offline,

but that online, and in particular on Twitter, message senders must imagine their audience and so either tailor their message accordingly or remain aware of possible reaction prior to posting (Marwick & boyd, 2011; Montgomery, 2001b; Papacharissi, 2012).

As a narrative, Crisis Theory acknowledges problems with democratic legitimacy and describes a disengaged and apathetic public tired of distrustful government and the communication—or lack thereof—that results (Blumler, 1997; Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995b). Communications between citizens and government are in a long-term downward spiral—we are in crisis—yet there is a belief that mediated forms of communication and engagement can reverse this trend (Blumler, 1997; Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995b; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001; Norris, 2000). Crisis theory states that citizens must be informed, must know who to trust, and must engage with government (S. Coleman & Blumler, 2009).

Web and Internet technologies now constitute a new mediated public sphere that may mitigate legitimacy and communication problems by providing a discursive and participatory arena unencumbered by inconsistent access to MPs, professionally-handled political messaging, an evolving media landscape, and growing public scepticism about politicians and government officials. As technology has a vast potential to reinvigorate a debased public sphere, theorists have identified various domains—egovernance and parapolitical interests, for example—in which a new discursive arena manifests (Dahlgren, 2005). Under this expanded view of the public sphere, citizens are acting politically more and more, and finding new ways to do so (Dahlgren, 2005; Tumber, 2001). There is not, however, widespread agreement among academics that technology, in itself, is helpful, with some finding it stifling, and others enabling (Norris, 2000; Putnam, 2000). And although this disagreement has far more to do with debates within the study of media effects and audiences rather than with message construction, there is widespread agreement that technology is constitutive of a new, mediated public sphere.

## Role of ICT in Civic Participation

Research into new media's impact on political communication and civic engagement was, perhaps, pushed to the fore in Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (2000), in which he based his

conclusions upon internet research conducted in the early 90's, before digital literacy rates began their 20-year climb. But his premise—that media and modern culture has disenfranchised the public—was, and is, relevant to debates over civic participation, especially where it concerns diminished sustained participation, a notion famously countered by Norris (2000), who contends that an engaged citizen continues to be so until their needs are no longer met.

Recent research into ICTs expands this argument, examining blog and Twitter usage for evidence of new forms of political communication and increased civic participation, and finding disparate approaches and effects. (S. Coleman, 2005a; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001; S. Coleman & Moss, 2008; S. Coleman & Wright, 2008; Francoli & Ward, 2008; Gil De Zúñiga, Puig-I-Abril, & Rojas, 2009; Jackson, 2008; Vergeer, Hermans, & Sams, 2011). These studies describe groups of MPs as hopeful and participatory, posting genuinely insightful essays and tweets, but the response has been inconsistent. Citizens don't typically respond to blogs, but they do tend to respond to tweets.

Few of these studies, however, focused their work on sub-units of politicians by breaking their results down, for example, into party affiliation or government position, for example. Instead, they focused on the entirety of politicians and often over-generalized their findings. Vergeer's study (2011) of political Twitter use during the 2010 European parliament campaign, for example, focuses on who is tweeting, finding that progressive party candidates use Twitter more frequently than conservative candidates. Vergeer also determined that politicians were drawn to Twitter "reluctantly," primarily because their constituents used it and the economic barriers to entry were low. He also noted that Twitter was used to campaign, rather than improve the quality of communication. But that study treated the entirety of its population as a single unit, and because it surrounded a single election, served as a snapshot rather than a film and must be read in the context of longitudinal studies that describe Twitter's political evolution. Vergeer also failed to address the number of EU politicians who did not use Twitter to improve communications. Twitter use, like all new forms of communications, continues to develop as the software improves and the audience finds new uses and gratifications. But many questions remain concerning how this form of political communication evolves.

UK parliamentarians, however, make greater use of new media (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012) , and over the course of this study—2011 and 2012—405 MPs used Twitter (Tweetminster, 2014) though in many different ways<sup>2</sup>. Margaretten’s study of Scottish MPs’ Twitter use reveals that although some MPs engage in conversations and civic lessons, others use it simply to release announcements or to direct traffic to their websites. And while that study highlighted MPs who do engage with citizens in a substantively new manner, what it is not discussed in detail is the finding that 13 of the 16 Scottish MPs studied used Twitter *sparingly*, an observation entirely consistent with Vergeer’s (2011) findings. A 2008 study of MPs and blogging questioned whether or not enhanced democratic debate results from blogging or if it improves communications between MPs and constituents (Francoli & Ward, 2008). That study noted that while there is a great potential for providing a more personal view of MPs, blogs are mostly used “as soapboxes,” and not as a mediated conversation tool (Francoli & Ward, 2008).

Additional studies have examined the use of ICT to present new conceptions of the author’s political self, and note that re-presenting the author to a sceptical audience becomes viable on social media and blogs when audiences participate (however actively or passively) over long periods of times (Siapera, 2008). Siapera’s examination of politicians’ blogs (2008) revealed that blog topics that emerge in the context of other political realities—rejecting a policy initiative in the presence of large-scale support, for example—suggest that once independent of party control, messaging may help the audience question the initial topic, and establish the blogger as someone authoritative and in a position to establish meaning. This new authoritative role is at the core of authenticity and trust: should the audience trust the blogger to know and speak the truth? For a politician’s loyal followers and readers, their blogs—and Twitter, a microblog—the answer is yes. These politicians become more credible and trustworthy with each post.

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<sup>2</sup> As of 5 May 2018, 582 out of 650 MPs use Twitter (mpsontwitter.co.uk, 2018)

This dynamic is enhanced when politicians strengthen their social media relationships by adopting celebrity-like discursive components, such as humour and diverse leisure interests (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012; Marwick & boyd, 2011; Street et al., 2012). In this context, there is no reason to think that Papacharissi's observation (2002) that webpages can influence readers when carefully constructed is less applicable to Twitter, though in Twitter's circumstance the "careful construction" can be the author's natural personality and not a purposefully constructed one. Though at first this distinction may seem incongruous—after all, how can a carefully constructed image equate to an unrehearsed unconstructed one—but the performative aspects of both are identical and therefore believable. They represent the extremes of self-representation. On one side, the constructed image is a perfectly implemented view of a character, and on the other side, the unconstructed view is just as believable because it appears perfectly natural. The difference is that the natural—and therefore authentic—view is sustainable and less apt to become untruthful precisely because it requires no misdirection. It has less room for error because there is no deceptive effort to begin with; it is an authentic view of a persona.

These studies reveal, at their core, that new media use—and in fact all new communicative endeavours—are used in democratically significant models by users who are well versed in technology and begin the process far more connected to society-at-large than the politicians whose communications require constant updating to remain relevant in a changing mediated environment.

Twitter has been studied of late for its ability to motivate citizens, establish public trust, and convey new representations of politicians, authority figures and journalists. But other than to acknowledge that political branding and self-representation both exist and play a role in message reception none of these studies focus on message construction, and instead usually either survey or interview message recipients for their opinions and conclusions (Hermida, 2010; Johnson, 2011; Larsson & Moe, 2012; Lassen & Brown, 2011; Marwick & boyd, 2011; Page, 2012; Schmierbach & Oeldorf-Hirsch, 2012; Tumasjan, Sprenger, Sandner, & Welpe, 2011; Vergeer et al., 2011).

Consider Marwick and boyd's study of Twitter self-representation (2011). While they acknowledge the relevance of Meyrowitz's situational approach (1985) to analysing mediated communication, and examine how Twitter users "imagine their audiences" (2011), their study interviews message receivers, not message creators. Though they find evidence of celebrity behaviour and branding—a notion echoed by Street (2012)—they do so by studying media effects rather than message construction. If, however, an "imagined audience" exists, then the corollary is the existence of an *imagined speaker*. In Twitter's case, audiences imagine those they follow and project their own biases and predispositions upon message senders. It is here that authenticity is performed. Political marketing theory, as described by Henneberg (Henneberg et al., 2009) addresses this issue by acknowledging a relationship-building communication that has the net effect of changing these otherwise negative perceptions of an MP.

In a study examining self-representation performative strategies on Twitter, Papacharissi notes that these performances create new perceptions of the actor in the eyes of the audience (2012), which lends credence to the suggestion that new forms of communication can impact democratic legitimacy, especially if the civic and politically-minded public engage with politicians. If the audience, real or imagined, as Papacharissi describes (2012), engages, then new representations of the self are created and transmitted among the actors. Trust naturally flows throughout these representations as the actor's perceptions evolve, and as long as the discussions remain political, active citizens will remain so, just as Norris predicts (2000). The natural outcome is a more engaged citizen.

Another study of audience reception using Uses and Gratifications theory reveals that though the Web can substitute for face-to-face communications, users are more likely to seek information, rather than engage in debate or discussion (Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000). But since this study was published in 2000 many technologies emerged that have had the effect of reducing barriers to online entry, including, but not limited to, increased broadband availability, the increasingly lower price of smartphones, the rise of social networking and the increasing expansion of many-to-many communication services, such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and the various VOIP and video conferencing applications. These new communication technologies have allowed politicians to speak in the language of the people, reducing the perception that politicians live lives very different from the

people and are unable to understand their constituents day-to-day existence.(S. Coleman & Wright, 2008).

These studies establish an academic concern with Twitter messages and their impact on public trust and engagement. But still, there is no research on the construction of these messages, only on their effects.

## Authenticity

Though political communication theory has defined perceived authenticity as behaving naturally in accordance with an individual's values and establishing the perception of caring with the electorate (Liebes, 2001; Montgomery, 2001b), the literature has had difficulty with establishing a more precise framework. Authenticity is "an increasingly important and elusive term in a mediated world" (Liebes, 2001, p. 443), and though it may indeed be an elusive term, research into its mediated appearance has described it as "displaying the features of spontaneous, unrehearsed discourse" (Montgomery, 2001b, p. 447) and notes that it contains all the elements of unmediated speech. This study examines MPs' tweets for similar characteristics.

Establishing an operational baseline for what constitutes perceived authenticity, authentic behaviour, or authentic talk comes from identifying common aspects of qualitative studies and communication polemics that describe behavioural characteristics of those found trustworthy. Generally, these studies write of behaviour without spin or construction, and point to results or observations that identify characteristics such as behaving "down to earth" (S. Coleman, 2006a) or as Frosh (2001) in his analysis of cultural authenticity through the Frankfurt School's Adorno & Horkheimer lens, refers to as being "true to oneself" (p. 542). Hall's focus group study of reality TV programme viewers (2009) revealed a positive association between trustful behaviour and perceived learning when viewers found the contestants "unscripted" and therefore "an expression of their true character, skills and personality" (p. 516). Liebes (2001) speaks of communication that it is "genuine, sincere, and means what [it] says," and introduces the notion of "performing authenticity" (p. 499) in her examination of political behaviour and suggests that a Lippmanesque public with a

diminished ability to understand or tolerate political debate turns to perceptions of trust as the most important factor in evaluating the politician (p. 503). This idea permits Twitter to educate and motivate citizens as they begin believing that MPs behave, online at least, as they truly are.

A deeper engagement with Hall, Coleman, Liebes and Montgomery reveals a framework for determining what audiences require if they are to believe that authentic behaviour and reality is present. Hall (2009, pp. 520-521) examines whether reality TV cast members are typical people, just as the viewers are, and suggests that when higher levels and more instances of “candidness or spontaneity of ...behaviour” are present and when there is a lower degree of “manipulation by the producers” then audiences are more likely to respond both emotionally and cognitively by trusting the character. Once perceptions of producers’ manipulation rise, the audience responds negatively. The political version of this dynamic is *spin*, and informed audiences react negatively to it (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Notwithstanding, these audiences remain involved in viewing the show, and are more responsive to adjusting their opinion and learning new facts in the same manner that Norris (2000) uses to describe civic participation. These character evaluations are therefore as participatory as writing a letter to an MP. Authenticity increases involvement.

Though authenticity has been applied more to writing than to speech (Montgomery, 2001a), this study applies it to Twitter, where Montgomery’s observation that authenticity can lead to “greater possibilities for participation” (p. 398) is especially noteworthy in the context of creating a more active and trusting citizenry.



FIGURE 1 THE "ED BALLS" TWEET

By examining the long-term view of an MP on Twitter—where all behaviour is conducted in a *perceived now* manner similar to a reality TV show—Hall’s framework allows for a far more nuanced view of MPs’ behaviour that accounts for non-political tweets and addresses new forms of mediated civic participation. Consider the effect of producing a silly tweet, such as Ed Balls’ infamous “Ed Balls” tweet (figure 1, above). Instead of writing something insightful or observational, he tweeted his name “Ed Balls” and was ridiculed in the Twittersphere for being a novice Twitter user. He simply made a user error, and in that moment bonded with those learning a new technology. He was true to himself: candid, spontaneous, a bit goofy, and unfamiliar with Twitter, and though he was mocked in the press, he suffered no lasting political damage. The “suppression” of a “perceived sense of scriptedness” (Montgomery, 2001a, p. 398) was evident in his behaviour. For those moments, he was “sincere”, “eccentric,” “unscripted,” (Liebes, 2001); presented as a normal person (Goffman, 1959); was “spontaneous,” (Montgomery, 2001b); was not beholden to a manipulative media handler (Hall, 2009); was “real” and “down-to-earth” (S. Coleman, 2006a). For those moments, Ed Balls was authentic.

Meyrowitz’s work describing mediated para-social relationships as empty and shallow (1985) fails to account for current political campaign communications, which rely upon establishing healthy para-social relationships through whichever communication technologies are expedient. Candidates routinely use email, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook to campaign and do so to establish the kind of democratically restorative relational political campaigns described by Henneberg (2009), where instead of selling a candidate through media appearances, and relying on polls and focus groups to refine a message, the candidates endeavour to establish relationships that listen to constituents and motivates them to act in manners beyond just voting. It is, for example, impossible for party leaders to meet several million voters, but they often build a foundation for political legitimacy and civic engagement by establishing *healthy* para-social relationships through televised speeches and online interviews. These mediated engagements are often two-way communications and this can have the net effect of establishing these candidates as ordinary people. Politicians strengthen their mandate with sincerity and consistency (S. Coleman, 2006a), and citizens react negatively when they do not trust politicians (Barnett

& Gaber, 2001; Hall, 2009). Authenticity, therefore, “alters politics itself” (Liebes & Williams, 2001, p. 443).

From research into authentic political talk, the analytical framework will treat conceptions of trustworthiness, believability and “well-intentioned... truthful... and unbiased” (Fogg et al., 2001) communication as critical components of Coleman’s “natural and down-to-Earth” requirement (2006a) in the establishment of trust.

## Reality TV

Dismissing reality TV as politically irrelevant is easily done, given the all-too-often banal content that guides dating and observation programmes. But Big Brother UK provides a great deal of insight into candidate behaviour and voting preferences with its unique ability to motivate viewers to pick up the phone and vote. On Big Brother UK, contestants are locked in a house, under televised scrutiny, and each week the public is asked to vote to save a housemate who’s been nominated for eviction. The candidates are mediated constructions of personal tropes: the nice person, the angry one, the emotional one, and so on. These are mediated candidates presented to the public for scrutiny, and the constructed narrative informs the public and motivates them to vote. If political elections have a similar performative aspect designed to encourage participation, then connecting Big Brother research and political research becomes reasonable and potentially valuable for its ability to analyse candidate behaviour.

Research into performance and voting behaviour on Big Brother UK describes voting criteria as being heavily influenced by their perceived authenticity (S. Coleman, 2006a). Coleman surveyed viewers to identify what characteristics they found desirable in a candidate. Successful contestants present positive representations of their selves, and “behave naturally”, in an “unrehearsed manner” (S. Coleman, 2006a). They appear normal and “down-to-earth,” (S. Coleman, 2006a) all identifying characteristics of authentic talk (Montgomery, 2001b). Coleman then re-surveyed the same Big Brother voters, and found that they reacted similarly to General Election candidates and noted that no candidates were seen as having any authentic qualities (S. Coleman, 2006a). In a previous study

comparing two types of viewers—those watching Big Brother but not politics, and those watching politics but not Big Brother—Coleman found that both groups believed that MPs forced into the Big Brother house, where the public could watch them 24 hours-a-day, would eventually reveal their true selves (S. Coleman, 2003b). Long-term Twitter use can reveal the same true self.

Public political discourse, however, when accountable to party messages and spin doctors responsible for a polished image that the public finds distrustful, finds tension between political expediency and the need to establish a trustful image. This tension is accounted for in Hall's recognition of manipulation's detrimental effect on trust. Once manipulated by a TV producer, the audience distrusts the reality TV character (Hall, 2009), a dynamic present in the public's distrust of professional political messaging (Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

It is the potential to observe politicians over long periods of time, across both working and non-working hours, which form the basis for this study. As constituents participate in their MP's life, they will develop a better sense for what that MP finds important. Linking authenticity and political behaviour creates the framework for identifying the type of personal qualities that resonate with voters and allows this study to search for similar qualities in MPs' Twitter feeds. As a live view of a politician's life, it's reasonable to expect their values and personalities to emerge, just as it does on Big Brother. Twitter has the same performative aspect and the same need to prompt participation. They both occur in the perceived now, a quasi-live view of the present. They both rely upon an examination, conscious or not, of relative values. Are they like me? Do I agree with them? Can I trust them?

## Research Questions

Combining themes of authentic behaviour, political legitimacy, and public trust, when placed in the context of Twitter's ability to provide new forms of communication and engagement, allow for the following three research questions:

- RQ1: Can Twitter metadata identify behaviour that is likely perceived as authentic?
- RQ2: Which models of Twitter behaviour are likely to present an MP as authentic?
- RQ3: What characteristics of authentic talk can be identified in the Twitter feeds of UK MPs?

## Pilot Study

To confirm the efficacy of harvesting tweets and identifying authenticity in Twitter feeds, a pilot test was conducted in the summer of 2010 that confirmed the presence (or at least the appearance) of authentic talk in the Twitter speech of Scottish MPs (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012). Bespoke software was created to harvest all tweets produced by the 16 Scottish MPs that used Twitter at the time, and over the two-year period of examined tweets, it was demonstrated that their personalities became more public and new forms of civic engagement emerged when Twitter became a daily part of an MP's communicative routine.

Three MPs in particular—Tom Harris, Eric Joyce, and Jo Swinson—all of whom tweeted over 3000 times during the two-year study, engaged in large-scale discussions with constituents about national, local, and personal topics that might not have taken place if not for Twitter; the time and access required would otherwise have not been available. It is interesting to note that after the pilot was completed, both Mr. Harris and Mr. Joyce were involved in subsequent scandals, and the precursors to these scandals were found in their tweets. Mr. Harris—at the time Labour party's New Media Tsar—stepped down after tweeting a link to an inappropriate YouTube video that his team produced comparing Scottish leader Alex Salmond to Adolf Hitler. MP Eric Joyce, prior to a violent and drunken altercation with a Tory MP that resulted in his arrest and resignation from the Labour party, mused on Twitter about why some people deserve to be punched.

It is critical to note that in the Scottish MP study, the usage conventions were used to locate instances (or trends) of behaviour perceived as authentic. For example, a cluster of Tom Harris's Dr. Who hashtags—determined by analysing conventions—identified specific likely-authentic days which permitted the content analysis that revealed the behaviour. This dynamic is described later in more detail in the Methodology chapter.

## Conclusion

Combining these strands of inquiry—Blumler's Crisis Theory, reality TV, political marketing, and dramaturgical theory—allows this project to position itself in a broader inquiry into authenticity with an updated version of authentic talk that places Goffman's dramaturgical theory—onstage and backstage behaviour—into a single authentic discursive space. When combined with reality TV's notion that public trust improves when screen-time increases and the perception of message manipulation decreases, this version of authenticity can be applied to Twitter, where the actor—political or otherwise—has more control over the reach and scope of his/her message, especially over a long timeframe. Reality TV, and in particular Big Brother UK, reveals characteristics that viewers find personally revealing and desirable, and confirms Hall's work describing the negative impact that manipulation—in the form of producers that manipulate the content—has on the audience. When viewing Blumler's contention that public communication is in crisis, in part due to a lack of trust in political actors, both the reality TV and dramaturgical theory inform the analytical framework for identifying authenticity in long-term Twitter use by MPs. These MPs, however operate along a broad spectrum of democratic conceptions, a dynamic described by Henneberg that also provides the context for using Twitter metadata. Henneberg describes relationship-building as democratically restorative, and the metadata—in the form of mentions, for example—provides a quantifiable event to measure. Political actors on Twitter are no longer reliant upon the press to amplify their message and can use hashtags and mentions to reach their intended audience with a far more personal voice than more restricted modes of communication. The net effect of this form of communication is increased trust of the MP in particular and Parliament more broadly.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### Introduction

As described in the literature review, Crisis Theory holds that declining public trust in government—and in particular individual MPs and their traditionally performative modes of communication—has led to a decline in civic participation that increasingly threatens democratic legitimacy. Democracy’s solution to this crisis begins with re-establishing trust in MPs through less-performative communications—*authentic talk*—and developing relationships with citizens that prompt participation. This study contextualizes authentic talk within a construct that treats political communication as having characteristics similar to reality TV—in particular Big Brother UK—because both are mediatized performances designed to garner votes, and both reward behaviour perceived as less contrived (S. Coleman, 2006a). They reward the *perception of authenticity*.

Amongst the research informing the analytical framework are conceptions of political authenticity that link spontaneity and sincerity with the “personality of the speaker” (Liebes, 2001, pp. 499-500; Montgomery, 2001b); a negative correlation between public perceptions of political behaviour and models of authenticity—being “real,” “genuine,” and “down to Earth”—displayed over a long televised exposure in the reality TV show Big Brother UK (S. Coleman, 2006a, pp. 469-471); a positive correlation between authentic reality TV behaviour that displays candidness and an absence of manipulation with both trust and cognition (Hall, 2009); a description of a discursive space that permits the Twitter/citizen dynamic (Dahlgren, 2005; Habermas, 2006); and an analysis locating relationship-centric political marketing within a Habermasian deliberative democracy (Henneberg et al., 2009). Collectively they suggest that longer exposure will reveal an MP’s true personality, and that this view builds a sustained, trustful and democratically-productive relationship with citizens.

This line of research allows for an examination of authentic talk on Twitter, where citizens can observe and communicate with MPs over a long timeline, so this study builds four behavioural models for authentic political behaviour and analyses the metadata for each tweet produced (n=774,464) by an MP over a two-year period (1 Jan 2011 through 31 Dec

2012) to identify timeframes in which authenticity is present and then examines these tweets for evidence of authenticity. Though the models and resulting analytical framework are derived from the initial examination of the metadata (Meinefeld, 2004), a content analysis (Krippendorf, 2013) quantifies these profiles across all MPs (n=405), and a series of mixed-method case studies (quantitative content analysis and qualitative content analysis) examines the participation with the public contained in sequences of tweets.

This mixed-method methodological approach to melding a qualitative and quantitative content analysis introduces new challenges to the examination of large datasets that are particularly relevant to this study—primarily the notion that while computer-aided analysis may reveal patterns which meet the technical definitions and requirements of quantitative analyses (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000, pp. 132-151; Bergmann, 2004; Flick, Kardorff, & Steinke, 2004; Krippendorf, 2013; Mayring, 2004; Neuendorf, 2002; Steinke, 2004), only by including a manual human element can the “contextual sensitivity” required for deeper analysis be preserved (Lewis, Zamith, & Hermida, 2013, p. 48). This methodologically hybrid approach to researching Twitter data was examined in a case-study of the U.S.’s National Public Radio Twitter coverage of the Arab Spring which found that matching research goals with datasets always required a deeply bespoke approach to data transformation and processing tools that while answering many questions about usage conventions, needed a far more nuanced human element to produce more meaningful results (Hermida, Lewis, & Zamith, 2012). This methodological construct plays a large role in this study, particularly in the examination of the developing voice styles of the MPs examined. While an MP’s behavioural profile may be quantified by establishing usage patterns, only by reading the tweets will deeper insight emerge. Should the metadata indicate, for example, that an MP’s behavioural profile is that of a *Speaker* or an *Educator* (described in more detail later in the Operationalizing section,) then this behaviour is best validated by an analysis of representative tweets.

Previous studies of political Twitter use have examined election communications—albeit within shorter timeframes—and have found inconsistent stylistic, frequency, and editorial use among the members (Aragón, Kappler, Kaltenbrunner, Laniado, & Volkovich, 2013; Burgess & Bruns, 2012; Jungherr, Jürgens, & Schoen, 2012; Lassen & Brown, 2011; Tumasjan et al., 2011; Vergeer et al., 2011). This should come as no surprise, given the

evolving adoption rate and varying degree of digital literacy among politicians. Quite simply, some MPs use Twitter as press release platforms; some tweet semi-regularly with a focus on political information; some interact directly with the general public and others document their authentic life, complete with comments about their both their work and non-work life (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012). Others behave according to their personality, for example, teaching or discussing. In all cases, however, there is evidence of establishing a relationship with their followers, whether that relationship is that of a *trustee*<sup>3</sup> MP engaged more with national politics than local issues, or a locally-engaged relationship-building *delegate*<sup>4</sup> MP. A prior study of Scottish MPs confirms these findings (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012). This study of all UK MPs' tweets, however, refines the previous study by mapping metadata with the development of self-representation over time, an analysis and methodological approach that has so far been ignored in the literature. Refining the dataset into a behavioural classification model allows for a far more complete view of this existing communication, one that will continue to provide insight over the coming decade as adoption, style and literacy rates evolve.

With a length of only 140 characters<sup>5</sup>, Twitter is first and foremost brief, making a qualitative analysis of individual tweets appropriate only in the context of many other tweets, where they can be examined as individual contributions to a longer conversation. But its personal nature means that just as people's moods change, so does their discourse. (Glassman, Straus, & Shogan, 2010). For example, prior to an election, a candidate might choose to focus discussions on issue positions, and therefore appear uninterested in non-political topics. After the election, assuming that he or she is re-elected, this newly-relaxed politician might begin discussing other, more personal or non-political topics. However, a discourse analysis of the 774,464 tweets is far beyond the scope of this study. Instead, it will rely upon a summative content analysis that quantifies Twitter metadata—hashtags, URLs, retweets, mentions and media URLs—and then will perform a qualitative content

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<sup>3</sup> A concise definition describes *trustees* as “representatives who follow their own understanding of the best action to pursue” (Dovi, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> A concise definition describes a *delegate* as a representative who “simply follows the expressed preferences of their constituents” (Dovi, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Twitter, in 2018, expanded the tweet's length to 280 characters.

analysis to map these metrics to behavioural models which classify authentic behaviour and voice styles. Once these styles are identified, MPs from each model are examined for evidence of authentic behaviour and civic participation through a more-focused analysis of representative tweets.

Examining MPs' tweets for evidence of personality and civic participation is the focus of this study, so quantifying Twitter use for evidence of usage patterns becomes the foundation and initial examination of the dataset. These patterns are then tracked according to time. Did the MPs always tweet in this manner, for example? Over what period did their voices develop? The method used to identify these voices is then applied to the entire dataset to further refine the criteria used to determine whose tweets will be investigated for authentic talk. This form of *inductive category formation* is critical to the *summative content analysis* that quantifies large datasets and identifies manageable sets of textual artefact (Krippendorf, 2013). Do MPs who tweet in particular styles present themselves as they truly are? Are they performing themselves as authentic?

As will be described later, in the methodology chapter, Twitter's metadata—conventions such as mentions, in-reply-to tweets, and hashtags—will point to specific days and weeks in which citizen participation and discourse which can be perceived as authentic is located. The content within these time frames is then subjected to analysis based upon the behavioural models that examine the tweets in the context of authentic personal performance. Generally, this analysis explores "...along strictly empirical lines,... social interaction as a continuing process of producing and securing social order... [and examines] the individual structural principles of social interaction as well as the practices used to manage them by participants in an interaction" (Bergmann, 2004, p. 296). Are MPs behaving naturally and authentically? Are MPs speaking *at* or conversing *with* citizens? The resulting metric—the analysis of days or weeks—is then used to compare the frequency of these engagements across the four models of Twitter users<sup>6</sup> and further analysed by time, party affiliation and position.

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<sup>6</sup> Defined later in the Analytical Framework as *Speaker, Educator, Communicator, Promoter*.

So: a *summative content analysis* will be used to quantify usage across a two-year timeline to provide a clear picture of a MP's evolving behaviour, and a qualitative content analysis will examine their behaviour. This research design allows the large dataset to be culled and refined, revealing time-segments and individual MPs that will be subject to a qualitative content analysis (Bazeley, 2018; Krippendorff, 2013). Various Twitter conventions—hashtags, URLs and mentions, for example—are clear indicators of specific activity, making content analysis an appropriate method (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000). The more detailed analysis of these tweets naturally will add insight to the trends revealed by the content analysis.

## The Dataset

The JSON data<sup>7</sup> is available through Twitter's API, and contains no ambiguity. Account names and the original text of the tweet are identified clearly, for example. Bespoke software was used to harvest and analyse the MPs' tweets, so no sampling was required. Though all tweets (n=1,048,975) between December 2010 and March 2013 by all MPs have been collected, the decision was made to *only analyse two full years, 2011 and 2012* (n=774,464) in order to avoid misleading tables and visualisations. A chart, for example, that displays yearly totals would appear to have a dramatic drop-off in the incomplete year (2013, in this dataset.)

Because one goal of this study is to establish a methodology for investigating political self-representation on large datasets, the reliability of treating the data this way will be determined in the Analysis and Findings chapters. Should the framework determine that authentic talk and civic participation is present during a particular timeframe, and an examination of those tweets confirms the framework, then I will treat that behaviour style as an accurate descriptor. The success of the prior research (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012),

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<sup>7</sup> The JavaScript Object Notation data format is a structured text file that provides context to raw data by pairing the datapoint with a meaningful descriptor, for example, "lastName": "Jagger"

confirmed that metadata can reveal authentic talk and civic participation, albeit on a small scale; this study will refine this approach further.

Once collected, the analytical framework dictates that specific Twitter conventions be used to determine days or instances of perceived authentic talk. Including URLs, for example, is an unambiguous offer to participate. If a reader wishes to verify or investigate more, then they may use the link for more information. Retweeting another's message or link is the Twitter equivalent of a conversation, just as a direct mention of another user is. It is indicative of either approval or disapproval, classic elements of face-to-face conversations. Hashtags—the convention used to denote a topic (e.g. #WorldCupBrazil)—reveal varying interests, another indication of being an authentic person. Just as political topics are relevant during the run-up to an election, personal topics vary according to changing interests and events. Analysing tweet time stamps show that parliamentary aides aren't tweeting on their MP's behalf, as it's unlikely that these aides are working at 7am or midnight when many personal topics and conversations emerge. In totality, examining these conventions paint a portrait of an MP that's otherwise unavailable to citizens.

The individual tweets are further examined for evidence of authentic talk, described broadly by Goffman as fresh talk (1981) and further refined by (S. Coleman, 2006a; Hall, 2009; Liebes, 2001; Montgomery, 2001a).

### **The Perception of Authenticity and the MP's Office as a Unit of Analysis**

It is critical to note that the level of analysis is the MP's office, not the individual MP. At first, this seems counter-intuitive. But MPs sometimes use trusted advisors and researchers to tweet on their behalf. This is especially likely in the case of government ministers. Consider Lynne Featherstone (Liberal Democrat), who signs those tweets she has written herself with an "LF". Though other markers may exist that imply authorship, such as informal or formal voice, or metadata revealing a choice of phone or software<sup>8</sup>, only through a series of comprehensive interviews that focuses on individual tweets could that

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<sup>8</sup> US president Donald Trump is known to use an Android phone, for example, so metadata revealing a tweet's source as an iPhone would identify another author.

data be gathered. Doing so is outside the scope of this study. Instead, the qualitative and metadata content analysis will reveal insight to authorship. While a message sent at midnight, from a phone on a Sunday evening may in fact be written by a researcher, this study takes the view that the *perception* of authentic behaviour is paramount. It is not critical whose fingers are on the keyboard; the message and its impact is the same. It is also unlikely that a researcher would produce a message that was either out of character for the MP or overly informal, and if they did, would likely lose their job. This study, therefore, treats the office as the level of analysis.

## Research Design

The goals of this research are to validate the quantitative framework of MPs likely to present themselves as authentic; to establish an additional qualitative framework for identifying authentic talk in Twitter feeds; and to memorialize the Twitter use of MPs between 2011 and 2012.

The research design begins with data gathering and data preparation. A list of MP Twitter accounts was used to mine the raw JSON data, before a summative content analysis coded the data into 96 datapoints. The original list of MP account names was cross-referenced with multiple data sources to match account names with actual names, and this was used to create an additional codebook. This clean dataset was used to code the MPs into four behavioural models (Communicator, Educator, Promoter, and Speaker) and then MPs from each category were examined for the presence of authentic talk and their efforts to form relationships with citizens.

A triangulated, mixed method approach was developed that took aspects of conversation analysis, summative content analysis and qualitative content analysis approaches to extract meaning from each category. This approach was required precisely because each category has a different metadata signature. Examining an MP's conversation with a citizen for evidence of authentic talk or participation is possible for a Communicator—because they

actually have conversations with citizens and have an associated metadata profile that includes @mentions—but not possible for a Speaker, who does not interact with individual citizens and does not use @mentions. The Speaker can still be examined for authentic talk, but not in the same manner, or with the same method that is used to examine Communicators. Each category's method is described within those chapters.

### **Mixed Method Content Analysis**

Twitter's metadata is clearly defined and available via their application programming interface (API), providing this study with reliable metadata such as the hashtags used, the mentions cited, the original texts and various other housekeeping information (dates, account names, user descriptions and the like.) By examining the frequencies and inter-relations between the metadata, insight into “meaning [and] symbolic qualities” (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 49) can be inferred and organized into a typology that will assist both this and future studies into assessing the “communicative roles [that these messages] play in the lives of the [sender]” (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 49).

I establish a contextual correlation between the metadata and the social construct of authentic talk to build a framework for identifying a behavioural model. These classifications are operationalized through a framework of behavioural types (described below). Though the analyses are quantitative in nature—they count and describe instances of text within the metadata—the analysis is primarily qualitative. The quantitative work defines the behavioural style, but a qualitative analysis of the primary speech act—the actual tweet content—is added to place the patterns and styles in perspective and to add additional insight.

### **Data Acquisition and Analytical Flow**

This section will describe the data acquisition process and the flow that this data took through the various software packages and analytical processes.

Acquiring Twitter data is not a trivial process and requires addressing a number of technical issues early in the process, for they impact on the research questions; methodological approaches and selection; analytical frameworks; software selection; and perhaps most importantly, a self-examination of the researcher's skill-set and ability to learn and integrate obscure technologies in the process.

Techniques for gathering Twitter data involve either purchasing the data from a broker; mining the data through Twitter's API, or "scraping" the data from a website's visual layer. The research questions—and in many ways, the researcher's abductive approach to the research questions—drive the approach's selection. Each acquisition approach presents challenges. If the data is acquired from a broker or directly from Twitter, then the data must be examined for structure and conformity before it can be evaluated for analytical suitability. Extraneous Twitter accounts may be included and must either be excised prior to analysis or filtered out during it, as was the case in this dataset. The data format may need large-scale adjustments from Windows-formatted text files to those suitable for a Mac, and more importantly for the software that has been initially selected to interrogate the data. The data may be provided in distinct files—one for each MP, or by year, or by month—and must then be joined into whatever format the analytic software requires. In this study the data was initially organized by month. All the tweets for all the MPs were contained in discrete month-long files. The process joining these files too might require either a custom tool or an existing one, each with its own functional peculiarities. All this happens prior to the primary data interrogation and might be wasted time if the primary analytical tool cannot ask the required questions of the data, something that can only be learned once the data is processed, imported and the analysis begun. Should the tool fail to perform the required analysis, the researcher must then either learn new software, build new software, or adjust either the research design or research questions.

This dataset was acquired from a Twitter mining service and arrived formatted as JSON data. The JSON data was mined from Twitter using their API and a list of MPs. JSON data presents strengths and weaknesses in the initial transformation stage. Because the data is structured, with each element tagged (e.g. "Twitter.user/screenName": [EricPickles]), there is no ambiguity in the parsing process; the datapoints and matched pairs are distinct. But because the data may have multiple instances of the same data point (e.g. appearing in the

metadata as "user\_mentions": [Eric Pickles][Eric Joyce]), the data cleansing process must identify the multiple entries and then parse accordingly (Krippendorf, 2013, pp. 237-239). This data was parsed with a system called Method52 ("M52"), a Textual Analytics platform in development at the University of Sussex's Textual Analytics Group laboratory. Though M52 both mines and analyses tweets, the system was used in this project only to parse and transform the dataset into a CSV file (a comma-separated-value text file,) which permitted me to use Tableau's visualization capabilities rather than be restricted to the analysis that M52 performs. The entire Tableau-based application is bespoke and has been in constant development for three years. Having the data in a CSV format also allowed me to use a combination of software packages (including Tableau, FilemakerPro, Python, Excel, Numbers and BBEdit,) to perform additional data-cleaning and analysis functions.

Once the data was prepared, parsed and exported from M52, it was imported into Tableau, where I wrote and tested algorithms to identify, tabulate and visualize each individual MP's Twitter data across two years, 2011 and 2012. Though my dataset includes December and November of 2010 and the first quarter of 2013, the decision was made to focus on the two complete years primarily because the partial years made for misleading visualizations and tables.

Once tabulated, the data was exported from Tableau initially into FilemakerPro and then later into Excel, where each MP was coded into the behavioural models that will be described later in the Analytical Framework. This process required writing additional visualizations, search routines, and a content analysis coding interface. It is important to note that this preliminary data analysis process was the impetus for constructing the behavioural models.

The codebook results were exported from FilemakerPro and imported back into Tableau so that each model became a unit of analysis upon which other analyses could depend. Each behavioural model, *Educators*, for example, could then be analysed separately from the others, with their differences and behavioural characteristics noted. As stated earlier, these models will be described in the Analytical Framework.

Ultimately, three datasets were used: 1) the raw tweet data; 2) a biographical set that contained the critical name-screenshot-party relationship; and 3) the codebook of behavioural models (actually, the result of the initial content analysis that separated each MP into one of the various behavioural models.) Examples can be found in the appendix.

### *Pilot & Reliability Testing*

When working with big data, the notion that machine-assisted content analysis must always *end* with human intervention if it's to reveal meaning (Lewis et al., 2013) should also include the guideline that the process must also *begin* with human intervention, and it must be done in-house by the researcher if the data is to be considered valid. Just as a traditional content analysis requires a test for inter-coder reliability (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000; Flick, 2009), so should there be a pre-analysis reliability test. For instance, in this case the dataset was examined to insure that all MPs' tweets *were included*, and that tweets not made by MPs *were excluded*. Additionally, each algorithm used must be tested for accuracy. For example, examining the use of @mentions requires not only identifying the number of tweets containing them, but also the number of distinct @mentions used. These usage figures are also tracked across many timeframes. Testing these formulas requires a human eye. MP Eric Pickles, whose Twitter use is a very manageable 104 tweets, was used to validate all the methodological approaches. The small number of tweets allows for an accurate manual confirmation of data filters and formulas.

### *Challenges with Data Mining, Normalization and Transformation*

The research strategy addresses a number of clear goals. Locating behaviour likely perceived as authentic talk—as described in the analytical framework—requires establishing behavioural metrics that permit the data to be culled appropriately.

As in my prior research (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012), all Twitter data was gathered from Twitter.com through its application programming interface (API). The data points are distinct and contain no ambiguity (e.g. *Twitter.User/screenName*. = “edballsmp”). The list of MPs was gathered from Tweetminster.co.uk by cross-referencing biographic data from parliament.uk and confirmed either verbally or by email. All data points available from the API were harvested and organized as structured-data JSON files, organized by month. Please see the appendix for the data points.

### *Overall Twitter and frequency of convention totals*

First, a summative content analysis quantified the overall usage totals and were used to broadly address the following questions: How do MPs use Twitter? When do they tweet? How do they tweet? Can MPs be organized by usage into behavioural models? What does the MP Twitterverse look like?

Placing an emphasis on total tweets, rather the mean number of tweets per day establishes the emphasis on experienced use instead of excitement over a new technology. A new user may begin tweeting furiously, without regard to style or appropriateness, so analysing them in the same context as one accustomed to Twitter would create a notional disparity in the segment. An MP who tweets ten times on his first Twitter day is dramatically different from an MP who's tweeted ten times per day for years, hence the emphasis on total experience. This study also tracks the development of voice and style over time, which involves experience and the development of comfort with the medium, contributing to the decision to create units of analysis based upon overall usage.

This analysis paints an objective picture of MPs' Twitter use that establishes baseline behavioural patterns across demographic divisions. Are there quantifiable differences, for example, between party affiliation Twitter use? Does the shadow government communicate differently from the ruling party? And what of older or younger MPs? Are their communicative patterns different? This analysis also serves as an important view of

how MPs use Twitter in their daily lives. Are they only tweeting during the day or are they communicating over the weekend? Who and how are they present in the *perceived now* Twitter environment?

The findings resulting from this analysis are key to *locating the MPs*—and their conversations—who present themselves authentically, for it establishes a typology that organizes their discursive practices into distinct units of analysis. It is likely, for example, that MPs offering URLs, speaking with citizens, and participating in group discussions present themselves differently from light users who only make the occasional public comment. In the context of linking the performative aspects of reality TV and the perception of trustful and authentic Twitter behaviour, heavier users have more *screen time* and are therefore able to establish their personas with more authority than those rarely seen or heard from.

### *Coding Frame*

The codebook describes how the MPs use Twitter and classifies them according to the metadata. How often do they tweet and use the various Twitter conventions, such as #hashtags and @mentions, for example? All tweets between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2012 were coded (n=774,464). The codebook contains no ambiguity: it the coding of Twitter metadata using Tableau.

It is important to note that some of these codes are calculated (e.g. the ratio of total tweets to the number of individual @mentions,) and some require algorithms (e.g. how many individual @mentions were used.) In total, each tweet has been coded into 96 distinct data-points. Though the analysis asks, by year, month, week, and day how often MPs tweet and what they say, the majority of analyses involve the following coded data:

- Total number of tweets
- Total number of tweets containing @mentions
- Who was mentioned

- How many combinations of @mentions were used
- Who was mentioned in these combinations
- Total number of tweets containing hashtags
- Which hashtags were used
- How many combinations of hashtags were used
- Which hashtags were used in these combinations?
- Total number of URLs included
- Total number of retweets
- The original retweet text
- Total pieces of media included
- The tweet text
- Party affiliation
- Behavioural model

### *Behaviour over time*

Usage patterns based upon overall totals provides no insight into the *development* of a Twitter voice, which is central to understanding the nature of their communication. An MP may be disposed to use @mentions rather than include URLs, but has this always been the case? Did the style move from one based upon excitement or ignorance to one based on comfort and experience? These questions may only be explored by examining usage over time.

To examine the impact of experience and the development of voice over time, the MPs' use conventions used by the MPs were calculated monthly, and the ratios of conventions to total tweets are charted and tracked. Did the MPs favour a particular convention (such as hashtag use) early, while they were becoming accustomed to integrating Twitter into either their personal or office's communications? Did the development, if any, occupy a timeline similar to others' experiences? In what way did their voice develop, and is it now a stable representation of who they truly are?

## **Operationalizing Authentic Talk and Civic Participation**

### **The Mixed Methods Connection between Summative and Qualitative Content Analyses**

As described earlier, this study relies upon a mixed methods analysis that begins with a Summative Content Analysis ("SCA") and finishes with a Qualitative Content Analysis

(“QCA”). The SCA identifies the behavioural model that the MP adheres to and identifies which cases are analytically rich, and the QCA incorporate aspects of conversation analysis into the identification and analysis of Authentic Talk . The data arrives as multiple raw, structured, JSON data files, and is then subjected to an initial content analysis. This analysis results in tabulated data that is then linked to a separate content analysis of both twitter.com, parliament.gov, and other sources of historical data, containing biographical data from the members of Parliament in office during 2011 and 2012. The results map Twitter account names (e.g. “Vernon\_CoakerMP”) with each MP’s name, district, and party membership (e.g. “Vernon Coaker”, “Gedling”, and “Labour”.) An example appears below (Table 1.)

All totals crosstab (3)

Twitter.User/Name	twitter.user/screen..	Party	Number of Tweets sent	Tweets containing mentions	Distinct Mentions used	How many InReplyTo	Tweets containing Hashtags	Distinct Hashtags used	URLs included	Retweets	Media included
Andrew Stephenson MP	Andrew4Pendle	Conservative	4,242	2,432	3,831	209	1,174	1,614	932	1,639	71
Michael Fabricant	Mike_Fabricant	Conservative	4,230	3,136	4,660	807	332	364	417	747	108
Chuka Umunna	ChukaUmunna	Labour	4,215	2,244	3,447	116	543	622	1,673	1,080	24
Gregg McClymont MP	greggmcclymont	Labour	4,200	4,022	6,762	277	1,167	1,565	964	2,991	68
Chris Williamson	ChriswMP	Labour	4,121	2,264	3,024	524	854	1,248	1,233	598	18
Kevin Brennan	KevinBrennanMP	Labour	4,077	2,778	3,847	420	1,021	1,179	896	1,442	105
Jonathan Reynolds MP	freyoldsMP	Labour	4,049	3,340	4,580	757	767	862	564	1,230	26
Gavin Barwell MP	GavinBarwellMP	Conservative	4,034	3,283	4,491	550	1,198	1,394	499	365	19
teresa pearce	tpearce003	Labour	4,006	3,040	3,541	493	524	606	859	955	14
Diana Johnson	DianaJohnsonMP	Labour	3,961	2,757	3,832	312	873	1,086	1,518	636	17
Jo Swinson	jswinson	LibDem	3,859	2,812	3,472	1,154	1,346	1,554	753	519	43
Jonathan Ashworth MP	JonAshworth	Labour	3,813	3,254	4,641	664	709	898	481	1,072	56
Greg Hands	GregHands	Conservative	3,774	2,206	2,944	378	587	662	818	594	7
Gloria De Piero	GloriaDePieroMP	Labour	3,647	3,067	5,341	457	604	700	542	1,081	64
Lilian Greenwood	LilianGreenwood	Labour	3,635	3,031	4,979	524	1,372	1,659	339	898	137
Vernon Coaker	Vernon_CoakerMP	Labour	3,600	2,419	3,450	434	557	647	1,039	1,522	71
Paul Flynn	Paulflynnmp	Labour	3,507	836	1,103	300	73	87	543	259	23
Esther McVey	EstherMcVeyMP	Conservative	3,393	2,422	3,869	555	339	393	771	943	51

TABLE 1 A SUBSET OF MP TOTALS AFTER THE INITIAL SUMMATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

This pairing of data from separate sources is crucial to mixed method approaches because it establishes the basis for selecting cases to study (Bazeley, 2018). Once this analysis is complete, each MP is coded and categorized into behavioural models, and cases are selected to examine each model for characteristics of authenticity. By examining these multiple cases (each of the 405 MPs in the dataset) in the context of each other, patterns emerge that might otherwise not have been revealed, for the “...group patterns and differences are more reliably detectable...”, than if they had been examined in isolation (Bazeley, 2018, p. 127). A single MP, for example, might not have appeared interesting had they not been a part of a group of MPs with similar metadata signatures, making a purposeful sample difficult, if not impossible.

Just as various forms of qualitative content analysis examine elements outside the specific words of an artefact—such as non-verbal cues in a conversational content analysis (Mayring, 2004)—this study establishes meaning by interrogating Twitter’s metadata, and then using these results to identify cases for a qualitative content analysis. To accomplish this analysis, portions of Conversation Analysis are used to inform the research design. Conversation Analysis requires examining both sides of a discussion, each participant’s contribution, but this study deals only with message construction, not message reception, so the while there are many relevant areas of inquiries that CA focuses upon (Heritage, 1997 as cited in David (2011) p. 379), this study will rely upon three, and examine the qualities of *turn design*—the manner in which responses and replies manifest through conversational expectations and its “orientation to the speaker”; *lexical choice*—specifically how formal and informal voices portray authenticity; and *epistemology and asymmetry*, with a focus upon power, trust, authenticity and subject knowledge that manifest in one side (the MP’s speech) of the conversational sequences (David & Sutton, 2011).

CA is particularly useful in creating the profiles described in the Analytical Framework, for it contextualizes the mechanisms of conversation into the examination of social class. This study deals with the same process when it examines how MPs communicate. Conversation analysis is concerned with the themes that emerge as a result of exploring conversations. It does not rely upon a formal pre-examination coding scheme.

CA is also heavily reliant upon detailed conversation transcriptions (Bergmann, 2004, p. 299; Rapley, 2007, pp. 72-77). The metadata provides 96 distinct datapoints for each tweet, permitting the “[preservation of] the original events as authentically as possible in the course of data processing” (Flick et al., 2004, p. 299). But *Tweets are the primary speech act*; they *are not* a transcription. Instead, the metadata *is* the speech. Tweets don’t exist in some other form that can be transcribed; tweets are the actual speech. Differences between talk-response and call-response conversations can indicate speaking or interaction, so the conversation sequences required are brief and easily discernible; they are the tweets themselves. Roles and identities are straightforward to discern; they are either an MP or not. Conversational outcomes, like “requests for clarifications” or laughter (using an emoticon) are easily determined (Silverman, 2010, p. 242).

The Qualitative Content Analysis that follows the initial Summative Content Analysis addresses two distinct characteristics in the MPs' behaviour. The first characteristic, *engagement*, describes how the MP is using Twitter. Are these tweets, for example, part of a conversation with a citizen or just a broad statement, for example? The second characteristic, *personality*, addresses how the MPs behave on a more personal level. Are they being candid? Formal? Humble?

## Analytical Framework

### Connecting Behavioural Models to Authentic Talk and Political Marketing

This section will describe how the two dynamics at play—tweeting with a particular stylistic voice and behaving in both political and non-political ways—will model the relationship between relationship-building and trust-building. This study initially uses the results to describe MPs who tweet with specific styles (see below) and then treats these groups as individual units of analysis. The algorithm used to define these groups is used to find other MPs who behave similarly, and then a narrative content analysis is used to confirm the presence of authentic talk. But before the initial analysis, it is critical to understand how the various styles and conventions are treated analytically (Krippendorf, 2013, pp. 90-93). Why is one Twitter convention considered more indicative of relationship building than another? How is style defined, and what role does this style play in addressing democratic legitimacy and declining public trust in MPs? In this study, the behavioural models and resulting voice styles represent different types of MPs, both with different roles in Crisis theory's narrative. Some are causing the crisis, and others are addressing it.

Henneberg's et al. (2009) examination of democratic conceptions and constituency relationships associates deliberative democracy—and an engaged public—with positive relationship-building activity while claiming that elitist conceptions of democracy require a less engaged public that permits informed MPs to act on their behalf without the personal involvement found in relationship-centric communications. Competitive Elitist versions of democracy (Schumpeter, 1942) mitigate the difficulties of direct democratic engagement by placing representatives in the position of taking care of their constituents much as a parent cares for a child (Henneberg et al., 2009). These MPs rely upon marketing and communication instruments like polling and surveys to gauge public opinion, and act with the certainty of the results. In 2009, however, Twitter was not widely studied for its role in political marketing, so this study adds the use of hashtags (which identify an issue-based market segment,) and mentions, (which inject messages into the segments managed by opinion-formers.)

Henneberg et al (2009) continues by noting that a Habermasian Deliberative Democracy requires a stronger and more binding citizen engagement with representatives that is

served most effectively by establishing relationships between the public and MPs. These relationships rely upon sustained engagement, rather than polling instruments, to establish a connection between an MP's actions and the public's views and desires (Henneberg et al., 2009). This engagement may manifest in mediated surgeries, event attendance, get-out-the-vote activities, or more visible public conversations surrounding policy and political decisions. It requires the respect and communication avenues that enable MPs to accurately represent their constituents while acting on their behalf. This balance between caretaking and order-taking is located delicately on a fulcrum of trust and communication, and is one aspect of Habermas's conception of deliberative democracy that has been found challenging in the face of one-way political talk as found on television, radio, and print, where media behaviour, and in particular *spin*, often attenuates the public's trust in democratic organizations (Blumler, 1997; Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995b; Gurevitch et al., 2009).

As Henneberg et al. (2009) describes, elitist democratic conceptions do not seek *relationships* with constituents as strongly as more deliberative Habermassian forms do. Instead these MPs seek *mandate* for their decisions. Deliberative democratic theory (Habermas, 1989) has always found ICT use difficult to analyse due to problems inherent in digital literacy, the self-selecting nature of engagement, and the idea that unequal adoption rates skew public opinions and are therefore an inaccurate view of the public's concerns (S. Coleman, 2003a, 2005b, 2005c, 2007; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001). As the former involves a more passive constituency and the latter a more engaged one, this study treats participatory voices and relationship-building activities as positively addressing a crisis in democratic communication, and the status quo as having either a neutral or negative effect on it.

Locating both relationship-building activity and communications more closely associated with the status quo—and therefore not addressing the “crisis,”—requires creating a typology that locates and describes various styles of communication. Are these MPs building a relationship or taking care of a public ill-equipped to care for themselves? How should they be described and how do they fit within crisis theory? The analytical framework below describes both the behavioural models and their relationship to authenticity, trust, and civic participation. It is important to note that this analytical

construct resulted from the abductive process of research design (Krippendorff, 2013, pp. 85-86, 170-171) and that these models emerged as part of the initial data inspection and cursory analysis; they are not discussed in the literature and are original contributions to the field. It is likely that additional models emerge from the data.

## **The Behavioural Models**

This section describes the behavioural models and their relationship to authenticity and the metadata. The models were developed from the results of the initial summative content analysis and are described by how they fit within democratic theory and political marketing theory, with a particular focus on the MPs' Twitter behavior. They are described in order, beginning with the model that has the highest ratio of tweets-to-mentions and ending with model contain the fewest mentions per tweet. The models progress from high levels of direct engagement with citizens to the lowest. They are, in order, the Communicator, the Educator, the Promoter, and the Speaker.

The first model—the Communicator—focuses upon building relationships with individuals instead of broadly espousing political viewpoints to a public that doesn't follow that MP on Twitter. The second model—the Educator—behaves as lecturers do, with a focused educational message that is often amplified to interested societal sections with hashtags. The third model—the Promoter—mixes aspects of both the Educator and Communicator with traditional non-Twitter messaging, and behaves as MPs do offline, combining personal contact with broader messages. The fourth model—the Speaker—does little to engage directly with citizens other than to make statements that resemble brief press releases. Though there is a fifth model—the Novice—these MPs do not engage in any substantive manner, producing only a few dozen tweets over this two-year study. This model is described, but there is not enough data on these MPs to perform a substantive study.

### *The Communicator*

Communicators operate inside a close relationship with individual followers and contain ratios of tweets:@mentions close to 1:1, with low inclusion levels of URLs, hashtags, and retweets. They are speaking directly with one user and are not offering their message to the larger audience offered by hashtags, and without the need to offer more evidence to the discussion by either retweeting or including URLs. In these discussions, the MP's credibility is based upon his message and conversational verve.

This participative structure has distinct steps. One user, for example, might comment or ask a question, prompting the MP to respond directly. Communicators respond directly to that user with an "@" sign (e.g. "@Otis",) or by using the in-reply-to function. The MP may respond immediately or later in the day, or not at all, mimicking established social norms for traditional communications. This *perceived-live* discussion may take place over the course of a day and appears unconcerned with any followers that happen to be monitoring the discussion. For these followers, those who witness silently, this observation creates a negotiated meaning and begins to define or redefine the MP as behaving authentically or seeking to build a stronger relationship. Whether the tweeted response is formal (e.g. "@SonnyBoy I support the party platform and will vote accordingly") or informal (e.g. "@JohnLee Don't worry pal, we'll do the right thing") will be the subject of each case study, and it is likely that both formal and informal Communicators exist.

Informal Communicators fit neatly within Coleman's framework for identifying authentic behaviour, as it indicates a "real, down-to-earth" person having a conversation with an engaged citizen. It appears as a normal conversation between peers that contains very little acknowledgement of the power differences between the government and the governed, and represents the type of communicative shift that enhances democratic legitimacy. A relationship is either established or strengthened during these exchanges. Discussions appear to the participants as a true exchange of ideas and serve to humanize the MP as one of the people rather than present an elite that is dismissing the public with media spin.

Formal Communicators may be representative of status quo political communications, and therefore less applicable to a Crisis theory solution that reinvigorates a deteriorating rate of civic participation and trust in government but may be authentically constructed

nevertheless. Should an MP have a *trustee* view of Parliament's role—likely in the case of those subscribing to the Competitive Elitist view of democracy, (Henneberg et al., 2009)—then these communications may be an accurate, and therefore authentic representation of that MP's view on the distinct power relations between MPs and citizens. Formal communications re-enforce the notion that the MP's side of the conversation has far more power than the citizen side. This power balance—when combined with the widespread belief that government acts in its own interest and is less concerned with the general public's individual needs—makes up much of Crisis theory's foundation. It is this relationship that the public finds problematic (Blumler & Gurevitch, 2001, 1995b; Gurevitch et al., 2009). Formal Communicators will be considered outside the framework proposed by Coleman and Hall and treated as less helpful in terms of crisis theory's hopeful view of ICTs improving the relationship between citizens and Parliament.

### *The Educator*

University lecturers often behave by answering individual questions with the full knowledge and awareness that others are listening closely and that many others may find the discussion interesting. At any given moment, they are teaching to one in the presence of many, and are generally of the opinion that even more people may find this information interesting. Lecturers often offer examples of prior or relevant literature in the form of reading and research assignments, the presumption being that the student—or in Twitter's case, the follower—is sufficiently participatory to seek or accept additional material.

Educators are distinctive in their use of Twitter conventions and use multiple direct @mentions per tweet—directly speaking to one or two individuals. They also include hashtags more often than the Communicator—which offers this discussion to users outside the MP's followers who are interested in the topic (e.g. #SyrianConflict). Educators also offer URLs, which improves the MP's credibility by offering vetted evidence. This entire communication is analogous to a university seminar: the lecturer is speaking with small groups and offering evidence. Others are listening closely. These deliberative citizens and the MPs that engage them validate the efficacy of political communications in a mediated public sphere, just as Habermas describes when he states that

*“Mediated political communications in the public sphere can facilitate deliberative legitimization processes in complex societies only if a self-regulating media system gains independence from its social environments and if anonymous audiences grant a feedback between an informed elite discourse and a responsive civil society.” (Habermas, 2006, pp. 411-412)*

In the case of the Educator, Twitter is the self-regulating media system; the private use of computers and cell-phones is the independence; the use of anonymous usernames is the audience; the discussion is the feedback; the political topic is the information; the elite discourse is conducted between an MP and citizens; and the Twitter followers, as a group, and in particular the users directly involved in the discussion, is the responsive civil society. The “deliberative legitimization process” becomes the foundation for improving the relationship between citizens and government, and is precisely the type of discourse that Crisis theorists hope that ICTs can facilitate.

Educators therefor have a greater likelihood of establishing the relationship described by Henneberg (2009), Habermas (2006), Blumler (Blumler & Gurevitch, 2001, 1995b), Coleman (S. Coleman, 2003a, 2004, 2008; S. Coleman & Blumler, 2009; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001; S. Coleman & Ross, 2010) and Gurevitch (Blumler & Gurevitch, 2001; Gurevitch et al., 2009). Additionally, followers are more likely to learn and engage when the MP is being candid and is emblematic of someone they know, such as a past teacher (Hall, 2009)<sup>9</sup>.

### *The Promoter*

Just as politicians tailor their message to each medium they employ, so do Promoter MPs. If they wish to make a statement to the public, these MPs either write a press release and send it off to the press or make a statement on Twitter. Perhaps both. This same MP may wish to address a particular segment of the public with a carefully crafted position, and either speak at local political meeting, or tweet a message to a particular Twitter user (that has a large number of followers.) The MP may also use a hashtag that is followed by

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<sup>9</sup> Hall writes of how cognition is improved when trust exists and does not discuss Twitter. Her work is focused on reality TV and the manner in which authenticity enhances trust between the public and a televised subject.

interested citizens. These MPs are using Twitter as a selling instrument, using various conventions to send a message directly to a specific user group, and generally take the view that MPs are there to lead on policy and take care of their constituents (Henneberg et al., 2009)<sup>10</sup>. Promoters use Twitter conventions situationally, without a predisposition to speak to small groups (like a Communicator;) or to engage small groups with information and direct offers to participate (like an Educator.) Their entire Twitter corpus contains behaviours associated with each of the types, and their overall profile reflects this diversity.

The Promoter profile generally has an @mention:tweet ratio <0.8:1; less than 80% of their tweets contain mentions. Their use of distinct mention groups is typically lower than 1:1, which, depending on how close this metric is to 1:1, indicates that pure statements are tweeted. The use of hashtags is lower than an Educator, typically below 15% of their tweets, diminishing message amplification (which indicates that characteristics of the Novice and the Speaker exist,) and which strengthens the contention the sometimes the MP speaks with individuals—where authentic talk typically manifests—and that sometimes the MP makes declarations; and sometimes the MP speaks to larger groups. Again, these MPs use Twitter situationally, depending on what they want to accomplish with their message. This is dramatically different than Communicators and Educators who have grown into Twitter’s loose discursive restrictions and are behaving as the “real people” (S. Coleman, 2006a) that Coleman demands. Promoters too do nothing to address Hall’s observation that trust diminishes quickly once an audience perceives manipulation in a mediated presentation (Hall, 2009). These MPs are behaving as they always have, selling their policy positions, without either acknowledging or aggressively addressing any trust problems that may exist in the greater public.

### *The Speaker*

A Speaker is broadly defined as one who uses Twitter to issue statements that perhaps promote conversations conducted by others, such as the media, or as part of a national

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<sup>10</sup> The Henneberg et al. (2009) study positions political marketing activities within different conceptions of democracy, and makes no reference to Twitter.

strategy of agenda-setting. They are behaving as politicians always have: they issue carefully crafted messages, often constructed in consultation with communication specialists, and design these messages for broad consumption often as part of longer national-level narratives. There is no conversational structure to these engagements. The roles are clear: the speaker speaks, and the audience listens.

The contextual correlation is as follows. Speakers are likely to have a very high number of followers, few friends (those they follow,) and even lower levels of URL inclusions and direct mentions. They may use hashtags, but other than to use political hashtags relevant to a policy or national issue (such as foreign crisis, domestic policy, or a cultural event like the World Cup or Olympics,) they do very little communicating directly with their constituents, as their seat is generally safe, with no need to change (either in a positive or negative way,) their style of communication. Consider the role of prime minister. With a communication staff constructing messages to convey policy initiatives and present a carefully crafted image of a country's leader, there is little room for other forms of behaviour. Though exceptions do exist, such as a self-shot (a "selfie") photo at an event, often with a friendly world leader, these communications serve only to re-enforce the intertextual notion that there is an enormous gap in both power and social status between the sender and receiver of these tweets. This activity exasperates the very perceptions of social inequality that it attempts to correct. Anyone spending time at an exclusive event with other elite figures are exactly that: elite, and not "down to earth" or "real," despite their attempt to portray themselves as such. That these MPs are not representative of those known to citizens (friends, family and co-workers, for example,) is likely to bring feelings of being manipulated to the fore (Hall, 2009, p. 522) which in turn leads to dis-engagement and mistrust.

Just as Educators are more likely to positively address deliberative processes because they create substantive two-way communications containing elements of relationship-building and information dissemination among active and passive participants, Speakers, whose behaviour is decidedly one-way, do quite the opposite, and merely enhance the status quo because they only issue statements and do little, if any, communicating with others. If simply listening to speeches and statements tainted with media logic and a heavily constructed narrative are in part responsible for the crisis described by Blumler and others,

then MPs described as Speakers will be considered as not meeting the framework's requirement for either improved engagement or behaving as an ordinary citizen. Speakers, however, may be behaving authentically—especially in the case of ministers, whose roles are national and informative in nature—if their duties do not permit either relationship-building or the need to speak directly with citizens. In that case, their job, and frankly their entire public persona, neither requires relationship-building communication, nor requires one. It simply isn't their role.

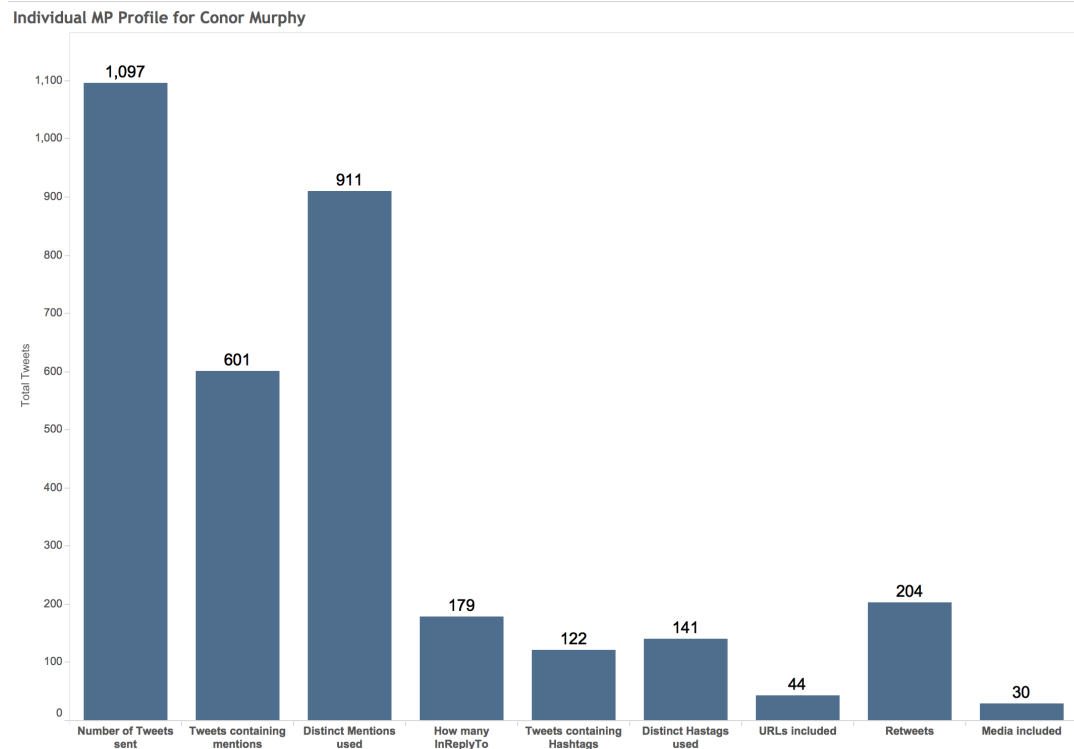
### *The Novice*

Often confused by or new to a particular technology, Novices adjust to using Twitter in clear ways. First, they use it sparingly; second, they use it without any clear usage pattern; and third, they indicate inexperience through the odd use of various conventions. For example, Eric Pickles often @mentions himself, and Ed Balls famously tweeted only his own name on 28 April 2011. These are all signs of being new to Twitter use. In the context of behaving authentically, these MPs are often true to their own inexperience which they perform in public. They are, at these times, “just like us” (S. Coleman, 2006a), struggling with new technology and learning how to use it. But not all new users are authentic. An MP that simply tweets statements is behaving like a Speaker, but on a much smaller scale. Nor can these MPs be considered Promoters, who intuitively tailor their usage patterns to their intended message. Instead, these simply learning a new technology and are using it with a childlike innocence that adheres to no real pattern other than very low usage levels, typically under 50 tweets for this two-year study.

### **Distinguishing Between Models: an Example Examination**

Determining which behavioural model describes an MP begins with an examination of the profile resulting from the initial summative content analysis. This initial analysis presents totals of an MP's Twitter use according to nine distinct pieces of metadata, specifically: Overall number of tweets; total number of tweets containing mentions; number of distinct @mentions used; how often was the in-reply-to function used; number of tweets containing hashtags; number of distinct hashtags used; how many URLs were offered; how many tweets contained a retweet; how many pieces of media were included. The resulting

chart is the initial profile used to determine the applicable model. Below is the profile for Conor Murphy (Sinn Fein) for Newry and Armagh between 2011 and 2012.



**FIGURE 2 INDIVIDUAL PROFILE FOR CONOR MURPHY MP (SINN FEIN) FOR NEWRY AND ARMAG**

Of initial interest is the relationship between the first two columns: the overall number of tweets and the number of tweets containing mentions. In this case, approximately 60% of his tweets contain a mention, which suggests that he is only marginally concerned with establishing relationships with individual people, and is often concerned with making statements. The remaining 40% are not directed at individuals. This initial determination locates his behaviour in either the Educator or Promoter model. If 100% of tweets contained mentions, then he would be a candidate for the Communicator model, because the metadata suggests that speaking directly with individuals is of primary importance. If little to none of his tweets contained mentions, then it's likely he would be a Speaker. This process, however, is not finished, so a qualitative examination to confirm his classification is required.

Murphy made 65 tweets on Tuesdays between 2011 and 2012 (from the 40% that contain no mentions,) and the subjects, broadly can be described as political and promotional in

nature, with the occasional personal observation. There is no attempt to establish relationships with individual citizens, as there is in the case of Educators.

Of the 601 tweets that contain mentions, Murphy is engaging and instructive, with evidence of speaking with journalists and citizens on subjects both political and personal. His behaviour (approximately 40% statements and 60% political/personal) is diverse. He makes statements; speaks with citizens; supports his party platform, and portrays himself as a busy, engaged MP. His is a classic example of a politician promoting himself to the public. He is a Promotor.

This process, which begins quantitatively by examining the percentage of Tweets that contain mentions before qualitatively examining the tweets from a representative time-frame is described in detail within each behavioural model's chapter.

### **Connecting Twitter's Structural Elements to Civic Participation**

Examining the relationship between Twitter conventions and notions of authenticity require mapping Twitter convention use and the MP's voice with Coleman's (2006a) and Hall's (2009) frameworks describing authentic behaviour. Both these studies qualify and quantify behaviour described as authentic, and in the context of an MP that is constantly tweeting and providing his followers with a view similar to a reality TV show, describe a framework that can be applied to Twitter usage conventions. This section will describe some of the qualities that the metadata reveals.

#### *Followers are active citizens*

A citizen who follows an MP is considered in this study to have made an active decision to follow them. Rather than just read the news (online or offline) or rely upon informal conversations with peers, this citizen has clearly decided that information gleaned directly from the MP is more accurate and is therefore likely to incorporate this primary source into his/her own opinion formation. This indicates, on the citizen's part, a level of trust in the politician and a confirmation that media may not be entirely truthful or accurate. A better information source was needed, so the decision was made to speak directly to an MP on

Twitter, where the possibility of asking a question and receiving a response is possible. This active citizen fits neatly within Habermas's view of a newer mediated public sphere, but requires that the MP—in Habermasian terms, the informed elite (Habermas, 2006)—participate and do more than contribute a statement. It must be a dialogue if it's to invigorate a degrading public communication.

*@Mentions as conversations held directly with citizens*

While it might seem that counting @mentions is a straightforward manner of determining conversations, instead the opposite is true. Some mentions simply call attention to a statement whose intent appears to notify or announce, much in the same way a speaker speaks to a crowd of followers. Consider a tweet that mentions the Prime Minister. The MP may simply be expressing support for a government policy or statement. It's unlikely the MP expects the Prime Minister to respond. But a tweet mentioning a constituent is precisely the opposite. Mentioning a constituent is a direct appeal to that person to listen or respond. That mention might also speak to a smaller crowd by mentioning a few people. Novice MPs may mention themselves; they may mention other MPs. In these cases, mentions do not indicate a conversation, and instead speak to how transparent they are behaving when they allow the public to view them working with others, or how political they are behaving.

The talk-response and call-response dynamic of conversational turn-design is particularly present in the @mention sequence. In the talk-response dynamic, the conversational opening is often a statement that prompts a response. One makes a comment, and the other responds. But how does conversation play out when a question is asked, as in a call-response sequence? How much time does it take before an MP or citizen responds? Is the response time different when the MP asks a question or responds with an answer? How does conversation manifest on Twitter?

In most cases mentions do indicate a conversation that speaks to civic participation. When a citizen poses a question or comment, the MP's corresponding response is the dialogue that follows, the "next turn" in the discursive etiquette required of conversations (David & Sutton, 2011; Montgomery, 2001b, pp. 451-452). It is a discursive contribution and clearly indicative of a participatory event.

### *Retweeting as vetted contributions to discussions*

Retweeting another's message is treated as being indicative of genuine, healthy discourse. A retweet calls attention to another's comment and presents it to the group as a vetted idea, much as a face-to-face conversation does when one agrees or disagrees with another's contribution. An example might be to comment on another's tweet with disagreement (e.g. "I disagree! RT @PersonInLondon The proposed immigration policy has been very effective.") Participants may agree or disagree as they see fit, and the conversation continues. The retweet is therefore a traditional and quantifiable conversational element played out in a mediated discursive space for all participants to consider. Retweets are reactions and contributions that embody Montgomery's notion of an "unrehearsed discourse" (2001b, p. 447) that describes conversational expectations and elements. Political communications must be "sincere, accountable, consistent and forthright" (ibid, p. 451). Retweeting and their subsequent reactions therefore are analogous to a face-to-face conversation's normal behaviour, one part of a "cluster of expectations" (ibid, p. 448)<sup>11</sup> that define what participants expect of a productive dialogue, such as the examination of moral or intellectual equivalencies and the reformulation of ideas.

While a single retweet can be treated as a discursive contribution, perhaps only applicable to another's conversation, a thought leader may lead a discussion, and offer more retweets on a specific topic. Consider the difference between a random retweet and one offered to a larger or longer discussion. In the first instance, an MP offers a retweeted comment to his

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<sup>11</sup> Montgomery writes of authentic talk in the context of political communication generally, and makes no reference to Twitter.

followers as simply a notion to consider, without any expectation of a response. In this case the offer provides insight into an MP's interest or opinion but does not contribute to a specific discussion. It is a comment offered as background that hints of an interest or predisposition. In the second case, a retweet is often accompanied by a hashtag denoting a specific topic and group to which he's directing the comment. While the MP's tweet is certainly viewed by those following the MP, those following the hashtag see the comment outside of the MP's network. This kind of participation may prompt others to follow the MP and present the MP as far more social than a more focused message to the followers.

With respect to authentic characteristics, a retweet presents the author as discursively present and opinionated, or "approachable and naturally human" (S. Coleman, 2006a, p. 470). It also presents the author as "unpredictable and engaging" and prompts emotional involvement in the participants (e.g. "superior" or "inspirational" depending on agreement levels) (Hall, 2009, p. 517).

#### *Hashtags display topical diversity*

Including a hashtag indicates a preoccupation or interest in a topic, such as #localfootballclub or #parliament or #swedishcampingstoves, and when viewed in the context of an MP whose only other communication with the public involves political matters, presents the MP as a diverse person that may have more in common with their followers and constituents than previously known or expected. Many moods can be conveyed, such as disappointment with the local football club, subservience or dissention with respect to party politics, or excitement over finding a camping stove worthy of restoration on eBay. There may be a serious mood for serious subjects, or a casual tone for casual subjects. An MP may listen to others, participate in diverse conversations, and update their opinions accordingly in a discursively honest arena. In total, this collection of moods and interests paint a more complete picture of an MP than may be found on TV or in newspapers, where statements and interviews are more often than not politically expedient or deemed newsworthy by the media and therefore part of a perceived discursive dishonesty. On Twitter, the MPs themselves have a far greater control over their appearance, and by behaving naturally can present themselves as they truly are.

Consider a reaction to a policy or event that the MP disagrees with. In one instance, the MP may simply offer a comment (e.g. “#immigrationpolicy That policy is ineffective”), but adding the hashtag #fail conveys outrage or disdain and distributes this comment to citizens tracking the #fail hashtag who are likely outside the follower group. In the second instance, this MP may be seen as having an emotional content (e.g. sincere, or angry) that resonates with his followers, instead of a quiet MP who simply wishes to tell his followers that he disagrees. An MP becomes a far more complex individual as he/she includes multiple hashtags to messages, and more likely than not to bond emotionally with citizens, which in turn confirms the notion that discursive honesty and emotional trust are inextricably linked.

MP with diverse interests fit well within Coleman’s “down to Earth and more real” (S. Coleman, 2006a) requirements. They have multiple interests; just as ordinary people do. They are angry, or sad, or active, or sedate. They are interesting people with diverse moods, like a friend, or neighbour, or mother-in-law. They become real people in the eyes of their followers. In a manner similar to a reality TV programme like Big Brother, where cast members are viewed behaving normally during the day, MPs that display diversity-of-interest engage with their followers by prompting a critical and “ongoing assessment of when [they] are being true to themselves and when they are “acting up” [for their audience]” (Hall, 2009, p. 518). Hall’s study also proposes that reality TV contestants deemed by audiences as eccentric are seen as representing themselves “as they truly are”, another indicator which suggests that following an MP over a greater period of time, and taking note of diverse interests portrays them as “candid,” “eccentric,” and as having a high level of “representativeness” (Hall, 2009).

The hashtag also fits well within Henneberg and Scammell’s (Henneberg et al., 2009) instrumentality-based political marketing behavioural model, for it permits an MP to directly address a market segment in the same way a targeted mailing or TV advertisement would.

That an audience can develop a new view of an MP is central to this study, for it allows for the emotional re-engagement required for rebuilding trust and increasing civic engagement.

*URLs are offers to participate*

Performing participation requires a series of propositions and events, beginning with an offer, and then progressing through acceptance and action. When an MP tweets a link, the proposition is to investigate and participate. At this point the user must evaluate the proposition and assess the offer (and the MP) for credibility, and then decide to either click or ignore. At this point, the relevant communicational dynamic is authenticity and trust. Can the MP be trusted to propose relevant information? The process begins as the MP evaluates his/her relationship with the followers. Might they be interested in something? Would this conversation be improved with more information? When offered a URL to click upon, the MP is seeking the relational activity proposed by Henneberg (2009) and encouraging participation, but does so under the broader notion of behaving in a trustworthy manner that's governed by the ordinary rules of social engagement. It's a conversation to engage in, and an unambiguous offer to participate.

## The Machine

This section describes The Machine, the platform developed to analyse and visualize all the tweets (n=774,464). Procuring Twitter data can be as simple as purchasing it from a data broker, or as complicated as developing bespoke harvesting software, and once gathered, the data must be cleaned and parsed for non-conforming data. This dataset was acquired from a political analysis firm using bespoke mining software and was made available for a small fee. This approach ensured that all Twitter accounts used by MPs were included; their business relies upon this complete dataset and are they are often hired as consultants to government on Twitter use, so the dataset was considered complete. But calling the dataset complete, while true, was not accurate. There were many instances of extraneous accounts which had to be culled and accounted for. The dataset also contained tweets from the end of 2010 and for part of 2013, so the decision was made to focus on the two complete years, 2011 and 2012, to avoid the misleading charts that a partial year would produce.

The initial dataset was made available in the JSON format, a structured file format that requires transformation and post-transformational processing so that it can be used in both a summative content analysis and a qualitative content analysis. Once transformed through a machine-assisted content analysis, using bespoke software from the University of Sussex Textual Analytics Group, the resulting data was then available in a CSV file, suitable for additional analysis in other software packages.

Normally, a CSV file is easily managed in a spreadsheet program, like Microsoft Excel, but Excel simply cannot manage a spreadsheet with 1,048,975 rows (one for each tweet,) and 96 columns (the datapoints resulting from the initial transformation / content analysis.) Nor could the system deployed in the pilot project be used. It too melted down. Additional packages were evaluated to either manage portions of the dataset (SPSS, R,) or to manage the entire dataset (Datameer, Perl/MySQL, Python, FileMaker,) but various analytical and technical difficulties prevented their use. Another solution was required.

Though raw data can be processed in any number of manners, including bespoke applications and databases of many types, the methodological requirement was to summarize, visualize, analyse and organize the data so that a qualitative interrogation could be conducted, and while The Machine can be re-used on other Twitter datasets on new projects, it was created specifically to address this study's research questions.

A tweet is a transaction, both figuratively and literally. For the sender and the receiver, a tweet fulfils an informational or participatory need and with this transaction comes information secondary to the tweet text (the metadata.) Hashtags and mentions are examples of additional information, as is any geo-location data, or the time zone from where it was sent. Various status flags exist, such whether it was favoured or was a retweet. The user's identity also contains additional data, such as their username and account description. A complete list of metafields can be found in the appendix, as can a representative JSON-formatted tweet. The initial data processing procedures also do reverse-lookups to acquire the original tweet that was retweeted to avoid truncation problems. On Twitter, and in this study, the raw tweet data is called metadata, and a tweet can contain hundreds of datapoints, depending on factors such as the inclusion of a photograph or video<sup>12</sup>, but in the business world, a tweet behaves exactly like an invoice. Invoices contain similar information, such as tax charged, product descriptions, quantities, prices and various shipping and billing addresses, and once I began thinking of a tweet as an invoice, I began looking at business intelligence software as a solution to my analysis problem.

Business intelligence ("BI") software is accustomed to managing millions of invoices, and both quantifying and visualizing this data, and to be fair, doesn't care if the product description reads "Visconti Homosapien Fountain Pen, Oversized, Bronze Age, fine nib," or "Ed Balls," so after examining the feature sets and availability of various packages, I selected Tableau, an industry-leading BI platform that is known for its large installed user base, extreme processing power, vast scalability, and intuitive interface. The software is

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<sup>12</sup> Including media or background inserts data concerning picture size and the original source, for example.

mature (I began with version 9.1 and am now using version 10.5,) and is upgradable to a client/server version that permits a large jump in team size for future projects. Business Intelligence software can handle all the Twitter data.

Tableau, however, like Excel or Word, begins with a blank document and no data, and just as a blank Word document can be used to write a birthday greeting or a PhD, Tableau too begins with a blank document and each dataset then has to be imported and organized into measures and dimensions, data fields must be configured into sums or averages or any other number of configurations, and equally important, each visualization must be individually crafted and tested. This is not a simple process.

Three datasets were used: 1) the primary tweet repository of 1,048,975 containing all the tweets produced by MPs between 1 November 2010 and 30 April 2013; 2) a list of MPs; 3) and finally, a codebook used primarily to house the MP's name, Party, account name, and coded behaviour model (Educator, Speaker, etc...) All the resulting analysis stems from combinations of these three datasets.

## **Architecture and Development**

Currently, The Machine, version 46, contains 40 distinct data visualizations, of which 35 are used in this study. There are 17 data filters, ranging from a date-range and the inclusion of a URL, to an account name's status as an MP or citizen.

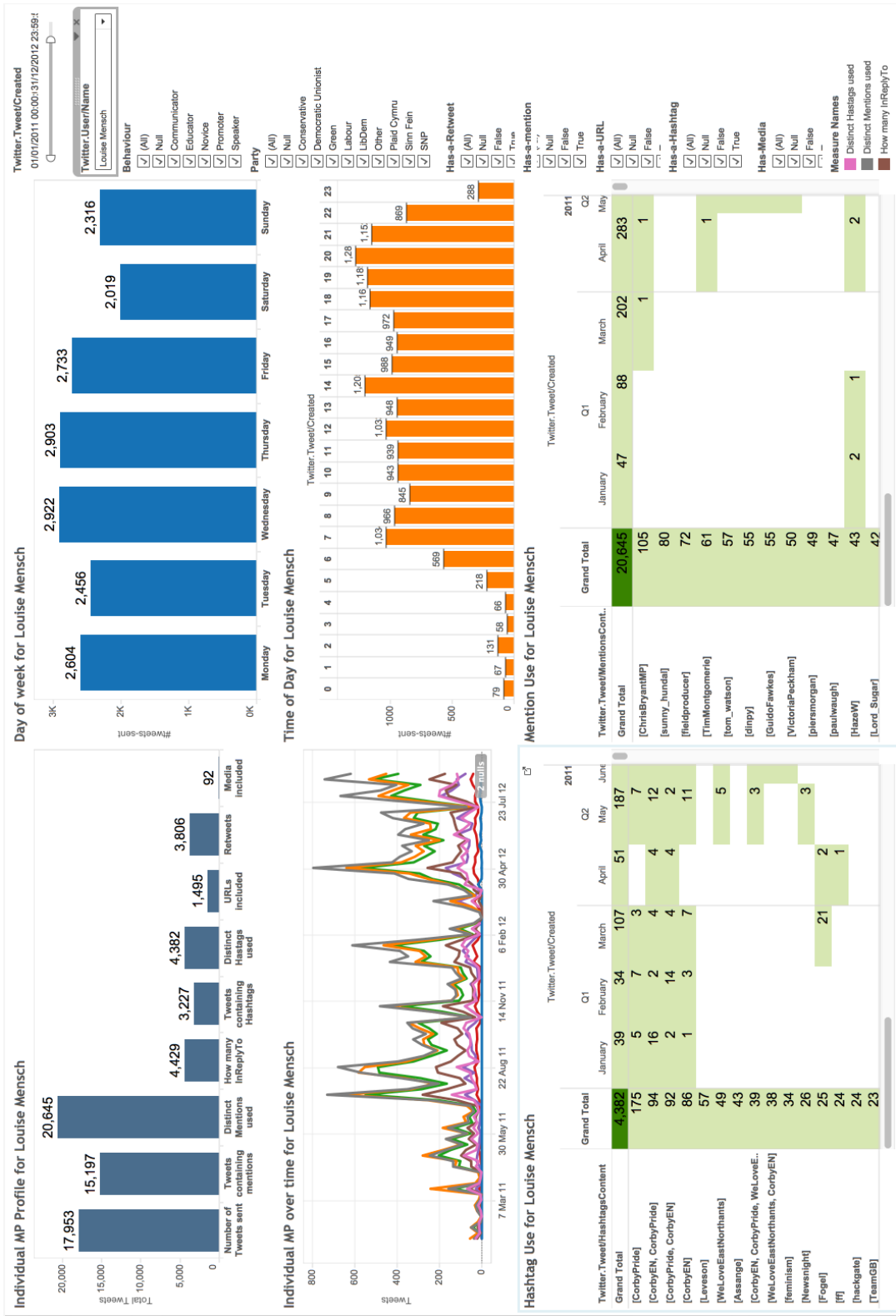


FIGURE 3 THE MACHINE v46 INDIVIDUAL MP'S PROFILE OVER TIME: EXAMPLE LOUISE MENSCH MP (CONS) FOR CORBY

## Capabilities to Display, Search and Interrogate

This screenshot of The Machine, version 46, displays the primary working interface that permits an examination of a group of tweets, either from a complex set of conditions or a single MP's selection. In this example, MP Louise Mensch (Conservative)<sup>13</sup> is the subject, with a large number of tweets spread out over the entire study, is an appropriate selection for showcasing The Machine. The research design functions broadly along this line of thought: once initially coded for behavioural classification—Louise Mensch is the most prolific Tory Communicator—an MP is selected for examination. Mensch's metadata produces the screen above, which then permits the researcher to conduct additional searches. Each visual element is selectable and used to filter the results, so selecting an hour, or examining only the tweets containing a hashtag, or any combination of the above will produce the appropriate set of tweets used for further analysis. The results can be displayed or exported for analysis in other software packages. The example above simply displays all her tweets, which is used to begin her analysis.

### *Individual Profile*

The overall totals are shown on the top left display, with nine totals displaying 1) how often she tweeted during the time period (17,953 tweets produced, in this case, over the entire two-year period, as selected by the top filter on the list located on the right side of the screen;) 2) how many of those tweets contained mentions (15,197); 3) how many distinct mentions she used (20,645, a measure of how many individual mentions were used;) 4) how often she used the in-reply-to function to respond to another's tweet (4,429); 5) how many tweets contained a hashtag (3,227); 6) how many individual hashtags were used (4,382;) 7) How many URLs were included (1,495;) 8) how many retweets (3,806;) and 9) how many tweets included media, such as a photo or video (92.) Selecting one of these columns will filter the data, so to examine the tweets in which she used a hashtag, the user would only need to select the fifth column ("tweets containing hashtags") and the entire display would recompute the figures. She has been coded as a Communicator, and all of her tweets can be displayed or exported as a CSV file.

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<sup>13</sup> Lousie Mensch is no longer a member of parliament.

### *Individual Profile over Time*

The Individual MP over Time report (second display down on the left side,) shows a line graph for each of the nine metrics over the selected time span (from the filters on the right column.) This report is also used to additionally filter these results. Dragging the cursor across a peak or a valley, would recompute the entire report and display only the intended metrics. It is of course combined with the other selections, so if all the tweets containing hashtags were selected on the individual profile report, then the timeline would permit the examination of tweets containing hashtags during a specific period of time. In this example, Mensch tweets furiously during time-periods she finds interesting—such as the capture of Osama Bin Laden, and often is very quiet (indicated by the extreme peaks and valleys.) Once selected, these tweets, and all 96 datapoints can easily be displayed or exported as a CSV file.

### *Day of the Week and Time of Day*

The day and time displays report the totals by weekday and time, so in this example, Mensch is shown to tweet all week, with a small drop-off over the weekend, and during waking hours, mostly between 7am and 11pm, with increased activity in the evenings between 6pm and 10pm. These metrics too are selectable and update the entire screen, so if a researcher wishes to determine whether these evening tweets are mostly during the week or over the weekend, and then wants to examine these tweets, the user would only need to select the weekend days to view how she tweets over the weekend, or the times, to determine which days of the week her evening tweets occur. The resulting tweets are then available for either display or export as a CSV file for further examination.

### *Heat Map for Hashtags*

The Hashtag Use display on the lower left is also selectable as a filter. Mensch used hashtags 4,382 times, and in particular, she used #CorbyPride the most (175 times.) The user could select this hashtag to reveal the dates and times she used it, and either display or export that data as a CSV for further analysis. This display also shows when each hashtag was used by month, so in this example, she used the #CorbyPride hashtag 5 times in January of 2011. To reveal a finer data analysis, the user would simply select the small “Go

to Sheet” icon in the upper right corner of this hashtag display which could then be used to reveal and select these tweets by the day, minute or second. Of course, all these tweets are exportable as a CSV file for further analysis.

#### *Heat Map for Mentions*

The Mention Use report functions identically to the Hashtag Use display, but for distinct mentions. In this example, Mensch mentioned another MP the most (Chris Bryant, 105 times,) and a citizen/blogger (@sunny\_hundal) 80 times.

#### *The Global Filters*

The right column is used to filter the data for broader metrics and when combined with the filters of the other reports, permits the researcher to examine very specific tweet-sets. If all the MPs were shown as the default view, then the user could select multiple options from this filter list to display or making available for export all the tweets produced by the Labour Party; or all the Labour MPs coded as an Educator; or all the Communicators across the all the parties; or all the tweets produced by the Conservative party, by Speakers, on a Thursday afternoon, at 3pm, when using a particular hashtag or mention, that only contained a URL. Overall, these filters allow for an almost endless set of research topics, from far more specific content analyses, agenda-setting examinations, party messaging discipline examinations and many more.

#### *Various other Visualizations*

The Machine has additional visualizations that permit a similar selection of data, including spreadsheets and usage charts. It’s important to note that the Machine was developed on Tableau, which is a business intelligence platform, so it is extensible and has programmable formulas, trend lines, and forecasting capabilities. As a platform it’s extensible and language-agnostic, so any Twitter dataset, regardless of language can be used. Because Tableau is building up its database connectivity, future versions of The Machine can perform live updates.

## Conclusion

Though this study begins with and relies upon quantitative data, it is important to note that this is primarily a qualitative project. The gathering and processing of data is simply a method to sort, collate and identify MPs and their tweets that exhibit the presence of authenticity. Analysing large datasets has two distinct challenges: interrogation of purposeful samples; and matching the research needs to the research tools. One must be able to ask questions of the data, and then find that data. This design accomplishes both through the use of a bespoke analytical tool that permits this dataset to be examined by individual and combinations of datapoints, and through an analytical framework that places these datapoints within a particular theoretical framework. If a study finds that examining how a group of MPs use a particular hashtag is of interest; or how a party behaves in the weeks straddling an important event; or any number of additional inquiries, then The Machine can find and visualise that data or export it to another tool. It is subject and language agnostic, and alone is an original contribution to the field. Had there been another tool available, then it would not have had to be built.

## Chapter 3: How UK Parliamentarians Tweet

Since Cicero delivered his first speech in a loud, steady voice, politicians have delivered their messages using whatever method was available at the time, and over the last 100 years those message channels have been replaced by newer technologies that add additional insight into the presenter and the presentation. From print came radio, where citizens could hear and experience a tonal passion that appealed to emotion; radio begot TV, where vibrancy and visage would enhance voice and oration; and TV begot the internet, where questions and answers amplify globally. Political communications were enhanced by these developments and the politicians themselves came to embrace the new capabilities and communicative requirements of changing media systems. They learned to announce on radio, groom for TV, and interact on the internet, and these new interactions can be studied by examining the metadata they produce.

Broadly, metadata is an individual component of a digital speech act. Just as sound can be measured by quantifying gain and noise and amplitude, Twitter can be measured with tweets, and time-stamps, and summaries of @mention use, for example. Each tweet in this dataset was coded into 96 associated datapoints<sup>14</sup>, from the date it was created; the account used to send it; which hashtags and mentions were included; and which URLs were inserted. For research focused on message construction, these metadata footprints leave a trail of data that reveals a great deal about how MPs use Twitter.

Statements, for example, are the Twitter version of a press release, a simple declaration that contains no interactive element other than the text. A tweet stating, “Please register to vote,” has no electronic call-to-action like a tweet which states “#ConcernedCitizens Please register to vote at <http://bit.ly/xyz123>”. The first tweet contains no hashtags or URLs, limiting the public’s interaction to those of the MP’s followers who might have read it. The second tweet contains quantifiable elements, like the hashtag, which permits researchers to measure amplification and message reach, and the link, which offers the

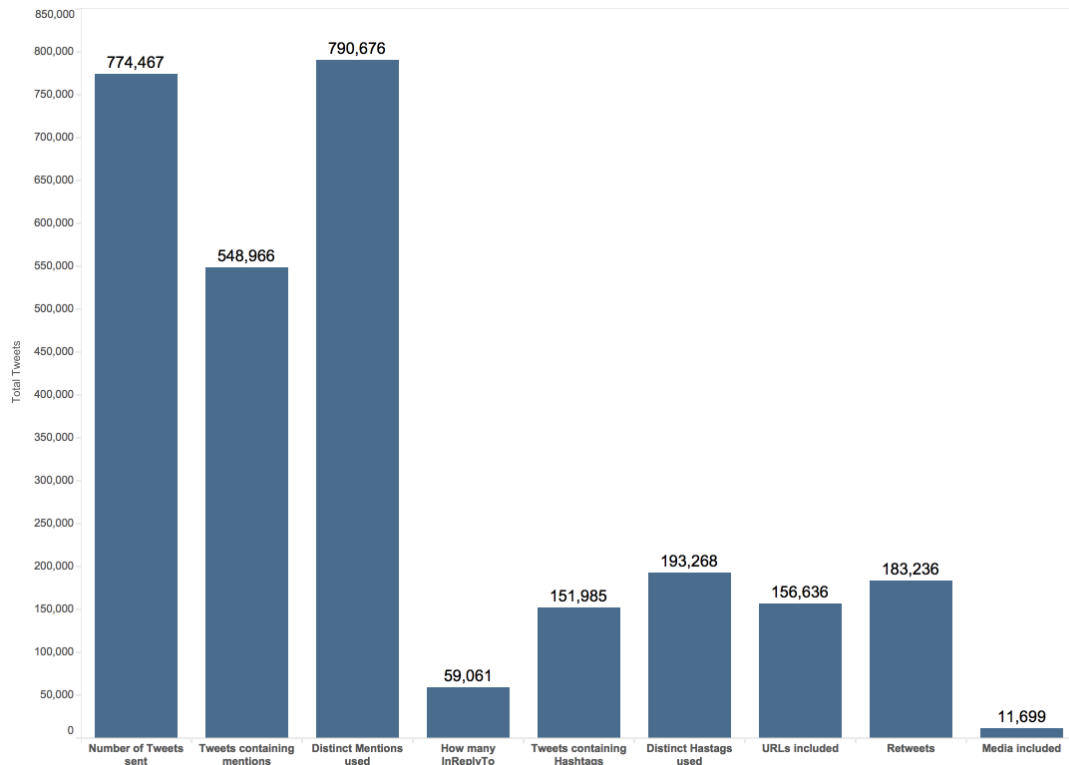
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<sup>14</sup> The codebook and the associated datapoints can be found in the Appendix.

public an opportunity to engage. Just as when an MP speaks to the press to declare a viewpoint or respond to journalists, each tweet has a purpose, and these purposeful tweets have a metadata signature. Statements, for example, appear differently in the data than do discussions or offers of information. These signatures are the focal point of my study, and in this chapter the UK Parliament is examined for how it behaves on Twitter by summarizing its metadata.

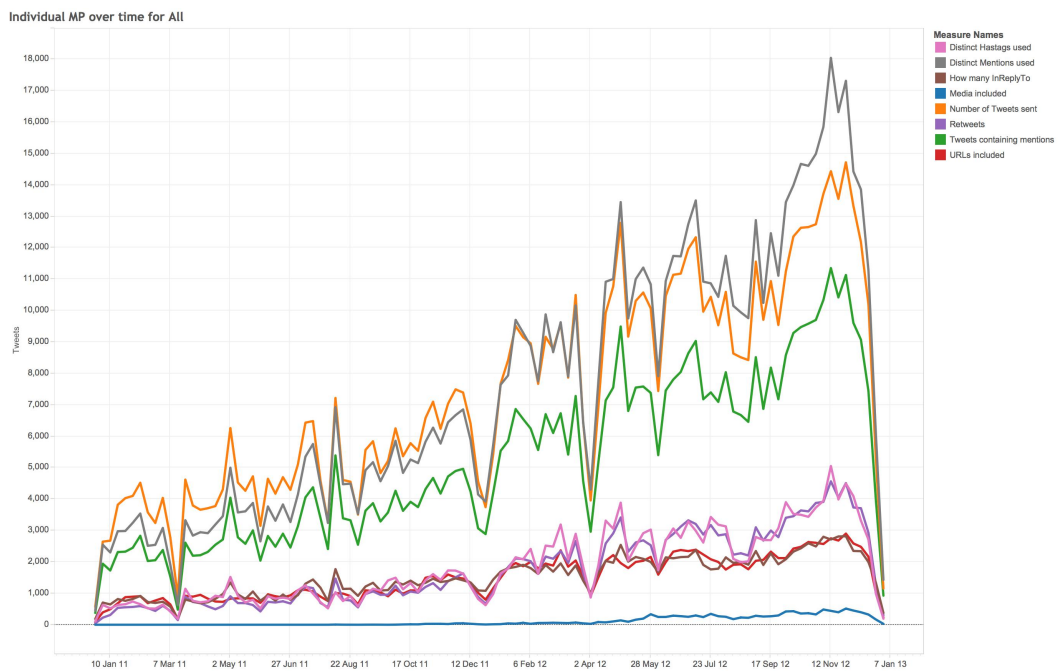
The content analysis of the raw, structured, JSON metadata has created 96 distinct datapoints for each tweet, and when combined with an additional content analysis of the “Twitter.User/Name” data (each tweet contains authorship information,) the resulting summative content analysis permits the “counting and comparison” of the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) in this chapter before the qualitative analysis is performed in subsequent chapters. These Tweets now have party and real names associated with them, and the resulting profiles permit the MPs to be coded into the user types described in detail in other chapters, and briefly below. This chapter describes overall use by individual MPs, political parties, and behavioural model (e.g. Educator, Speaker, etc...).

## Overall Totals



**FIGURE 4 OVERALL PARLIAMENTARY TWITTER USE 2011 - 2012**

Between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2012, 405 MPs produced 774,467 tweets, averaging 1,061 per day (figure 4, above.) Collectively, they mentioned people (using the @ tag) 548,966 times (in 70.6% of their tweets.) They used 790,676 combinations of mentions (e.g. @Butch *and* @Sundance), each of which offers an additional opportunity for the public to engage in the discussion and for the message to be amplified, which suggests, broadly, that MPs want the public to know when and who they are speaking with, and also want them to engage. They used hashtags as a marketing instrument to amplify their tweets to specific interest groups 151,985 times (20% of the time;) included 156,636 URLs to prompt engagement (20% of their tweets;) retweeted 183,236 other tweets (23% of the time;) and included media on 11,699 messages. Broadly, this usage pattern describes a Parliament that wants citizens to observe them working, contact them directly, and create a more informed and engaged public. If this were a single MP's profile, it would be described as a Promoter, with different tweet signatures for different types of communications.

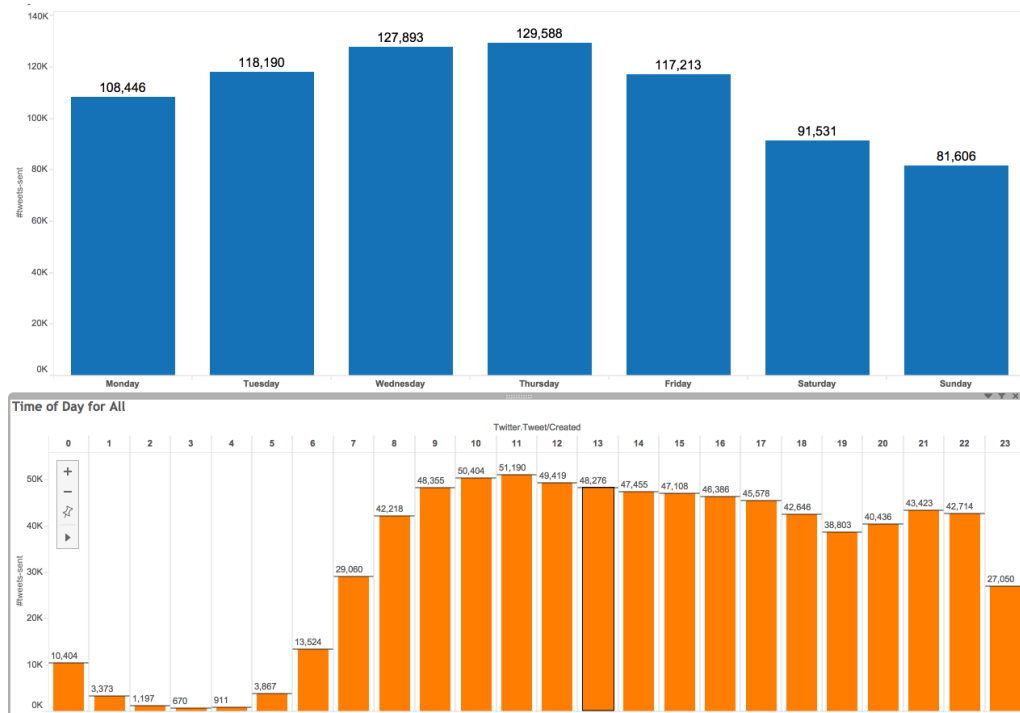


**FIGURE 5 OVERALL PARLIAMENTARY TWITTER USE OVER TIME (ALL METRICS)**

This period, 2011-2012, represents a dramatic rise in Twitter use by MPs, with weekly totals in January 2011 of approximately 2,000 tweets (the orange line, figure 5, above) to weekly totals of approximately 14,000, with predictable drop-offs during recesses and holidays. It describes politicians in transition, from being less concerned with using Twitter to including it into their weekly communication activities. MPs clearly view Twitter as useful in the public-facing portion of their representative duties, and during this time period have escalated its use from occasional to continuous. MPs want to engage in new substantive ways with citizens and during this time begin to create a civic commons that behaves as Blumler describes (Blumler & Gurevitch, 2001; Gurevitch et al., 2009). Though Blumler & Gurevitch are critical of television's de-politicization of the political process, where "...policy issues and concerns [shift] the focus of political discourse from issues to personalities," (Gurevitch et al., 2009, p. 166), it is precisely this shift that enables Twitter's

reliance on personality to re-engage an otherwise cynical public and restore trust in the democratic ideals that they see in decline in the public sphere. On Twitter, personality matters. It can reverse the stereotype of MPs as detached from the public and establish a space for citizenship to flourish.

Collectively, the aggregate usage pattern for all the MPs displays a similar combination of Twitter conventions (mentions, hashtags, etc.) with no sudden uptick in any one feature. This Promoter pattern holds across this two-year study; only the gross number of tweets has changed. Including the tweets from the first quarter of 2013 (not shown in figure 5,) shows an increase consistent with this upward trend. Given the approximately 500% rise in use, (from approximately 2,500 weekly tweets to 14,000,) this period is particularly interesting to study for usage and voice development and will remain historically significant as a record of how the UK MPs began their Twitter use.



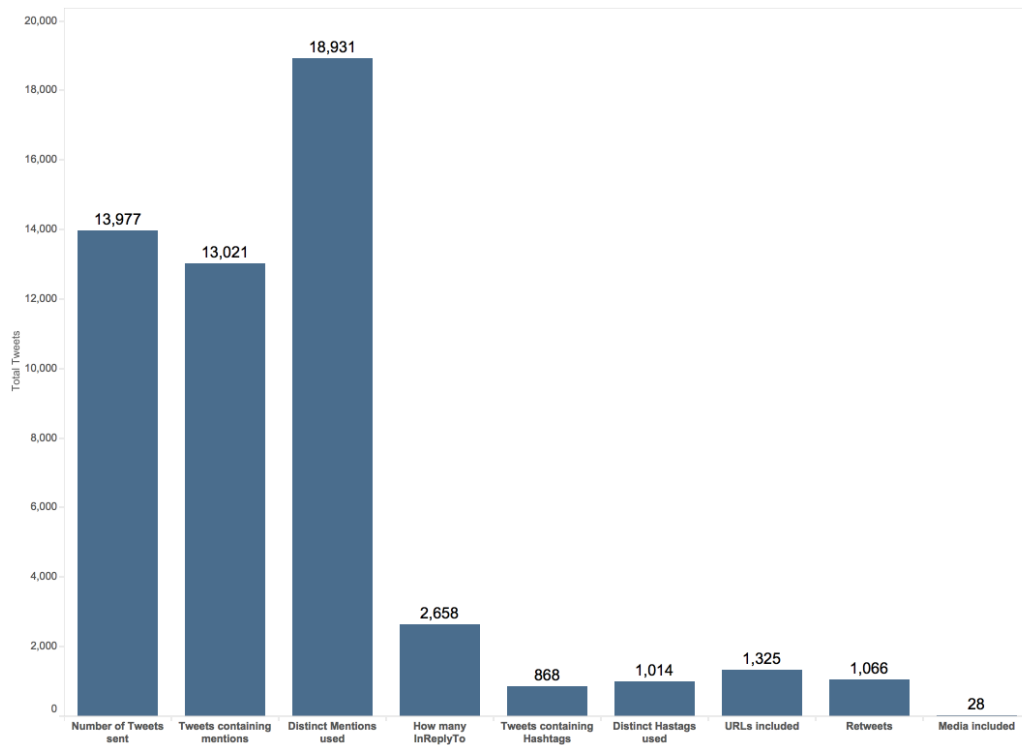
**FIGURE 6 OVERALL PARLIAMENTARY TWITTER USE BY DAY AND TIME**

Overall, MPs tweet all week, with an unsurprising drop-off over the weekends, and consistently between 8am and 11pm (figure 6, above.) There is no significant difference between the parties; this distribution holds. Communicators, however, tweet more between the hours of 9pm and 10 pm (9,599 tweets) and 10pm-11pm (10,148) than any other hour of the day<sup>15</sup>.

## Totals by Type of User

As described in the methodology chapter the content analysis reveals that MPs' usage patterns fall into six broad categories: 1) Educator; 2) Communicator; 3) Promoter; 4) Speaker; 5) Novice; and 6) Unused Account. The patterns are briefly explained below. These types are explored in far more detail in subsequent chapters primarily for the performance of authentic talk and how their practice may be viewed in the context of democratic and political marketing theory—but the distribution of these patterns across party lines reveals differences in each party's approach to Twitter.

<sup>15</sup> More detail on this spike is described in the Communicator chapter.

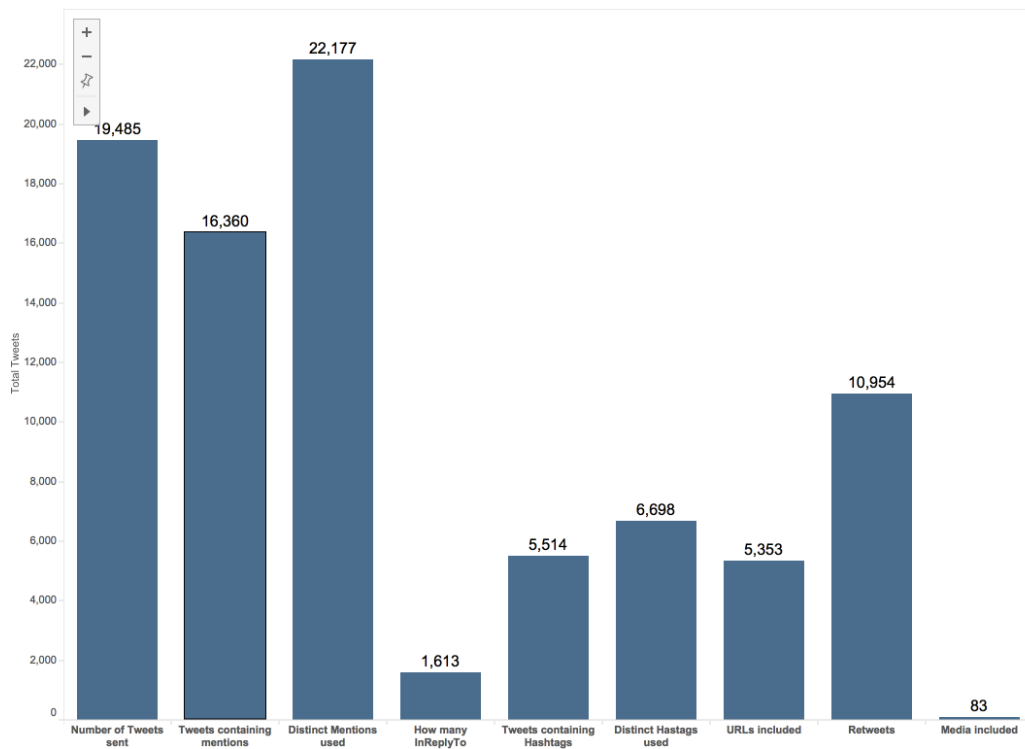


**FIGURE 7 THE COMMUNICATOR – TIM FARRON**

The Communicator speaks directly with individuals and small groups, as shown above in this example, with a strong correlation between the number of tweets sent and the number of those tweets that contain mentions (13,977 and 13,021, above). The high level of distinct mentions and low levels of hashtag use (868) suggests that message amplification is limited to the followers of those in each particular discussion and not disseminated widely across the Twitterverse. These discussions typically are conducted in a natural voice, displaying communicative properties normally found in verbal discussions. Though discussions with MPs are certainly forms of civic participation, and evidence of the sort of relationship-building discussed as democratically productive by (S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001; Gurevitch et al., 2009; Henneberg et al., 2009), Communicators do not normally encourage wider participation in a manner quantifiable in the metadata, and instead are more likely to tell people to vote in the body of the tweet rather than include a link to a voter registration webpage. These MPs are creating and sustaining direct relationships with citizens, and generally perform as authentic<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> For a more detailed description and analysis, see. The Communicator chapter.

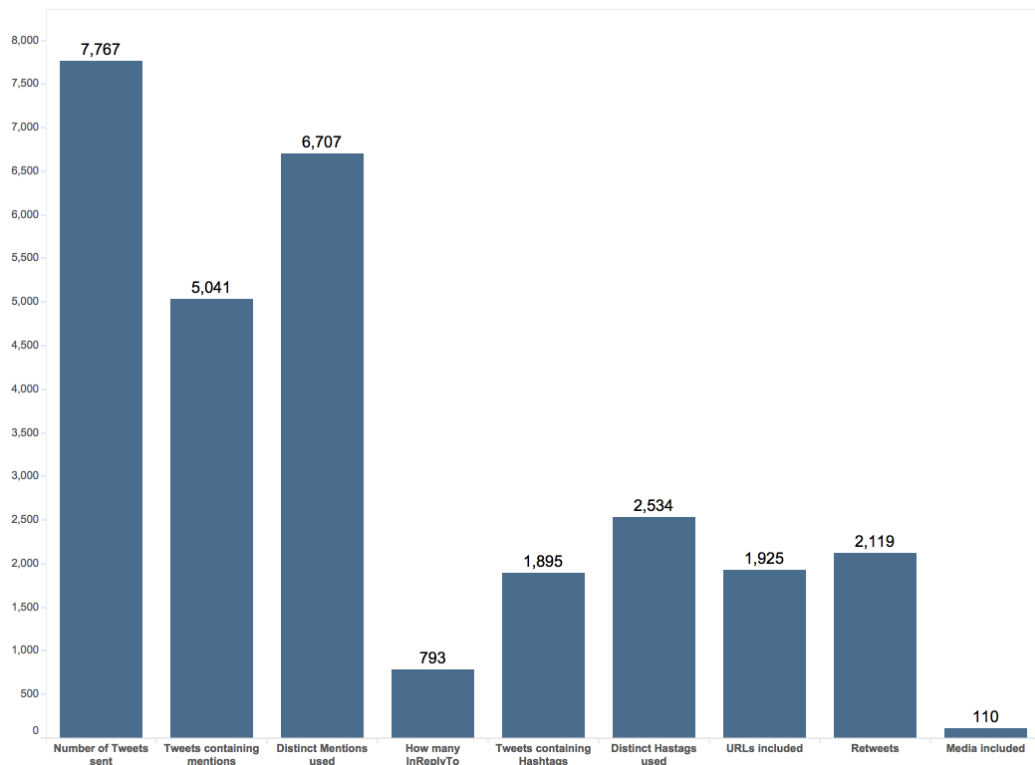


**FIGURE 8 THE EDUCATOR – JULIAN HUPPERT (LIB DEM)**

The Educator, like the Communicator, speaks directly with people and small groups, as shown above in the relationships between tweets sent (19,485) and both the mention (16,360) and distinct mention count (22,177), but adds to these engagements encouraging participatory elements (such as URLs to click on,) more information to consider (retweets,) and a broader appeal to the public to listen and learn (higher levels of hashtag use.) They speak with people and encourage participation. These MPs, like the Communicator, build sustained relationships with citizens and generally perform as authentic<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> For a more detailed description and analysis, see The Educator chapter.

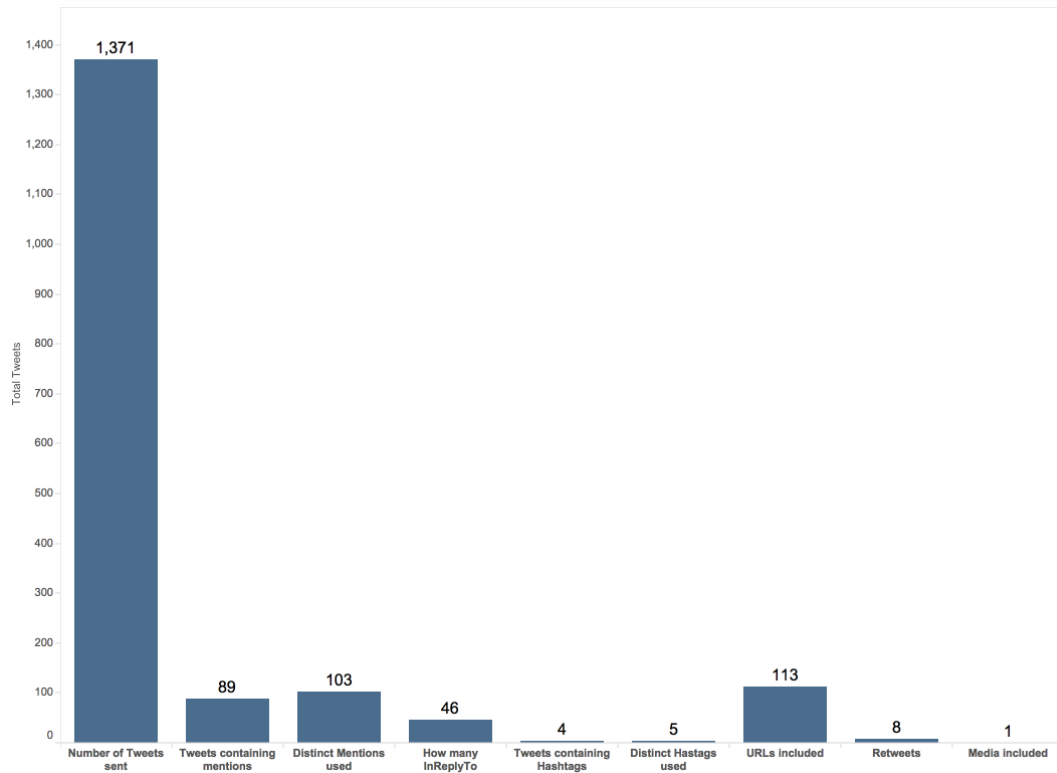


**FIGURE 9 THE PROMOTER – TOM BLENKINSOP (LABOUR)**

The Promoter displays behavioural characteristics of all the profiles and performs him or herself as a traditional politician selling a message to the broader public. Promoters may perform as authentic in particular circumstances, such as in a reply to a citizen, or a statement announcing a personal opinion<sup>18</sup>, but these MPs behave situationally and use traditional messaging techniques instead of forming or sustaining new ones as Educators or Communicators do. Many of the Promoter's tweets contain individual mentions (often to members of the press,) but at a lower rate than an Educator or Communicator; are broadcast to a wide audience (high level of hashtags inclusion;) include participatory offers (URLs;) and contain statements (no URLs, mentions, or hashtags.) These MPs are selling themselves in the same manner as they do in offline media, but with a new online tool<sup>19</sup>, and are engaging in the selling, instrument-based political marketing described by Henneberg (2009).

<sup>18</sup> Michael Fabricant MP (Conservative) for Lichfield, on Sunday 9/12/2012 at 10:10am: tweeted “@CharlesTannock Very interesting, Charles. Thank you. But we shouldn't confuse cannabis/'weed' with modern skunk which is far stronger.”

<sup>19</sup> For a more detailed analysis and description, see The Promoter chapter.

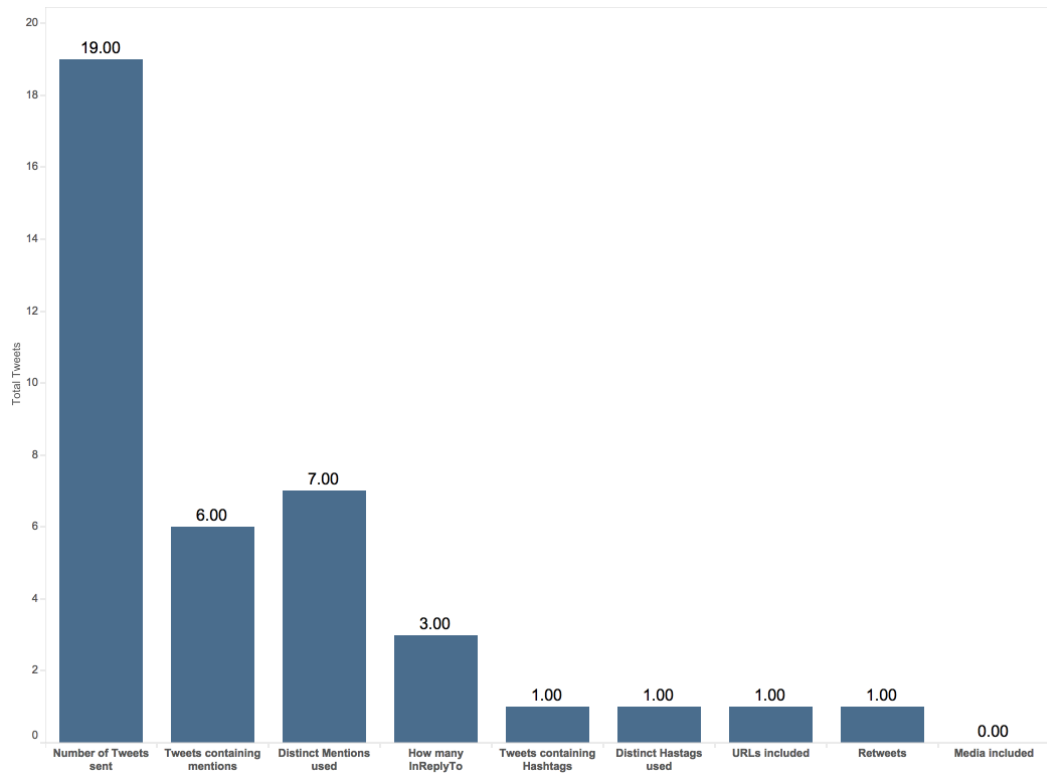


**FIGURE 10 THE SPEAKER – GLYN DAVIES (CONS)**

Speakers spends the majority of their time making statements, with little or no attempt to connect directly with citizens (low mention use) or amplify the message beyond their followers (low hashtag use.) These MPs generally do not perform as authentic. They tweet sporadically over the week (if at all) and do not normally speak in a natural voice. This is the simplest form of Twitter use and is often associated with lower overall usage<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> For a more detailed description and analysis, see The Speaker chapter



**FIGURE 11 THE NOVICE – GAVIN WILLIAMSON (CONS)**

Extremely low usage rates define the Novice user. There is not enough data to establish a pattern and no reason to believe that Twitter is a part of their public persona or overall messaging strategy<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> For a more detailed description and analysis, see the Novice chapter

## Differences in Party Twitter Usage

Party	Seats	% of Seats	Active Twitter Users	% of Active Twitter Users	% of Party that Tweets	Registered Twitter Accounts	Inactive Twitter Users
<b>Conservative</b>	306	47%	168	42%	55%	202	34
<b>Labour</b>	258	40%	181	45%	70%	207	26
<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	57	9%	40	10%	70%	45	5
<b>Democratic Unionist</b>	8	1%	2	0%	25%	2	0
<b>SNP</b>	6	1%	5	1%	83%	6	1
<b>Sinn Fein</b>	5	1%	3	1%	60%	4	1
<b>Socialist Democratic &amp; Labour Party</b>	3	0%	1	0%	33%	3	2
<b>Plaid Cymru</b>	3	0%	2	0%	67%	2	0
<b>Alliance Party</b>	1	0%	1	0%	100%	1	0
<b>Green</b>	1	0%	1	0%	100%	1	0
<b>Independent</b>	1	0%	1	0%	100%	1	0
<b>Speaker</b>	1	0%	0	0%	0%	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	650	100%	405	100%	62%	474	69

TABLE 2 PARLIAMENTARY TWITTER USE BY USER

Party	Communicator	Educator	Novice	Promoter	Speaker	Grand Total
Conservative	33,584	21,529	779	169,942	10,179	<b>236,013</b>
Democratic Unionist			34		249	<b>283</b>
Green				1,753		<b>1,753</b>
Labour	104,440	120,787	348	192,486	10,998	<b>429,059</b>
LibDem	14,621	37,102	64	18,718	960	<b>71,465</b>
Other			1	5,375		<b>5,376</b>
Plaid Cymru			86	4,586		<b>4,672</b>
Sinn Fein		1,859		1,097		<b>2,956</b>
SNP		15,400		7,490		<b>22,890</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>152,645</b>	<b>196,677</b>	<b>1,312</b>	<b>401,447</b>	<b>22,386</b>	<b>774,467</b>

TABLE 3 OVERALL TWITTER USE BY PARTY AND MODEL

Each party broadly uses Twitter in similar numbers (see chart above.) Conservatives, for example, with 47% of the seats in Parliament, makes up 42% (168 MPs) of the number of Twitter users (405), and produced 30% of the tweets, with Labour usage described similarly at 40% and 45% and 55% respectively. With 9% of seats occupied by Lib Dem MPs, they provide 10% of the Twitter users and 9% of the tweets. Labour clearly tweeted more during this study, sending 55% of all tweets (429,059). Though 474 MPs have registered accounts, there are 69 MPs who have not tweeted (34 Conservatives; 26 Labour; and 5 Lib Dem, 1 SNP, 1 Sinn Féin, 2 SDLP, and the Speaker.) It's important to note that 3 MPs have two active accounts (8 MPs in total have two accounts, but 5 of them are not used,) so 403 MPs use Twitter on 405 active accounts. All 405 accounts, however, have been coded for type and are treated as distinct users because they are ostensibly used for different purposes, such as Phillip Davies' (Cons) statement that his second account is used for "retweets only." This list of 3 MPs who use their duplicate accounts are John Mann (Lab); Phillip Davies (Cons); and Craig Whittaker (Cons). The list of 5 MPs with an unused second account are Pete Wishart (SNP); Rob Wilson (Cons); Andy Burnham (Lab) who also maintains additional Manchester-related accounts not included in this study; Mary Macleod (Cons); and Alex Cunningham (Lab).

During 2011 and 2012, 62% of MPs used Twitter (table 2, above). The differences between how often the three major parties use it are statistically distinguishable (55% of Conservatives, 70% of Labour, and 70% of Lib Dems,) but culturally they are not: citizens and journalists wishing to contact MPs that were available before Twitter are generally available on Twitter.

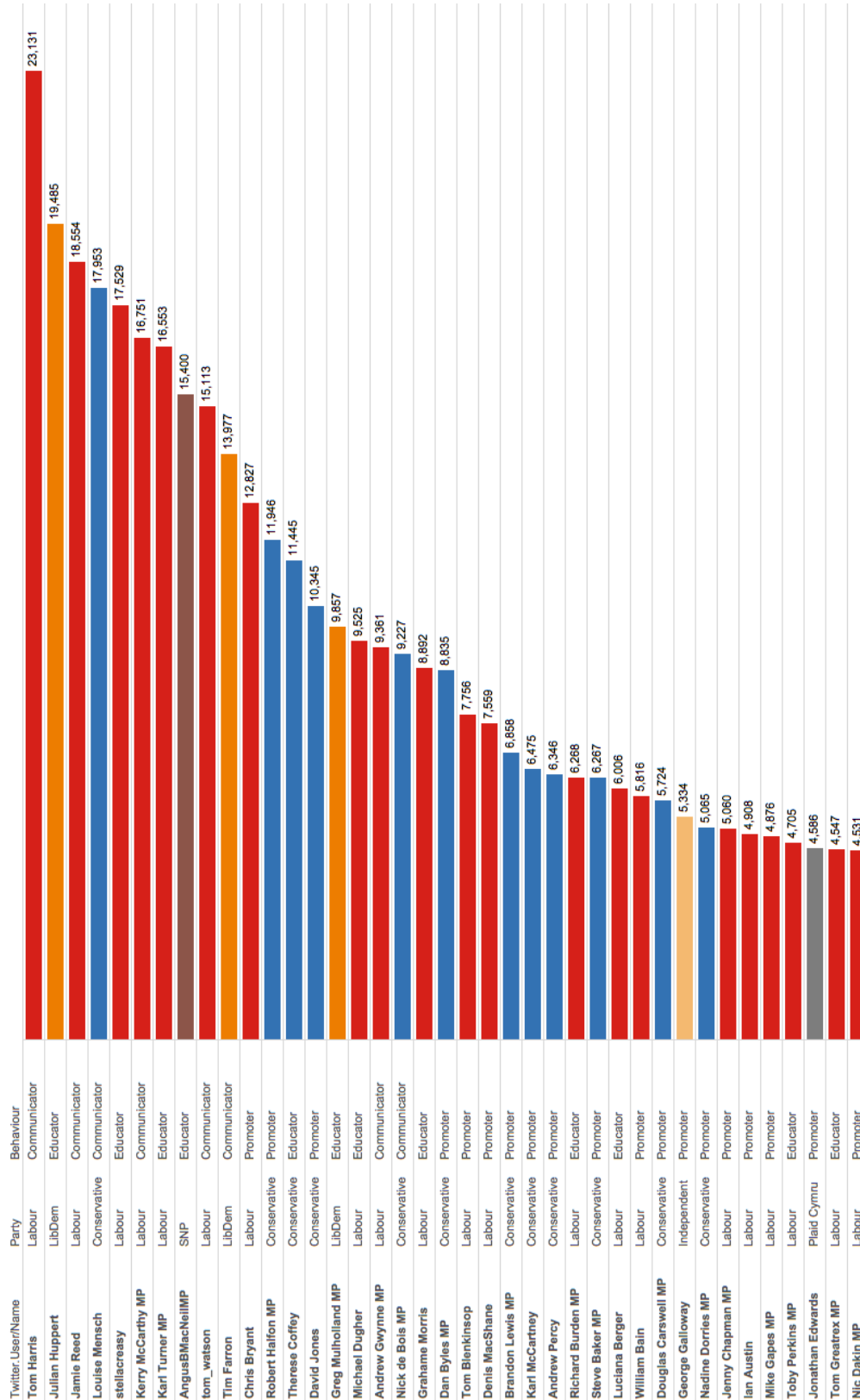
	<b>Educator</b>	<b>Communicator</b>	<b>Promoter</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Unused</b>
<b>Labour</b>	27	16	110	14	14	26
<b>Conservative</b>	10	5	103	31	19	34
<b>Lib Dem</b>	7	2	24	4	3	5
<b>SNP</b>	1		4			1
<b>Sinn Fein</b>	2		1			1
<b>Green</b>			1			
<b>Democratic Unionist</b>				1	1	
<b>Plaid Cymru</b>			1		1	
<b>SDLP</b>					1	2
<b>Alliance of NI</b>			1			
<b>Independent</b>			1			
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>69</b>

**TABLE 4 PARLIAMENTARY TWITTER USE BY MODEL**

Each party's MPs have been coded for type (table 4, shown above.) The Promoter type is the most common across all MPs (246, or 61% of MPs;) with Labour better represented in the types that generally display more authentic talk and more actively engage citizens (27 Educator and 16 Communicator, for a total of 43,) than does the Conservative party (only 15 are coded either Educator or Communicator.) Similarly, there are far more Conservative MPs who are unlikely to present as authentic (50 are either Speaker or Novice, compared to 28 Labour.) The Lib Dems are more equally represented, as shown above.

## Who Tweets, and How Often

So: 403 MPs use Twitter on 405 accounts, and collectively, MP behave as a Promoter that uses many different voices (e.g. communicating with citizens in a personal voice and speaking to citizens with announcements.) This activity has risen five-fold over the two-year period. This section describes which MPs are the most active, and how they behave.



**FIGURE 12 MOST PROLIFIC MPs ON TWITTER**

Of the 405 Twitter accounts used by MPs, 14 (3%) tweeted over 10,000 times, collectively producing 221,009 of Parliament's 774,467 tweets (29%). Half of these were Labour (7

MPs, or 50% of high-use MPs, that produced 120,458 tweets;) followed by the Conservatives (4 MPs who produced 51,689 tweets;) the Lib Dems (33,462 tweets from 2 MPs;) and a single SNP MP that produced 15,400 tweets.) Twelve of these 14 MPs have been coded either Educator or Communicator, which suggests MPs find their natural voice once Twitter becomes a large part of their constituency and impression management. On a long enough timeline, MPs behave naturally, as they truly are, and perform themselves as authentic. They are more concerned with building sustained relationships with followers, either by engaging them individually in the presence of a larger audience, or doing so whilst educating them and encouraging participation beyond these conversations. Though two MPs with more than 10,000 tweets behave as Promoters, this profile appears primarily between 18 and 8,835 tweets along with the Speaker and the Novice profile. These figures suggest that MPs develop their Twitter persona over time, moving from traditional messaging techniques to new online ones.

## Who do MPs Mention, and How Often?

Mentions are the primary indicator of individual interaction and engagement; each one is a direct appeal to a person or group to continue an engagement. It is a tweet's delivery address, and collectively the MPs used 790,676 "@" mentions during 2011 and 2012. An MP that uses the @mention function to address an individual, ensures that the tweet will appear on that person's timeline, and will be read by the addressee and others. MPs that make judicious use of the @ tag are performing an unambiguous proactive engagement with the public, whether that public is a journalist (which enhances message amplification and engagement;) or an organization (such as a trade union) that is inherently engaged; or an individual citizen with a question.

Party	Communicator	Educator	Novice	Promoter	Speaker	Grand Total
<b>Conservative</b>	49,841	46,533	443	116,066	2,733	<b>215,616</b>
<b>Democratic Unionist</b>					55	<b>55</b>
<b>Green</b>				1,689		<b>1,689</b>
<b>Labour</b>	101,873	181,784	298	164,156	3,615	<b>451,726</b>
<b>LibDem</b>	20,438	30,903	42	29,536	173	<b>81,092</b>
<b>Other</b>		1,633	47	10,891		<b>12,571</b>
<b>Plaid Cymru</b>			10	4,128		<b>4,138</b>
<b>Sinn Fein</b>		746		911		<b>1,657</b>
<b>SNP</b>		19,768		2,364		<b>22,132</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>172,152</b>	<b>281,367</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>329,741</b>	<b>6,576</b>	<b>790,676</b>

**TABLE 5 OVERALL DISTINCT MENTION TOTALS BY PARTY AND MODEL**

Of the Twitter users who were mentioned over 400 times (51 users, totalling 64,490 mentions), all but five were either MPs, party organizations or the press, which is consistent with the Promoter profile's predisposition to use selling techniques to market a political message. The overall effect is one of message amplification and transparency. When MPs tweet each other, the public is privy to conversations, debate and endorsements that they might not otherwise be aware of. MP's relationship with the press, however is different, for using Twitter to inform journalists is certainly more efficient (primarily because many other journalists will read the same statement,) but it is substantively less informative than an interview or phone call with an individual journalist. These statements, which can only be challenged by the press within Twitter's public with the previous 140-character limit<sup>22</sup>, gives the misleading appearance to citizens that no substantive interrogation has occurred or that only a brief message is required, when in practice a journalist would instinctively accept Twitter's discursive limitations and either phone or write for a more complete discussion. Twitter, to Parliament at-large, functions as an enhanced press-release platform or speaker podium. This is evident in the metadata.

The Labour party, with 43 MPs coded either Educator or Communicator and therefore more likely to engage substantively with individuals than Conservative party MPs (who have 16 MPs coded as either Educator or Communicator), produced more than twice as many

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<sup>22</sup> Now 280 characters

tweets with mentions (311,030) as the Conservative party MPs (154,203,) which is consistent with their proportionate Twitter representation. These MPs are also more likely to perform as authentic. The MPs coded as either Educators or Communicators produced 57% of all distinct mentions, collectively, despite composing of only 17% of the overall number of users, indicating that once an MP has found an authentic voice, and a mature, engaging communication style, then engagement becomes a routine part of his or her Twitter use.

## Which Hashtags Are Used

Over this two-year study, MPs used hashtags to direct messages and participatory invitations in 151,985 tweets (20% of all tweets) and used 193,268 distinct hashtags combinations, each one being another point of entry in a more engaged civic society (Norris, 2000). Without the need to hire PR firms or pay for mailing lists and direct mail campaigns, the use of hashtags are a simple-to-use selling instrument for an MP wishing to market a message to a targeted audience. (Henneberg et al., 2009). An MP wishing to draw attention to a retweet, or a comment, or offer a URL to a group or a person can send the message to any hashtag they wish (e.g. #No2AV (592 uses), #Eurovision (74 uses) or #Shakespeare4Murdoch (20 uses.)) These distinct publics are overwhelming political or social, and reference political parties (e.g. #LibDem), political figures (e.g. #cameron), topics (e.g. #Gaza, #phonehacking), newspapers (e.g. #guardian), constituencies (e.g. #Leeds, #Hackney), and silly subjects (e.g. #SillyBilly.)

Party	Communicator	Educator	Novice	Promoter	Speaker	Grand Total
Conservative	7,534	13,465	162	28,984	990	<b>51,135</b>
Democratic Unionist					10	<b>10</b>
Green				621		<b>621</b>
Labour	10,964	51,067	67	42,785	625	<b>105,508</b>
LibDem	1,183	10,201	18	12,929	26	<b>24,357</b>
Other		558	6	3,163		<b>3,727</b>
Plaid Cymru			72	1,033		<b>1,105</b>
Sinn Fein		173		141		<b>314</b>
SNP		5,675		816		<b>6,491</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>19,681</b>	<b>81,139</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>90,472</b>	<b>1,651</b>	<b>193,268</b>

**TABLE 6 OVERALL HASHTAG USE BY PARTY AND MODEL**

Five hashtags were used more than 1,000 times. The tag #FB (8,541 uses) is the most popular and is used to amplify messages by increasing the reach of the MP's readership. The Follow Back group reciprocally "follows the user back." The #FF tag (used 1,958 times) is a similar group but operates on Friday ("Follow Friday".) These two hashtags connect MPs wishing to reach out with a public that wishes to participate in the broader Twittersverse. The next three most-used hashtags (#LabourDoorStep, 1,314 uses; #bbcqt "BBC Question Time" 1,217 uses; and #NHS, 1,019 uses) are clearly political, and indicate a desire to discuss political topics and encourage engagement with the broad public.

Twenty hashtags were used between 300 and 1000 times and are also political (e.g. #leveson, 657 uses; #No2AV, 592 uses, #LDConf, 381 uses;) 18 were used between 200 and 300 times, also political. The remaining 193,268 hashtags were used 100 times or less, in a classic long-tail distribution.

## Findings

Broadly, MPs used Twitter in much the same way they used other media. They accomplished similar messaging tasks and performed themselves in similar ways. They issued statements to the public and directly to journalists; commented on policy; performed constituency management and outreach; bickered with other MPs; and were seen, now in a far more quantifiable way, performing their role as Members of Parliament. Those MPs that found Twitter emancipating performed themselves in an authentic manner

by encouraging participation and speaking with citizens in a natural voice, filled with the eccentric and spontaneous tone of verbal conversation.

Over the course of this study most of the MPs could be described as Promoters—246 of the 405 accounts were coded Promoter—meaning that they used Twitter much the same as they used traditional messaging techniques. This distribution was observed in 2011—early in the study when MPs produced approximately 2,000 tweets per day—and later in 2012, towards the end of the study, when MPs produced approximately 14,000 per day. This indicates that early in Twitter’s adoption by MPs, there was little recognition that it could or should be used to form a new relationship with the public. Some MPs certainly did form new relationships with the public, as evidenced by the number of Communicators (23) and Educators (47), and their behaviour is modelled in subsequent chapters.

Though MPs engaged with many more citizens than they do journalists, MPs had longer and more sustained relationships with the media, as indicated by the concentration of journalists in the hashtag and mention lists, which suggests that during 2011 and 2012 the overall impact of using Twitter was an improved transparency in their political activities. Constituents could witness press interactions, inter-MP discussions (and political arguments,) as well as make note of how MPs worked—for example their long hours and their topics of interest. This finding alone can be considered democratically restorative.

As described earlier, most of the constituents that were consistently @mentioned directly were members of the press, followed by civic groups, political parties, and other MPs. But in a long tail distribution, the majority of people mentioned were ordinary citizens, many of whom remained engaged consistently over two years studied. Though these are significant findings—that MPs use Twitter to perform the role of parliamentarian in a manner similar to traditional media use—there is evidence that MPs from left-of-centre parties tend to develop more sustained relationships with citizens and behave authentically than do right-of-centre parties. Many Labour and the Liberal Democrats behave in a manner more consistent with a Habermassian Deliberative Democracy model by inviting citizens into conversations and making genuine efforts to pass on knowledge and encourage more informed civic activity than do the Conservative MPs, whose outliers are more likely to be

Speakers or Novices who have none of the personal tone of Educators or Communicators. Conservatives party MPs, whose view of representation tends to be more closely aligned to Schumpeter's Competitive Elitist view of government-as-caretaker are more likely to perform as in-charge and at-work, rather than as one of the people. All this behaviour is consistent with Henneberg's (2009) contention that conservative politicians perform their constituency management as one might sell a product, while more liberally-minded politicians are predisposed to establish sustained relationships with citizens in order to encourage informed participation.

## Chapter 4: The Educator

As described in the Analytical framework, this chapter defines one of the behavioural models—*the Educator* and explores two MPs classified as such. It begins with a content analysis of the metadata which quantifies usage across selected metrics and identifies timeframes in which the Educator pattern occurs, and then conducts a qualitative content analysis on these cases to identify authentic talk. Specifically, a summative content analysis quantifies the metadata and organizes it into the Educator profile, and then the qualitative analysis identifies Liebes's (2001), Montgomery's (2001a), Coleman's (2006a) and Henneberg's (2009) behavioural characteristics in the production and use of language; establishment of narrative; and encouragement of participation. This triangulated approach links the metadata to authenticity and identifies the emergent personal characteristics (helpfulness, formal or informal speech, for example) that exist in the Educator profile. This approach also applies a manual component to an otherwise large-scale data analysis that bridges the gap between big-data numbers and qualitative interrogation (Hermida et al., 2012; Lewis et al., 2013) and enables the quantitative data to inform the qualitative analysis. The Educator profile, being concerned with engagement and message amplification in addition to a focus on authentic talk, places a high value on the prominence of mentions, hashtags and retweets, which cannot be used in the examination of other profiles, such as the Speaker (who makes little use of these functions,) and Communicator (who is less concerned with amplification and therefore has reduced hashtag use.)

Examining the manifest meaning of an apparently non-political tweet—e.g. tweeting about Dr. Who—remains a relevant part of this study because the latent meaning is being discussed, and it is part of the purview of qualitative analysis. The tweet text can be examined and classified as, for example, “angrily” or “respectfully” without the quantitative content analysis's insistence on an *a priori* coding frame. The primary

methodological requirement is to “systematically describe the meaning” (Schreier, 2012) of the tweets in the manner ascribed in the research questions (Cho & Lee, 2014).

Because the Educator model focuses on engagement and education, he or she is likely to convey the perception of authenticity and encourage the development of civic engagement. Educators proactively engage with their publics by informing and educating through individual discussions conducted in the presence of a larger audience, much like a university lecture or seminar. Lecturers are (hopefully) perceived as trustworthy and students rely on them to be truthful. They are seen to be personal and rational and require the kind of mutual respect inherent in open-minded conversations. A citizen wishing to know more about an issue can initiate contact with an Educator MP and expect a response that’s both personal and informative, often with a link to further information. Educators will involve their followers in the political process, by soliciting opinions or offering their followers’ tweets to a larger audience. They will also proactively retweet content selected to prompt discussion, much as a lecturer offers a recommended reading list. They will encourage wider participation by using hashtags. Educators are often transparent in their political dealings and encourage the public to watch them work with both other MPs and the press. This discursive arena contributes to a more inclusive and participatory deliberative space where citizens can work with MPs to develop their political knowledge and enhance their civic activities. These MPs educate and, arguably, motivate. The behaviour is evident in the tweet text; the mentions; hashtags; retweets; and URLs offered.

It is here, in Twitter’s discursive arena, where an MP can create the democratically restorative impression that what’s important to constituents is important to the MP (S. Coleman, 2005a). By speaking directly with the public, and offering facts along with the opinions of others — in contrast with Lippmann’s (1922) rather despondent view of the public’s ability and need to participate in this way — the Educator MP can push aside issues of untrustworthiness by behaving in a trustworthy manner, just as teachers do. Teachers have long been thought of as selfless servants with a noble purpose, unlike current public perceptions of politicians. As Liebes notes in her examination of political authenticity in the visual media—TV and film—the “impression of spontaneity, authenticity, and genuine caring becomes crucial [to conveying this simple message]... *you can trust this man*” (Liebes, 2001 note: emphasis added).

Performative aspects of educating include prompting discussion and offering more information in the presence of others just as a university lecturer does. The prevalence of hashtags, retweets, mentions, and an examination of the text confirm this. Lecturers welcome a motivated and interested audience and are well versed in behaving in ways which prompt engagement. In this sense, the Educator is a “real person” because it permits the audience to link this behaviour to past educators—to real people in their lives—and to react in a comfortable manner. The audience can imbue these MPs with the same trust that they saw in their instructors and engage in a familiar pattern of learning.

Two cases were selected to examine aspects of the Educator type. The first MP, Julian Huppert (Lib Dem) for Cambridge, is the prototypical Educator and is used to highlight the particular characteristics of this type of Twitter user. He regularly informed constituents of topics informing science policy and extolled the health and productivity virtues of cycling. He routinely encouraged participation and made others aware of this knowledge through the use of hashtags, mentions and retweets. He used Twitter to educate. This chapter quantifies his Twitter usage and then explores the tweets surrounding his hashtag and mention-use for evidence of authentic talk in the establishment of a sustained relationship that encourages civic participation that’s more in line with a liberal Habermassian democratic and civic ideal.

The second case is that of Stella Creasy MP (Labour) for Walthamstow, whose educational style differed from Huppert’s in that she was much less polite—she proactively trolled the founder of a payday-loan company—whilst being charming and disarming with her followers. Her personality is evident in each tweet during her efforts to educate the public on the problems of the short-term loan industry, the acts governing it, and the parliamentary process required to address it. Anyone following Creasy would have new insight into both Parliament as an institution and Creasy as a person. These constituents were also taught how to participate and encouraged—and helped—to do so.

## Defining the Educator

Initially, a high ratio of mentions to tweets—when combined with the presence of a relatively high number of participatory conventions, such as hashtags, URLs and retweets—presents the first indication that an MP is behaving as an educator. When the ratio of Mentions-to-Tweets approaches or exceeds 1:1, the MP can be described as meeting the Educator’s first requirement: that they speak directly with the public.

The next requirement is that the MP offers evidence, or points to consider. This can be found in the prevalence of URLs, which in order to be identified as an Educator, should be included in excess of 20% of the total tweets. These titbits of information reinforce two crucial components of trust—accuracy and rationality—by suggesting to citizens that the MP’s opinions are informed, and not simply talking-points. The message is a familiar one: “I’ve done my homework. I’m informed, and you may learn something if you’re interested.” The audience is in this sense primed to listen, for they have already taken the proactive steps of following the MP and engaging in a discussion with them. They’re ready to learn. Irrational citizens who troll MPs with abusive tweets don’t prompt responses; only rational citizens do, and these rational citizens want information.

Examining Twitter’s in-reply-to function—available to users (and in this case, MPs) who respond immediately to a tweet and therefore directly with a person—draws attention to a reply’s spontaneous and unrehearsed nature, as Liebes (2001), Montgomery (2001a), Coleman (2006a) and Hall (2009) require. When an MP uses Twitter’s reply function, the tweet appears the same to the user as if the MP simply tweeted directly with the citizen. It begins with an @mention and continues with the message (e.g. “@citizen Hello world”.) This tweet can be the result of simply typing the tweet this way (as one might do at the beginning of an engagement, or when the MP has let time pass before responding,) or can result from using the reply function (which is often spontaneous.) Replying to a user, though can be quantified in the metadata, which identifies each tweet by either noting the use of the in-reply-to function or not. This study treats an in-reply-to as spontaneous. This is not to say that manual replies are not spontaneous; it simply recognizes that in-reply-to

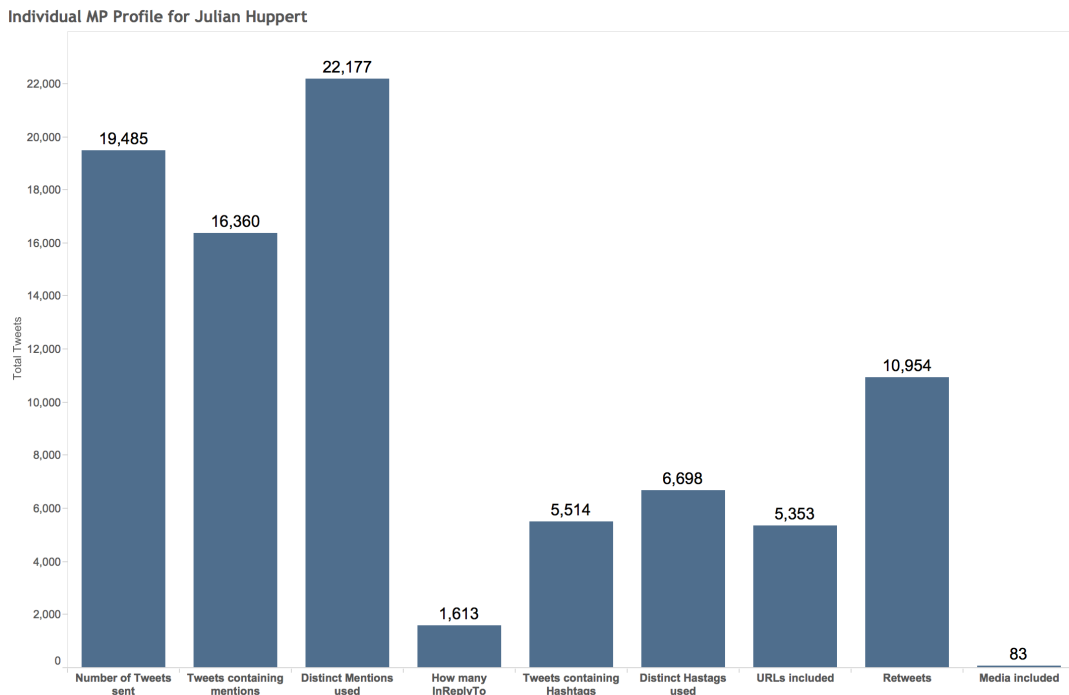
tweets are. In-reply-to tweets (spontaneous) tweets should approach or exceed 10% of tweets of all messages to be included.

Retweets, which, like URLs are conversational and informational elements intended to encourage participation should be in excess of 10% of the total tweets. Additional indicators include the inclusion of hashtags (>20%) as these strengthen the original tweet and amplify the participatory impact by including others and prompting additional action.

It is important to note that deriving a precise formula for identifying Educators is problematic for reasons which also drive the need for a qualitative review of identified MPs. A formula requiring that 10% of a MP's tweets are retweets would easily mischaracterize an MP who meets all other requirements but falls short by only a few retweets, so the mention-to-tweet ratio (and the other ratios) must not be hard requirements; they must only be guidelines. Qualitative analyses of large datasets requires human validation, so the text must be examined to add "contextual sensitivity" before authentic talk can be confirmed (Lewis et al., 2013). If many of the retweets are party announcements, for example, then the audience might perceive them differently than if the information was from a non-partisan source. For this reason, it is critical to qualitatively examine the content of the tweets.

## The Prototypical Educator - Julian Huppert MP

Consider Julian Huppert: between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2012, Julian Huppert, MP for Cambridge, tweeted 19,485 times, making him one of Parliament's most prolific Twitter users; only Tom Harris tweeted more often (23,131) over this two-year time period. Based on the combination of usage statistics and content, Huppert is the prototypical Educator. It is also important to note that prior to standing as the MP for Cambridge, he was a lecturer in the Cavendish Laboratory at Cambridge, researching the biophysics and bioinformatics of nucleic acids. After losing his seat in the 2015 election, he returned to Cambridge as a lecturer in the Department of Politics and International studies. He is, literally and figuratively, an educator, and his Twitter behaviour is especially authentic in this light.



**FIGURE 13 JULIAN HUPPERT OVERALL TWITTER USE 2011-2012**

Of his 19,485 tweets, 16,360 contained @mentions. These 16k tweets contained a total of 22,177 individual mentions, indicating that many of his tweets mentioned more than one person. These are direct discussions with multiple people conducted in the presence of users and their followers; a *one-to-few-in-the-presence-of-many* conversation that is now part of society's permanent record. As described in the methodology chapter, Huppert is clearly using Twitter to communicate directly with people, and this behaviour improves civic participation by either improving transparency in politics or encouraging civic participation. When Huppert tweets directly with another MP instead of chatting in a Westminster hallway or speaking on a phone, he is offering this conversation up for public scrutiny in a manner that did not exist before Twitter. He is informing his followers that he is acting on their behalf, working towards a policy goal, and can be seen as doing his proper job as an elected representative. Transparency has a democratically restorative aspect that improves the public's trust in politics. There is no ambiguity here: Huppert is seen to be working for his constituents.

When he tweets directly with the public, he is both enabling and conducting civic participation. He's helping create the active citizens that Public Sphere and Crisis Theorists desire. The Educator feeds Norris's Virtuous Circle (2000) by involving a citizen and then continuing this virtuous involvement. These citizens remain active. Prior to Twitter, a phone call or letter to an MP might technically have been a public document subject to archiving and disclosure rules, but relatively few were ever requested, and of those, many of the responses were made by researchers. They were not, however made available to the broader public. But on Twitter these comments are public. When a citizen asks a question by posting it on an MP's timeline, it is there for everyone to see and comment upon. It can be re-amplified through retweeting, ignored for its irrelevance, acted upon because of its brilliance, or simply responded to.

Huppert includes many participatory elements. Almost half his tweets (10,954) were retweets. Retweets are, in theory at least, vetted by the MP and made available to interested followers. Though MP Stella Creasy's public Twitter profile points out quite clearly that "RT does not mean that I agree, just that I read it...", Huppert's offerings seem to take the opposite view – offering information for the public to consider that he generally agrees with. They are additional educational elements offered to the discussion and are evidence of substantive engagement. Additionally, he used 1,737 combinations of hashtags, meaning that this content was sent to other groups of interested parties (e.g. on 19/01/2012 12:02:45, Huppert tweeted: "Join us at the FIRST #Cambridge #Dyslexia #Exhibition! <http://t.co/vkvsOBrb> MP of #Cambridgeshire @julianhuppert please RT @dyslexhibcambs"). Not only was this tweet broadcast to three other groups, but a link was offered and a plea to retweet made.

The 5,353 total URLs indicate that he is prompting his users to participate. The URLs are offered through a URL-Shortening service, such as bit.ly. Unfortunately, the click-through statistics are only available at a prohibitive cost, but a manual examination of a small sample indicates that they very much follow the pattern of Huppert's identifiable URLs. Of particular note are the 1,613 in-reply-to tweets. Because these tweets are acted upon immediately, replying directly indicates evidence of the spontaneity and unrehearsed behaviour described by Liebes (2001) and Montgomery (2001b) and are clear indicators of behaviour perceived as authentic. A close examination of Huppert's tweets displays the

recurring topics that reveal much about his personality and interests, and more interestingly, his approach to teaching and governing, which is to prioritize personal contact, motivate the public to act and to introduce policy ideas to both the public and the party.

### **Hashtags, Authentic Language, Civic Participation and Science Policy**

Of the 5,514 tweets that included hashtags, Huppert focused primarily upon 33, and over the two-year study used these combinations of hashtags (figure 14 below) 14 or more times. The remaining 5,481 were used 13 or fewer times. The chart below (figure 14) lists his most commonly-used hashtag combinations on the left, and then contains the number of times they were used, by month and year. They are colour-coded, with the darker green representing greater usage. The combinations are distinct, as evidenced by the combinations “scipolicy”; “scipolicy, fb”; and “fb, scipolicy” (see Figure 14, below)

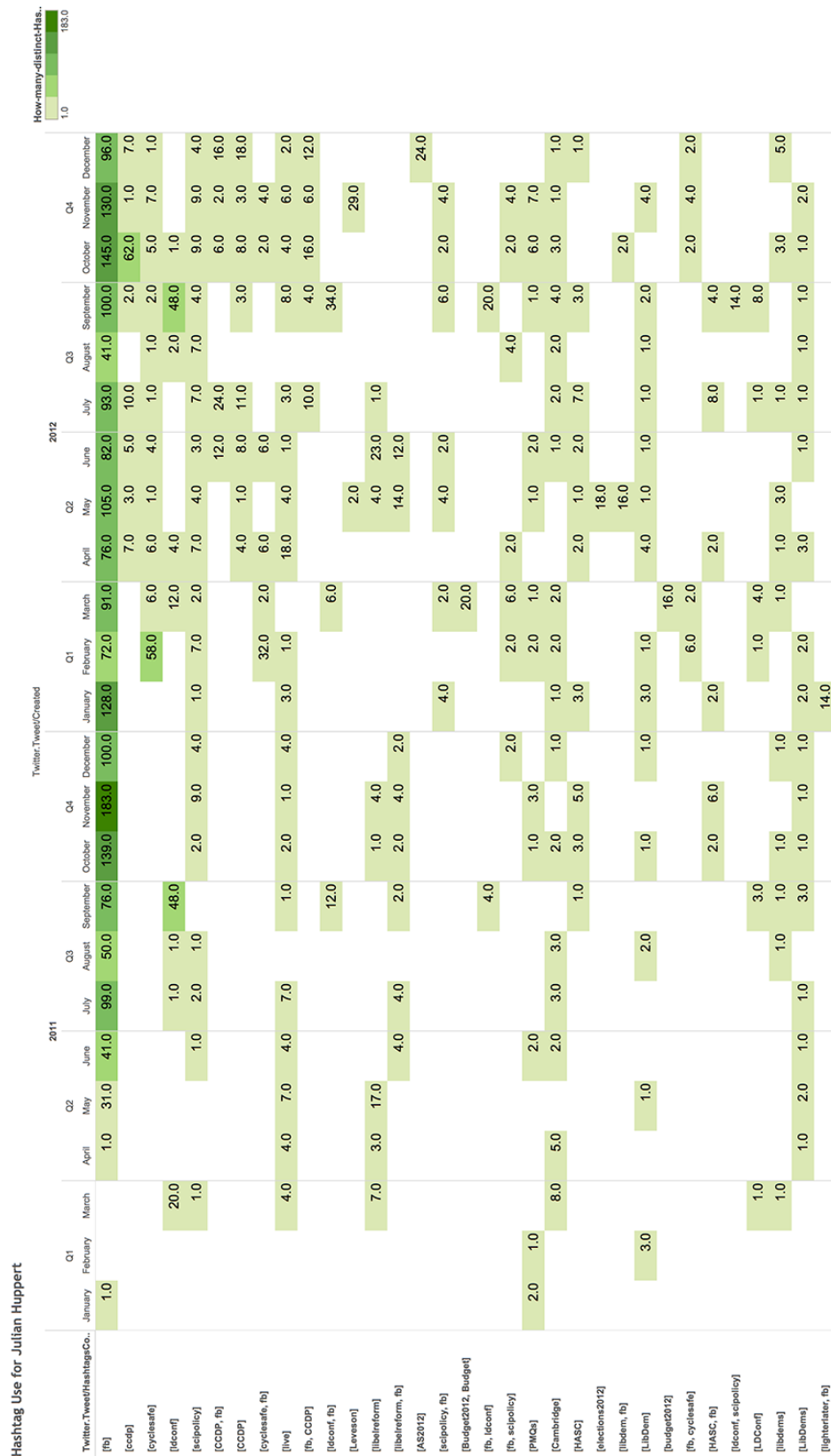


FIGURE 14 JULIAN HUPPERT MP FREQUENT HASHTAGS USED 2011-2012

Of initial interest is the frequent use of the #fb hashtag (the top row in Figure 14, above.)

The #fb hashtag is an abbreviation for “follow back”, so when it’s invoked, the social

convention is to consider following that person. Huppert used it, without any other hashtag, 1,880 times over the two-year period. Increasing the number of followers is of particular interest to an MP that's predisposed to educate, for it permits him to engage with a larger audience. Huppert often combines the #fb hashtag with topical hashtags (e.g. #libelreform, #libdem, #cyclesafe and others) to ensure that whoever is interested—in the broader public—may have the opportunity to engage, continue their engagement, or simply learn.

All but the cycling hashtags are purely political in nature, though it's important to note that as an MP, Huppert was the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Cycling and an avid cyclist, often cycling to and from work in his constituency. Tweeting about cycling, which is a lower profile political and policy topic than technology issues (which he also has an interest in,) is evidence of behaving like an average person, and not the sort of politician thought of as out-of-touch with the general public. In this sense he is “down to earth” and “more real” (S. Coleman, 2006a). The manner in which he uses Twitter to illustrate his daily life is to speak directly with enthusiasts rather than broadcast his musings and conduct his conversations to the broader Twitter cycling community. He includes hashtags, certainly, but his tweets are thick with mentions. Within the 87 #cyclesafe tweets that contain mentions, 135 different combinations of mentions were used, and they often included both political people and citizens in the same tweet (e.g. @davepage\_Id, @stealthmunchkin).

Another way to explore his use of authentic language and participatory predispositions is to examine a hashtag that falls outside his parliamentary duties and closer to his personal interests, which this case would be #scipolicy, a hashtag that discusses science policy in the UK. Huppert is a scientist by trade yet serves on no group or committee dealing with science.

In Coleman's Big Brother / Politics study (S. Coleman, 2006a), the notion that democracy requires a “two-way transparency” that improves the public's access to politics and MPs, can now be seen in Huppert's Twitter behaviour. Within his 6,698 hashtag combinations (used across all his tweets,) political behaviour, such as the debates surrounding Leveson (#leveson); Libel reform (#libelreform, #fb); the budget (#budget2012); science policy

(#Idconf, #scipolicy); Prime Ministers Questions (#PMQs) and the Snooper’s Charter (#CCDP, #FB) are all available for the public to engage with, and Huppert proactively includes them in the conversation. Huppert even insures that the #fb (which asks the general public to “follow [Huppert] back”) is included. He is proactively educating and motivating, and in this case, a “real” and “down to Earth” educator.

Examining Huppert’s use of the #scipolicy hashtag reveals an MP who follows a topic—science policy—and regularly offers this information to his followers. Of particular interest is how the tone of voice used in the retweets (not written by Huppert but shared to his followers) is different from those authored by Huppert. In this case, Huppert shared 98 tweets to #scipolicy (24 authored by CaSE, the Campaign for Science and Engineering, an advocacy group for the STEM sector).

Consider the Huppert-authored tweets, below:

18/01/2012 17:26	#scipolicy newsbreak: Alan Malcolm is new secretary of parliamentary and scientific Committee. #fb HT Stephen Benn
30/01/2012 17:25	I'm updating Lib Dem science and research policy. Suggestions welcome to LibDemSciencePolicy@gmail.com <a href="http://t.co/llw5iXbA">http://t.co/llw5iXbA</a> #scipolicy #fb
20/03/2012 12:29	Now meeting with the Science Council to discuss #scipolicy #fb

These tweets contain natural language cues, such as the appearance of a complete sentence and the use of proper punctuation. The pronoun “I” and the implied personal subject in the “Now meeting with...” tweet is personal in nature and grants the audience a view into Huppert’s workday; they appear unrehearsed and normal. Huppert is also informing the public (e.g. “newsbreak...”) and using the active voice (e.g. “I’m updating” and “Now meeting”). Each of these tweets allows him to create a personal relationship with an individual or group and establish his intellectual authority to both his followers and interested parties; and also permits him to inform the discussion and/or encourage political participation.

The tweets below, authored by the advocacy group Campaign for Science and Engineering (“CaSE”) and retweeted by Huppert, read like announcements or headlines, without the

personal cues present in Huppert's tweets. They are sterile and have a truncated, abbreviated tone that make them read like press releases that has been edited for length and comprehension. The facts and information barely fit within the 140 characters, and the tweets have a cryptic, cramped style that requires deciphering, rather than reading. Huppert's tweets (above) behave very differently. It is important to note, however, that these tweets do contain participatory elements, such as URLs, and on occasion contain personal narrative fragments (e.g. "want to kick start the innovative economy?"). Overall, they do not meet the requirement of establishing a personal relationship, so critical to Henneberg's (2009) relationship-building requirement for a more deliberative and participatory public sphere.

- 17/11/2011 09:37 New Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees (COPSAC): <http://t.co/BN4DnT8y> #scipolicy
- 29/11/2011 14:08 CaSE Director @imrntime on @BBCNews re: £200m given to science by Chancellor <http://t.co/5xkURcMY> #scipolicy
- 29/11/2011 15:57 RT @SocGenMicro: Interested in #scipolicy? Apply to join SGM as Science and Education Policy Officer, £24-29K, <http://t.co/w5zMC0Kf>
- 05/12/2011 15:31 Want to kick-start the innovative economy? Opportunity knocks, Prime Minister. #scipolicy <http://t.co/f71kdIwl>
- 08/12/2011 12:15 BIS appoints new Chief Scientific Adviser - Prof John Perkins. <http://t.co/SazKEHjs> #scipolicy
- 15/12/2011 14:10 Nifty #scipolicy job: RSC Parliamentary Affairs Manager (in London) £53k, d/l 14 Jan. <http://t.co/bF3kQGbn>
- 20/01/2012 13:28 Victory! Gov commit to research in the NHS. Get the lowdown from @BeckyPurvis <http://t.co/NgJ7zwqO> #scipolicy
- 02/02/2012 12:06 A quick post in praise of @POST\_UK's archive of notes on sci & tech policy <http://t.co/wJm25fJz> #scipolicy
- 27/02/2012 13:14 CaSE welcomes immigration report and changes: update <http://t.co/TXL3U1t2> #scipolicy
- 29/02/2012 13:35 CaSE welcomes Lords report on departmental Chief Scientific Advisers <http://t.co/UgcNmuEs> #scipolicy @ukgov
- 29/02/2012 16:29 Impressive range of #scipolicy jobs going at the moment - deadline for the most exciting one is in three days... <http://t.co/DbyOC6ft>
- 21/03/2012 12:57 Got an idea for a great #scipolicy article? pitch it to our ed, @ehsanmasood in the Dragons' Den <http://t.co/2CDSJrhD>
- 13/04/2012 13:07 Immigration and Science Ministers in front of HOL S&T Committee re: HE in STEM subjects <http://t.co/aIYPWps0> #scipolicy
- 17/04/2012 14:48 Institute of Physics job : Policy officer, central London c£26k. Deadline 3 May. <http://t.co/fBn5jHSf> #scipolicy
- 24/04/2012 09:26 Interesting list of contenders for Government Chief Scientist from @BBCPallab <http://t.co/F192RBPW> #scipolicy
- 26/04/2012 09:22 A great #scipolicy opportunity RT @CSciPol: The search for the new CSaP Exec Director starts here: <http://t.co/zg0BwlrZ>
- 16/05/2012 13:05 How much is BIS planning to spend on science capital in 2012-13? <http://t.co/IFd9Azea> #scipolicy
- 28/05/2012 13:14 Delighted to hear Tony McBride is formally appointed as Director of @royalsociety Science Policy Centre #scipolicy. Congratulations to him!
- 28/06/2012 17:39 Big congratulations to @robdoubleday who is the new Executive Director of @CSciPol. Excellent #scipolicy news. <http://t.co/6eLLYPau>
- 30/07/2012 15:07 The amazing @wellcometrust policy team are looking for a policy adviser to join them for 6 months: <http://t.co/g7Tc3Ap5> #scipolicy
- 23/08/2012 12:06 Guest post on CaSE blog: @julianhuppert explains his proposals for a new Lib Dem #scipolicy <http://t.co/10ThjGw7>
- 28/08/2012 15:59 @sciencecampaign hosts @julianhuppert in a blog summarising recently proposed Lib Dem #scipolicy: <http://t.co/KaAJxOgi>

10/10/2012 14:37	Party conferences - did the leaders talk science? Coalition: yes, opposition: no. <a href="http://t.co/rSCmlrjv">http://t.co/rSCmlrjv</a> #scipolicy #cpc12 #lab12 #ldconf
10/10/2012 17:18	Party conferences: the #scipolicy roundup, from CaSE. <a href="http://t.co/uFhglymE">http://t.co/uFhglymE</a>
12/10/2012 10:48	More 2012 Conf. highlights. @julianhuppert holding court @Science_Council's Lib Dem fringe event #scipolicy <a href="http://t.co/EhfQiovD">http://t.co/EhfQiovD</a>
15/10/2012 12:21	CaSE review the advisory network in Whitehall <a href="http://t.co/WHMBs0sc">http://t.co/WHMBs0sc</a> #scipolicy
17/10/2012 14:48	Interested in #scipolicy? Join the @sciencecampaign board of directors <a href="http://t.co/94sd8J3j">http://t.co/94sd8J3j</a>
24/10/2012 14:29	Obama's and Romney's Science Policies: How Do They Stack Up? <a href="http://t.co/3l2IXcqs">http://t.co/3l2IXcqs</a> #scipolicy
07/11/2012 15:56	New post from @DrJennyWoods: Aldes oppose cuts to EU science budget #scipolicy <a href="http://t.co/VklOWoA4">http://t.co/VklOWoA4</a>
23/11/2012 12:30	RCUK News: RCUK welcomes £600 million investment in research and innovation <a href="http://t.co/PsRtRJGW">http://t.co/PsRtRJGW</a> #scipolicy

As they concern civic participation, Huppert's retweets to #scipolicy come from a wide range of citizens and advocacy groups. There is clear evidence of civic participation. Of the 84 retweets, 2 were coded "Academic, Activist, Group"; 15 were "Academic, Activist, Individual"; 39 from an "Advocacy Group"; 1 from an "individual advocate"; 1 from a government group; 1 from an individual in a government group; 18 from "Individual" citizens; and 7 from the press. Huppert is clearly conducting his fact-finding in full view of the public, and is creating and enabling conversations by offering opinions to the broader public, just as an 'opinion leader' (Katz, 1957; Lazarsfeld & Katz, 1955) should do, and just as an engaged MP should do. Huppert is educating and motivating, - the lecturer, and educator par excellence.

## Mentions

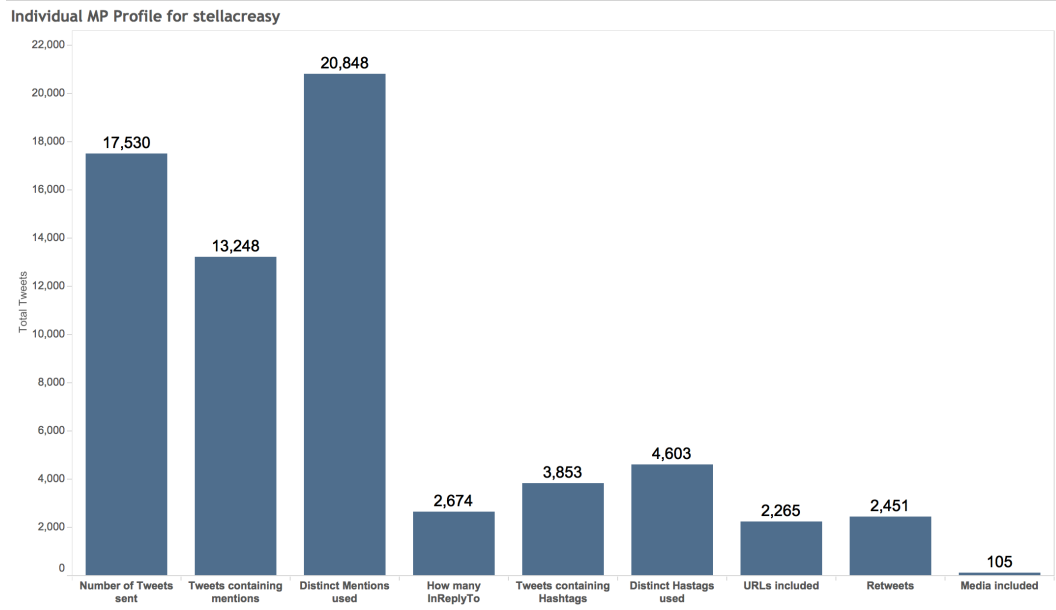
Huppert's use of @Mentions is prolific, and during this study, he produced 22,177 distinct mentions within the 16,360 Tweets that used mentions. Each of these mentions amplifies his message to a different group of followers, broadening his reach as an Educator. Of all the Educators (there are 48) he produces the most. Only Tom Harris MP (Labour), who is a Communicator, produced more (27,254.) He speaks with a broad number of people, with only 17 individuals being mentioned more than 100 times. Unlike MPs-at-large, whose most popular mentioned accounts are journalists and politicians, Huppert's are mostly local individuals.

## Stella Creasy and Payday Loans: Educating and Motivating the Public

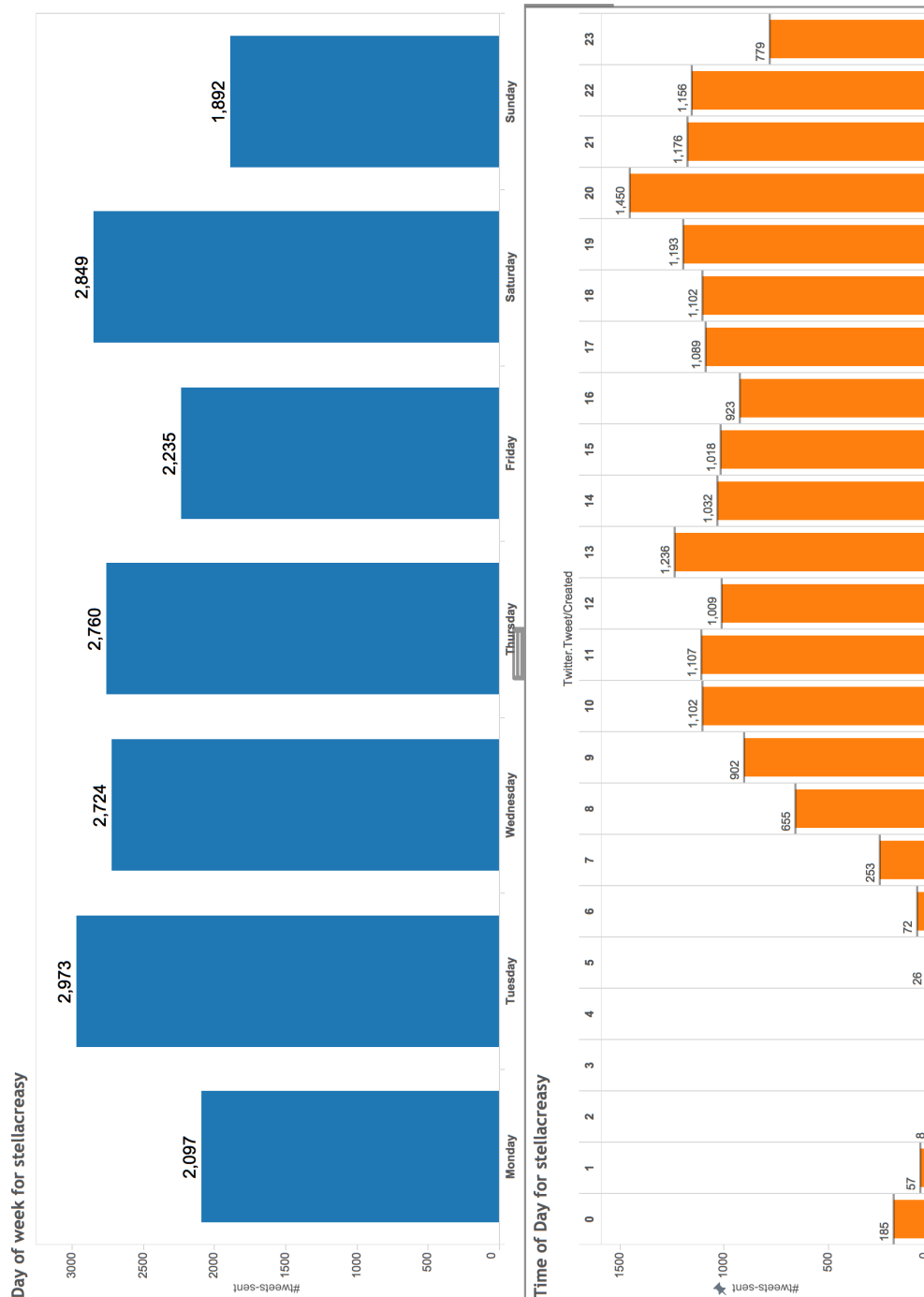
Though Huppert is the prototypical Educator, his teaching style focuses more on offering evidence to his followers than the other Educators, so examining the behaviour of another Educator, in this case Stella Creasy, MP for Walthamstow (Labour), one who is more motivational, is appropriate to fully explore this behavioural model.

Examining how an Educator educates and motivates the public is one way to connect Twitter elements, such as hashtags and mentions, to improve civic participation. By nature, the Educator MP, like a university lecturer, applies teaching and learning techniques to improve critical engagement with issues whilst offering this discussion to larger audiences presumably interested in that topic. These techniques are familiar: critically examine a topic; offer vetted information to a group interested in that topic; amplify the discussion about that topic to others who might be interested; and then motivate these groups to think and act. As described in the analytical framework chapter, various Twitter elements are used to perform those tasks. The critical examination takes place in the original Twitter text within a corpus of tweets. The additional vetted information is found in the retweets and URLs offered, which is likely opinions from issue-groups and facts and/or facts government reports or studies. The amplification to constituents outside the Educators MP's followers is conducted by using hashtags, which sends the relevant tweets to groups who are interested in that topic but might not be following the MP's discussion or to an individual's followers with an @mention. And finally, the motivation can be found in each tweet's call-to-action, which could be in the text (e.g. "Call your MP!") or in a URL to a petition website.

Stella Creasy, MP (Labour) for Walthamstow since 2010 is the most prolific Labour party, Educator MP, tweeting 17,530 times during 2011 and 2012, a total, among Educators, exceeded only by Julian Huppert's 19,485 tweets. Only four MPs, regardless of behavioural model, have tweeted more often than Creasy during this time: Tom Harris (Labour) 23,131 tweets; Huppert (Liberal Democrats) 19,485; Jamie Reed (Labour) 18,554; and Louise Mensch (Conservative) 17,953.



**FIGURE 15 OVERALL TOTAL STELLA CREASY MP FOR WALTHAMSTOW**



**FIGURE 16 STELLA CREASY DAY OF THE WEEK AND TIME OF DAY**

Creasy's Twitter use (figure 15, above) over between 2011 and 2012 displays evidence of individual engagement with high levels of @mentions and combinations of @mentions; and comparatively high levels of hashtags, hashtag combinations and URLs when compared to the other behavioural models and MPs generally. She tweets regularly, seven days a week and during all waking hours (Figure 16, above).

## Creasy's Focus on Payday Loans and their Regulation

One of Creasy's signature issues is that of predatory lending practices, specifically short-term, high-interest payday loans, such as those offered by Wonga.com, with whom she has an acute problem. She was heavily involved in educating the public about a credit regulation bill and tweeting about these loans, and in particular Wonga and its owner, Errol Damelin, whom she regularly trolled on Twitter. Among the hashtags she used were #voteforcedregbill 316 times (all, except for one tweet, during 2011); the #sharkstopper group 159 times (between July and December of 2012)<sup>23</sup>; the #vote4vredregbill 25 times; and a many other combinations of #sharkstopper, #wonga, #getorganized, and various forms of the "credregbill" hashtags. Overall, she used Wonga and payday loan related hashtags 611 times continuously throughout the two years covered in this study.

Similar payday loan related @mentions were also used, including 26 between 3/5/2011 and 6/5/2018 directly addressed to @WongaMan, the Twitter account of Errol Damelin, the founder and CEO that were clearly meant to antagonize Damelin. These tweets, below are representative of the type of language and attitude that Creasy used to draw out a response from Damelin.

14/05/2011 19:47	has anyone heard from @wongaman at all? perhaps he's performing in eurovision & that's why he's gone quiet about his legal loan sharking...
14/05/2011 09:32	Anyone know how to report a missing tweeter? @WongaMan still not responded re debate vs dinner request -Can we send out a twearch party ?
13/05/2011 23:11	its past midnight & yet still @wongaman hasn't been in touch re his earlier faux pas- bit worried about him now as not normally so quiet!

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<sup>23</sup> Creasy spelled "sharkstopper" two ways, one with a capital S and the other without (#sharkstopper, 133 times; and #Sharkstopper, 26 times). Both hashtags refer to the same group of citizens and tweets addressed to either are seen by the same people. The sharkstopper tweets refer to Wonga as a "loanshark," hence the hashtag.

Written in a sarcastic confrontational voice, Creasy seems determined to keep the conversation public, for her followers to witness, and given the pace—26 tweets over 32 days—does not appear predisposed to stop her trolling. But her trolling is not of the sort common to angry tweeters, where the tweets are limited to abusive statements. Creasy does not appear to behave like that. Instead, she is directing her ire at Damelin’s decision to disengage by implying cowardice. She also, clearly, recruits the public in this effort (e.g. “anyone heard from @WongaMan”, “Anyone know...”), which creates an emotional bond with her audience, and is influencing her followers’ response with ad hominem attacks. She is, in essence, attacking his character by implying to her followers that Damelin is scared to engage with her, as he had earlier. By attacking his character in this manner, instead of calling him scared, and co-opting the public’s view of Eurovision as silly, Creasy deftly exploits Lippman’s notion (1922) that the general public requires a more emotional reason to dislike Damelin than it does an intellectual one. And by sustaining her Tweets regularly over the month, exploits McCombs (2004) notion that her attack will raise the salience of Damelin’s implied cowardice. Having read Political Science at Cambridge and after earning a doctorate in Social Psychology at the London School of Economics, Creasy is certainly aware of this discursive strategy’s effectiveness. The net effect of this exchange is likely to establish Creasy as authoritative and fearless, while simultaneously becoming one-of-the-people. To the public-at-large, she can appear similar to one of their smart, tough friends, making her real and down-to-earth, as Coleman (2006a) suggests is important to establishing authenticity.

## **Educating Citizens**

In February 2011, Creasy introduced a motion to modify an amendment (*HC Debate 3/2/2011, 2011*) to the Consumer Credit (EU Directive) Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/2010) that would protect consumers from predatory lending practices. During the BackBench Business of the Consumer Credit and Debt Management committee, on the 18<sup>th</sup> allotted day 3/2/2011 at 12:47pm, Creasy:

*“calls upon the Government to introduce, alongside measures to increase access to affordable credit, regulatory powers that put in place a range of caps on prices in areas of the market in unsecured lending which are non price-competitive, likely to cause detriment to consumers or where there is evidence of irresponsible practice;” (HC Debate 3/2/2011, 2011)*

In the days surrounding her motion at the House of Commons, Creasy was increasingly vocal about her motion, penning editorials in the Guardian (Creasy, 2011a), and the Times (Creasy, 2011b). She was also vocal on Twitter, and during the one-week period commencing 31 January 2011, which included her debate at the House of Commons on 3 February, tweeted 136 times, almost exclusively about payday loans and her parliamentary statement. Only six of the 136 were on topics other than the credit regulation amendment, and these were friendly and personal. Consider these six:

02/02/2011 09:00	@kevpeel that wasn't in the training - it's behaviour modification see ... * have some actified if you need*
02/02/2011 09:05	@nextleft all I'm saying is I've never seen nat Wei and Chris Morris in the same room at the same time...
02/02/2011 16:59	@will_full welcome to the stowhood! where are you going to be residing?
02/02/2011 21:06	@kevpeel hackney, believe newcastle are tonight....think liverpool aiming to do so as well...
06/02/2011 21:04	half hoping hawaii 5-0 is rubbish. Not sure I have time to commit to more trash tv.....

These tweets are filled with personal details, such as her preference for Actified medication; her sense of humour (e.g. artist/entertainer Chris Morris is not Ai Wei Wei); her love of sports; and her confession to watching “trash TV.” Creasy also takes the time to welcome a new constituent to “the stowhood.” She is clearly eccentric, intelligent, socially aware, politically active, and friendly.

In the days prior to her statement, she also spoke with citizens on Twitter 130 times to explain details of the issue and to encourage activity. In fact, the only hashtags used that week were #vote4credregbill (60 times); #vote4vredregbill (19 times); #credregbill (once) and #vote4credrebill (once). Her @mention use was also high, using them in 80 tweets to a combination of MPs, activists, citizens, bloggers and journalists. But her focus on educating citizens directly was interesting for its personal nature. These representative tweets detail some of the exchanges:

31/01/2011 14:05	Twitter help me explain to people - #vote4vredregbill about capping costs of credit NOT interest rates! Big diff in impact & efficacy!
31/01/2011 14:05	@CashQuestions very happy to discuss this with you and what actually proposing. Agree it's about more than just access to credit too..
02/02/2011 09:07	@reasonablyright ask the whips....in the meantime check out the evidence & support from consumer groups & experts ...#vote4vredregbill
03/02/2011 07:34	@NikDarlington yep but only 2% of people use them so will take long term to provide viable alternative - #vote4credregbill would work now!
03/02/2011 07:44	@NikDarlington yes that's in my bill - not a binary choice between credit unions and credit capping as both needed #vote4credregbill

She is clearly using Twitter not only to campaign, but to explicitly “help [her] to explain to people” what is that she finds objectionable to the current state of payday loan regulation, and offers evidence of these explanations to a broader audience that is clearly interested in the discussion. Consider her messages to both @reasonablyright and @NikDarlington. She teaches (e.g. “2% of people use them”), asks them to learn (e.g. “...check out the evidence...”) and then offers this discussion to those following the #vote4credregbill hashtag. She is behaving as a university lecturer, and educator, by having small discussions in the presence of a larger, interested group, and then offering this discussion to others who might be interested.

It is this additional step of working directly with individuals that distinguishes her educational effort from other generic and broad promotional efforts. Instead of stopping at declaring her intentions and promoting her efforts, she takes the time to explain the issues to her Twitter followers directly, with individuals. The overall effect is to inform, educate and motivate constituents to both learn and act.

## Final Thoughts on the Educator

Educator MPs spend time building sustained civic relationships by proactively mentioning citizens and continuing to involve these citizens in conversations over long periods of time. They are rebuilding the strained relationship between politicians and citizens. Links are offered, and comments are given. The MP includes them in discussions with others in a

conversational voice that contains a full range of linguistic and emotional cues, such as humour and disagreement. They teach, and they're good at it.

For Educator MPs whose conception of democracy is closer to Habermassian Deliberative Democracy ideals that seeks a more informed and engaged public that maintains a sustained relationship with government (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995a; S. Coleman & Gotze, 2001), behaving authentically on Twitter can encourage citizens and mitigate the implied manipulation of mediated engagements (Hall, 2009). Authenticity in the Educator creates new forms of engagement and restores trust in politics because the MP is seen not only as working *for* citizens, but also *with* citizens. Relationships largely unavailable in the pre-Twitter, pre-social media era are cultivated here and can be identified in large datasets through the examination of metadata. URLs are offers to participate; @mentions are direct engagements; @hashtags amplify messages; retweets offer opinions; and for those MPs who tweet regularly and prolifically, Twitter permits citizens to view them as they are: real people.

Authentic talk as performed by the Educator places the reader/citizen in an emotional space to critically engage with speech that is consciously biased in favour of the position that the MP takes. Citizens listen, speak, and move back and forth along the line separating agreement and disagreement. They learn. Huppert has opinions about science policy and is not shy about sharing and discussing them with citizens, other MPs, and journalists. He is opinionated and provides evidence and retweets policy positions of those he trusts. This trust is infectious. Trust an Educator; trust those he trusts. In Huppert's case, the reader, who by now trusts Huppert precisely because he is authentic, is unconsciously biased to agree with his positions on science policy. He is a rational actor. Had the same policy statements been made by a Speaker, whose behaviour generally lacks authenticity, the readers would have an opposite reaction even if the tweet was identical: *"be sceptical of that position; those MPs spin everything."* But in the Educator's case, the personal engagements that establish relationships permit the broader public to critically engage with information that might otherwise be thought of as spin. It is here that the Educator addresses the issue of cynicism correctly described both by Blumler and Gurevitch (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995b) and later by Colman and Blumler (S. Coleman & Blumler, 2009) as being democratically dangerous. Spin sustains a "contempt for politicians" that "weakens

confidence in the audience appeal of extended discussions” (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995b, p. 212), but in the Educator’s case, the extended engagement is functioning properly: citizens trust the message.

The narrative devices present in the totality of an Educator’s tweets—specifically the spontaneity, humour, the performance of being “real” and “down-to-Earth”—allow the audience to suspend mistrust and learn about issues while they engage in a civically productive manner. Authenticity is democratically restorative.

## Chapter 5: The Communicator

Defining the Communicator type naturally leads us into examining two distinct analytic metrics. First, the MP’s metadata reveals a particular pattern, and second, the metadata points to exchanges where they behave in a particular manner. This section will define the Communicator more precisely and then examine the behaviour of Tim Farron MP from Westmoreland to shed analytical light on the Communicator model. Communicators will be examined for spontaneity (Liebes, 2001), personality (S. Coleman, 2006a; Montgomery, 2001a), and the creation of relationships (Henneberg et al., 2009) through an examination of the conversations they engage in.

Communicators present themselves on Twitter as personally available for individual consultation as one might do at an open surgery, with citizens lined up to speak with their MP. It is available to anyone, with no predispositions or agenda, and the MP engages directly with a citizen. On Twitter, however, this discussion is public and available to those following the MP and the citizen. While the citizen may choose to amplify the message with a hashtag, the Communicator MP is concerned mostly with the citizen’s need, and this engagement is democratically restorative in that light. This engagement is precisely of the sort described by Henneberg as a *relational approach* to political marketing in which “long term exchange interactions... benefit all relevant actors and society” (Henneberg et al., 2009, p. 170). Henneberg points to personalized letters and the importance of personality

in these relationships (*ibid*), which is precisely what Communicator MPs excel at. These relationships would not be otherwise available to individual citizens who struggle to attend the surgery in-person, and nor would the publicness of the activity be available for scrutiny without this form of Twitter use; it is direct and personal, yet indirectly open and public. Communicator MPs are generally available at all hours.

Examining the Communicator's speech—and activity—requires examining the engagement differently than the Educator or Speaker because the very nature of this sort of one-to-one-in-the-presence-of-many is substantively more conversational and personal than the other types. Yes, the Educator speaks directly with citizens, but the Communicator does so without the notion that the message will be amplified beyond the followers. It is individual and focused on the citizen directly. These engagements also take place over a longer timeframe and with smaller groups of citizens, often over an hour or an evening. These are small, sustained discussions. The Communicator is less concerned with message amplification—in contrast to the Educator, who frequently includes hashtags to move the exchange beyond the mutual follower to a larger audience—and more concerned with the individual. Applying intimacy to an otherwise remote communication (Linklater, 2007) is a hallmark of authentic talk on Twitter; the citizen is virtually there with the MP.

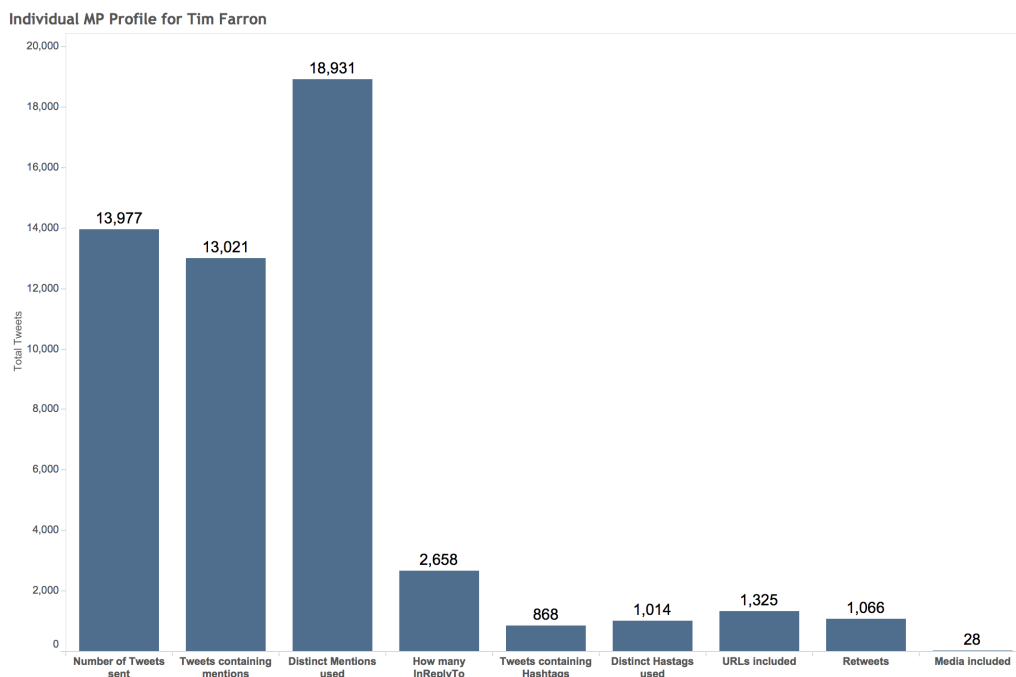
## Defining the Communicator

The defining metadata characteristics of the Communicator are a high ratio of mentions to tweets, approaching and often exceeding 1:1. The MP speaks with one or two people at once, in small conversations. As this style requires a comfort with Twitter use that appears to remove the technology from the conversation—unlike an Educator with his/her frequent insertions of hashtags and URLs—the individual engagements are more personal and conversational in nature. The next requirement for a Communicator is a very low level of URLs, hashtags, and retweets, either approaching, or lower, than 10% of total tweets. These low levels of Twitter convention usage are evident because the Communicator is concerned more with the substance of the conversation; the democratically restorative nature is confined to an individual and less concerned with message amplification beyond the individual and to a lesser extent, the followers. This is a personal engagement.

The content analysis will identify the extent to which the MP is displaying personal characteristics in these engagements. Are they friendly or angry, serious or silly, for example? Which characteristics are evident? Are these MPs available at odd hours, late at night, or over the weekend, like a friend or cousin might be? Is the engagement spontaneous and instant? It is during these engagements that personality occurs, so an examination of this personality is the focus of this chapter.

MP Tim Farron for Westmoreland and Lonsdale (Lib Dem) was selected as the prototype because his metadata profile reveals an MP that consistently speaks mainly with individuals and groups of two to three without including many hashtags or URLs. His usage developed over time from a novice user to one with a specific personal voice. During 2011 his voice became more personal, conversational and natural, and displays his personality, a critical part of being authentic (Liebes, 2001). Farron tweeted 13,977 times during this study; he is the typical Communicator.

### The Prototypical Communicator – Tim Farron



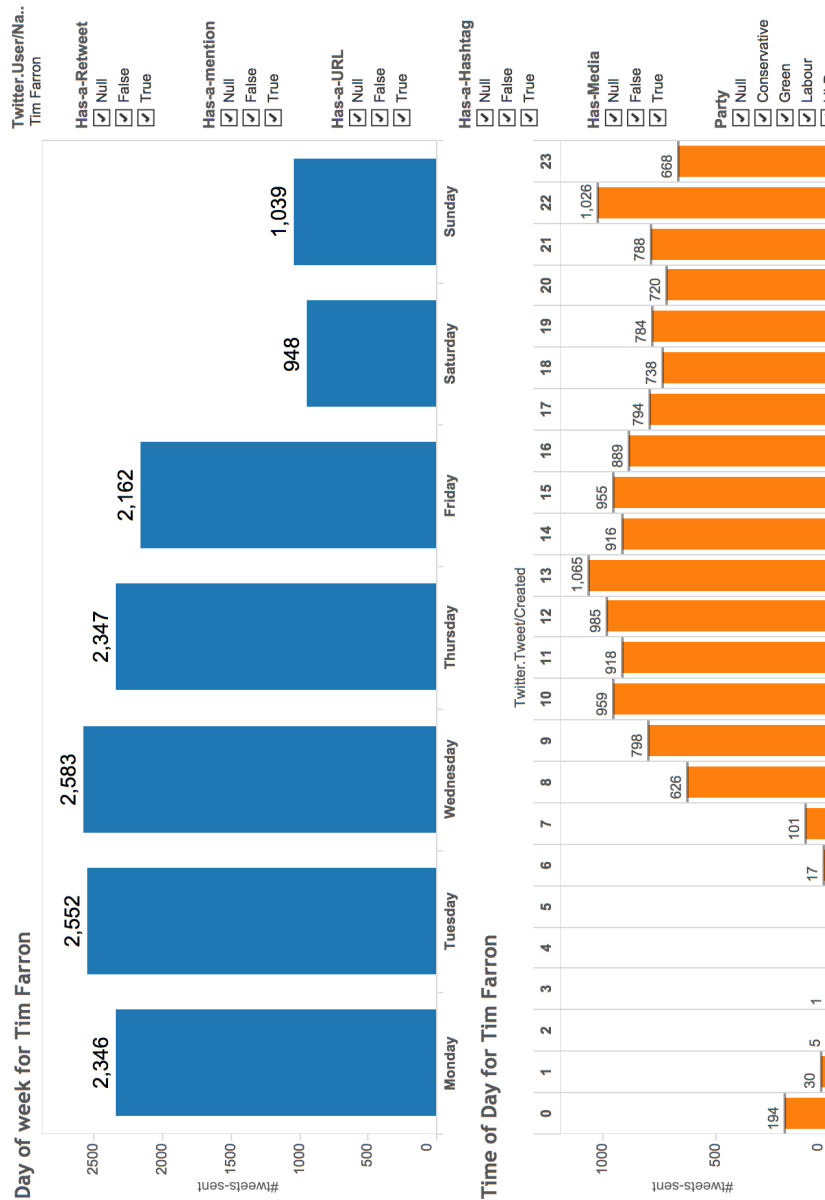
**FIGURE 17 TIM FARRON MP PROFILE 2011-2012**

Tim Farron MP for Westmoreland and Lonsdale (Lib Dem) was chosen as the prototype not only because his metadata profile is that of a Communicator, but because he is, primarily,

prolific. His 13,977 tweets are the 10<sup>th</sup> most produced by all the MPs over this two-year study, and while he is not the most prolific Communicator—Jamie Reed (Labour) 18,554 tweets; and Kerry McCarthy (Labour) 16,768 have tweeted more—Farron’s use of the in-reply-to function is the highest (19% of his tweets) among the 14 heaviest users (more than 10,000 tweets;) and he uses @mentions, as a percentage of his overall total (93%), more than anyone else in that group. During this two-year period, 93% of his tweets contained at least one mention (13,021 mentions and 13,977 tweets), which is the highest rate among MPs with over 10,000 tweets. He also uses the in-reply-to function more often than other MPs with over 10,000 tweets, at 19% (2,668 times over 13,977 tweets.) The metadata is clear: Farron speaks directly with citizens and does so as a portion of his overall Twitter use more often than others. He rarely makes simple statements, and instead prefers to have discussions with his followers over sustained periods.

He was also chosen in part because of how he behaves when speaking with citizens. He has a natural voice, without much of the polish that a politician driven by spin or media logic (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) might employ.

### **Farron Tweets All Day and All Week**



**FIGURE 18 TIME FARRON 2011-2012 TIME OF DAY AND DAY OF WEEK**

Farron begins his Twitter day at 8am and ends at midnight, with similar hourly totals, producing only 348 tweets between midnight and 8am. And though the number of tweets produced over the weekend are typically half of what he produces during the week, 1,987 (14% of his tweets,) it is prolific in its own right. The metadata also reveals, as will be shown, that Farron tweets at all hours of the day and all days of the week, and is completely available to his public, just as a friend might and just as the public might wish their MP to be. The metadata describes a Communicator that tweets often, at all hours of the day, without offering his ideas to a public unfamiliar to him by using hashtags. He speaks directly with individuals in the presence of his followers. Those uninterested in Farron are only likely to read his tweets if a follower retweets the message to another

group. The metadata also reveals how his voice developed. The early months of this study reveal a moderate usage level and describe the rate at which he expanded his use.

### *Three Representative Periods*

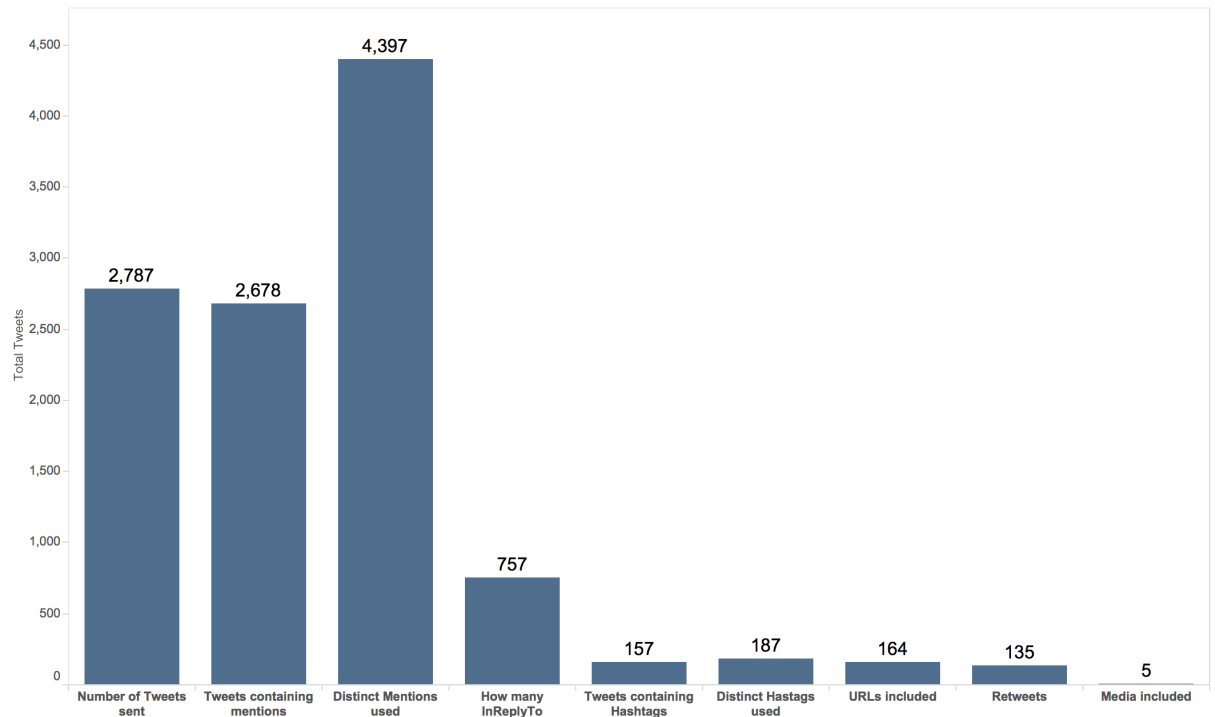
During May to July 2012, Farron's metadata reveals a classic Communicator pattern. His Twitter voice is fully developed and he is behaving authentically. This section will examine two exchanges during this period. He speaks directly with three users one evening in a voice that's described as natural and spontaneous, and while it is live to the participants, it appears in the *perceived now* to those followers who go back and read their tweets at a later time. This period also contains a two-day discussion with one user that is particularly natural, with inside-joke references to people that they both seem to know.

The next period under scrutiny is the beginning, from January 2011 to May 2011, when Farron is developing his Twitter usage. During this period he displays characteristics of a speaker (where he simply makes statements) and a Communicator (where he engages directly with people.) This is a fascinating period to observe, for the metadata and the associated content clearly show how his natural voice develops from one unsure of Twitter to someone confident and spontaneous in its use.

The final Farron period, from 24 September to 31 December 2012 displays an MP who is a full Communicator. The metadata shows that the pattern he began the study with (part Communicator, part novice, part Speaker) is now almost entirely communicative. He rarely makes statements and is almost entirely natural, unrehearsed, real and down-to-Earth. His development is complete.

## He Communicates Directly with People

Individual MP Profile for Tim Farron



**FIGURE 19 MAY-JULY 2012, FARRON HAS MANY DISCUSSIONS**

As described in the Methodology chapter the Communicator profile is used to find evidence of authentic talk, and this time period, between 17 May and 31 July fits the profile. All but 100 tweets contain mentions (2,678) and most have more than one (4,397 total mentions). His use of the in-reply-to function is very high, at 27% (757 out of 2787 tweets). He rarely includes hashtags (157) or URLs (164) and almost never includes media (only 5). He is clearly having discussion with individuals and small groups.

A close look at this period displays evidence of personality and discussion. One particular discussion takes place over a 25-minute period on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May during the early evening, after a normal workday, between 5:26pm and 5:51pm on a Wednesday. The three citizens are @Birdyword, @Scottishliberal, @Woodstockjag. The discussion is economic in nature and concerns agriculture policy. Consider the manner in which this narrative establishes Farron's personality.

09/05/2012 17:26

@Birdyword @scottishliberal @woodstockjag But supermarkets don't work like that - they expect milk as an example produced as a loss leader!

This conversation fragment begins with Farron displaying his knowledge about how supermarkets behave and offers insight into marketing theory by declaring that milk sales are a “loss leader.” He uses an exclamation point to add emotion, perhaps outrage, and in doing so distinguishes his ideas from mere contributions (which may be more sedate than this declaration.) In this context he is authoritative—*trust this man* (Liebes, 2001)—just as an MP should be, which is to say trustworthy, competent, passionate, informed, and by having this discussion in public, after work, accessible and helpful.

09/05/2012 17:39	@Birdyword @scottishliberal @woodstockjag I don't think you will find any MP arguing for less farmers!
09/05/2012 17:41	@Birdyword @scottishliberal @woodstockjag Inflated? I think we will have to agree to disagree there!

Thirteen minutes later (shown above) Farron responds with additional comments, first defending MPs as intelligent, rational and clearly in favour of keeping the domestic agriculture industry afloat and then having the temerity to not degenerate into side-stepping an issue by acquiescing and instead *publicly disagreeing with a citizen*. Both tweets are finished with exclamation points, when, given the thirteen-minute gap between the initial tweet and the following one, displays the ability to remain rational whilst still passionate. Farron presents as passionate, informed, accessible, helpful, and rational.

The following three tweets extends the discussion into deeper subject matter expertise, just as an active public would conceivably want their MP to be: expert and informed. First he responds, again with a polite and rational disagreement, that the parliamentary solution to “levelling the playing field” is not protectionist, presumably because Farron was accused of taking that position.

09/05/2012 17:44	@Birdyword @scottishliberal @woodstockjag Again I'd say its not protectionism it is helping level the playing field.
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He is now performing a scrappy, pugnacious version of himself, for his contribution to this discussion, now 18 minutes long, has Farron using three exclamation points and a clear repeat of a former position (“again, I’d say...”). Farron is jockeying for intellectual position at the top of this discussion, to a position of authority and credibility. He then continues in

a calmer manner, presumably to diffuse what could become an ugly exchange, by simply stating a fact (“...average hill farmer earns...”) and then finishes by suggesting that another government agency might provide additional insight.

09/05/2012 17:45	@Birdyword @scottishliberal @woodstockjag The average hill farmer earns 5k a year.
09/05/2012 17:47	@Birdyword @scottishliberal @woodstockjag I think it's through regulation. Like Ofgem or Ofcom.

These exchanges in particular show evidence of Farron’s personality: he’ll defend his position when challenged; he’s informed; rational; passionate; knowledgeable; available and helpful. There is evidence of personality here; Farron is engaged with citizens, in public, and anyone reading this exchange would have view of Farron that they may form judgements against. Perhaps the public appreciates an MP with these characteristics. Or perhaps they might dislike him. But both reactions, trust or dislike, are motivational and are likely to form the basis for discussion with others, offline. Farron’s performance is authentic.

This next series of tweets is with @AAEmmerson, a university-age Liberal Democrat organizer from The Shetland Islands who is helping to elect a Lib Dem to the Scottish Parliament while also working on his dissertation. Farron performs himself as helpful and friendly, sincere, informal, and even eccentric. These tweets are selected from the same time-period, the end of May through July 2012, and occur on a Friday afternoon around lunchtime. Their mood is good.

11/05/2012 13:03	@AAEmmerson Hi :)
11/05/2012 13:10	@AAEmmerson Cumbria is good today thanks!

Farron is simply being friendly to an engaged youth. The tone of the tweets is informal, and he uses both an emoticon and an exclamation point to convey emotion, first with a smile

and then by accentuating “good” and “thanks”. The overall effect is one of sincerity and social equality. They are both happy and commenting on their fine moods.

The next day, Saturday afternoon, Farron remains accessible to the youngster, first being polite when they disagree. The absence of an initial tweet from Farron indicates that he is responding to a comment from @AAEmmerson presented, presumably as a statement that Farron takes issue with. Farron is, again is presenting himself as authoritative yet polite, helpful on a Saturday afternoon and encouraging to a young civically engaged citizen.

12/05/2012 14:28	@AAEmmerson I think we will have to agree to disagree on that one.
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Then, 29 minutes later, Farron offers advice and assists @AAEmmerson on how to stay true to the Lib Dem vision. He continues to appear respectful, helpful and authoritative.

12/05/2012 14:57	@AAEmmerson Some people do but not enough. But we all need to work to make sure everyone does. Our vision needs to be positive and bold.
12/05/2012 15:01	@AAEmmerson I think we have a series of things we all agree on. Freedom, democracy & equality and policies that run from them.
12/05/2012 15:22	@AAEmmerson I agree with that. But with govt we have to be careful so this one of the reasons I am on the board of a new thinktank..
12/05/2012 15:23	@AAEmmerson we will hopefully look at this, inform the debate and make sure a liberal voice is heard. Cheers, Tim

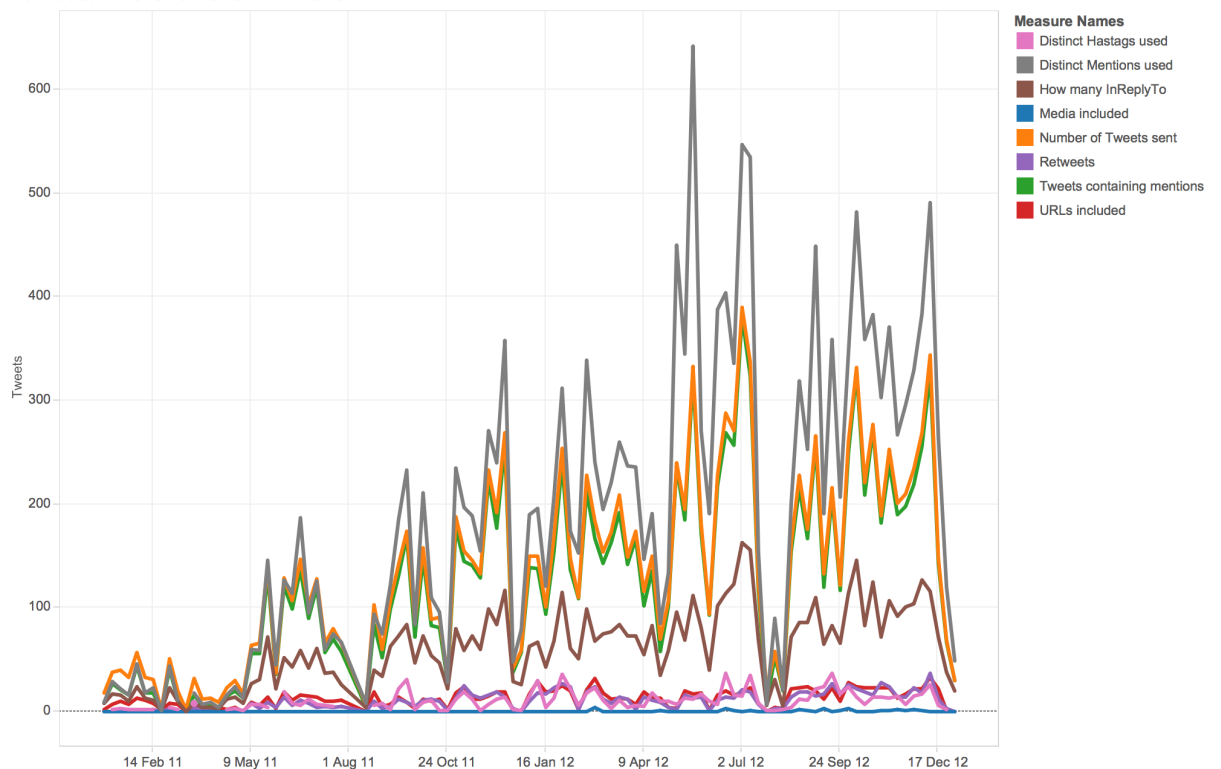
After an hour, Farron and @AAEmmerson are finished with the civics lesson, and the result is that an engaged citizen is equipped with more skills and knowledge to be civically productive and more likely to remain so (Norris, 2000). Farron is helpful and friendly, even signing off with “Cheers, Tim”.

These exchanges between 17 May and 31 July of 2012 are typical of tweets from that time period. Farron comes across as someone helpful, available, sincere, knowledgeable and helpful. He presents facts in his discussions and encourages debate and participation.

Overall, the effect of Farron's Twitter feed is one of democratic restoration. His followers witness these interactions and see his personality. The Communicator framework identified it as being likely to contain authentic behaviour and it has.

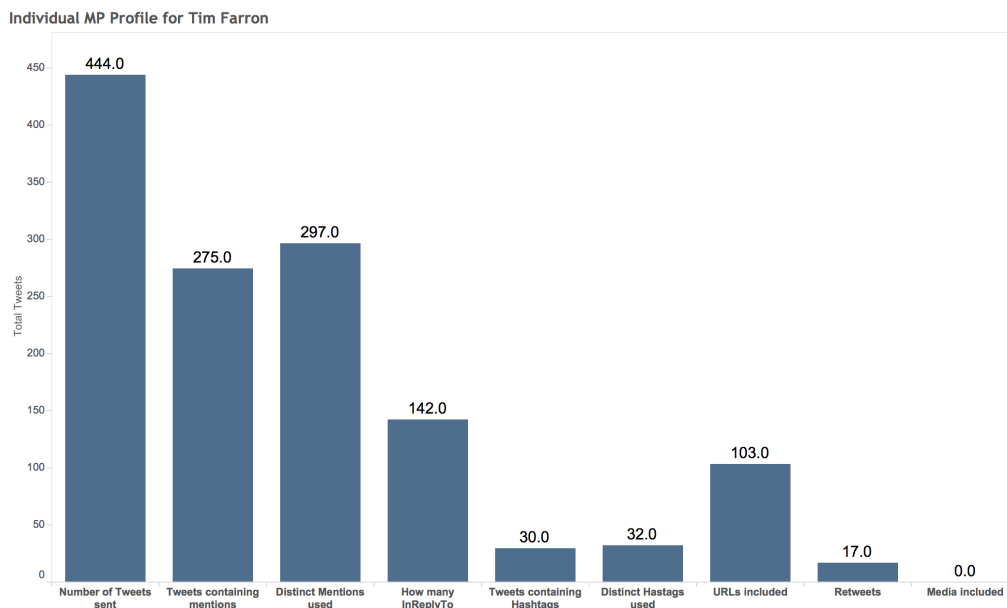
## But he wasn't always that way

Individual MP over time for Tim Farron



**FIGURE 20 TOTAL USAGE 2011-2012. VERY LOW USAGE JANUARY TO MAY 2011**

Though Tim Farron performs as a Communicator, he didn't always behave that way. Figure 20 (above) shows Farron's use from the beginning of the study, on 1 January, through December 2012, and clearly indicates that in the early part of 2011, he tweeted approximately 30 times per week until the 9<sup>th</sup> of May, when his use increases two and often threefold. This section describes Farron's development from a casual Twitter user without a consistent voice into becoming someone whose personality is evident more consistently throughout his daily use. These tweets will focus on how Farron behaves with two distinct styles during the first four months of this study, January – April 2011. He clearly behaves as both a Speaker and a Communicator during this period before eventually finding his natural performance style and becoming a complete Communicator.



**FIGURE 21 BEGINNING OF JANUARY – END OF APRIL 2011**

The metadata for the period 1 January to 30 April 2011 reveals totals that are somewhere between a Speaker and a Communicator. He uses mentions regularly (62% of tweets) and in-reply-tos (32%), but this pattern is much different than during the next 20 months, when 94% of his tweets included a mention. What is interesting is that Farron uses the in-reply-to function often (32%) during this period, but in the subsequent 19 months, when his voice matures and his behaviour settles into his permanent long-term Communicator pattern, he uses the in-reply-to function only 19% of the time. That Farron wishes to, and actually does communicate directly with people is not in question, only the manner in which he does is relevant here: that he communicates directly with citizens is established in the prior section. The overall number of engagements increases, but after April 2011 the manner in which he conducts these interactions transitions from the in-reply-to method to the mention method. He simply doesn't use the "reply" button on his Twitter client, and instead just begins typing. Still, the pattern during this period is not one of a Communicator (the ratio of mentions to tweets is too low,) nor is it a Speaker (there are too many mentions and in-reply-tos per tweets.) He is between styles and his voice is developing (see below.)

In these tweets, taken from the 19<sup>th</sup> of January 2011, between 9:20am and 7:36pm, Farron displays two distinct behaviours: he speaks and communicates. In the first three, all at

9:20am, he makes statements, and his call-to-action is a URL. The fourth is simply a statement.

19/01/2011 09:20	MP slams banks for failing to support local businesses: <a href="http://bit.ly/fhHpBG">http://bit.ly/fhHpBG</a>
19/01/2011 09:20	MP slams Cumbria County Council for wasting public money: <a href="http://bit.ly/ht6yD2">http://bit.ly/ht6yD2</a>
19/01/2011 09:20	MP welcomes government plans to support local pubs: <a href="http://bit.ly/gT4xZE">http://bit.ly/gT4xZE</a>
19/01/2011 09:43	just spoken in the debate on fuel poverty in favour of regulating off mains gas providers to keep down rural energy bills

As described in the methodology chapter, including a URL is an unambiguous offer to participate civically, with clear encouragement to become involved and learn more. But these tweets contain none of Farron's personality and do not directly contribute to either creating or restoring trust between his followers and himself. For anyone reading these tweets, the path to a trust-producing moment is long and faces many barriers. The citizen must first read the tweet and decide if it's interesting before making the next decision to click on the link. A reader may not have the time or inclination to investigate at that moment, or perhaps they're reading the tweet on a cell phone and do not enjoy the mobile web experience. Readers may decide to email the link to themselves for later use. Many barriers in the process of investigating the subject matter and participating in the debate present themselves. Once the reader clicks and reads, there exists a moment of question: is this story accurate or relevant? At this point in the participatory process citizens are far removed from Farron; they instead are focused on the web content and faced with their reaction to it instead of closely associating their feeling of intellectual gratification with Farron.

The next two tweets, only moments later, however are direct engagements with citizens.

19/01/2011 09:45	@hmatthews92 hmmm... Good spot, i should invest in a thesaurus!
19/01/2011 11:52	@LilyHepburn I'm sure your friend won't need any luck - but he has my very best wishes, 'winning for Whiston' has a ring to it!

To @hmatthews, Farron uses literary devices similar to journalist Tom Wolfe by employing onomatopoeia<sup>24</sup> to pull the reader closer to the moment's mood, and by extension Farron's mood. "Hmmm," says Farron, and the reader has no other response other than to hear that sound in his own head. The reader understands Farron's contemplation, removing any ambiguity as to Farron's mood when the admission to "invest in a thesaurus" is made. Farron is being humble and now presents himself as contemplative and open to suggestions. His problem-solving process is clear and plain to see: *I will adjust my actions in the presence of new facts.*

The path to connecting trust and Farron is much shorter in this exchange, with far fewer barriers. The reader has sent a message to Farron and seen, clearly, a contemplative mood and change of opinion in return. There is no link to click on; no URL to send; no investigation to make. The reader may now experience trust directly.

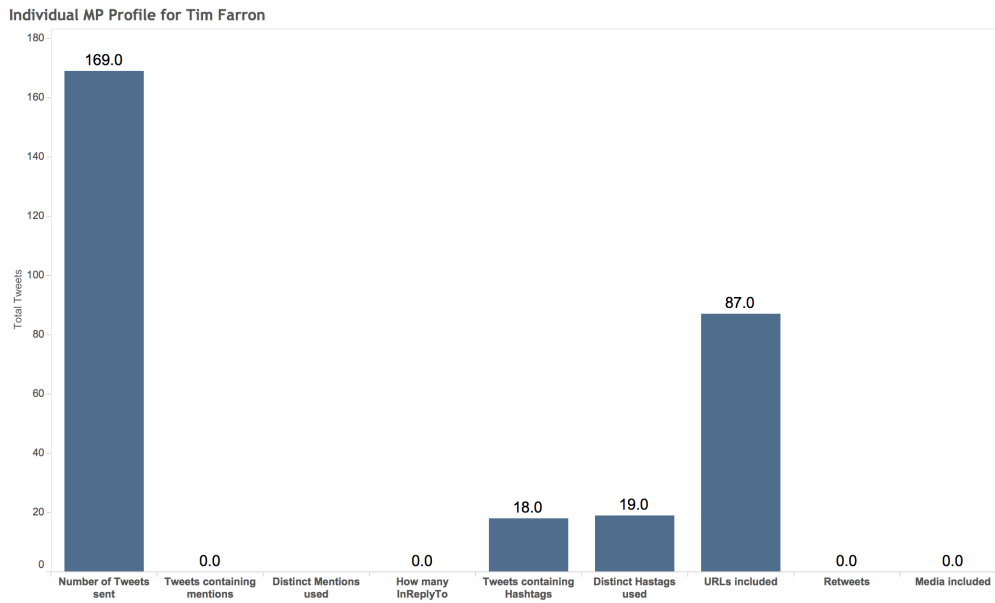
On the 19<sup>th</sup> of January, 2011, Farron behaves as a Speaker<sup>25</sup> with an engagement no different to previous non-Twitter announcements and has done little to embolden a reader to participate or establish a relationship, and as a Communicator by engaging directly with a citizen, in the presence of all his followers, in a manner likely to produce a feeling of trust and a conveyance of personality. The remainder of this period, between January and the end of April behaves in a similar manner. Farron is both a Speaker and a Communicator.

### **When Tweets without @mentions are examined, he's a Speaker**

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<sup>24</sup> Onomatopoeia is defined by dictionary.com as "the formation of a word, as cuckoo, meow, honk, or boom, by imitation of a sound made by or associated with its referent."

<sup>25</sup> See the Speaker chapter for more information about this model. In this context, Farron's metadata reveals a different use of Twitter: He is making statements instead of speaking with people.

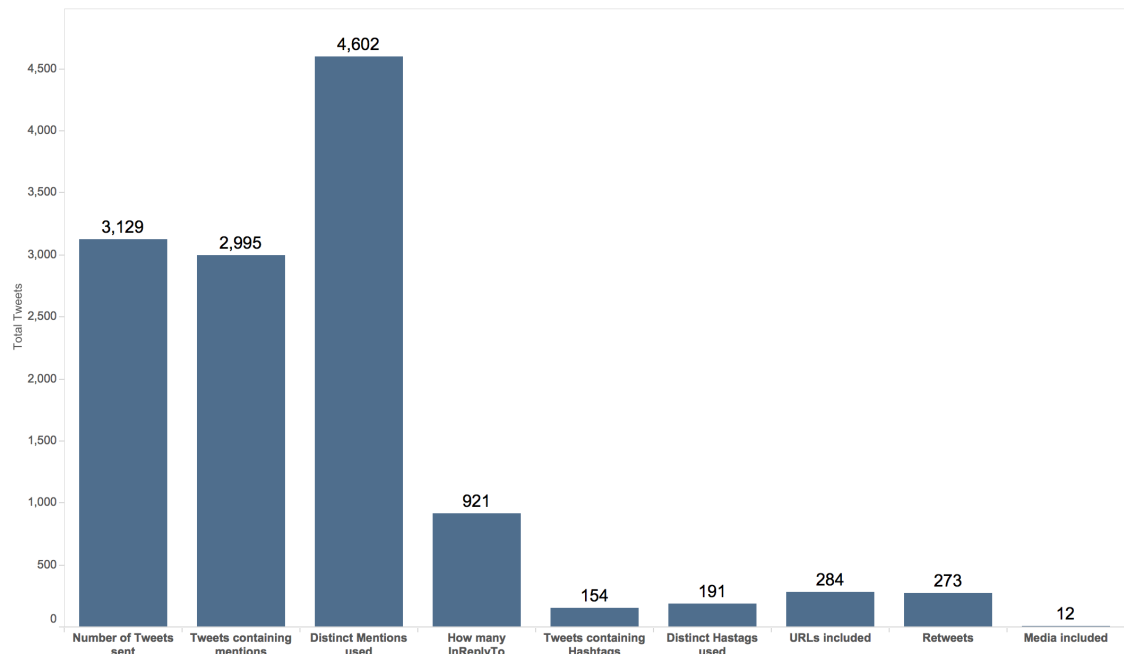


**FIGURE 22 JAN-MAY 2011: TWEETS WITHOUT MENTIONS**

When the tweets with mentions are removed from the totals during this period, the metadata reveals a profile consistent with a Speaker, with 38% (169 out of 444 tweets during this period) of his tweets containing little more than a statement and a URL.

## By 24 September 2012, he's a full Communicator

Individual MP Profile for Tim Farron

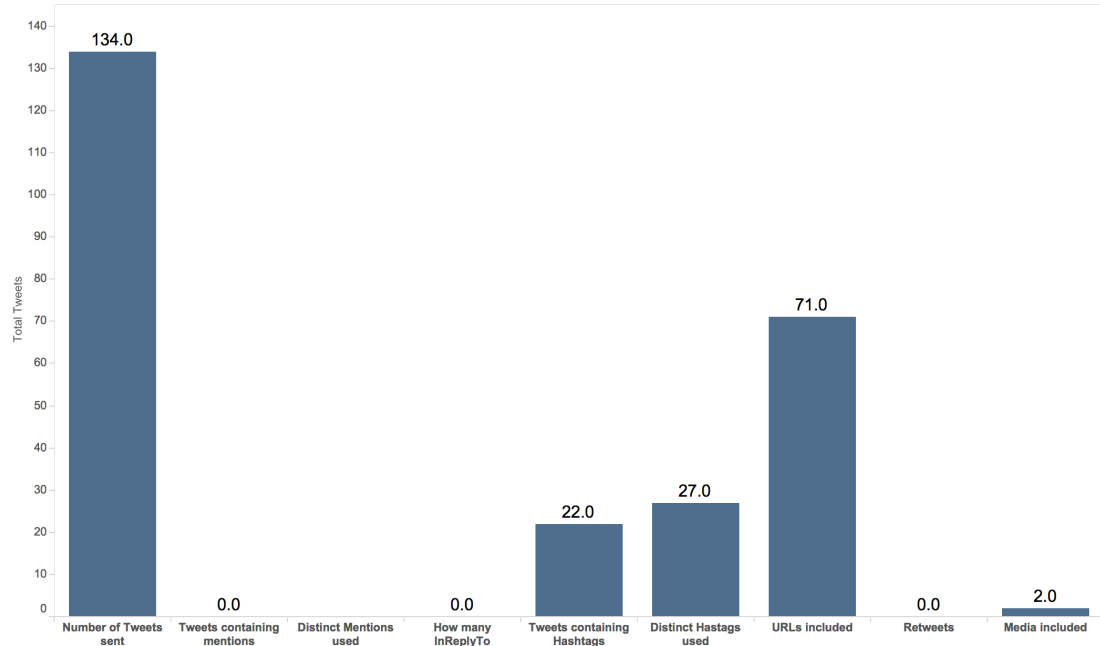


**FIGURE 23 FARRON IS A COMMUNICATOR 24 SEPTEMBER-31 DECEMBER 2012**

By 24 September 2012, at the end of the period being studied, Farron presents a Communicator. The high number of distinct mentions (4,602) indicates that he is having many small discussions regularly throughout the period. He still uses the in-reply-to function 29% of the time, which indicates that he is remaining spontaneous, and the low levels of hashtag, retweet and URL inclusion indicate that he is having discussions in the presence of their followers, but not amplifying them past this group. His discussions are personal and direct. He is engaged with the public during each part of the civic participation process rather than encouraging them to do something else.

### *He Still Speaks, But Very Rarely*

Individual MP Profile for Tim Farron



**FIGURE 24 24 SEPTEMBER-31 DECEMBER 2012 WITHOUT MENTIONS**

He's only a Speaker 4% (134 out of 3129 during the end of 2012) of the time compared to 38% of the time in the beginning of 2011. When he presents himself as a Speaker during this period, the tweets are void of personality, and read like press-releases. There is nothing of the engaging Farron performed in his personal engagements. He is not funny, angry, or discursive. He does, though encourage participation by including URLs. These are indicative of his Speaker tweets from this time period. Note the lack of personality or direct engagement.

27/09/2012 15:44	'228k will make sure no Cumbrian child is left behind' says MP <a href="http://t.co/63Qm1Rly">http://t.co/63Qm1Rly</a>
28/09/2012 10:38	Can I help in any way? My next advice surgery is tomorrow at Windermere Library from 10-11am. No appointment is necessary.
02/10/2012 11:16	Cumbrian village selected for broadband trial (From The Westmorland Gazette) <a href="http://t.co/22dsYEoN">http://t.co/22dsYEoN</a>
02/10/2012 15:10	MP HAS 'POSITIVE' DISCUSSIONS WITH EDUCATION MINISTER OVER SCHOOLS FUNDING: South Lakes MP Tim Farron has today ... <a href="http://t.co/QUXRYcWH">http://t.co/QUXRYcWH</a>

## Democratic Transparency: Tim Farron MP and Karl Turner MP Have a Barney

Farron's Twitter behaviour has been described, thus far, as engaging and therefore democratically restorative, but he also restores democracy by being transparent in his dealings with the opposition. During this engagement, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2012, Farron engages angrily with an opposition-party MP, Karl Turner (Labour) of Kingston upon Hull East, on a Sunday evening from his Blackberry over a 20-minute period beginning at 10:12pm. It is important to note that this discussion began 24 minutes earlier, and that this fragment represents a 20-minute period in the middle of a longer exchange that goes on past 11pm.

18/11/2012 22:12	@KarlTurnerMP @Saggydaddy @afneil The feelings mutual. Your party is illiberal and authoritarian. 92 days without trial, child detention.
18/11/2012 22:15	@KarlTurnerMP @borobarrister This comes from the party that cut the 10p tax rate, the derisory 75p pension increase.
18/11/2012 22:18	@KarlTurnerMP Have you been hitting the eggnog a little early? It appears so...
18/11/2012 22:19	@Arrest_Bankers @KarlTurnerMP @Saggydaddy @afneil Easy...Karl doesn't like people pointing out Labour's failures... ;)

At the beginning of this conversational fragment, Farron and Turner are clearly disagreeing, shamelessly and aggressively, in the presence of four citizens (@Saggydaddy, @afneil, @borobarrister, and @Arrest\_banker), over a policy position. Farron accuses Turner of tweeting-while-drunk, which has the teasing ambiguous nature of aggression that has yet to turn violent and recreates for the followers the tension of a looming bar-fight. Farron even recruits the followers as compatriots by pointing out Turner's intellectual failings in a manner easy to describe as comradery. This choice presents Farron someone who will push the limit of aggressive talk, before softening the approach, to both avoid a discursively violent clash and to appear rational-but-angry.

But Farron doesn't back down completely and continues to perform the discussion in confrontational terms. Consider the tone of his following tweets:

18/11/2012 22:22	@AFCRDMark @KarlTurnerMP @borobarrister It's only a matter of time... I'm still waiting for my answer about Iraq. I'm not holding my breath
------------------	---

18/11/2012 22:23	@welsh_gas_doc @KarlTurnerMP Yeah that will never happen.
18/11/2012 22:25	@KarlTurnerMP @RetiringViolet Still no answer to my question though. Are you proud of Iraq? 92 day detention? And locking children up?
18/11/2012 22:29	@KarlTurnerMP @retiringviolet Not what I asked as 'Shadow Attorney General' are you proud of 92 day detention or locking children up.

These tweets are rhetorical and confrontational, and in the context of the past comments about eggnog, are intended to draw Turner out in to the open with open-ended questions that would require Turner to speak for the Labour party, which has the effect of recruiting the Labour whip as an unwilling confederate to Farron's (who is a Liberal Democrat) attack. The message here is clear: *would you like to defend the Labour position now, in public, and draw the ire of your whip?*

And now Farron becomes even more aggressive, implying that Turner is a simpleton, unable to grasp the intellectual requirements of his job, before daring Turner to engage angrily ("do you need an atlas for Xmas?")

18/11/2012 22:29	@KarlTurnerMP @retiringviolet I can ask a simpler question if that one is too hard. But I thought as justice was your area apparently...
18/11/2012 22:32	@KarlTurnerMP @retiringviolet It might come as a massive shock but Iraq is a different country! I know.. Do you need an atlas for Xmas?

Anyone following this exchange for evidence of closure would only need to wait a minute to find out if Turner could be drawn out into a petty response, and at 22:33, Turner responds with a childlike subject change, and an equally juvenile "double dare you?" Turner even goes so far as to tag his final tweet with "Disgrace!", a linguistic marker identical to that used by the current US President, Donald Trump.

18/11/2012 22:33	@timfarron @retiringviolet come on Timothy. Give us an answer on our #NHS privatisation. Do it Timothy. Double dare you?
18/11/2012 22:33	@timfarron @KarlTurnerMP Mr Farron, your party has signed up to more illiberal policies since May 2010 than Labour ever did in 13 years!

18/11/2012 22:34 @rob9441 @brickystan @timfarron @saggydaddy @afneil I will never work with them. Disgrace!

The overall effect of Farron's exchange on this Sunday evening was to behave as an angry, but rationally controlled, and deftly discursive political operator, and the small group involved (Turner, and seven citizens) subsequently has a new view of Farron as a person. This exchange is rife with personality and authentic talk and consistent with a Communicator's conversational behaviour.

## Chapter 6: The Promoter

Promoters make up the overwhelming majority of parliamentary Twitter users. 246 of the 405 MPs in this study are Promoters, and use multiple messaging techniques (such as making statements, amplifying messages and engaging citizens directly,) and employ distinctly different voices when doing so. They are not of a single behaviour like a Communicator—who engages small groups directly, in a natural voice, to the almost complete exclusion of other techniques—and instead perform as traditional politicians, using the digital equivalents of a navy suit, a door-knock, and a firm handshake. Trust is assumed present in this type of messaging, and this behaviour serves to reaffirm the MP's position as someone acting on the citizens' behalf or concerned with the same social and political issues, rather than acknowledging a citizen's need to address messaging scepticism and build a long-term relationship with their representative. Promoters are doing the same things they've always done, but with new tools, and this behaviour is evident in the metadata.

As described in the Analytical Framework, various Twitter conventions are indicative of various modes of behaviour. An MP wishing to amplify his message might include a hashtag, or multiple hashtags. A message directed at a person or small group would use an @mention, or multiple mentions. A call-to-action manifests in a URL that directs a citizen to engage and participate by learning more. A discussion may start by simply making a statement, or retweeting another's message. Including a photo might make a citizen smile. Each of these behaviours has a pre-Twitter offline equivalent: a statement to the media is still a statement on Twitter, just as a get-out-the-vote campaign can be accomplished with an effective URL. Direct mail (@mentions,) and political endorsements (retweets,) are also present. MPs wishing to market a message to an interest group can use a hashtag instead of purchasing a mailing list. And message management guidelines apply as well: Labour MP Tom Harris tweeted a link to his YouTube video comparing Alex Salmond to Hitler, and was relieved of his post as Labour's Social Media tsar (Carrell, 2012). MPs who employ the same messaging methods, and the same political marketing tasks on Twitter as they do offline,

are classified as a Promoter, and this chapter will examine the Promoter's messaging for the performance of authentic talk as described by Leibes (2001), Montgomery (2001a) and Coleman (2006a), and position this performance in Henneberg's framework (2009) of political marketing management as one concerned mostly with selling rather than building sustained relationships with citizens.

### The Prototype - Rob Halfon MP (Conservative)

Rob Halfon MP (Conservative) for Harlow has been selected to explore the Promoter behavioural model. Rather than use Twitter to build long-term relationships with his constituency or the public at large, he uses it to sell himself, as Henneberg describes (2009). Halfon presents as a Schumpeterian politician that can be trusted to act on the peoples' behalf and, in dramaturgical terms, performs his onstage persona as someone with a partially visible backstage persona. He utilizes Twitter to sell his positions and policies, and engages in behaviour that could be seen as consistent with the Educator, Communicator and Speaker profiles each day, depending on what he wants to accomplish. He uses Twitter as an enhanced press-release platform, using many participatory elements and plain speech, and does so in the guise of a modern digitally-connected representative that encourages participation traditionally, by making political marketing statements and encouraging users to either do something offline or click on a link. He speaks carefully but not particularly personally. There is very little overall evidence of personality or spontaneity, as is required for authentic behaviour (S. Coleman, 2006a; Liebes, 2001; Margaretten & Gaber, 2012) and it is this behaviour in the context of a conservative democratic philosophy that is particularly interesting.

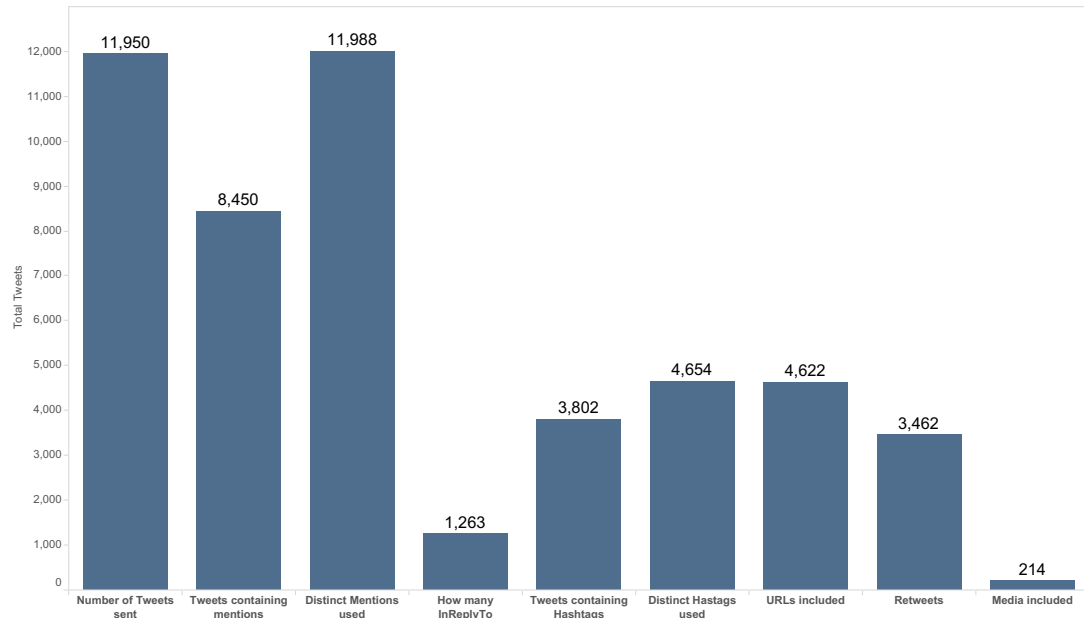
In their examination positioning political marketing management within separate conceptions of democracy—specifically a Schumpeterian Competitive Elitist model and a Habermassian Deliberative Democracy model—Henneberg and Scammell (2009) emphasize Deliberative Democracy's insistence on building sustained relationships with constituents and this relationship's ability to inform and motivate civic participation. This behaviour is a core part of the Educator and Communicator: sustained personal

relationships are cultivated and maintained. It is not, however a core component of the Promoter.

The Deliberative Democracy conception of democracy requires politicians to be responsive to an informed public while mitigating the dangers of being driven by an uninformed one. Henneberg continues by acknowledging that the Competitive Elitist model—which “[produces] a government that takes it upon itself to establish the public good,” (2009, p. 174)—engages in constituency management differently, and instead communicates in a manner that encourages activity which reinforces the idea that their MP is stable and competent to lead rather than to build more personal, sustained relationships. My study has operationalized much of this work into behavioural models that recognizes different participatory activities and identifies them on Twitter. Rob Halfon’s behaviour, while democratically encouraging, relies little on his personality and authenticity, except to express his love for his dog, *Downton Abbey*, and weather reports—all safe subjects—and instead he presents himself as a solid, stable Tory who is working for his constituents.

## Rob Halfon Twitter Behaviour 2011-2012

Individual MP Profile for Robert Halfon MP



**FIGURE 25 ROB HALFON MP FOR HARLOW OVERALL TOTALS 2011-2012**

Rob Halfon MP for Harlow uses Twitter extensively, producing 11,950 tweets between 2011 and 2012, with high levels of mentions (11,988), hashtags (4,654), and URLs (4,652). He is the 12<sup>th</sup> most prolific tweeter identified in this study. His profile appears as a Promoter (see figure 25, above). He tweets regularly, across the week and at waking hours (see figure 26, below), and should, by all accounts, be seen to be performing authentically. But a closer analysis of his tweets—the “human touch” required for “contextual sensitivity” (Lewis et al., 2013, p. 48)—reveals an MP who uses Twitter to behave as a traditional politician does who has modernized his political marketing efforts—characterised by Henneberg as “selling-oriented, ... uni-directional and [with] episode-based exchanges” focused on large groups or “the general prevailing public opinion” (2009, p. 172). His legislative focus is on fuel prices, and after winning his seat in 2010 launched a website, “Petrol Promise”, to petition government. He is also an outspoken supporter of FairFuelUK, a lobbying group devoted to a reducing fuel taxes. Fuel-related mentions—@PetrolPromise, @FairFuelUK—are used in 547 exchanges with followers. This issue affects citizens across the nation, not just his constituents, and is consistent with Henneberg’s

description of a politician engaged in “political salesmanship” (2009, p. 177). Of particular note is that Halfon became the Minister for State and Skills in 2016, and his Twitter behaviour (but not his metadata profile,) becomes that of a digitally aware member of Government. He speaks, but not typically with individual members of the public, and during this study, from 2011-2012 is seemingly developing his behavioural profile in preparation for that role. Even his Twitter account name is geared toward campaigning:

*Halfon4harlowMP*. There is, some evidence of his personal interests—he retweets weather forecasts and excitement over his dog and Downton Abbey—but overwhelmingly his tweets are political marketing activities consistent with a Schumpeterian conservative ideal: he performs himself as a politician with the ability to represent the public.

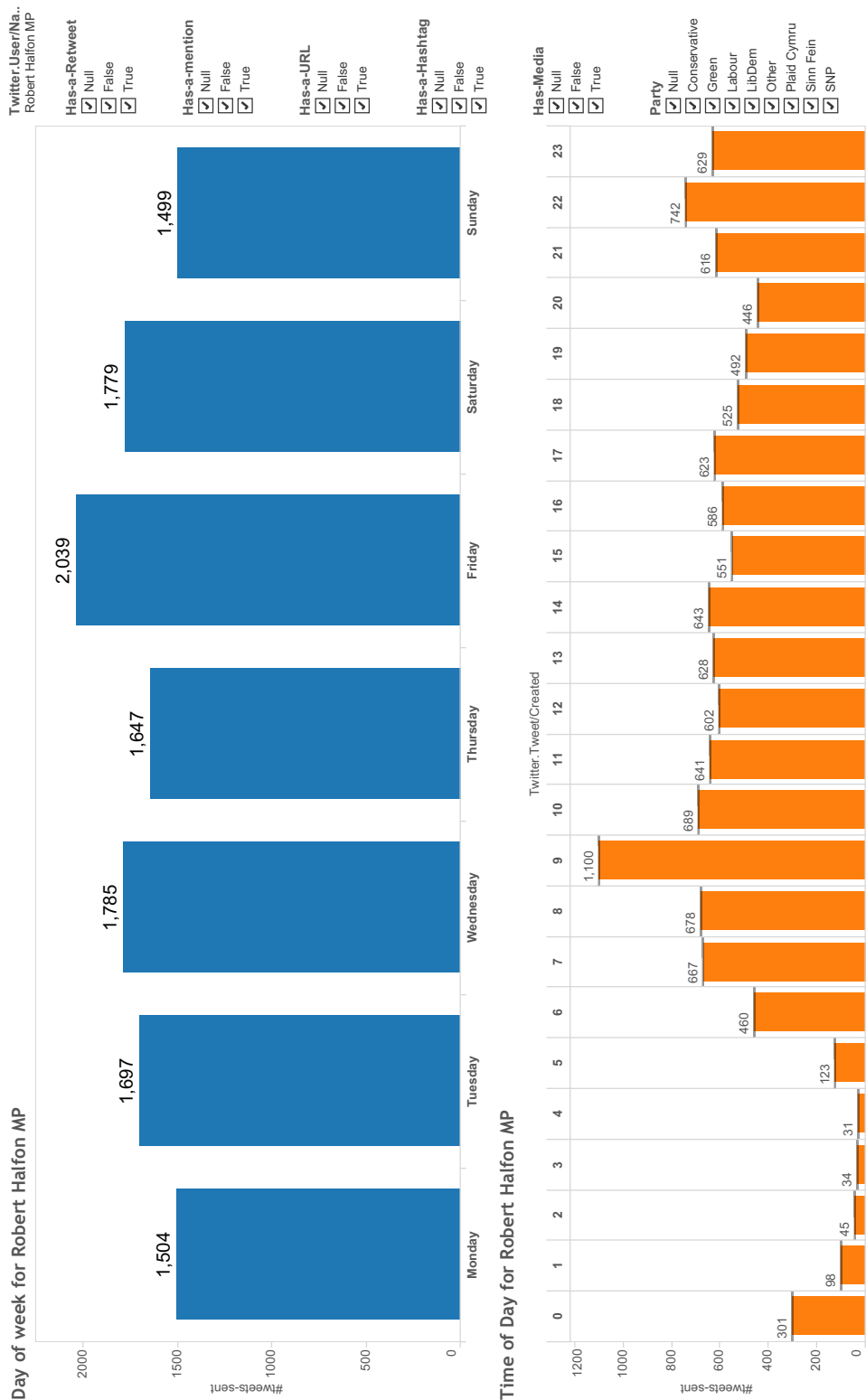


FIGURE 26 HALFON TIME OF DAY AND DAY OF WEEK TOTALS

Halfon uses Twitter extensively, as many Promoters do, and tweets all week long, and all day and much of the night. He is always on Twitter. He does, however, begin his day by

tweeting and ends his day similarly, as is evident in Figure 31 (above). Note the spikes at 9am and then again at 10pm. During 2011 and 2012, he tweeted 1,100 times between 9am and 10am, and then 1,672 times between 10pm and 1am. Of particular interest is that he behaves as a Promoter late at night and has always done so during the two-year study (figure 32 below.) He is a tireless MP at work, all the time. Note the high levels of each metric between 10pm and 1am, (652 hashtags; 639 urls; and 568 retweets; all in 1,672 tweets.) Essentially all of his hashtags are political during this time or are imploring people to *Follow him Back*— #FB, 277 times—and he covers BBC Question Time, Syria, Gaza, Israel, Harlow, Libya, the LIBOR scandal, Newsnight, and the Olympics, all socio-political issues that involve his governmental work. Though he speaks in a natural voice, which is not unusual for a Promoter, he continues to be onstage as an MP late in the evening. He is the consummate Conservative party salesman, protecting his Harlow seat and supporting his party's position on broader issues.

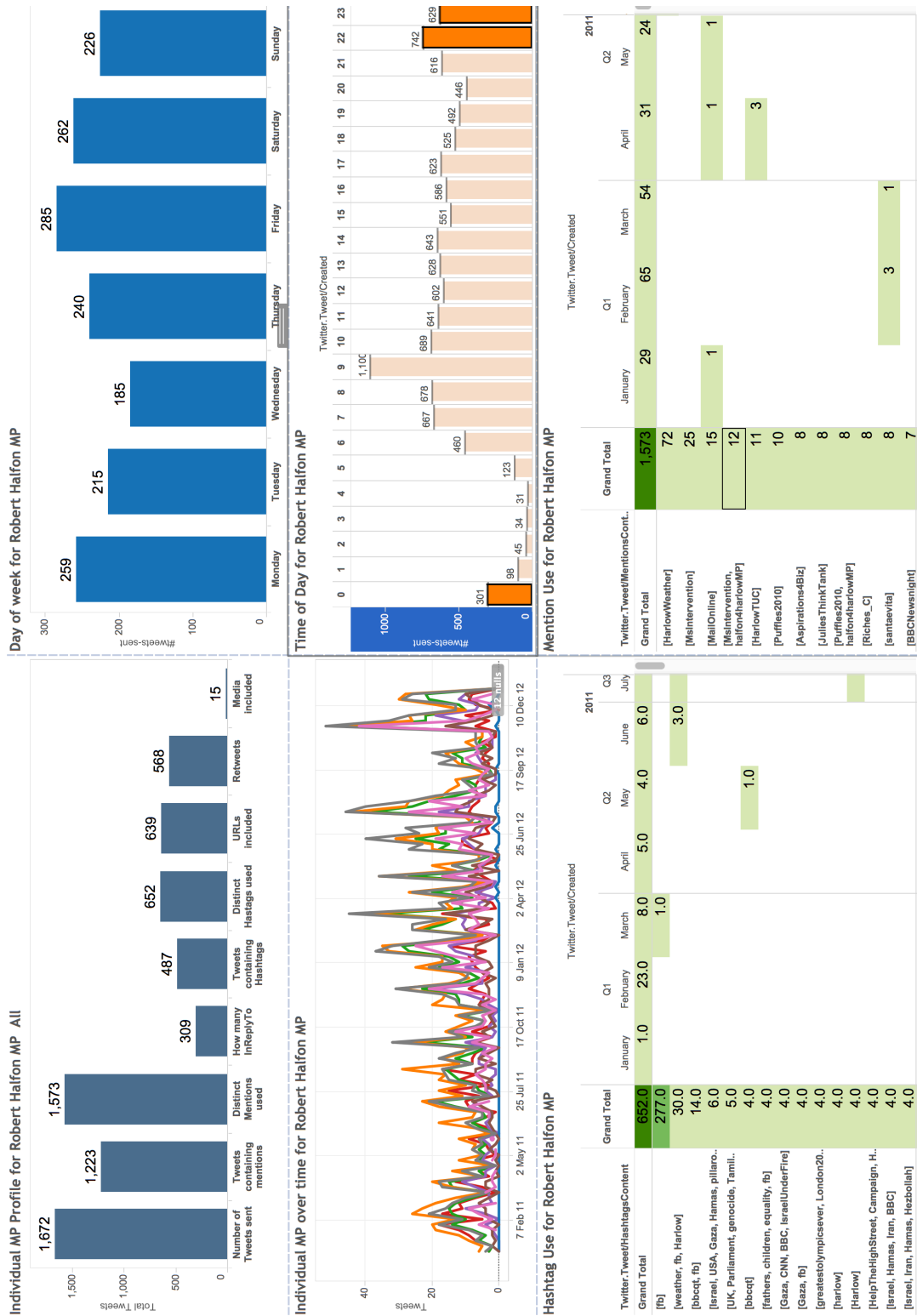


FIGURE 27 ROB HALFON 10PM TO 1AM TWITTER ACTIVITY

Halfon’s beginning-the-day tweets are similarly professional, but instead deal mostly with local constituency issues. His usage profile is mostly the same, but with an elevated level of URL inclusion (which is naturally participatory). None of the world issues are present. He doesn’t use hashtags pertaining to the Middle East or North Africa at all, and nor does he



Halfon's predisposition to sell his fuel tax policies to the public are evident throughout his dataset and are particularly interesting when viewed through a salesman's lens. Tweets that behave as press releases, but contain hashtags, retweets and links, are evident in this random selection of Petrol Promise messages (below). Tweets of this structure will appear as Educator-style tweets, but Halfon, whose use is best described as a sales-oriented marketer politician, uses traditional messaging tactics to encourage participation, without making any effort to be personal, and does little to address the public's trust or distrust of government other than to show an MP taking good care of his constituents. In this sense, Halfon is relying on an older caretaker MP paradigm to maintain public support; he is just like MPs past, but with new technology to accomplish the same policy and participation goals.

The following retweets of PetrolPromise messages contain @mentions, but the mentions are of himself: his website and his name. The hashtags are for general, public consumption, just as Henneberg describes, and the tweets are written in the third person, like press releases, without any evidence of personality or spontaneity. With one exception, they are sent out at 4-5 minute intervals, likely the amount of time they took to compose on his Blackberry. This is a coordinated campaign. An organized campaign occupies no higher or lower moral position than the spontaneous and personal tweets sent by Huppert, Featherstone, Farron, or other MPs, instead, it exemplifies the Conservative Government approach to political messaging that Henneberg correctly equates with Schumpeter's Competitive Elitist democracy that places little value on establishing the kind of sustained relationship that encourages new forms of civic participation (Henneberg et al., 2009). The whip organization and political philosophy has an impact on the presence of authentic talk, and the MP's ability to foster a greater restoration of public trust in government.

23/05/2012 15:29	RT @PetrolPromise: Campaigning MP @halfon4harlowMP's debate in Parliament coming up. See his article calling for NO RISE in fuel duty -- ...
23/05/2012 15:34	RT @PetrolPromise: @halfon4harlowMP says petrol still at a historic all-time high, and that Government should not increase fuel tax #Pet ...
23/05/2012 15:38	RT @PetrolPromise: @halfon4harlowMP says if oil firms don't play fair, the Gov should investigate and threaten a windfall tax <a href="http://t.c">http://t.c</a> ...
23/05/2012 15:43	RT @PetrolPromise: Labour Party says they admire @halfon4harlowMP's fight for cheaper petrol with <a href="http://t.co/tt2PQuI8">http://t.co/tt2PQuI8</a> #fueldebate #Petr ...

23/05/2012 15:44 RT @PetrolPromise: @halfon4harlowMP says we must look at charging foreign lorries more to cut petrol prices at the pump #fueldebate http ...

23/05/2012 15:49 RT @PetrolPromise: @halfon4harlowMP says the big oil companies are not struggling, we must look at windfall taxes to cut pump-prices htt ...

When Halfon does add personality, the content continues to behave as traditional political marketing. In the following tweets, Halfon is on his Blackberry, and goes so far as to culturally appropriate abbreviated words in the style of youthful tweet-speak (e.g. “Grt” instead of “great,) but fails to recognize that abbreviations of this sort are used to conserve characters in Twitter’s 140-character limit, which calls into question why he decided to repeat the word “huge,” choosing instead to write “...and huge huge work of @fairfueluk...”. The message also serves only to establish his position as an MP who can care for the public at large, as a Schumpeterian would, and does little to establish sustained relationships with constituents. It is also important to note that though Halfon often takes minutes to carefully compose his messages (see above), this tweet *seems* contrived, and serves only to amplify an announcement rather than create or encourage participation. It is still a selling message, but uses informal speech to do so. Though the overt meaning does not appear manipulative, its subtext is, and for citizens sensitive to this, the tweet degrades trust instead of restoring it (Hall, 2009).

26/06/2012 14:00 Govt to stop August fuel rise.Grt stuff My recent Debate in Commons,support from MPs and huge huge work of @fairfueluk made a difference #fb

His use of hyperbole is also less-than-genuine, for the in the following tweet, describing @FairFuelUK’s success as “...one of the more successful campaigning groups in modern history,” is followed by the #fb hashtag which serves only to ask the public to “Follow him Back,” in an effort to amplify his messages.

26/06/2012 14:22 @fairfueluk confirms its place as one of the most successful campaigning groups in modern politics #fb

## Communicating vs Promoting when Osama Bin Laden was Killed

In the early hours of 2 May, 2011, at 2:24am, Tom Watson (Labour) and an archetypical Communicator Twitter user, tweeted: "Hmmm: RT @BreakingNews White House: The president to make statement at 10:30pm ET; subject not announced – AP", and between his tweet at 2:24am and 8am, after Osama Bin Laden's death was announced at 3:00am, 103 tweets were produced by MPs, and only 6 of them had nothing to do with OBL. Of the remaining 97 OBL tweets, Watson produced 19, with one coded as a statement ("Over 2300 coalition soldiers dead and 10,000+ wounded in last decade. What now?"). The 18 other tweets he wrote were to members of the public, some journalists and were clearly part of sincere conversations. Typical of them were "@alanbeattie yes, you're probably right. My kids are ill hence being awake. Witnessing remarkable events."; and "@dominiccampbell me too dom, me too". Louise Mensch (Conservative), also a Communicator, contributed 30 tweets, 12 as statements, and 18 as conversations with the public. She too is sincere with her followers, stating that she has been "up since 4:30 to hear the news, still feel energised!" or arguing with another user: "@benglover77 you weren't there. He ordered those deaths." As is appropriate for the Communicator model, both Watson's and Mensch's behaviour was personal. It was late in the evening; the event was emotional and in the public interest, and their tweets were either directly with citizens or statements to anyone awake and involved. Rob Halfon, a Promoter, behaved differently.

Though Halfon tweets at similar levels all day long (see figure 28 above,) and 667 times between 7am and 8am, his initial contribution to the Twitter discourse surrounding OBL's death consisted of five statements made between 7:42am and 7:53am. Then, at 8:55am, he's out campaigning in his Harlow constituency against the upcoming AV vote issue.

2011-05-02T07:41:40.000Z	Bin Laden's death show just how much America's superpower status is needed in the world
2011-05-02T07:42:35.000Z	Osama Bin Laden dead: Cameron hails US bravery <a href="http://www.itv.com/news/pm-hails-bin-laden-death24599/">http://www.itv.com/news/pm-hails-bin-laden-death24599/</a> #obl
2011-05-02T07:45:38.000Z	I hope evil mass murderers everywhere in the Middle East will be living in fear
2011-05-02T07:50:48.000Z	Bin Laden's death represents a huge symbolic and real defeat for totalitarian extreme Islamism
2011-05-02T07:52:34.000Z	Will be interesting to see how apologists for extreme Islamists - all the Islamist groups in UK react to Bin Laden's death

2011-05-02T08:55:23.000Z	Out campaigning in suny Harlow with @halfon4harlowMP @HarlowTory #no2av
2011-05-02T08:57:29.000Z	Turns out Bin Laden opted for the quiet and understated hideout then! \$1m compound in a military town! Pakistan... please explain.
2011-05-02T10:44:46.000Z	Campaigning with Darth Vader's troops in Broadwalk! <a href="http://yfrog.com/gyr48htj">http://yfrog.com/gyr48htj</a>
2011-05-02T13:50:48.000Z	My Six reflections on Bin Laden's capture: <a href="http://t.co/c9rgW5R">http://t.co/c9rgW5R</a>
2011-05-02T17:17:06.000Z	Six Reactions to the capture and death of Osama Bin Laden <a href="http://nblo.gs/hmr8H">http://nblo.gs/hmr8H</a>
2011-05-02T19:33:47.000Z	@brittanyslenn8 thanks for the recommendation
2011-05-02T22:54:58.000Z	Labour's big beasts ignore Ed Miliband to condemn AV amid fears derisory turnout could... <a href="http://goo.gl/fb/R44ig">http://goo.gl/fb/R44ig</a>

His behaviour during the day, is one of a campaigning politician, engaging in no discussions directly with citizens. He speaks to only two groups, the #obl and the #no2av; one hotel, @brittanyslenn8; and offers links to an editorial he wrote for the blog "Conservative Home". There is no personality present in his tweets, no eccentricity, no real emotion, no spontaneity, and in the entirety of this day's comments he conducts a sales effort for his various positions.

Consider his initial reaction when he states that the world needs America as a superpower. Messages of this type read like a reassurance that powerful betters are taking care of the world's problems. Trust us. Trust *us* to take care of *you*. There is no bonding here. Halfon isn't sharing any of the emotion that OBL's demise is likely to inspire. Instead he is a reassuring MP consistent with Schumpeter's Competitive Elitist model of democracy.

For citizens looking for insight into Halfon *as a person*, none is offered, despite the ability of Mensch and Watson to accomplish that very thing: being authentic. It is public exchanges over matters like these that the Promoter resorts to political efficacy instead of the relationship-building activity more authentic MPs exhibit.

Promoters are nice when they are performing as a Communicator

In his 11,950 tweets, Halfon behaves as a Communicator 2,639 times, using 3,006 combinations of mentions. These tweets are distinguished from his others by the metadata: they are tweets that only contain mentions. No hashtags or URLs are present. The following selection of tweets were written between 29 April 2011 and 5 May 2011 and display evidence of cheerfulness, respect for the public, and evidence of personality, all of which are markers of authentic talk.

29/04/2011 10:52	@AnnaAdamsBBC only because I have my occasional gripes with BBC! But doing a brilliant job today :)
30/04/2011 20:41	@andrewmorganhs I dont- bit can try and find out
30/04/2011 23:34	@HarlowTUC none!
02/05/2011 19:33	@brittanyslenn8 thanks for the recommendation
03/05/2011 06:26	@claire4devizes see you there :)
03/05/2011 18:12	@Liberal_Tory thank you! I have corrected!
03/05/2011 21:35	@ClrCottis thanks for coming and all your help. Much appreciated.
03/05/2011 21:36	@Paulflynnmp thanks for letting me know what time I might be able to go home! :-)
03/05/2011 21:37	@GuidoFawkes more of a Balvenie man myself
04/05/2011 02:50	@exuberantlyblue thank you! Actually my favourite is Pepsi Max :)
04/05/2011 02:57	@exuberantlyblue its delicious. All the taste without the calories. Coke Zero almost as good.

When Promoters are in the presence of individuals, it is normal for them to perform with the sincerity of an offline handshake and smile, nodding and smiling as appropriate to bond with the audience. This performance may, in fact, be sincere, and there is no reason to suspect Halfon of being deceitful when he declares his preference for PepsiMax, or thanks @Liberal\_Tory for correcting him. But in the context of his other tweets over the years, and his predisposition to sell, that the public may view these exchanges with suspicion as the machinations of a sales professional. Nothing in these personal tweets are in the least surprising. His overall behaviour is that of professional politician.

## Findings

As a model, the Promoter model describes traditional MPs' behaviour. Politicians sell their opinions and party position. When presented with the chance to speak to the public, they are aware of the political ramifications and measure their speech accordingly. There is little outrage over the outrageous; little emotion over the emotional, and by behaving this way

they miss the opportunity to connect more profoundly with the public and establish a bond that might change the public's view of politicians. There is nothing in the Promoter model that restores a waning trust in MPs, and instead simply reinforces the status quo. For Promoters, Twitter is simply another communications tool. Their metadata signature shows a mix of statements, personal engagements, and directed messages sent to specific hashtags and @mentions, which suggests that their messaging strategy is one of expedience. When they need to accomplish a particular communication, they tailor their Twitter use to meet that need.

Promoters are predisposed to view communication technology in this manner. They are care-takers for the public, aristocratic betters, and not of-the-people like Educators or Communicators. When given the chance, they sell and campaign consistent with the idea of an *instrumental* approach to political marketing (Henneberg et al., 2009) that uses hashtags to appeal to interest-based markets and @mentions to appeal to opinion-formers.

The analytical framework is clear: authentic talk on Twitter requires discursive elements that reveal personality. Sincerity is included because the public does not typically find politicians sincere, and instead questions them. Is it spin? Is it accurate? Is it fair? The public, sadly, must question these messages. Mistrusting politicians is at the core of Crisis Theory, for it suggests that without trust, democracy is in terminal decline, so this study looks for linguistic markers that convey sincerity. Sincerity manifests in Twitter speech by conveying emotional truth. When it's missing, as in the case of Rob Halfon, and in the Promoter behavioural model generally, the public reacts as it always has, by listening without completely believing. Democracy requires this trend to change. It needs politicians to bond with the public so that when good news or bad news, or policy positions, or analysis is presented, the public can trust the MP to act on their behalf and not feel misled in the process.

The Promoter model does little to allay these concerns, and even when personality quirks emerge, such as Halfon's love of PepsiMax and Balvenie scotch, it does little to change the public's overall impression of him. He is still a politician, messaging when it is politically

expedient in pursuit of a position or party edict. There is no change in the public's opinion, which is precisely what authentic talk contributes to this discursive arena: a change in the public's perception of politicians and politics.

## Chapter 7: The Speaker

### Defining the Speaker

Political speech—in the broad sense—prior to the internet consisted mostly of speeches, filled with pithy phrases written to inform or motivate the public, and were often written carefully and with attention to a perceived impact or interpretation. The speeches were more often than not political in nature, and even in the case of non-political speech, such as a yule-tide address or a holiday speech, the message was crafted. There was a performative aspect.

MPs made statements, and if the intended meaning filtered from the MP through society in steps (Katz, 1957; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944), then so did the feedback back to the MP. Society would react, and opinion-formers in the form of newspaper editors would write editorials that completed the circle of feedback back to the politician. The discursive cycle was slow, and this delay permitted the national discussion to behave thoughtfully, and rationally, with crafted responses that were edited—there was time to think and consider—and in the case of the newspaper response, rehearse, as in the manner of the performing politician. In this era, Goffman's dramaturgical notion held fast; MPs wrote backstage, and performed onstage (1959). The MP was the *animator* who spoke the words, the speechwriter was the *author* who wrote the words, and the policy position was the *principle* that sourced the words (ibid). And in the 1950s, when Goffman and Katz examined public discourse, these theories recognized that time—or more accurately time-to-response—played a role in a message's decoded meaning, and this meaning defined the speaker on the public stage. If a personable or sensitive character was required during a holiday address, then one was constructed, regardless of the speaker's true self. The same is true of a strong leader demonstrating his or her strength. But impact is very different in this faster Twitter era, and Goffman's separation of front and backstage much blurrier, so when a constructed message is tweeted on Twitter the public now has many other messages and message-senders for comparison, less time to consider the meaning, and the resulting message is often regarded as mere spin. The public senses the difference, and mistrust results (Hall, 2009).

For MPs still communicating with speeches and statements in the slow feedback loop of pre-Twitter times, Twitter is a fine press-release platform, and these MPs can be described as Speakers. Speakers fit closely within the selling-oriented political marketing model, described as using a “traditional, ideology-oriented approach” (Henneberg et al., 2009, pp. 169-170) to constituency contact that values party messages and interests above building relationships with the public-at-large.

As a behavioural model, the Speaker uses Twitter to issue brief comments on what the MP perceives is a broad conversation that spans all media and society, rather than a personalised response in the much smaller discursive arena preferred by Communicators and Educators. Consider this tweet, by Pat McFaddon (Lab), on 15/4/2011 at 9:15am: “Last week we got figs showing A&E waits up. Now its surgery waits. Patients losing out.” McFaddon’s message is only a comment on an issue already in the public discourse. There is no evidence of personality as described by either Coleman (2006a), Montgomery (2001a), or Liebes (2001), and nor is there any evidence of relationship-building or a call-to-action (Henneberg et al., 2009). This is simply a statement, so for the Speaker, the discursive context is outside the Twittersverse and requires the reader to be familiar with the topic prior to reading the tweet, whereas for the Communicator and the Educator the context is within their prior conversations or with those following a hashtag. Conversations create the context required to derive meaning, but statements do not. Instead, they require a priori knowledge to create the “temporal orientation” present in selling-oriented political marketing (Henneberg et al., 2009, p. 171). Speakers not only use Twitter differently but use their communications differently. Making a simple comment is all they do.

Speaker tweets have a distinct metadata signature, making them easy to locate in the dataset. In its purest form, they are tweets without hashtags, mentions, URLs or retweets, and make no effort to involve the reader beyond reading the message. Without the context provided by a broader discussion, or for readers unencumbered by messages outside the Twittersverse, these tweets can appear as graffiti—often distracting and occasionally poignant, but ultimately begging for a direct response. This is not to say that all statements

contain no other Twitter elements, but instead that a Speaker is concerned mostly with the sound of his own keyboard, and less in building new relationships with the public.

Typical statements can often appear as random non-sequiturs. Consider the following tweets by Sir Tony Baldry MP (Conservative) for North Oxfordshire. The metadata signature is clear (the tweets contain only a URL sending readers to his blog), and the discursive exchange dimensions are that of an instrument-oriented MP selling his policies to a specific market segment: his followers. The content is cold, without personality, and do nothing but draw attention to Baldry's activity as elite MP.

12/10/2011 11:29	Tony receives response from Minister of State for Employment regarding NEETS: <a href="http://t.co/leqCa2ca">http://t.co/leqCa2ca</a>	[ <a href="http://www.tonybaldry.co.uk/?p=3167">http://www.tonybaldry.co.uk/?p=3167</a> ]
13/10/2011 16:30	Written Question (Work and Pensions): Employment Schemes: Young People: <a href="http://t.co/FQUd6dhW">http://t.co/FQUd6dhW</a>	[ <a href="http://www.tonybaldry.co.uk/?p=3171">http://www.tonybaldry.co.uk/?p=3171</a> ]
13/10/2011 16:32	Intervention: Jobs and Growth: <a href="http://t.co/Ze6xTr3q">http://t.co/Ze6xTr3q</a>	[ <a href="http://www.tonybaldry.co.uk/?p=3174">http://www.tonybaldry.co.uk/?p=3174</a> ]
13/10/2011 16:35	Baldry discovers that about a year's worth of housing has been granted planning permission....: <a href="http://t.co/7wSvDBZS">http://t.co/7wSvDBZS</a>	[ <a href="http://www.tonybaldry.co.uk/?p=3177">http://www.tonybaldry.co.uk/?p=3177</a> ]

The tweets are written in the third-person, without any conversational elements, and devoid of any personality markers—such as humour, sincerity, or spontaneity—as described by Montgomery (2001a), Liebes (2001), Coleman (2006a). The third-person voice also appears constructed by an assistant, which lends a detached and constructed feel to its impact, something that readers find distrustful (Hall, 2009).

The Speaker model is identified in the metadata by its low levels of mentions (typically <25%,) with the occasional use of hashtags or URLs. It is notable that the most prolific Speaker has tweeted only 3,507 times between 2011 and 2012 (Paul Flynn MP (Lab) for Newport West), and even now, in 2018, still tweets as a Speaker. His tweets consist mostly of statements lacking any Twitter convention, though they are occasionally broadcast to issue-oriented constituents by using a hashtag (he used hashtags 87 times.) Of course, there are other exceptions. Peter Aldous MP (Con) for Waveney, for example, has a high

ratio of hashtags (147 of his 197 tweets contained hashtags and he used 247 distinct combinations of hashtags), and often includes URLs, but his tweets still read like statements. Typical of his tweets are these: “Calling for a review of Business Rates in the House of Commons yesterday, concerned about impact on local businesses: <http://t.co/yijo3EGI>” and “Good news that roadworks are coming to an end but lessons must be learnt from this #Lowestoft #Waveney”. Tweets like these are consistent with Henneberg’s (2009) observation that “selling-oriented [political marketing is] exemplified by the use of party political broadcasts, slogans, posters.. [and] the 30-second spot...” Henneberg’s framework could be updated to include hashtags when describing the modern sales-oriented political marketer. These tweets campaign, and reinforce the notion that the MP is hard at work, taking care of a constituency, in line with the realist conception of democracy described by Schumpeter (Henneberg et al., 2009). This behaviour does not address a democratic deficiency or establish a discursive intimacy, but instead it serves to strengthen the status quo position of MPs as caretakers responsible for an otherwise uninformed public.

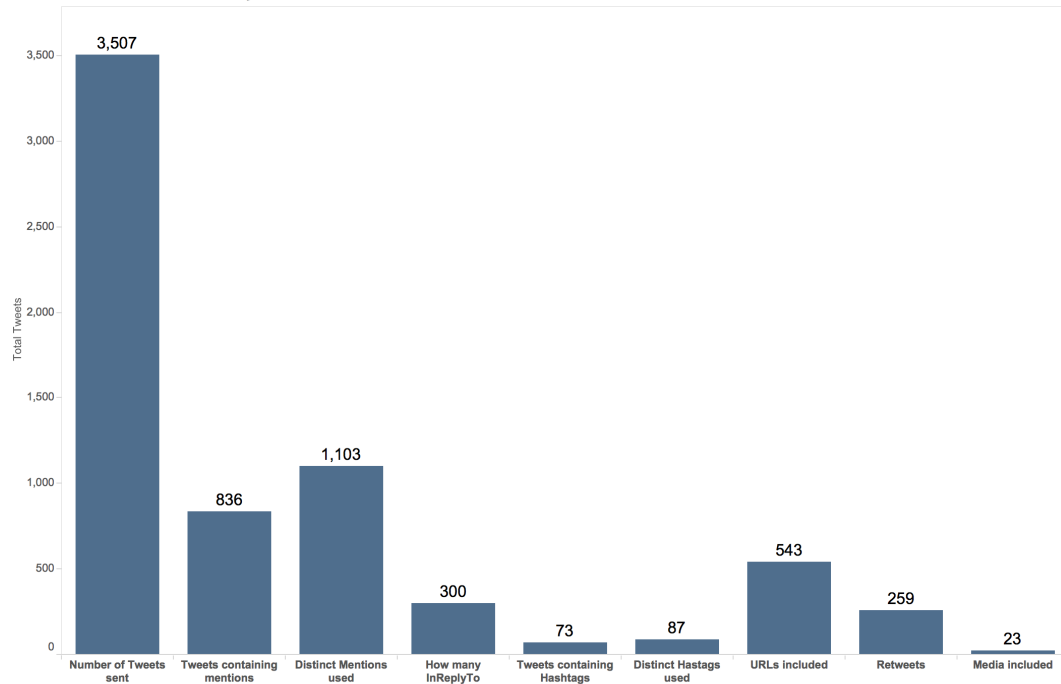
Twitter.User/Name	Party	Behaviour	Number of Tweets sent	Tweets containing mentions	Distinct Mentions used	How many InReply To	Tweets containing Hashtags	Distinct Hashtags used	URLs included	Retweets	Media included
Grand Total			22,386	4,932	6,576	1,392	1,326	1,651	5,839	1,823	354
Paul Flynn	Labour	Speaker	3,507	836	1,103	300	73	87	543	259	23
Alex Cunningham	Labour	Speaker	2,455	703	910	185	123	147	600	290	12
Pat McFadden	Labour	Speaker	1,373	458	666	108	69	98	190	253	23
Glyn Davies	Conservative	Speaker	1,371	89	103	46	4	5	113	8	1
JackDromeyMP	Labour	Speaker	1,300	330	452	60	112	126	68	150	4
Steve Brine	Conservative	Speaker	1,100	274	321	89	67	69	172	50	46
Anne Milton MP	Conservative	Speaker	1,087	460	609	164	61	98	62	121	1
John Redwood	Conservative	Speaker	873	0		0	0		873	0	0
Steve McCabe	Labour	Speaker	727	107	157	29	36	46	209	56	13
Alec Shelbrooke	Conservative	Speaker	564	246	329	82	47	55	49	79	51
Austin Mitchell	Labour	Speaker	525	55	79	27	7	7	11	18	2
David Evennett MP	Conservative	Speaker	510	145	185	13	62	74	333	71	8
Jeremy Lefroy	Conservative	Speaker	496	111	149	13	24	29	315	39	24
Sir Tony Baldry MP	Conservative	Speaker	493	0		0	0		490	0	0
Andrew Bingham MP	Conservative	Speaker	488	200	274	46	40	47	37	120	6
Ian Swales	LibDem	Speaker	449	97	122	56	16	16	60	26	0
Mark Garnier	Conservative	Speaker	396	25	35	13	171	180	173	5	0
Malcolm Bruce	LibDem	Speaker	321	38	46	19	4	8	21	12	0
Pauline Latham MP	Conservative	Speaker	296	83	128	9	38	41	220	65	1
Oliver Colville MP	Conservative	Speaker	290	58	87	29	7	11	21	20	2
Rosie Cooper MP	Labour	Speaker	280	64	81	7	32	33	45	4	32
Iain Stewart MP	Conservative	Speaker	263	84	94	48	3	3	17	8	3
Nigel Dodds	Democratic Unionist	Speaker	249	34	55	7	9	10	166	25	1
Geoffrey Cox MP	Conservative	Speaker	209	44	50	9	4	4	103	9	1
Peter Aldous MP	Conservative	Speaker	197	42	70	4	144	249	101	31	2
James Duddridge	Conservative	Speaker	196	34	39	6	9	11	42	22	11
Jim Sheridan	Labour	Speaker	191	13	16	5	3	3	21	2	0
Andrew Bridgen MP	Conservative	Speaker	190	59	75	18	5	6	28	20	4
John Glen	Conservative	Speaker	178	21	35	3	5	7	38	7	10
Iain McKenzie	Labour	Speaker	159	28	33	11	13	14	68	11	1
Tristram Hunt	Labour	Speaker	158	33	49	11	21	21	110	8	0
Annette Brooke	LibDem	Speaker	140	2	2	0	1	1	133	2	0
Nick Hurd	Conservative	Speaker	140	15	22	3	26	33	6	8	0
Andrew Selous MP	Conservative	Speaker	139	1	1	0	0		6	1	0
Geraint Davies MP	Labour	Speaker	130	35	47	10	24	37	64	6	6
Simon Reeve	Conservative	Speaker	123	24	35	10	9	9	12	8	3
Roger Godsiff MP	Labour	Speaker	110	12	15	4	6	6	90	1	0
Matthew Offord	Conservative	Speaker	105	3	3	0	3	3	8	0	4
Richard Benyon	Conservative	Speaker	96	14	18	9	9	10	8	2	1
Anne McIntosh	Conservative	Speaker	73	18	30	6	3	5	18	9	15
David Cameron	Conservative	Speaker	72	16	23	0	31	37	7	0	33
Clive Betts	Labour	Speaker	62	1	1	1	0		62	0	0
Anna Soubry MP	Conservative	Speaker	55	7	10	0	3	3	51	3	0
Nicola Blackwood	Conservative	Speaker	55	4	4	0	0		54	0	0
Mark Pritchard	Conservative	Speaker	53	0		0	0		1	0	0
Steve Webb	LibDem	Speaker	50	3	3	1	1	1	14	0	0
andrew murrison	Conservative	Speaker	27	0		0	0		0	0	0
Martin Vickers	Conservative	Speaker	26	0		0	0		4	0	1
Nia Griffith	Labour	Speaker	21	3	6	2	0		1	0	9
John Stevenson MP	Conservative	Speaker	18	3	4	0	1	1	1	2	0

FIGURE 29 LIST OF SPEAKER MPs

## The Prototypical Speaker – Paul Flynn MP

The metadata describing a Speaker shows a very low level of mentions, hashtags, URLs, retweets, in-reply-tos or the inclusion of media to tweets. Consider Paul Flynn MP, shown below. Of the 3507 tweets, very few contained these elements, and the pattern is unmistakable: there are high levels of tweets to low levels of usage conventions.

Individual MP Profile for Paul Flynn

**FIGURE 30 PAUL FLYNN MP PROFILE 2011-2012**

The observation that Flynn's use of Twitter is to promote and sell his brand is not only evident in the 2,404 tweets that contain no mentions, but in his 37 tweets that mention his apparent nemesis MP Rob Halfon. Tweets with this metadata signature (using a mention and/or a URL), when produced by Communicators and Educators, overwhelmingly contain evidence of personality markers and authentic talk. They can be angry, funny, personal, informative, and encouraging. But Flynn's tweets are dry statements and appear to be part of some long-standing animosity between himself and Halfon. They are not rich with sarcasm and anger, and are instead restrained arguments, which suggests that Flynn is quite aware of the context in which he tweets. He wishes to behave as proper British MP, reserved and strong, direct and professional, and certainly without a personal voice that might embarrass the party. When he wishes to campaign he does so, and when he wishes to argue, he does that too. This behaviour indicates that he behaves in both manners deliberately. One voice sells, and the other campaigns. In this instance, he is using Twitter as an instrument to sell, as a care-taker, realist, Schumpeterian MP does, for he knows that followers common to Halfon and himself are reading the exchanges.

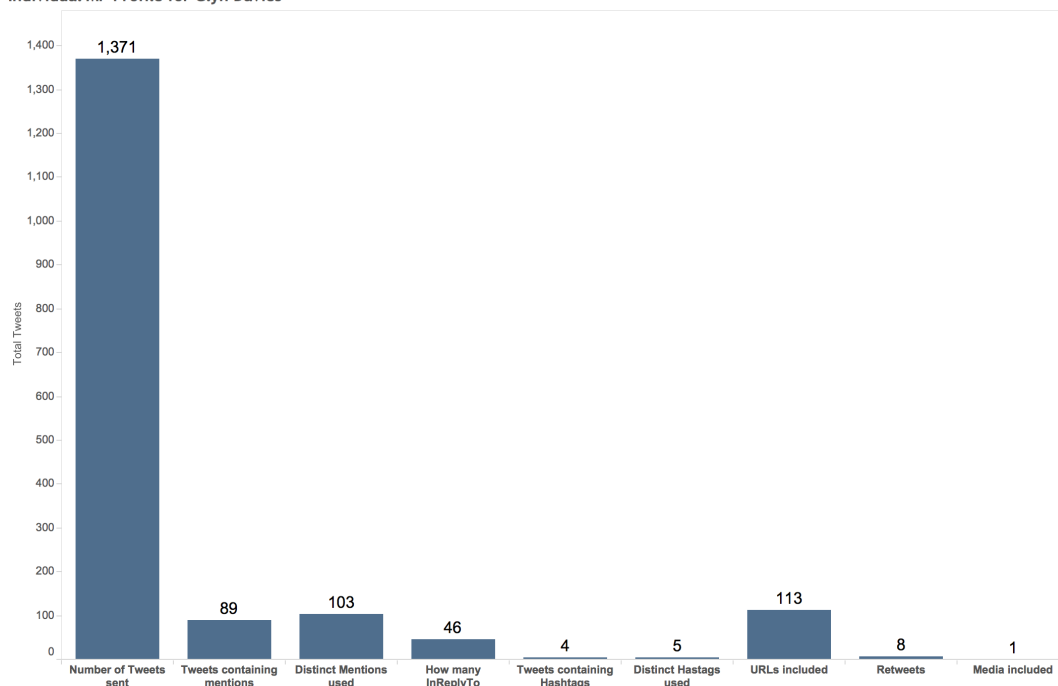
Consider this tweet, directed at Rob Halfon MP of Harlow (Cons): “@halfon4harlow The leftist smearing’ you suppressed was the truth from the Time on Shaun Bailey’s charity problems. <http://t.co/4jacL4J6>”. Flynn is clearly calling out Halfon, in public, but the link connects the user to his blog, which indicates that that the tweet’s intent is to send both his and Halfon’s followers to his blog. Had the link sent followers to a third-party website that invited the reader to investigate and decide for themselves, then this tweet would be similar to an Educator’s, whose purpose is to inform and motivate, instead of the Speaker’s, whose approach is to sell a position. This tweet is a sales effort designed to draw attention to another blog-length statement.<sup>26</sup> Though Flynn is angry, as evidenced by the blog post, the tweet merely states an opinion in clear language, without any of the personality markers found in tweets by Communicators or Educators. It is discursively dry and bland, with one clear goal: to send readers to blog that serves as an outlet for Flynn’s political positions. Flynn is behaving politically, not selling, and certainly not building relationships with followers. Tweets in this voice, and with this purpose are typical of Flynn’s entire Twitter output, and typical of Speakers generally.

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<sup>26</sup> [http://paulflynnmp.typepad.com/my\\_weblog/2012/03/page/4/](http://paulflynnmp.typepad.com/my_weblog/2012/03/page/4/) The post entitled “Another Cameron choice nose dives” is a Flynn commentary written in a journalistic style and 3rd-person voice detailing a dispute over the dissolution of the MyGeneration charity, run by former Cameron-appointee “Big Society Ambassador” Shawn Bailey. The post contains a transcript of a heated exchange between Halfon and Flynn during a Parliamentary inquest conducted “last year” in which they are asking Bailey how he ran the charity. The aim of the post is a political hit-job, as evidenced from the sub-headline “Cameron’s judgement questioned again.” Flynn is performing himself as tough and competent.

## Glyn Davies MP (Cons) of Montgomeryshire

Individual MP Profile for Glyn Davies



**FIGURE 31 GLYN DAVIES PROFILE 2011-2012**

Though Glynn Davies MP of Montgomeryshire (Cons) in Wales has a distinctly Speaker profile (very low use of Twitter conventions in relation to the overall number of tweets, his tweets have a few indications of personality, but only in the text of the tweet, not with any identifiable metadata marker. For example, he doesn't engage in humour, except to be very dry (e.g. "I like obscure stats. Like – highest 9<sup>th</sup> wt partnership involving lefthanders. Michu is fastest Spaniard to score 3 goals in Premiership"), and almost never mentions anyone with an "@" tag (89 mentions; 6% of his tweets.) He only replies to people sporadically (3% of his tweets,) and has only amplified his message to users following a hashtag in four tweets. He is selling, but only to his followers. There is no indication from either the metadata signature or the tweet content that he is concerned with citizens outside his follower list, and more importantly, that he wishes to engage with them other than to perform for them. In this sense, there is a great divide between his frontstage and backstage personas (as is the case with all the Speakers,) and his role is to sell himself as an MP who is working hard and trustworthy. His personal statements are considered, and not politically risky. The persona that he wishes to present is one of competence and leadership, so that the public may trust him to preserve "the public good," (Henneberg,

2008, p. 174), but with a bit of personal interest thrown in so as not to appear entirely too detached from the citizens he represents.

Davies' meta profile describes an MP unconcerned with direct public engagement, as evidenced by the low number of mentions (89 total; 6% of his tweets) and essentially no behaviour (four hashtags) that could be described as consistent with an instrumentally-oriented political marketer selling his positions to his followers.

## Findings

Overall, the Speaker model applies to a wide mix of MPs who either have not embraced Twitter's ability to engage the public in a substantively new way, either to establish and sustain a relationship with the public or to address a broader democratic deficit. While their comments and voices may contain an attitude that approaches authenticity, there is nothing inherently engaging about their speech. Their statements are no different from statements made in the pre-Twitter era. They are often party-compliant, and only controversial when doing so is politically expedient. Authenticity in these cases is subservient to political realities. When being candid is required, they are candid, just as they are combative when required. Personality, therefore, is only a performance. If it serves them to be funny, then they are funny, and this humour is of their own construction—they are *trying* to be quirky and spontaneous—because tweets aren't scheduled statements. But is this performance of the same sort that a Communicator displays? No. Communicators and Educators are funny or informative or spontaneous because they are in-the-moment, present emotionally and discursively at once, and they type as they laugh. Twitter for them is the primary speech act, and not a negotiation between the onstage and backstage persona as it is for the Speaker.

The Speaker must be examined, however, less in the context of authenticity, and more in the context of democracy and political marketing, where the role of an MP and the MP's behaviour is thought to sustain a set of ideals. Schumpeter's suggestion that elected officials are an elite class of people who are in power to take care of a public unable to understand the minutiae of policy or the workings of government may in fact be true, but

this view remains in tension with the idea that government should represent the people's wishes, however Trumpian these instincts are. The Speaker, however begins this ideological debate from an elitist point, detached from a public that feels ignored. The authentic talk and Twitter behaviour of Educators and Communicators takes a different view, and while it recognizes that the public may lack the knowledge to make policy decisions, these MPs are engaging in a manner that both educates those that desire it and creates trust for a public that needs it. Unlike the Speaker, whose Twitter behaviour does nothing to address the public's knowledge and trust deficit, the Educator and Communicator actively engages in a solution. Once the Educator and the Communicator commit to this personal approach to communication, authenticity emerges, and Blumler's crisis is addressed.

And while Coleman and Blumler note that their crisis in communication does not require a "romanticism of former times," (2009, note: chapter 2 discusses this at length) it is precisely this romanticism that provides context for the Speaker's probable failure to produce a new space for communication. For the Speaker, what has worked in the past is good enough for them now. The past is romanticised, and they do not seeking to engage the public in new ways. If these speakers had evolved into Communicators, then one could reason that Twitter emancipated them from an otherwise stoic and less effective communication, but Speakers have not evolved (at least not in the time-period of this study,) and their speech remains the same, despite their awareness of how other MPs use Twitter to improve citizen engagement. It is this past behaviour that is romanticised by the MP, and their belief that their Twitter public continues to respond well to it that prevents them from behaving in a substantively new manner that addresses mistrust. Speakers seem to believe that because they themselves are trustworthy, the public finds them so, and that there is no compelling reason to reevaluate their relationship with citizens.

Treating the Speaker as an MP that provides no substantive help to citizens (when using Twitter) seems simple to do. They make no real effort to establish a dialogue with the public. But context is important here, for those citizens that follow one MP often follow another, and the contrasting behaviours are striking. One speaks *at*, while the other speaks *with*. From a political marketing standpoint, the more authentic MPs are more effective because they offer the public a sense of *what can be*, instead of how democracy *is*, which

certainly feeds into the cynicism, and the “manipulative publicity” that Coleman and Blumler lament (S. Coleman & Blumler, 2009) and that Hall suggests is at the root of mistrust (Hall, 2009). The Speaker provides the discursive other that helps citizens distinguish a sincere communication from an insincere one, and in this way assists the authentic MP addressing a democratic deficit.

## Chapter 8: The Novice

The Novice Twitter user is one without enough tweets to establish a pattern, either by convention use—such as only never using hashtags or mentions, which would make that MP a Speaker—or by time—such as tweeting regularly each week or month. Novices exhibit no such pattern. They tweet sporadically, and with little regard to presenting as naturally-spoken. This is not to say that on occasion a Novice may exhibit personality or appear engaged with a citizen—they can—but only that these MPs have not integrated Twitter into their regular communications in a manner that establishes any sort of relationship with citizens. Novices generally have two-year tweet totals less than 50, and often less than a dozen. Twitter plays little role in their lives other than to satisfy an unwritten rule of modern parliamentarianism: that MP's should have a Twitter account, which, at the very least, protects their name from unscrupulous Twitter account squatters who would register an account only to sell it back to the MP.

That the Novice is included as a behavioural model is important, however, for its ability to quantify those who choose not to engage. Some MPs, for example Jessica Lee (Cons) MP for Erewash, who tweeted once, or Jim McGovern MP for Dundee West, who tweeted seven times, simply defy placement in the other models, yet require categorization if only to describe an MP who cannot be said to use Twitter in any meaningful way.

## Chapter 9: Perceptions of Authenticity in an MP's Office Communication

The Educator profile describes Twitter use that behaves as an educator does:

communication is spontaneous and public; it offers additional information; involves a larger audience; contains natural language cues; promotes participation and education; and is engaging. Twitter's various conventions—such as hashtags and the inclusion of URLs—are used to provide a rich communicative experience that is readily available for public scrutiny. It is naturally authentic. But the appearance of authenticity is not limited to an individual; it also applies to an MP's office. When an MP and his/her office is staffed by engaging people with a following that witnesses and participates in this engagement, then the authentic talk on display is democratically restorative. This section describes the office of Lynne Featherstone (Liberal Democrat), who during 2011-2012 was the MP representing Hornsey and Wood Green<sup>27</sup>. Featherstone is a particularly interesting case, for by the end of 2016<sup>28</sup> her office is responsible for over 13k tweets and its Twitter use is mature and engages citizens frequently on a wide range of issues. But though Featherstone joined Twitter in 2008, her use was sporadic until June of 2012 when her office began using it daily. This transition is especially interesting for its ability to examine the transition from a single MP that tweets to an office that tweets.

It is the focus on an office as a single unit of analysis that makes the Featherstone case relevant to the notion that authenticity is only valuable if it is perceived as such, regardless of source, and can describe an office genuinely involved in the sort of public communication that engages and motivates their public in a democratically restorative manner. As Montgomery states quite clearly, "It is not so much the authority of the speaker that authenticates the account. *It is the nature and manner of the talk itself that makes for compelling testimony*" (Montgomery, 2001a, p. 404 note: emphasis mine).

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<sup>27</sup> Baroness Featherstone PC is currently a member of the House of Lords.

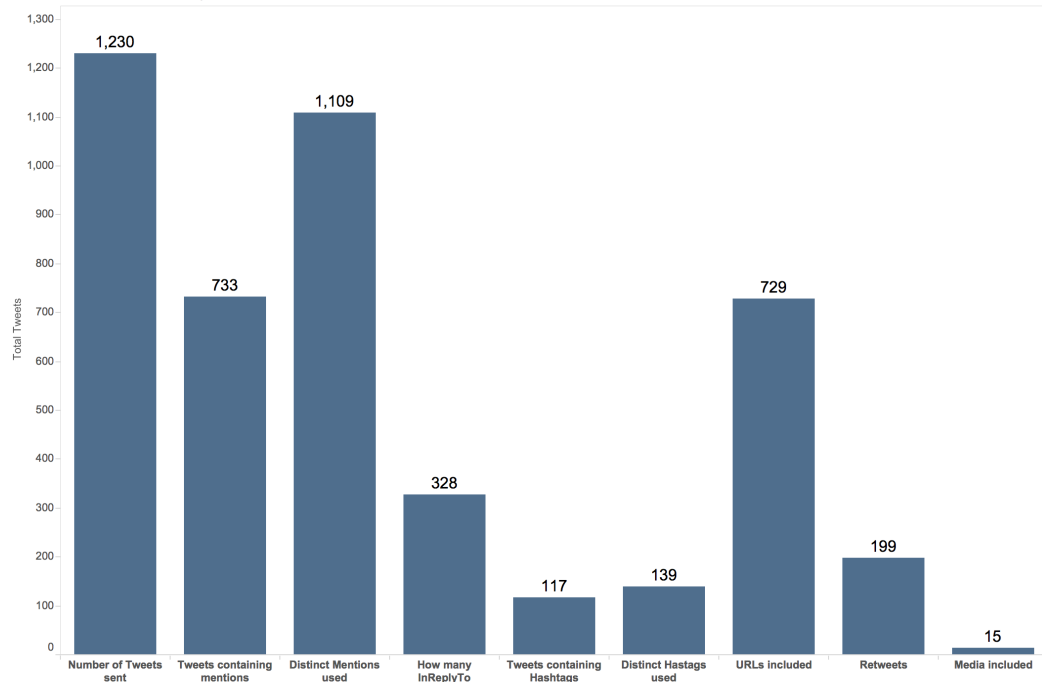
<sup>28</sup> After her tenure with the House of Commons had ended.

Featherstone presents an office staffed with people that behave individually (and authentically.) Their personalities emerge naturally, and they appear helpful, sincere, sympathetic, serious, thankful and playful. The *mis-en-place* is active and vibrant and real and the communication moves effortlessly from a speaking state to an engaged one. The evidence is not only in the content of their tweets; it is also in the metadata. Each distinct voice—there are three people tweeting from her office: Featherstone and two assistants—uses different software and includes different elements. The overall effect is one of authentic activity. This section tracks Featherstone’s evolution from an individual sporadic Twitter user to an office that presents as an Educator.

While Julian Huppert is clearly established as an Educator in his Twitter use— he informs constituents and uses a consistent combination of hashtags, mentions, URLs, etc—other MPs have developed their style over time as they become comfortable with the technology or the norms of social media use. They might already have a finely tuned outreach programme, perhaps based on a combination of regular constituency appearances and/or meetings with issue groups and contact with the press, but have been slow to develop their Twitter visage. Lynne Featherstone’s office is typical of this type of Twitter user. Featherstone’s analysis contributes to an understanding of the Educator because her *office* behaves authentically, once her *style changes* from a sporadic user to an Educator.

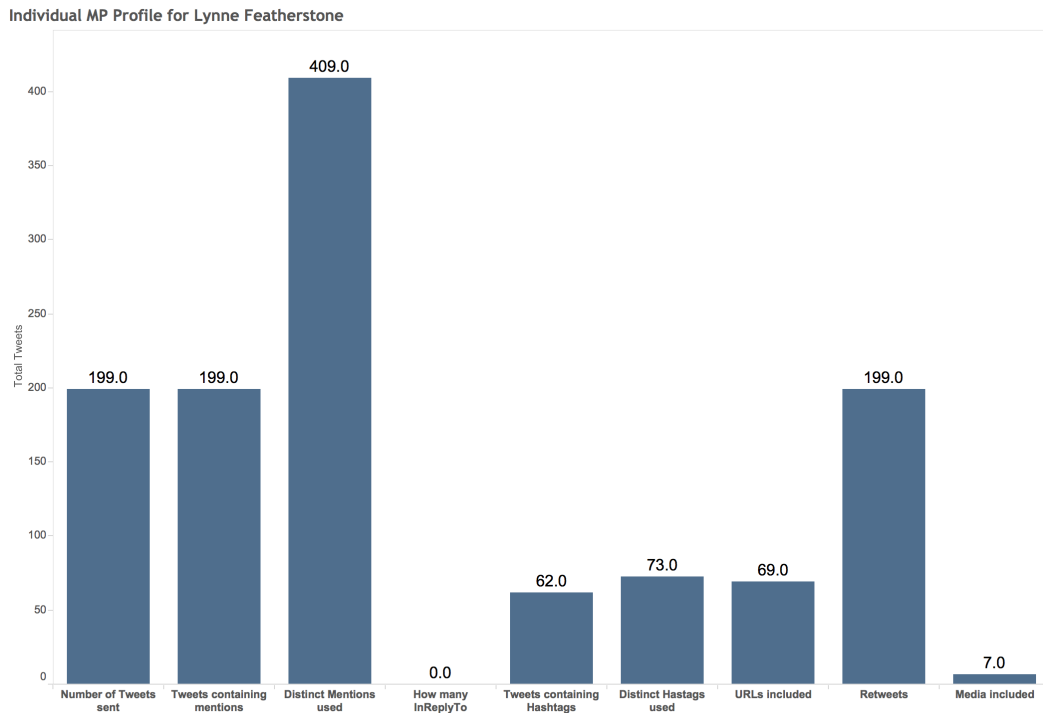
Over the course of this two-year study, overall totals for @lfeatherstone are shown below.

Individual MP Profile for Lynne Featherstone

**FIGURE 32 LYNNE FEATHERSTONE TOTALS 2011-2012**

The profile displays totals typical of an Educator: the ratio of distinct mentions to tweets approaches 1:1 and she frequently (729 times, or 59%) includes a URL. Her high in-reply-to rate (26%) indicates spontaneity; and while her hashtag use is low across the entire two-year dataset (11%), these hashtags mostly appear after June 2012, when they comprise 14% of her total. Her office also tweets many URLs, an unambiguous participatory element, in 59% of their messages. They encourage civic participation.

Of particular interest are the 199 retweets. When she does offer another view to the discussion, her profile shows an even greater level of engagement and participation; she does not simply offer information without placing it in context. Instead, she expands the retweet's reach by including many mentions and hashtags. Consider the following chart of her retweets:

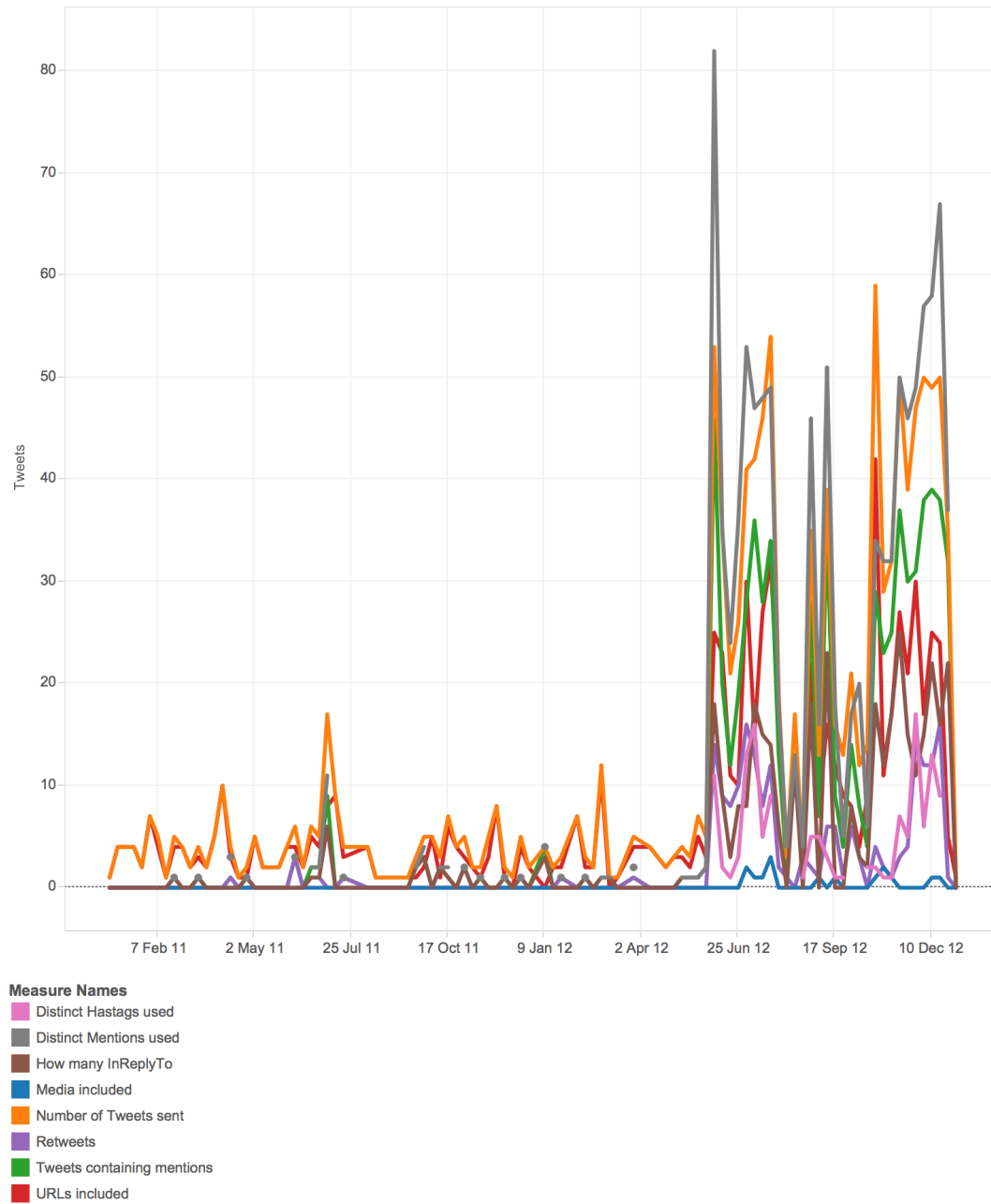


**FIGURE 33 FEATHERSTONE RETWEET PROFILE 2011-2012**

She adds additional mentions to each of these 199 retweets, increasing the amplification of her message and offering more participatory opportunities. Each of these retweets (199) contains not only a combination of mentions (409) (each of the 199 tweets contained a mention), but also contains hashtags at a higher rate (31%) than her own original tweets. She is sending these tweets to a larger audience. Of the overall total of 117 tweets with hashtags (figure 33, above), 62 were included in the retweets, but the remaining 55 tweets with hashtags comprise only 5% of her remaining 1,031 tweets. This seems to indicate that Featherstone never developed the behaviour of including this important participatory element, but a closer examination of how her style developed says otherwise, for as her usage developed, retweets make up a much larger percentage of her activity.

## Featherstone behaves as a Speaker from January 2011 – May 2012

Individual MP over time for Lynne Featherstone



**FIGURE 34 FEATHERSTONE'S USAGE OVER TIME**

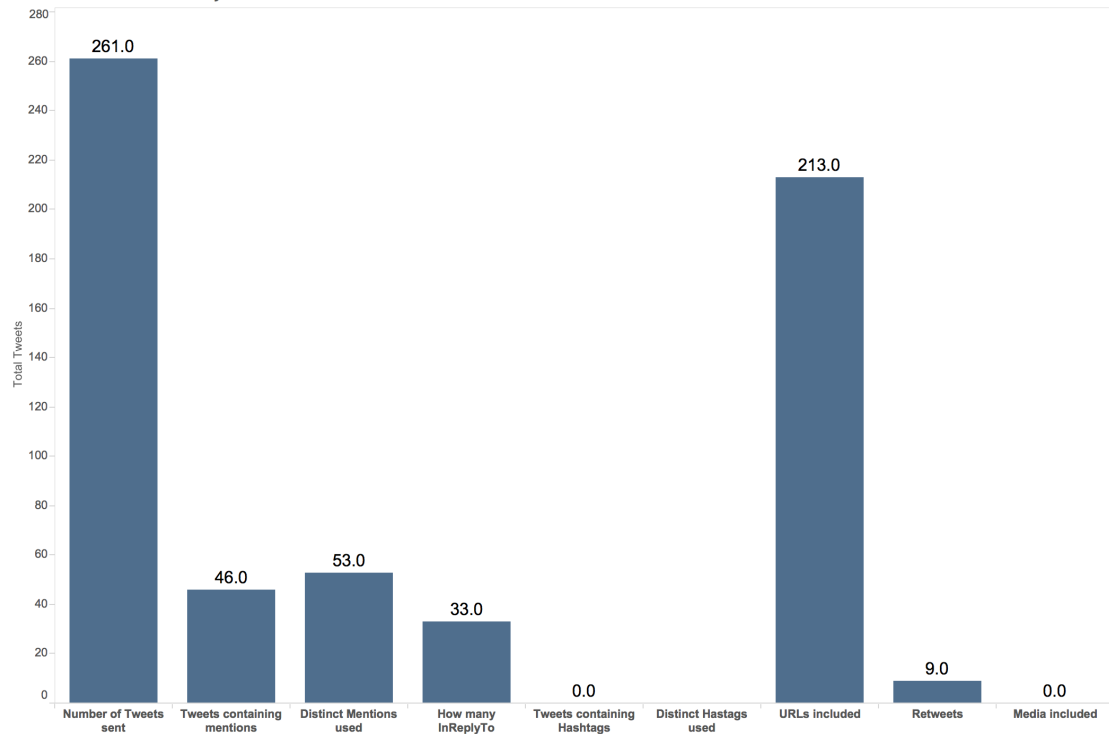
Lynne Featherstone's usage profile began, in January of 2011 without enough tweets to fully form a single style, but like many other MPs, her style began as a Speaker and a Communicator before developing rather dramatically into an Educator, when her usage went from 3-9 tweets per week (between Jan 2011 and the last week of May 2012) to 20-

60 per week. Prior to this development, during the 17 months beginning in January of 2011, Featherstone only exceeded 10 tweets per month (the orange line, figure 39, above) twice. There is nothing to suggest that using Twitter was a prominent part of her communication strategy during this period, despite being the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of Equalities (which ended on 4 September 2012, four months after her rise in Twitter use.) She tweeted infrequently, and as figure 40, below, describes, typically only included URLs. She tweeted statements and attached URLs almost exclusively. She rarely amplified her messages with a hashtag or directly addressed individuals with @mention and her tweets read like press releases or single-person engagements. Consider this 10-day period prior to her becoming an Educator-style tweeter from March in 2011:

18/03/2011 17:10	Cake time for Shelter <a href="http://flic.kr/p/9riQE4">http://flic.kr/p/9riQE4</a>
19/03/2011 16:15	New post: The LGF <a href="http://tinyurl.com/4db57v5">http://tinyurl.com/4db57v5</a>
20/03/2011 09:40	New post: Trans Media Watch and Chanel 4 <a href="http://tinyurl.com/4dyetvg">http://tinyurl.com/4dyetvg</a>
20/03/2011 12:31	@christineburns Spelling imperfect - but always fragrant! Thanks Christine - corrected now.
27/03/2011 16:51	New post: Alexandra ward <a href="http://tinyurl.com/4l7xb6b">http://tinyurl.com/4l7xb6b</a>
27/03/2011 17:29	New post: Bits and pieces <a href="http://tinyurl.com/4umd7sk">http://tinyurl.com/4umd7sk</a>
28/03/2011 13:09	At the Trans Media Watch launch event <a href="http://flic.kr/p/9tYBAT">http://flic.kr/p/9tYBAT</a>
28/03/2011 13:09	At the Trans Media Watch launch event <a href="http://flic.kr/p/9tYBDi">http://flic.kr/p/9tYBDi</a>
28/03/2011 13:47	£214,000 to repair potholes in Haringey <a href="http://flic.kr/p/9tZ5P8">http://flic.kr/p/9tZ5P8</a>

These tweets are typical of the 261 sent during this early period. They are sent mostly from Flickr (the image sharing site,) or a Wordpress plugin that automatically tweets new posts (e.g. "New post".) Her behaviour contains few personal elements, and she has even tweeted the same announcement twice. They are statements and announcements and read like press releases. They are, frankly, links to press releases.

Individual MP Profile for Lynne Featherstone

**FIGURE 35 LYNNE FEATHERSTONE TOTALS JAN 2011 - MAY 2012**

When the 17 months are analysed, her Twitter profile fits that of a Speaker. She tweets without mentioning people regularly; includes few hashtags; retweets very rarely; infrequently replies to anyone, and only includes URLs. Her content is cold, without personality, and is available only to those following her account. There is no conscious effort at outreach and there are only two tweets in this random selection for this period where she presents herself as either sincere, humble, eccentric, the overall effect has little life. She is inauthentic.

The metadata from this period reveals that Featherstone used Flickr's tweet function when posting a photo 99 times; used Twitter.com's mobile web interface once; used an automated Wordpress plugin to tweet the title of her newest blog post and a link to the post 109 times (e.g. 25/02/2012 11:51 New post: Who Owns Marriage? <http://t.co/hfejHkqp>) and the remaining 52 tweets were sent from Twitter.com's non-mobile web client. These are 52 tweets (of the 261 tweets in 17 months) that she wrote, and are very authentic, and are evidence of how her Twitter behaviour is unfocused but initially shows signs of authentic talk that she develops later, in June of 2012.

## Becoming Authentic

The 52 non-automated tweets display authentic talk and indicate that she naturally wants to speak with citizens but has not yet integrated Twitter into her regular communication efforts. Hers is a very simple and uncomplicated way to use Twitter and indicates that while she sees Twitter's usefulness in conveying a message, she has not fully embraced it or become comfortable with using it. She does, though have a naturally authentic and personal Twitter voice.

The following tweets are typical of those 52 written by Featherstone:

25/09/2011 18:05	@EricAvebury It is still being considered - as well you know!
26/09/2011 11:32	@EVAWhd @CRASAC point well made - thank you
26/09/2011 16:26	@miss_s_b totally appreciate your constant and vocal support against the haters!
28/09/2011 17:06	@ElizabethMcWill not silent - just not time to answer tweets. if you want to lobby me on this properly - better to write to Home Office
15/10/2011 11:58	@martinbright no
16/10/2011 13:12	@truelabourparty Wrong - I am fighting it! it is Labour Haringey - including the local Labour councillors in Bounds Green who are to blame
20/10/2011 15:23	@lukehwarren @veolia_es_uk please email what happened to featherstonel@parliament.uk as casework. important to make complaint
04/11/2011 18:36	@JustinCampaign persuade more football clubs to follow suit?
05/11/2011 11:21	@SocraticPolitic no
20/11/2011 18:27	@mimrich I enjoyed it - and now am following you!
23/11/2011 18:36	Can anyone recommend a brilliant vet in North London? Have a poorly dog with a complicated condition and need a second opinion.
23/11/2011 19:50	Thank you for all your vet suggestions. Personal recommendations always the best - very grateful.

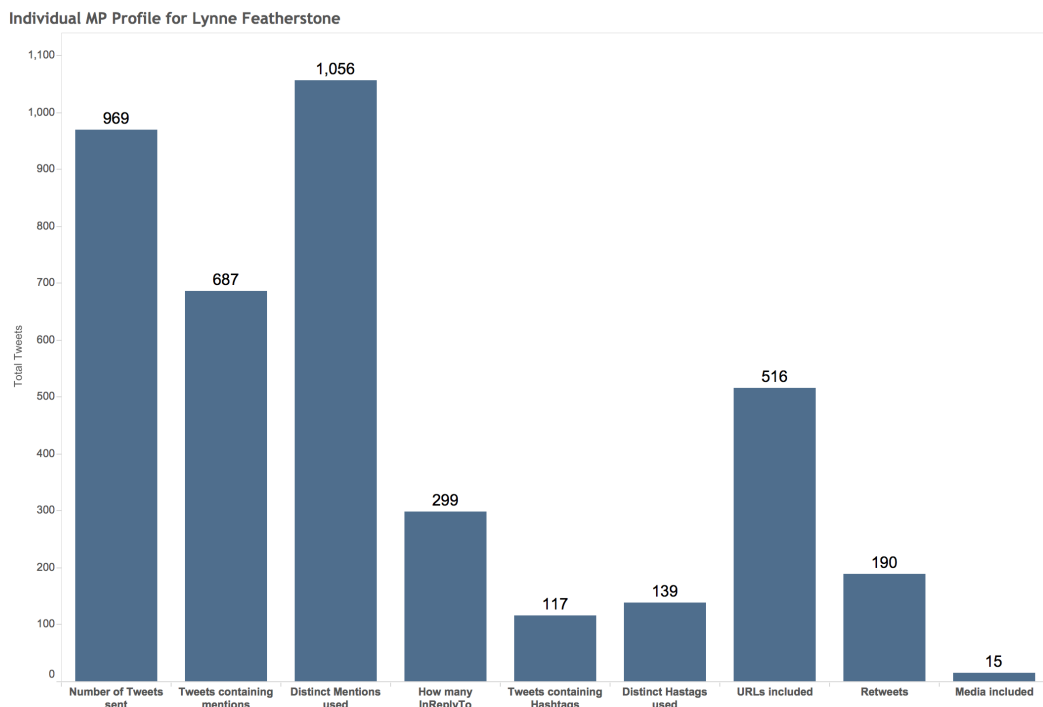
These tweets display all the hallmarks of authentic talk. They are conversational and personal (e.g. @CRASC point well made – thank you.) They are spontaneous (e.g. “no”). They ask questions; offer answers; are written in the first person and contain the conversational cues that prompt engagement. She uses complete sentences (e.g. “Thank you for all your suggestions”, complete with proper capitalization;) is polite (e.g. “Please”;) and conveys emotion by using English's initial emoticon: the exclamation point. She also is

quick to disagree (e.g. “no”) and ask questions (e.g. “persuade more football clubs to follow suit?”) When she isn’t simply posting automated blog announcements or photos, she’s engaging citizens and encouraging discussion and participation. From these tweets alone, a follower would learn that Featherstone has a pet that needs a vet; prefers lobbyists to contact the Home Office directly; appreciates outspoken voices; and humbly accepts points that are “well made.” There is an authentic person writing these tweets; they do not read like a press-release system. These tweets suggest that she could develop into an MP consistent with the Communicator model and are certainly authentic.

It is here, in these 52 personal tweets, authored from Twitter’s web client and produced over 17 months, that Featherstone is performing herself faithfully and establishing the voice that will eventually lead to hiring staff members that share this approach to constituent care. She is also, as will be examined, beginning this transition (depending on topic and technology) as a single Speaker and a Communicator before her office refines her Twitter use and behaves as an Educator.

## Featherstone's Office behaves as an Educator June 2012 – December 2012

Until June of 2012, Featherstone behaved as a Speaker. Her tweets were either automated—generated from a WordPress plugin or posted by Flickr—or written by her from the Twitter web client. They contained few elements other than URLs, were little more than statements and most often were inauthentic. But the tweets *authored by her* behaved authentically and contained language elements closer to natural speech than the others in the style of a Communicator. She displayed emotion; was helpful and asked questions; and discussed non-political topics. Her voice was developing. There was spontaneity and empathy. She was eccentric. During the last week of May, Featherstone hired two people, and began using Twitter far more frequently than before (see figure 36, below). Between June 2012 and December 2012, Featherstone's office began behaving as an Educator, and built the sort of democratically restorative relationship with her followers described by Henneberg (Henneberg et al., 2009), Coleman (2006a) and Hall (2009). Her office builds and sustains relationships; behaves exactly like the busy, concerned and helpful people that they actually are; and avoids the appearance of any outside manipulation in their engagements. The office built participatory and engaging activities on topics like the Special Olympics, African Policies, Housing policy, House of Lords reform, food security, Rosh Hashanah, Wimbledon, and a day devoted to wearing ridiculous Christmas jumpers. This is a far different view of a political office than was preformed prior to June, when her tweets contained mostly announcements and the occasional question.



**FIGURE 36 FEATHERSTONE JUNE 2012 - DECEMBER 2012**

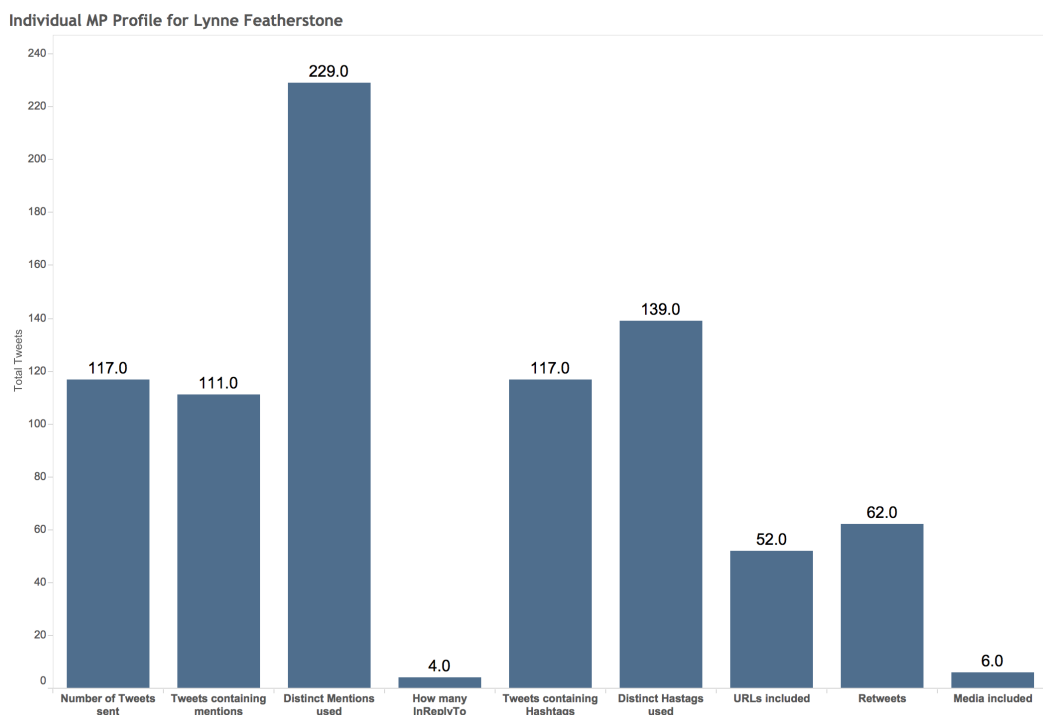
As shown above, in figure 36, above, the metadata for the seven months following her office expansion are typical of an Educator. The office's mention-to-tweet ratio exceeds 1:1; more than 30% of its tweets (299) are direct responses to someone; they are using hashtags (139, 14% of the tweets), retweeting other tweets (19%), and including URLs (53%). The topics are more natural and represent an engaged office, without a visible editorial filter, and use conversation elements in the tweets. Featherstone begins signing her personally offered tweets. They are speaking directly with constituents, grass-roots organizations; the press; and with the broader British public. They are encouraging participation by participating in public. *"Do as we do,"* the tweets beg; *"be involved."* The public is now watching an office behave in a trustful and transparent manner. This behaviour permits the audience to witness Featherstone's office in an intimate way and creates a trustful relationship with her public.

On 6 September 2012, when she was made the Parliamentary Secretary of State in the Department of International Development, Featherstone personally thanked 11 people for their kind congratulations from her Hootsuite account. In fact, of the 940 tweets sent after

June 2012, 17% (161) thanked people, compared to only 7 “thanks” or “Thank you” appearances prior to June.

When the remainder of 2012 is analysed and coded for Tweet Source (from where the tweet is sent, such as a phone or website,) 8 sources are revealed (Twittelator, an iPhone, and iPad, WordTwit for WordPress, Flickr, Hootsuite, Tweetdeck, and the Twitter web client, indicating that multiple people may be involved in sending messages. In this case Twitter has taken a more prominent role in Featherstone’s outreach activities. There is no pretence as to who sends the tweets (Featherstone signs her tweets,) but the presence of authenticity exists nevertheless. The messages are authentic in nature and conducted in full view of her audience, leaving the impression that the citizen is being addressed personally. The effect is one of transparency (the office is seen working) and of public participation. Her office displays evidence of helpful sympathy and candid eccentricity. The office is authentic.

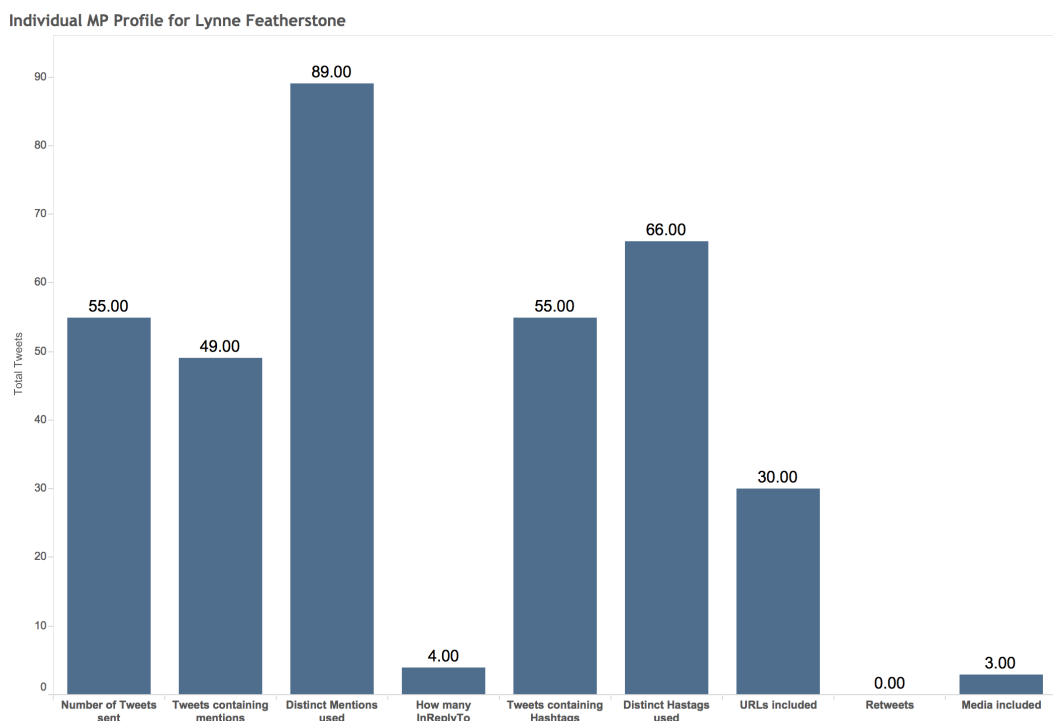
## Hashtag Use



**FIGURE 37 FEATHERSTONE JUNE 2012 - DECEMBER 2012 TWEETS CONTAINING HASHTAGS**

Featherstone's (and her office's) hashtag use dramatically changes in June of 2012.

Consider figure 42, above. When Featherstone includes a hashtag—which publishes the tweet to a broader interest-based diaspora—she behaves as a classic Educator. Her profile shows that she generally includes a hashtag with each tweet (139 hashtags in 117 tweets,) and more often than not mentions multiple people (229 mentions in 117 tweets.) She's offering this information to a larger audience that she believes will find it interesting. Her mention to tweet ratio is almost 2:1; she includes multiple hashtags 19% of the time; and includes a URL 44% of the time. The figures are even more dramatic when the retweets are eliminated and only her office's original tweets are examined (figure 43, below).



**FIGURE 38 FEATHERSTONE LATE 2012, ORIGINAL TWEETS WITH HASHTAGS**

In figure 38, above, Featherstone's original tweets (not retweets) that contain hashtags (and therefore broadcast to a larger audience) are remarkably rich with Twitter conventions and are dramatically different than the tweets in the 17 months prior. Her style has fully developed from the sporadic Twitter user of 2011 and early 2012 into a full Educator that engages her public. Rather than simply make statements and hope that the citizens will analyse and participate, Featherstone forms opinions and takes positions in public for her audience to scrutinize and interact with.

An examination of these 55 original tweets—that also contain hashtags from late 2012—reveal that she is appearing to speak directly with citizens on broad issues. However, it is critical to note that Lynne Featherstone, who at this point in 2012 signs the tweets she personally authors with an “-If” did not write any of these. They were entirely authored by her staff, who collectively offer a performance of a concerned office. Followers see a narrative that displays a helpful and fully engaged office. One assistant often says “thanks,” and another continually encourages the follower to send an email or phone someone. Activity is clear in this narrative; the office is fully engaged with the public.

This participation encourages other citizens to observe the formation of opinions. The Educator encourages debate and introspection by presenting opinions and encouraging participation. “*Examine this new information,*” the Educator suggests when presenting a link or a retweet; “*I have an opinion.*” Though the Speaker is described in its own chapter the broad differences relevant to this discussion are straightforward: The Speaker makes statements that read like press releases and encourages very little participation other than to occasionally offer a link to a government or party website. The Educator engages substantively, often directly and personally, and presents themselves as *one of the people*, a normal person that citizens can relate to.

Featherstone informs and motivates when participating in a discussion rather than simply asking a user to click a link. Consider these two examples:

- 16/10/2011 13:12 @truelabourparty Wrong - I am fighting it! it is Labour Haringey - including the local Labour councillors in Bounds Green who are to blame
- 20/10/2011 15:23 @lukehwarren @veolia\_es\_uk please email what happened to featherstonel@parliament.uk as casework. important to make complaint

Featherstone encourages participation when she asks her constituent to “please email...” and assigns blame to the Bounds Green councillors, just as an outraged civically active

citizen would. Sympathy and sincerity is evident, and the result is authentic (Liebes, 2001). If Featherstone's followers are looking for evidence of an MP concerned about issues and willing to be involved, then these tweets are very different from those of an MP whose messages are constructed with the media in mind. Featherstone, when she assigns blame is more concerned with how her citizens view her than how the press might. These differences are crucial to understanding how Educators encourage participation. One type—the Speaker—demands and assumes that there is trust, while the Educator appears to earn it by behaving just like the audience and being “real” and “normal” and “just like me.”

## Findings

Lynne Featherstone presents herself as a real person, even going so far as to sign her tweets to distinguish those written by her staff from those written personally. Her staff, though they do not sign their tweets, appear as helpful, engaged, friendly civil servants, and take care to thank people and create sustained relationships. Though it is unclear why her assistants do not sign their tweets, there is no ambiguity as to authorship—the office wrote it, with or without Featherstone's explicit approval—as there might be with a cabinet minister who has a large staff of people. Lynne Featherstone is telling her followers explicitly that she is working on their behalf, concerned with the same issues, and reacting with the same verve.

But Featherstone's case is not only instructive because she signs her tweets. She confronts and acknowledges the public's distrust of political communication and takes the proactive step to address it by signing her tweets. She is polite and friendly, as someone might do in a short personal note, or whether her research assistant is tweeting on her behalf. It's important to note, though, that including the signature “-If” is very personal and establishes her desire or predisposition to behave authentically on Twitter. She is also honest and is clear that others are helping with her Twitter account. She states quite clearly in her Twitter profile (as of 2014) that “Lib Dem MP for Hornsey & Wood Green & Minister at the Dep't for International Development. Account run by Lynne, @alansm & @markpack. Lynne's tweets signed -If”. Being clear with her audience about authorship

tacitly acknowledges the notion that other MPs may not be authentic and in doing so reinforces the growing trust being built between her office and her followers.

This view of Lynne Featherstone's office is one of an emerging communication strategy that adds the perception of authenticity to government transparency. Other MPs (many Educators and Speakers) behave similarly and accomplish the same narrative goal: *I'm speaking directly with you. You can trust me.*

Featherstone's office is also instructive because it acknowledges that the perception of authenticity is not limited to an individual and can be applied to an office or group of tweeters. In this case, the office is both educating and promoting, depending on the author, and displays enough personality to distinguish the authors from one another.

## Chapter 10: Discussion

### Introduction

Longitudinal studies such as this are open to criticism based upon the precision of method and specificity of the questions, so it is in this light that while the data is vast, the findings must be presented in a manner that specifically addresses the research questions. It is not enough to say that this study describes a polity in transition from one kind of communication to another, though it does. Parliamentarians' Twitter use grew 500% between 2011 and 2012. Instead, an examination of authenticity and its prevalence in the data is called for. Are MPs who behave authentically detectable in a large dataset? Yes, they are, and their metadata reveals distinct behavioural models. Amongst these models the MPs exhibit authentic behaviour that presents them as ordinary people and demystify the notion that MPs are detached from society-at-large and not representative of their constituents. Louise Mensch is engaged with citizens, stays up late at night, is opinionated, funny, and literate, with diverse interests and a seeming immunity to criticism. Stella Creasy involves citizens in the process of campaigning for legislation and is genuine, funny, outspoken and angry while she does it. Tim Farron enjoys helping people directly and often explains complex subjects to citizens in an accessible and personable way, until, of course,

he's crossed, which then results in a bit of combative dialogue. Julian Huppert wants everyone to ride their bicycles more often and pay closer attention to science policy and will always be available to both help and explain. He is well-read, and constantly sharing his concerns with others. Lynne Featherstone's office is hardworking and responsive, with a staff of helpful, friendly people that work over the weekend and actively encourage people to get involved in politics, even when it doesn't involve her constituency. Rob Halfon promotes policy positions and performs as a traditional politician does. Paul Flynn and Glyn Davies make statements and do not engage citizens directly. George Galloway has radical positions and is unconstrained by political correctness. Ed Balls has taken up running. Michael Fabricant is odd. Labour MPs are more likely to engage personally and are authentic far more than Conservative party MPs, and most MPs use Twitter situationally, selling when they must sell, speaking when they must speak, and laughing when something is funny. These findings are outside the narrow scope of the research questions but are important nevertheless. They describe politicians who are far more comfortable with the public than they have appeared to be in the past.

## Can Twitter Metadata Identify Authentic Behaviour?

The simple answer is that yes, authentic behaviour can be identified in the metadata.

It begins with recognizing that MPs engage with the public for reasons as diverse as political expediency and basic human communication, and when they use Twitter, they are either emancipated by the technology or ignore its potential to reinvigorate a weary public. From the metadata, the first, and most important metric used to determine an MP's behavioural model is always the ratio of mentions to tweets. Are they speaking directly with people? MPs who demonstrate close ratios that approach or exceed one mention per tweet are generally Communicators. They spend their time talking with an engaged public that remains engaged and presumably views the MP as a person precisely because the MP is acting naturally. Once the ratio drops, the MPs begin behaving as Educators, and the prevalence of other Twitter conventions, such as Hashtags, Retweets, and URLs appear more frequently. These MPs are informing and motivating the public by offering information and promoting activity. They are building productive democratic relationships

with the public who has now come to expect this sort of engagement. MPs with lower levels of mentions, but with a higher use of hashtags, URLs and replies use Twitter more politically and sell their positions to a broader public that needs or wants the care that a politician can provide. These MPs are Promoters. They communicate directly on occasion, educate on occasion, and speak on occasion, and never lose sight of this simple notion: MPs are always political. Speakers have not integrated Twitter into their communications in any great way and tend to issue statements instead of engaging directly with constituents. Whether they are supporting their party or reminding the public that they are working on the public's behalf, these MPs are not building sustained relationships with individuals on Twitter. The Speaker's data reveals many tweets without mentions or hashtags or URLs, and though these elements are used on occasion, Twitter is simply a press-release platform. Purposeful sampling of tweets confirms these findings. The Machine permits an examination of tweets based on usage profiles, time stamps, behavioural models, party affiliation, and the presence of Twitter conventions such as hashtags, mentions, URLs, media use, and a full combination of all these attributes. The behavioural models developed in this study confirm these findings.

The two models at the extreme ends of the @mention to tweet ratio—the Communicator, whose ratio is closer to 1:1, and the Speaker, whose ratio can be as low as almost 0:1—are clear examples of how the metadata can reveal an MP who can be typically perceived as authentic or not authentic.

Communicators, for example, have a distinct metadata profile, and MPs whose tweets conform to these profiles generally appear authentic. Communicators mention someone in almost every tweet, and have a low level of hashtag use, which indicates that they are concerned more with the individual than they are speaking with than the public at large. Hashtags are useful for microtargeting messages, and a selling-oriented political marketer would use them, but Communicators make no significant use of this technique. Communicators speak directly with individuals and do nothing more to amplify their messages. They build relationships with citizens and are personal and authentic. These MPs meet all of Coleman's (2006a), Montgomery's (2001a), and Hall's (2009) descriptions of authentic behaviour, and appear this way precisely because their onstage and backstage personas have merged together.

The opposite is true of Speakers. They are not particularly authentic at all. Though Speakers have distinctive metadata profiles, this behavioural model evidences a discursive style that does not appear to be authentic. Speakers generally have a low overall level of Twitter use, and in the context of their peers that have grown their usage by over %500, find little use for Twitter other than to inform their followers of a schedule or event and make the occasional personal statement on politically safe topics. Their metadata profiles show a low level of URL inclusion, which indicates that the MP has little interest in prompting civic participation, and their low level of hashtag use suggests that they care little for amplifying their message. They are not spontaneous, real, or down-to-Earth. They exhibit none of Goffman's authentic talk (Goffman, 1981), and their onstage and backstage personas are distinctly separate (Goffman, 1959).

The remaining models—the Educator and the Promoter—are not as consistently authentic as the Communicator--and can often appear more concerned with speaking with wider audiences.

Educators, who can typically be perceived as authentic, do not always confine their behaviour to the one-to-few-in-the-presence-of-many model of the Communicators, though it is certainly a large part of their activity. This is evident in the high levels of hashtag use, where their discussions (for their engagement is not usually limited to a simple response,) are sent to those interested in the topic. Discussions about Syria, for example, use the #syria hashtag, insuring that the broader public is aware of the discussion and can choose to read, contribute, or ignore as they see fit. The Educator model describes an MP who optimistically teaches constituents about relevant civic issues, and are not caretakers, as Schumpeter describes (1942), of an ignorant public, as both Lippman (1922) and Coleman & Gotze (2001) suggest. Instead, Educators view the public through the lens of a Habermassian deliberative democracy and seek to engage the public. These engagements involve a combination of discussion, the offering of evidence, and speaking, and each of these behaviours have metadata markers. Educators behave authentically by educating within clearly spoken personal engagements that are distinguished from the Communicator's engagements with a much higher level of hashtag, URL and retweet use.

They routinely speak with citizens in a personal voice and are often funny, serious, factual, spontaneous, and quirky. They meet all of Coleman's (2006a), Montgomery's (2001a), and Hall's (2009) requirements for authenticity, but only approximately 80% of the time.

Educators do on occasion make statements that appear as announcements that are not very authentic-sounding, but in the context of their other, more personal tweets, remain authentic overall, for they are working MPs with a job to do, and taking care to remind the public of their activity.

Promoters too have distinct metadata markers, though across a broader spectrum, with far more tweets classified as statements, fewer as educational, and fewer classified as communicative. Their personality, however emerges in the totality of these engagements, and is typically one of an MP hard at work. It is important to note that no one single piece of metadata is indicative of authentic talk. Authenticity emerges from the text and requires a qualitative examination, and can be present within models, like the Speaker, that ordinarily exhibit little. But authentic talk can be located with metadata examining the behavioural patterns, as this study has shown.

## Which Models of Twitter Behaviour are Likely to Present an MP as Authentic?

### **Educator as Authentic**

Making full use of various Twitter conventions, such as hashtags, URLs and mentions is quite a natural behavioural pattern for those friendly to technology and comfortable with the notion that an MP should establish relationships with constituents and guide them through the process of becoming more active and engaged citizens. If an Educator wishes a follower to learn something new, then a retweet is used; do something new, a link is offered; and if a follower has a question, then a mention tag is used. The Educator personality is one of helpful engagement and is unlikely to be performed by a detached or unhelpful other. In this case, the Educator is one of the regular people, helping out as a

lecturer might, and it is in this role-model that followers may build their perception of the MP.

In Julian Huppert's case, his engagement pattern began early; he was never a Speaker, and in the event that he was ever a novice, this behaviour quickly fell aside as his personality emerged and Twitter became a larger part of his life. Over the two-year study, Huppert, and the other Educators, quickly embraced this new communicative form and accelerated its use five-fold, just as other parliamentarians generally did. In fact, once MPs begin to exhibit the characteristics—both behaviourally and in the metadata—of being an Educator, they do not change; they do not later become Communicators or Speakers. It is a terminal state and culminates in their presentation of authenticity. All the MPs coded Educator displayed no "sense of scriptedness" (Montgomery, 2001a, p. 398) and presented as "sincere," "eccentric" (Liebes, 2001) and "down-to-earth" (S. Coleman, 2006a). There was helpfulness and personality evident in the majority of their tweets. When the MP was dealing with serious matters, then the tone was appropriately serious; when the topic was personal, there was evidence of emotion both in the language, or in the form of unambiguous emoji or punctuation, or in a subtler tone and mood.

It is within these moments of personal mood and tone that Habermas's suggestion that an "anonymous audience" in contact with "informed elite discourse" (Habermas, 2006, pp. 411-412) can begin to make up for the lack of true-face-to-face contact and make use of the mediated nature of Twitter communication and bridge the gap, or perhaps eliminate it altogether, between Goffman's backstage and frontstage personas (Goffman, 1959, pp. 72-74). Educators are authentic because they are behaving exactly as they are: helpful, engaged, and hopeful that sustained relationships can prompt the marginally engaged to become more so. They want people to be smarter and more active, and behave accordingly, using every tool that Twitter offers them.

### **Communicator as Authentic**

Perhaps more consistently than the other types, the Communicator is almost perfectly authentic. There is no obvious audience to the tweets other than the person with whom the MP is speaking, though it is clear that all the followers are watching. The Communicator

doesn't seem to care or acknowledge this audience. It remains unimagined. To the Communicator, each tweet is personal. It's directed at a particular person or a very small group. It is a fully mediated one-to-one-in-the-presence-of-many discussion, complete with the spontaneous eccentricity that presents as normal and unscripted (Goffman, 1959, 1981; Liebes, 2001; Montgomery, 2001a). It displays what the mood and topic dictate at that moment.

MPs coded as a Communicator display conversational characteristics, and engage over similar lengths of time, and at similar times of the day and week as discussions of these types would happen in unmediated conditions. Tim Farron's evening tweets, for example, sound like discussions that citizens might have after work, on topics casual and occasionally serious. Just as a friend might be in a mood to talk about politics or sports, so does the Communicator. And just as a friend might have difficulty shutting-up when the conversation goes on too long or the audience grows weary, so do Communicators.

As metadata goes, the Communicator makes very little use of Twitter conventions other than @mentions, so evidence of authenticity is easy to locate in large datasets. If an MP uses a citizen's hashtags, it is likely authentic. Over this study, Communicators become so after beginning as a Speaker, and never develop past this behavioural pattern. They build and sustain relationships in a decoratively restorative manner in a manner consistent with Deliberative Democracy's ideals (Henneberg et al., 2009), and do so by having discussion with individuals whilst in the full view of the public. This witnessing has the effect of establishing personality in the performance and this personality is authentic.

### **Promoters Aren't Very Authentic**

There has always been a promotional aspect to politicians' behavior, whether it's appearing with Jeremy Paxman on Newsnight in full makeup defending a position or selling a policy, or whether it's inside Parliament in an unprepared state speaking with a reporter. They are, at once, presenting themselves as an MP on the public stage and doing their best to appear natural, or more importantly, unguarded, with a delicate balance between prepared and unprepared. In Goffmannesque terms, these MPs are onstage, performing to

a public while also trying to appear as though they backstage (Goffman, 1959). When they wish to issue a statement, they issue one. When they wish to speak with the public; they speak with it. When they wish to respond to a citizen, they respond to that citizen. Political expediency remains the rule and is the overwhelming way to describe their tweets. This is the public face of an MP.

Just as has been with each new communication technology or technique, MPs wishing to sell themselves to the public have utilized various marketing instruments to do so, and of late, have used blogs (S. Coleman & Wright, 2008; Francoli & Ward, 2008; Wright, 2008, 2011) to sell their ideas in the hopes that the public responds in a manner that permits the MPs to further explain themselves and cement their position as caretakers of a Lippmanesque society that requires them. Responding to blog comments became the focal point of these new sales instruments, and though this form was “high-risk,” and provided a “mechanism [for] relationship building,” it was “short-lived” (Henneberg et al., 2009, p. 180) and never quite fulfilled the promise of true sustained relationship building and the ability to present as authentic. Still, the use of technology for MPs pursuing the traditional political marketing goals of message amplification and the selling of policy positions is manifest in Twitter, and in particular, in the behavior of the Promoter. This behavior does not require the MP to be authentic, so they are not.

Promoters do not place a great deal of emphasis on their authenticity unless a specific engagement requires it. When they wish to issue a statement to a group, they tweet a statement to a hashtagged audience or to a group with many followers. There is nothing personal about these messages, presumably because the MP feels no need to be authentic. Statements are simply that: a statement, and not a discussion nor a space to present as themselves. Promoters don’t perceive Twitter as a place to be “down-to-Earth” or “real” (S. Coleman, 2006a) when they issue a statement, or sell a policy position; Twitter is simply another tool to do the same communicative job. This is not to say that there is no authentic talk in the Twitter behavior of MPs. When their need is one of individual response, such when they respond to a direct question from a citizen, then they can appear authentic, but only so far as to be politically safe.

Though Promoters do, on occasion, present themselves as authentic by being “sincere” (Liebes, 2001) and “down-to-Earth” (S. Coleman, 2006a), these instances are infrequent and only in the context of political expediency, or within the safety of casual topics. Again, context matters. When compared to a Communicator, whose behavior almost always displays aspects of authentic talk, and Educators, who’s entire mission is one of sustained and personal relationship building, the Promoter is too often engaged in spin or too restrained by party doctrine to merge their backstage behavior with their onstage behavior and present as real.

### **Speaker Model is Not Authentic**

Speakers are not particularly authentic. They speak and hope only to amplify their message to their followers without the specific call-to-action or a URL; or with the personal appeal of an @mention; and only utilize an amplifying hashtag sparingly. Being a speaker is inconsistent with the nature of authenticity, which is to be contemporaneously engaging in a style unrehearsed for the sender and comforting for the receiver. This is not to say that tweets with a Speaker’s metadata signature cannot be authentic. A Speaker MP tweeting that he is “mad as hell and not going to take it anymore!” may in fact be authentically angry; and a Communicator who tweets “It’s enough everyone, time for bed now. Good night, and have a pleasant tomorrow,” may in fact be authentically tired and ready for bed, but these tweets are only authentic in the context of that MP’s other tweets.

Many Speakers do, however, discover hashtags and include them with their statements, and these statements can appear authentic, but again, it is the context of these statements in the context of other less-authentic tweets that prevent the public from perceiving these MPs as anything other than they have been perceived outside of Twitter.

### **What Characteristics of Authentic Talk Can Be Identified in MPs’ Tweets? Personality**

Twitter was always supposed to be an emancipatory communicative space for the public to shout and share behind the anonymity of a username and with the self-selected and self-

forming publics offered by hashtags; and it is with these social starting points in mind that MPs begin using Twitter. They are supposed to make statements, so they do. They are supposed to speak freely, so they do. Some MPs believe that with this freedom comes the responsibility to behave as a distinguished public servant in the British tradition of an aristocratic better, while others believe that this role enables them to connect with an engaged public and deliberate the issues of the day. In both cases, though, comes the difficulty of performing in this manner 140 characters at a time. How is that done? It is certainly not because MPs have read Goffman and are constructing their performance with careful attention to merging the thought, the words and the presentation. Rather, they instinctively recognize that Twitter is available on their phones and available too easily to permit planning their speech. Their presentation evolves and develops over time to reveal their personality, one tweet at a time. During their early tweets MPs generally appear stiff and composed. How else would they be during the adoption of a promising, but unfamiliar technology? But over time their personality emerges, and they appear candid, informal, outrageous, real, down-to-Earth, sincere, humble, and beautifully eccentric.

Andy Warhol's quest to take the perfectly authentic, un-posed images of his celebrities resulted in his Screen Test film series (Dillon, 2009; Weingart, 2010), where instead of using a still camera, Warhol pointed a film camera at his subjects. He would leave it running and instruct his models, Lou Reed, Edie Sedgwick, Susan Sontag, Allen Ginsburg and over 470 others, to hold their pose, an instruction he knew would eventually result in a breakdown. At some point, often a few interminable minutes in, the model sneezes or laughs, scratches their forehead or burps, and it is in that perfect moment that real personality emerges, and Warhol gets his authentic image. On a long enough timeline, everyone's personality emerges. It's why we enjoy the company of our flawed friends. On Twitter, personality emerges over time, and those MPs who have found their voice and are prolific present themselves as they truly are. They are authentic.

Evidence of authentic personality traits is common amongst MPs who are Educators and Communicators. They routinely laugh, scold, lecture, tease, and on occasion, start arguments. Personality traits emerge that create new relationships with an otherwise disaffected public. This democratically restorative behaviour serves also to redefine the democratic relationship with the public, in ways both idealistic and productive. These

citizens remain engaged, and authentic MPs continue speaking with them over long periods of time. Authentic talk is less common in Promoters but appears occasionally. Depending on what these MPs wish to accomplish, they make statements, have discussions, and encourage civic activity. But they are not doing so in any new manner. Instead they are performing their role as MPs using a new technology; there is no real change in their engagement strategies. Speakers display little personality, because, frankly, there is little personality involved in press releases, which is what these tweets are. Novices, quite naturally, are uncomfortable with, or perhaps unaware of what Twitter can do for their communication efforts are both disengaged and even less authentic. MPs must be comfortable on Twitter; and comfortable with this sort of behaviour before they can appear funny or serious or happy or angry.

Louise Mensch speaks to her author alter-ego in the third person; Michael Fabricant knows his skunk weed; George Galloway is angry; Tim Farron is helpful to some and combative to others; Julian Huppert wants everyone to cycle; Ed Balls is trying to run a marathon, and all of them want the public to know them as they truly are.

## Additional Findings

### Research Design

This research design permits researchers to explore large Twitter corpora by pointing the researcher to instances and people that are likely to be seen as authentic. Especially important is The Machine's ability to encourage exploration of large datasets. It permits the researcher to conduct purposeful sampling across a wide variety of groups, not just MPs, but for any identified group, whether it is a political party in other countries, in languages other than English, or with an activist group tweeting from an expedition vessel in a far-off fiord. Many new lines of analytical inquiry are available to researchers once these models are applied to a corpus. Network analysis, for example, can reveal a user's social media effectiveness at moving messages and fostering civic or commercial activity beyond their followers or those following a hashtag, making it useful for research topics as diverse as marketing a brand or managing counter-culture political protest.

## Twitter as a Transaction

As a communication model, Twitter is best described as a transaction, partly because it conforms to the idea that it gratifies a use, like the purchase of vintage photo that gratifies a need to connect to the past, and partially because it contains metadata just like an invoice does. Associating metadata with invoicing information is what led me to Tableau, the business intelligence platform that The Machine was developed upon. An invoice has a sender and receiver as well as short product description, that while true, requires the context of both the cultural position and the customer's expectation before it is can be considered accurate. The invoice may state "Janis Joplin, August 15, 1969, Fine Art Print," but only in the context of the other metadata, such as knowing that the merchant, "Wolfgang's Vault," specializes in Woodstock paraphernalia, would I know that the photo was taken at Woodstock.

Twitter permits the same meaning projection, for a public comment about #syria could refer to any number of topics depending on the current world condition or the preceding tweets in a longer discussion. In all these cases, the metadata adds meaning. In this study, the metadata provides insight into how MPs use Twitter. If an MP is simply offering statements then this transaction is simple: the MP offers and the follower accepts. There is no hashtag or mention to provide additional meaning. The opposite is true of an Educator, who directly addresses a person that requires an answer, includes new information to consider, and offers this response to a wider audience. Henneberg's examination of political marketing management (2009) provides the context for this use. This transaction serves a purpose: to inform and motivate; and the follower registers satisfaction by responding or remaining a follower. Twitter is, in this case, a transaction between two or more parties that fulfils needs on both ends.

As a political communication transaction, Twitter gratifies a need, both with the politician who must act publicly and the citizen who wishes access to power and so is transactional in that light. The MP or the citizen says something, for a reason such as anger projection or support or to be inquisitive, and the receiver responds, satisfying that need or not, while at the same time opening a line of communication that remains open in perpetuity. As needs are gratified, and the open line of communication remains constructive, then new relationships are formed between MPs and citizens that results in new forms of political participation.

## Chapter 11: Conclusion

This project began, intellectually at least, in 2009, when after meeting an MP at a dinner party, I searched for more information about him, and found his Twitter feed. His tweets, and in fact his entire online demeanour, was identical to who I met at the party. His online persona was authentic; it was him, a guy named Eric, and his online behaviour was not even remotely similar to the politicians I knew of in America. This MP was different, and perhaps uniquely British. Were there more MPs like him? Is this how MPs behave in the UK? A US Congressman who was true to his authentic self would be vilified for a lack of political awareness if his public speech represented his true self. American news organizations tacitly approve of political spin when statements aren't questioned. Isn't this why I didn't trust politicians? Isn't this why I became disengaged and distrustful of the political elite? I grew up with Watergate, and Iran-Contra, and the Clinton saga. I heard about WMDs and relaxed during a scandal-free Obama presidency. Trump is an entire other-worldly topic in itself. But this British MP suggested somehow that the UK culture doesn't tolerate spin and scandal as Americans do. UK MPs may be presenting themselves as they truly are.

As the process of behaving and thinking as an academic infected my life, the notion that I could present to academia what I knew to be true required a careful examination of research design and method selection and would certainly require constructing behavioural models if I was to properly explore the discovery made at the end of a Grappa-fuelled evening in Farringdon from 2009. And so it began: this MP behaves as a speaker, and another as an educator. This one communicates with people, and another behaves the same as politicians of old. The framework seemed straightforward, and an initial examination of the metadata seemed to confirm the result. Speakers didn't use hashtags or @mentions in the same way an Educator does. Patterns emerged in the data, and this is when the project became very interesting.

Twitter makes its data available in particular ways, and with particular restrictions, so instead of screen-scraping the data, or gathering it historically (as I had during my MSc dissertation, the majority of which was published (Margaretten & Gaber, 2012)), I relied

upon the one truth that I learned after decades of being in the computer business: data wants to be freed; anything can be found. So instead of talking to a guy behind the pool-hall, I found a data-miner that had been collecting the MPs' tweets for years, and soon afterwards a small research grant permitted me to acquire it, all above-board and accountable. A million tweets. All the tweets produced by MPs for 2 ½ years. Now I had to mine the data, and again, this is not a trivial task.

Prior to data acquisition of this magnitude, researchers would design projects to acquire only the specific data that was needed, and then interrogate this smaller dataset as planned. Additional findings might emerge, certainly, but the data availability limited the distraction to pursue additional lines of inquiry. The research available to those acquiring large datasets, however, is far more conducive to additional inquiry. This project originally collected 1,048,975 tweets over 29 months, spanning the end of 2010 and on into the beginning of 2013. But partial years create ambiguous charts and constant explanations, so the decision was made to limit the dataset to two years, 2011 and 2012 ( $n=774,464$ ) for clarity. But the additional line of inquiry—to *forecast behaviour*—which could have used the first few months of 2013 to test against seemed like a better topic for future work and was not explored in this study.

Newer research designs require an abductive approach to research questions and software selection that permit these new lines of inquiry. An observation or hypothesis (a naturally abductive approach,) must select software, for example, which ultimately may or may not address the intended question. The software's suitability can only be determined after a thorough and task-specific data-transformation and a full series of software package tests. This is not a trivial task and may take months. Should the research question, for example, require that particular graph is created or analysis be conducted, the software package must perform it, or leave the researcher with two choices: change the question, or change the software. Big data analysis presents these decisions regularly.

Goffman is keen to suggest that life can be described dichotomously, with a distinct public and private (Goffman, 1959), in which a person's self is situational, either available or not, and that people (the MPs in this case,) struggle to navigate the divide. My study takes the

view that this divide is no longer wide, and in the case of heavy Twitter users, may have disappeared entirely due to the ease with which someone can broadcast themselves, and present themselves to a public interested in them as *ordinary people*. The audience is now behind the scenes, viewing Goffman's authentic backstage performance-of-self. This is not conjecture; Coleman's studies (S. Coleman, 2003b, 2006a) of reality TV show Big Brother confirm the notion that viewing someone in an unguarded authentic manner creates an emotional and intellectual bond that manages the actor's impression and can create a bond strong enough to influence or even prompt a vote.

A study applying Goffman to how identity presents itself in virtual worlds (online, in the game Second Life,) the authors suggest that one's identity becomes an "edited facet of [the person's] self" (Bullingham & Vasconcelos, 2013, pp. 101-102). This same study suggests that Goffman's metaphor of frontstage and backstage behaviour (1959, pp. 70-76)—in which a contrived, or self-edited performance inhabits the stage, and that the real person is only available behind the scene or backstage—applies to online, mediated performances. My research takes the opposite view: over a long enough timeline, true personality emerges on Twitter as the two spaces merge. The distinction between front and back stage diminishes the longer an MP uses Twitter. Tweeting has become a normal part of these prolific tweeter's lives and there is very little distinction between the frontstage and backstage. It is all one stage, and the MP's true self is the character.

In 2009, Blumler and Coleman "revisited" Blumler and Gurevitch's treatise on a "crisis in communication" (1995a) and lamented a discursive space that was based too much on personality; was too reliant on publicity; had too little time to engage the public; failed to discuss matters with the public and therefor alienated them from the process; and was lacking a discourse outside the press that permitted the public to see more than negative viewpoints. They wrote that a "[format] of constructive discourse... [was] in rare supply in the established news media." And perhaps in 2009 this was all true. But by 2011 each of their concerns was addressed by Twitter, and by the end of 2012 this new "format of discursive space" was adopted by 405 MPs.

On Twitter, personality, especially in the form of authentic talk, is responsible not for disengagement, but instead for a reason to follow an MP. These citizens listen to what the MPs says, asks the MP questions, and engages in the political process outside the restrictions of voting dates and phone calls. And while publicity is generally thought of as morally bankrupt, it instead drives civic engagement with political issues and with the MPs themselves. There is time for engagement between the public and political, because tweeting takes moments, and is available on peoples' phones and at all hours of the day and night. And though the press is certainly involved in Twitter's discursive space, they are not its master, and instead participate with the same veracity that the general public participates. This space favours no one entity and is no longer in rare supply.

It would be easy to say that on a long enough timeline, all MPs become authentic actors. They do, frankly. But being authentic is less about time and more about integrating this technology into one's life. It may be that an MP feels there is a democratic duty to be public; or that technology helps them perform their public function more effectively; or that speaking with constituents is a better use of their time than watching *Fawlty Towers* re-runs. Whatever the reason, these MPs are merging their public and private and are naturally natural. A wise man once said that "you can't hide who you are on a pool table. If you play long enough and are a sore loser or a generous winner, your opponent will eventually find this out."<sup>29</sup> The same is true of Twitter. The findings reveal that MPs who have incorporated Twitter completely into their week are behaving as they truly are, and this behaviour addresses problems with public trust in government and civic participation.

Culture and technology's ability to broadcast one's self is now so ubiquitous, and the functional process so simple, that for those embracing the technology there is a full merging of one's private self with their public self. MPs who use Twitter extensively, from their new phones, in their messy bedrooms, on their crowded trains, in their boring meetings, on their quiet weekends, in their noisy lives, have removed this public/private distinction completely and are presenting themselves as they truly are. They are

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<sup>29</sup> Something I found myself saying a great deal between 1996 and 2008 at numerous pool halls in Denver, Colorado.

combative, and funny, and spontaneous, and intelligent, and bone-headed, and goofy. Sometimes they tweet their name. They are genuine people, in public, for the public to speak with and react to. The ease with which an audience can relate to an MP's personal musings strengthens the trust between these two political actors and is democratically restorative.

Twitter is simply the first of these interactive technologies, which started with the wired telephone, that places points of interaction in someone's hand, available at a moment's notice, and is likely to be replaced by a new technology that makes it even easier to amplify the self to an audience. This might be a voice-activated, speech-to-text system that requires less work than Twitter and will reduce the divide between public and private even more. Authentic Talk won't be an option to these permanently public people; it will simply be the default communicative position. Authenticity will be everywhere, except, of course for crabby introverted academics that vigorously remain private and require anyone wishing to see them in pain to be in their presence, at least until technology companies force the public to transmit emotion alongside voice and video, but my sense is that this a long way off. Hopefully.

It is often academia's challenge to present to knowledge that which we already know but cannot prove. This challenge is reduced as big data provides enough quantitative data to marry with qualitative data. These methodological challenges will continue to develop over the next few decades as methodologists create new tools to help social scientists interrogate the world. My project has taken a step in this direction and merged big data with qualitative data and located authentic talk in the tweets of UK MPs during the early days of Parliament's Twitter adoption. There is room for development too, both algorithmically and linguistically. Increases in processing power, and the sophistication of qualitative analysis, and the development of machine-assisted learning, and the creation of more dynamic corpora, will continue to move analysis down this path, and soon it won't only be impossible to hide who you are on a pool table, it will be impossible to hide behind political spin. The public will know their representatives, be informed and active, and the world might be better for it. Or maybe we elect Donald Trump. Sad.

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## Appendix

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## Summative Metadata Totals for all UK MPs 2011-2012

Twitter.User/Name	Party	Behaviour	Number of Tweets sent	Tweets containing mentions	Distinct Mentions used	How many InReplyTo	Tweets containing Hashtags	Distinct Hashtags used	URLs included	Retweets	Media included
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>774,467</b>	<b>548,966</b>	<b>790,676</b>	<b>59,061</b>	<b>151,985</b>	<b>193,268</b>	<b>156,636</b>	<b>183,236</b>	<b>11,699</b>
<b>Tom Harris</b>	Labour	Communicator	23,149	20,409	27,254	3,374	2,521	2,849	2,006	2,962	80
<b>Julian Huppert</b>	LibDem	Educator	19,485	16,360	22,177	1,613	5,514	6,698	5,353	10,954	83
<b>Jamie Reed</b>	Labour	Communicator	18,554	14,610	19,030	2,576	1,607	1,903	1,275	3,806	180
<b>Louise Mensch</b>	Conservative	Communicator	17,953	15,197	20,645	4,429	3,227	4,382	1,495	3,806	92
<b>stellacreasy</b>	Labour	Educator	17,530	13,248	20,848	2,674	3,853	4,603	2,265	2,451	105
<b>Kerry McCarthy MP</b>	Labour	Communicator	16,768	14,335	20,961	2,804	1,871	2,190	1,771	1,968	147
<b>Karl Turner MP</b>	Labour	Educator	16,553	14,728	24,973	1,412	4,670	6,854	3,521	8,912	345
<b>AngusBMacNeilMP</b>	SNP	Educator	15,400	13,412	19,768	1,354	4,378	5,675	1,861	6,787	161
<b>tom_watson</b>	Labour	Communicator	15,144	12,517	15,039	5,144	773	929	3,682	1,694	82

<b>Tim Farron</b>	LibDem	Communicator	13,977	13,021	18,931	2,658	868	1,014	1,325	1,066	28
<b>Chris Bryant</b>	Labour	Promoter	12,828	9,589	12,309	2,355	1,336	1,521	1,143	2,807	53
<b>Robert Halfon MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	11,950	8,450	11,988	1,263	3,802	4,654	4,622	3,462	214
<b>Therese Coffey</b>	Conservative	Educator	11,449	9,018	11,007	1,478	1,939	2,288	1,002	1,713	33
<b>David Jones</b>	Conservative	Promoter	10,352	6,432	7,806	1,052	865	976	799	633	172
<b>Greg Mulholland MP</b>	LibDem	Educator	9,858	8,167	14,508	1,555	3,102	4,410	1,782	3,165	68
<b>Michael Dugher</b>	Labour	Educator	9,525	7,184	9,931	687	1,430	1,654	2,630	2,195	180
<b>Andrew Gwynne MP</b>	Labour	Communicator	9,362	7,992	12,548	850	2,039	2,436	1,713	1,454	295
<b>Nick de Bois MP</b>	Conservative	Communicator	9,227	7,140	10,016	1,401	934	1,125	1,060	1,105	103
<b>Grahame Morris</b>	Labour	Educator	8,892	7,918	13,917	1,000	4,338	6,251	4,283	2,768	144
<b>Dan Byles MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	8,835	6,578	7,926	742	684	839	1,174	1,858	116
<b>Tom Blenkinsop</b>	Labour	Promoter	7,767	5,041	6,707	793	1,895	2,534	1,925	2,119	110
<b>Denis MacShane</b>	Labour	Promoter	7,559	2,556	3,345	298	292	345	387	782	3
<b>Brandon Lewis MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	6,860	4,664	6,339	650	1,203	1,572	1,841	1,850	156

<b>Karl McCartney</b>	Conservative	Promoter	6,476	4,951	7,717	216	1,202	1,434	984	4,314	125
<b>Andrew Percy</b>	Conservative	Promoter	6,346	4,369	6,182	623	334	455	462	767	83
<b>Richard Burden MP</b>	Labour	Educator	6,268	5,060	7,530	616	2,580	3,600	2,114	2,378	116
<b>Steve Baker MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	6,268	3,995	5,594	491	864	1,092	2,785	2,604	132
<b>Luciana Berger</b>	Labour	Educator	6,012	4,726	6,650	1,343	1,681	2,280	1,475	747	104
<b>William Bain</b>	Labour	Promoter	5,816	2,843	3,641	335	563	671	2,632	1,109	13
<b>Douglas Carswell MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	5,725	4,742	6,859	742	562	642	1,818	2,366	11
<b>George Galloway</b>	Independent	Promoter	5,334	4,588	7,914	1,389	1,040	1,542	827	2,319	205
<b>Nadine Dorries MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	5,065	3,717	5,273	1,071	835	1,063	508	957	40
<b>Jenny Chapman MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	5,061	4,384	6,149	565	495	605	671	1,735	11
<b>Ian Austin</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,908	3,725	5,086	908	328	359	844	674	46
<b>Mike Gapes MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,880	3,154	4,823	261	787	997	594	2,446	16
<b>Toby Perkins MP</b>	Labour	Educator	4,714	3,842	6,001	623	1,221	1,569	531	1,642	49
<b>Jonathan Edwards</b>	Plaid Cymru	Promoter	4,586	3,057	4,128	386	779	1,033	1,008	2,028	42

<b>Tom Greatrex MP</b>	Labour	Educator	4,547	3,853	5,753	684	1,021	1,368	972	1,953	55
<b>Nic Dakin MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,531	2,451	3,651	185	565	771	1,798	1,734	44
<b>Liz Kendall MP</b>	Labour	Educator	4,513	3,564	4,971	605	916	1,147	1,251	947	4
<b>John Woodcock</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,471	3,435	5,251	760	590	681	565	843	47
<b>Rachel Reeves</b>	Labour	Educator	4,446	3,494	5,841	906	1,064	1,344	903	1,518	149
<b>Diane Abbott MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,423	3,212	4,083	1,191	982	1,120	942	586	102
<b>Huw Irranca-Davies</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,372	2,543	3,987	435	1,232	1,623	1,197	1,068	109
<b>angela smith mp</b>	Labour	Educator	4,366	3,479	4,937	522	1,246	1,537	360	1,888	24
<b>Andrew Stephenson MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	4,242	2,432	3,831	209	1,174	1,614	932	1,639	71
<b>Michael Fabricant</b>	Conservative	Communicator	4,230	3,136	4,660	807	332	364	417	747	108
<b>Chuka Umunna</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,215	2,244	3,447	116	543	622	1,673	1,080	24
<b>Gregg McClymont MP</b>	Labour	Educator	4,200	4,022	6,762	277	1,167	1,565	964	2,991	68
<b>Chris Williamson</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,121	2,264	3,024	524	854	1,248	1,233	598	18

<b>Kevin Brennan</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,077	2,778	3,847	420	1,021	1,179	896	1,442	105
<b>Jonathan Reynolds MP</b>	Labour	Communicator	4,049	3,340	4,580	757	767	862	564	1,230	26
<b>Gavin Barwell MP</b>	Conservative	Educator	4,034	3,283	4,491	550	1,198	1,394	499	365	19
<b>teresa pearce</b>	Labour	Promoter	4,006	3,040	3,541	493	524	606	859	955	14
<b>Diana Johnson</b>	Labour	Promoter	3,961	2,757	3,832	312	873	1,086	1,518	636	17
<b>Jo Swinson</b>	LibDem	Educator	3,859	2,812	3,472	1,154	1,346	1,554	753	519	43
<b>Jonathan Ashworth MP</b>	Labour	Communicator	3,813	3,254	4,641	664	709	898	481	1,072	56
<b>Greg Hands</b>	Conservative	Promoter	3,774	2,206	2,944	378	587	662	818	594	7
<b>Gloria De Piero</b>	Labour	Communicator	3,647	3,067	5,341	457	604	700	542	1,081	64
<b>Lilian Greenwood</b>	Labour	Educator	3,635	3,031	4,979	524	1,372	1,659	339	898	137
<b>Vernon Coaker</b>	Labour	Promoter	3,600	2,419	3,450	434	557	647	1,039	1,522	71
<b>Paul Flynn</b>	Labour	Speaker	3,507	836	1,103	300	73	87	543	259	23
<b>Esther McVey</b>	Conservative	Promoter	3,393	2,422	3,869	555	339	393	771	943	51

<b>Tracey Crouch</b>	Conservative	Promoter	3,372	1,943	2,607	460	407	472	460	444	104
<b>Steve Rotheram</b>	Labour	Communicator	3,338	2,927	4,318	982	297	332	298	581	28
<b>Sharon Hodgson MP</b>	Labour	Educator	3,329	3,045	4,738	407	983	1,195	621	1,795	29
<b>Caroline Flint</b>	Labour	Educator	3,244	2,469	4,240	421	1,306	1,772	754	1,352	91
<b>Gavin Shuker</b>	Labour	Promoter	3,241	2,385	3,025	555	450	535	437	777	70
<b>Pamela Nash</b>	Labour	Educator	3,229	2,342	3,426	363	1,084	1,356	598	1,317	63
<b>Grant Shapps MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	3,196	1,642	2,426	700	491	580	1,470	82	5
<b>Ben Bradshaw</b>	Labour	Promoter	3,028	2,004	2,590	834	811	1,040	357	391	3
<b>Helen Goodman</b>	Labour	Promoter	3,028	2,343	3,373	215	867	1,265	455	1,800	12
<b>Debbie Abrahams</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,988	2,282	3,246	396	797	1,004	1,046	1,313	24
<b>Ian Lucas</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,936	1,614	2,107	203	552	696	835	697	83
<b>Andrew Griffiths MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,883	2,142	2,925	419	800	970	495	858	20
<b>chi onwurah</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,879	1,823	3,096	296	667	812	673	744	46
<b>Mary Creagh MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,872	1,948	2,865	231	913	1,120	1,276	971	50

<b>David Hanson</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,868	1,213	1,557	492	154	165	477	100	87
<b>Andy Burnham</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,807	2,207	3,353	313	746	912	607	1,194	9
<b>Alison McGovern</b>	Labour	Educator	2,783	2,224	3,072	451	873	1,157	649	1,222	28
<b>Stewart Jackson MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,745	1,686	2,192	302	337	419	480	799	16
<b>Barry Gardiner MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,693	1,480	1,941	521	355	424	307	332	165
<b>Harriett Baldwin</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,682	1,785	2,233	412	556	659	848	872	25
<b>Pete Wishart</b>	SNP	Promoter	2,680	1,088	1,621	218	288	317	453	361	19
<b>Christopher Pincher</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,670	1,748	2,997	294	328	375	221	482	19
<b>Tim Loughton MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,659	1,848	2,661	366	455	567	495	1,139	95
<b>Emily Thornberry MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,651	1,615	2,277	379	902	1,140	542	595	42
<b>AnasSarwar</b>	Labour	Educator	2,592	2,183	3,780	469	868	1,085	565	870	31
<b>Stephen Mosley MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,572	1,170	1,766	178	615	750	756	797	43
<b>Alex Cunningham</b>	Labour	Speaker	2,455	703	910	185	123	147	600	290	12
<b>Pat Glass</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,411	1,612	2,118	195	500	590	262	1,205	12

<b>Stuart Andrew MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,389	1,271	1,925	302	200	249	210	336	95
<b>Rory Stewart</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,370	1,617	2,200	393	369	456	856	865	27
<b>Michael Meacher</b>	Labour	Communicator	2,358	1,754	2,896	8	197	219	2,119	1,029	1
<b>Gisela</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,331	1,276	1,771	350	645	1,110	308	665	6
<b>Angus Robertson</b>	SNP	Promoter	2,328	1,579	2,188	301	886	1,160	614	705	25
<b>AlisonSeabeckMP</b>	Labour	Educator	2,323	1,814	2,589	405	624	862	316	943	12
<b>Sadiq Khan MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,319	945	1,597	227	778	963	669	214	92
<b>Maria Eagle MP</b>	Labour	Educator	2,265	1,867	2,740	421	676	846	415	734	80
<b>Zac Goldsmith</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,232	1,651	2,320	318	212	249	735	886	23
<b>Sarah Wollaston MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,231	1,512	2,072	519	585	711	252	286	88
<b>Simon Danczuk</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,167	1,391	2,078	150	390	503	489	947	42
<b>Rob Wilson</b>	Conservative	Promoter	2,147	883	1,101	356	647	820	249	124	88
<b>John Leech</b>	LibDem	Promoter	2,138	1,183	2,033	201	723	1,243	840	626	62
<b>Paul Burstow MP</b>	LibDem	Educator	2,092	1,710	2,787	182	844	1,094	591	1,070	127

<b>Philip Davies</b>	Conservative	Communicator	2,057	1,941	2,873	575	115	135	107	426	4
<b>Stephen Gilbert MP</b>	LibDem	Promoter	2,025	1,045	1,542	326	1,033	1,148	213	426	45
<b>Jeremy Corbyn MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	2,011	1,216	1,688	398	178	233	415	370	3
<b>Chris Heaton-Harris</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,976	1,008	1,488	176	178	202	384	601	23
<b>Ian Murray</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,972	1,469	2,164	283	519	613	418	660	45
<b>William Hague</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,967	952	1,429	346	1,260	1,886	329	229	63
<b>Bill Esterson</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,963	1,287	1,818	362	554	700	356	304	10
<b>Nicky Morgan MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,950	1,274	1,738	298	216	257	216	349	32
<b>Eric Joyce MP</b>	Labour	Communicator	1,928	1,502	1,982	575	127	158	196	173	20
<b>Claire Perry</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,923	1,004	1,406	219	190	239	159	488	5
<b>Dan Jarvis</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,902	1,355	1,948	496	302	382	381	311	21
<b>Barry Sheerman MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,878	1,460	1,900	119	252	287	150	357	11
<b>Duncan Hames</b>	LibDem	Promoter	1,873	1,195	1,448	377	955	1,056	163	177	37
<b>Alun Cairns</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,870	1,214	1,730	170	298	372	368	807	21

<b>Laura Sandys MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,860	1,278	2,130	185	653	879	614	698	86
<b>Catherine McKinnell</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,837	1,354	2,123	110	580	734	572	788	23
<b>Simon Kirby MP</b>	Conservative	Educator	1,830	1,439	2,218	237	414	565	283	663	37
<b>Stephen Williams MP</b>	LibDem	Promoter	1,776	1,178	1,742	199	414	524	528	707	53
<b>cathy jamieson mp</b>	Labour	Educator	1,773	1,500	2,543	118	425	538	776	8	19
<b>Matthew Hancock</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,762	1,231	1,869	98	271	330	457	752	64
<b>Nadhim Zahawi</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,761	1,283	1,969	174	257	323	547	869	55
<b>Adrian Sanders</b>	LibDem	Promoter	1,758	1,308	1,778	301	231	287	327	282	32
<b>Caroline Lucas</b>	Green	Promoter	1,753	1,309	1,689	702	483	621	507	35	17
<b>Jesse Norman</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,750	1,342	2,088	422	312	393	313	495	9
<b>Harriet Harman</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,731	1,286	1,990	424	355	435	162	485	23
<b>John McDonnell</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,689	1,124	1,630	528	151	219	187	251	3
<b>Peter Hain</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,653	947	1,477	259	220	253	228	326	7
<b>Mike Weir</b>	SNP	Promoter	1,645	611	753	111	376	449	277	302	89

<b>Jim Murphy</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,578	713	1,171	56	431	519	473	330	28
<b>Robert Buckland MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,566	953	1,390	109	316	379	253	465	6
<b>Ed Balls</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,558	1,047	1,670	288	354	401	639	4	18
<b>Conor Burns MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,551	847	1,057	336	66	85	139	129	6
<b>Peter Luff MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,550	1,001	1,122	325	239	294	164	262	13
<b>john spellar</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,529	757	908	24	85	95	920	66	7
<b>Tom Brake MP</b>	LibDem	Promoter	1,517	863	1,339	310	666	999	445	179	48
<b>Greg Barker</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,485	889	1,433	122	832	1,185	314	580	175
<b>Meg Munn</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,429	747	1,026	143	660	884	601	366	44
<b>MarkSpencerMP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,418	779	1,072	149	300	385	503	386	73
<b>Bridget Phillipson</b>	Labour	Educator	1,394	1,157	1,433	372	165	175	219	164	31
<b>Anne McGuire MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,382	1,071	1,390	96	358	414	351	810	29
<b>Ben Gummer</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,381	932	1,138	225	138	168	124	321	4
<b>Rob Ffello MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,381	721	950	84	389	482	105	466	4

<b>Alun Michael</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,376	921	1,416	123	167	223	204	580	115
<b>Pat McFadden</b>	Labour	Speaker	1,373	458	666	108	69	98	190	253	23
<b>Glyn Davies</b>	Conservative	Speaker	1,371	89	103	46	4	5	113	8	1
<b>Jason McCartney MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,370	563	717	180	221	264	230	84	33
<b>David Lammy</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,368	746	990	283	282	384	341	220	49
<b>Michelle Gildernew</b>	Sinn Fein	Educator	1,326	1,164	1,633	215	421	558	112	716	42
<b>Sam Gyimah MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,312	759	1,016	152	280	357	244	346	2
<b>Elizabeth Truss</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,310	908	1,199	268	162	190	171	196	1
<b>Graham Jones</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,308	794	1,093	255	411	542	206	166	28
<b>Brooks Newmark MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,305	665	888	99	207	274	414	138	34
<b>JackDromeyMP</b>	Labour	Speaker	1,300	330	452	60	112	126	68	150	4
<b>margot james</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,288	434	514	163	48	50	184	28	5
<b>Dame Anne Begg MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,248	750	1,036	217	192	220	237	282	13
<b>Caroline Nokes</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,246	502	571	149	39	48	76	64	66

<b>David Ward</b>	LibDem	Promoter	1,240	645	1,050	122	766	1,377	239	230	83
<b>Lynne Featherstone</b>	LibDem	Educator	1,230	733	1,109	328	117	139	729	199	15
<b>Kate Green</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,215	806	1,252	166	314	395	467	355	27
<b>Mark Reckless MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	1,201	613	1,001	92	160	210	729	259	16
<b>Michael McCann MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,201	713	957	185	99	138	280	303	80
<b>Phil Wilson</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,171	796	1,203	180	213	247	126	323	30
<b>Seema Malhotra</b>	Labour	Educator	1,147	966	1,799	93	460	614	274	515	21
<b>R. Blackman-Woods</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,143	531	737	93	332	371	176	194	60
<b>Russell Brown</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,143	622	988	68	241	289	173	378	22
<b>Justin Tomlinson MP</b>	Conservative	Educator	1,126	825	1,256	151	328	365	314	281	16
<b>Heidi Alexander</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,120	892	1,330	290	120	150	159	205	59
<b>Steve Brine</b>	Conservative	Speaker	1,100	274	321	89	67	69	172	50	46
<b>Conor Murphy</b>	Sinn Fein	Promoter	1,097	601	911	179	122	141	44	204	30
<b>Anne Milton MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	1,087	460	609	164	61	98	62	121	1

<b>Don Foster</b>	LibDem	Promoter	1,074	659	1,077	81	419	536	602	242	19
<b>Ed Miliband</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,045	508	660	252	287	310	335	82	51
<b>Tessa Jowell</b>	Labour	Promoter	1,006	669	1,030	202	224	263	303	222	37
<b>Ivan Lewis</b>	Labour	Promoter	955	617	779	195	133	166	84	133	2
<b>Gemma Doyle</b>	Labour	Promoter	952	706	971	224	182	210	109	211	22
<b>Minister Civ Soc</b>	Conservative	Promoter	952	389	570	42	435	557	295	10	7
<b>caroline dinenage mp</b>	Conservative	Educator	948	720	1,201	146	204	269	149	354	42
<b>David Miliband</b>	Labour	Promoter	948	471	739	60	192	229	410	133	4
<b>Yasmin Qureshi</b>	Labour	Promoter	908	496	667	51	221	278	230	304	19
<b>George Freeman MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	886	443	700	23	267	356	373	238	8
<b>Mary Macleod</b>	Conservative	Promoter	885	443	621	66	180	210	150	92	7
<b>Mike Freer MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	884	500	586	165	280	292	54	113	4
<b>Andrew George</b>	LibDem	Promoter	878	471	597	299	279	435	704	99	0
<b>Emma Reynolds</b>	Labour	Promoter	876	641	1,106	206	349	455	129	201	13

<b>John Redwood</b>	Conservative	Speaker	873	0		0	0		873	0	0
<b>James Morris</b>	Conservative	Promoter	843	318	482	86	321	428	185	126	3
<b>Angela Eagle</b>	Labour	Promoter	837	598	1,049	127	321	407	140	309	55
<b>Stewart Hosie</b>	SNP	Promoter	837	600	743	134	351	499	151	282	6
<b>Norman Lamb</b>	LibDem	Promoter	816	504	595	281	23	29	53	28	12
<b>Douglas Alexander</b>	Labour	Promoter	809	397	543	88	348	429	215	110	2
<b>Damian Collins</b>	Conservative	Promoter	781	533	836	113	166	209	328	280	2
<b>Mike Weatherley MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	779	296	514	43	83	109	429	138	13
<b>Keith Vaz MP</b>	Labour	Communicator	763	538	541	310	139	152	4	8	0
<b>David Lidington MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	761	372	520	94	225	331	214	143	18
<b>David Cairns</b>	Labour	Communicator	747	560	619	183	19	24	46	15	0
<b>Steve McCabe</b>	Labour	Speaker	727	107	157	29	36	46	209	56	13
<b>Fiona O'Donnell MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	722	476	619	119	144	191	67	208	3
<b>Meg Hillier MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	715	501	798	138	294	420	87	180	1

<b>Lisa Nandy</b>	Labour	Promoter	705	440	766	73	161	186	182	182	11
<b>Jake Berry</b>	Conservative	Promoter	695	420	644	113	249	318	102	204	53
<b>Hilary Benn MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	682	300	429	110	138	168	56	132	39
<b>Chris White MP</b>	Conservative	Educator	678	508	826	94	234	316	127	212	16
<b>Martin Horwood</b>	LibDem	Promoter	661	447	579	178	249	376	132	126	32
<b>Alistair Carmichael</b>	LibDem	Communicator	644	588	912	170	118	140	71	173	10
<b>Stephen Twigg</b>	Labour	Promoter	644	311	485	52	141	158	128	32	5
<b>Penny Mordaunt MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	642	359	499	146	88	107	31	111	2
<b>Siobhain McDonagh MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	634	265	369	94	197	234	158	81	2
<b>Liam Byrne</b>	Labour	Promoter	633	225	360	53	187	210	223	108	11
<b>Yvette Cooper</b>	Labour	Promoter	632	369	621	35	140	168	205	2	19
<b>David Morris MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	623	327	548	28	195	207	336	166	58
<b>Sheryll Murray MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	623	244	319	49	32	40	67	86	134

<b>Gareth Thomas MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	614	232	351	36	68	93	346	153	6
<b>Lucy Powell</b>	Labour	Educator	610	464	699	114	152	175	69	209	11
<b>Owen Smith MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	602	377	584	60	162	178	169	98	28
<b>Cheryl Gillan MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	595	468	666	83	203	250	77	290	19
<b>Paul Blomfield</b>	Labour	Promoter	585	377	594	123	70	84	223	97	20
<b>Roger Williams MP</b>	LibDem	Promoter	585	426	601	85	155	189	110	285	14
<b>Charlie Elphicke</b>	Conservative	Educator	581	440	737	149	157	228	75	127	65
<b>John Denham</b>	Labour	Promoter	581	354	512	36	153	167	213	257	4
<b>Andy Slaughter MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	578	365	541	37	179	226	268	178	24
<b>Richard Harrington</b>	Conservative	Promoter	574	245	352	59	24	29	100	72	4
<b>John Mann MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	572	214	302	67	160	169	144	93	8
<b>Alec Shelbrooke</b>	Conservative	Speaker	564	246	329	82	47	55	49	79	51
<b>Graham Stuart MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	539	241	389	46	114	127	230	108	0
<b>Paul Maskey</b>	Sinn Fein	Educator	533	479	746	99	133	173	53	266	37

<b>Austin Mitchell</b>	Labour	Speaker	525	55	79	27	7	7	11	18	2
<b>Dr Phillip Lee MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	513	169	227	18	155	212	334	63	15
<b>David Evennett MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	510	145	185	13	62	74	333	71	8
<b>Graham Evans MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	496	353	504	71	170	238	128	229	28
<b>Jeremy Lefroy</b>	Conservative	Speaker	496	111	149	13	24	29	315	39	24
<b>Sir Tony Baldry MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	493	0		0	0		490	0	0
<b>Helen Grant MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	490	259	611	18	153	200	101	174	1
<b>Andrew Bingham MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	488	200	274	46	40	47	37	120	6
<b>Greg Knight</b>	Conservative	Promoter	483	152	219	42	8	9	93	46	4
<b>Nick Herbert</b>	Conservative	Promoter	481	333	578	8	108	134	258	195	7
<b>Jeremy Hunt</b>	Conservative	Promoter	475	205	292	47	187	242	78	13	9
<b>Margaret Curran</b>	Labour	Promoter	456	304	490	27	107	127	66	198	17
<b>Ian Swales</b>	LibDem	Speaker	449	97	122	56	16	16	60	26	0
<b>Julian Smith MP</b>	Conservative	Educator	441	346	538	112	126	148	50	91	26

<b>Wayne David MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	432	205	258	61	106	114	52	59	1
<b>Angie Bray</b>	Conservative	Novice	431	219	274	100	98	118	28	19	40
<b>Damian Hinds</b>	Conservative	Promoter	426	233	332	36	165	206	133	155	2
<b>Ian Mearns MP</b>	Labour	Communicator	418	346	540	114	49	57	33	99	10
<b>Tessa Munt (MP)</b>	LibDem	Promoter	411	174	252	14	119	181	262	107	3
<b>Ed Vaizey</b>	Conservative	Promoter	409	166	265	39	32	35	38	56	5
<b>Aidan Burley MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	403	167	279	11	44	64	175	121	10
<b>Mark Garnier</b>	Conservative	Speaker	396	25	35	13	171	180	173	5	0
<b>Shabana Mahmood MP</b>	Labour	Educator	391	311	499	60	80	108	54	201	7
<b>Barbara Keeley</b>	Labour	Educator	388	373	580	47	120	155	92	261	8
<b>Mark Williams</b>	LibDem	Promoter	388	179	298	29	67	110	199	117	4
<b>Jon Trickett</b>	Labour	Promoter	378	240	350	52	49	62	70	126	1
<b>Chris Leslie</b>	Labour	Promoter	377	219	279	52	94	111	62	99	20

<b>Kevan Jones MP</b>	Labour	Communicator	376	293	438	46	45	46	63	215	45
<b>Mike Crockart MP</b>	LibDem	Educator	375	300	501	77	205	259	82	95	34
<b>Andy Sawford MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	372	266	430	80	115	139	77	63	18
<b>Ann McKechin</b>	Labour	Promoter	355	221	341	36	138	166	65	128	17
<b>Gordon Birtwistle</b>	LibDem	Promoter	346	173	230	63	54	61	73	58	14
<b>Neil Carmichael</b>	Conservative	Promoter	346	153	212	18	158	250	39	124	14
<b>Bernard Jenkin MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	342	179	233	50	72	85	123	74	0
<b>Margaret Hodge MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	342	122	174	33	98	130	143	41	42
<b>Chloe Smith</b>	Conservative	Promoter	331	157	246	22	71	82	42	68	27
<b>Tony Lloyd</b>	Labour	Promoter	325	112	160	33	26	31	121	51	24
<b>James Brokenshire</b>	Conservative	Promoter	324	176	233	57	78	87	43	65	12
<b>Malcolm Bruce</b>	LibDem	Speaker	321	38	46	19	4	8	21	12	0
<b>David Mundell MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	317	112	139	33	41	47	38	14	4
<b>Stephen Crabb MP</b>	Conservative	Educator	308	230	352	61	49	58	22	88	13

<b>Damian</b>	Conservative	Promoter	306	155	213	41	59	66	13	71	1
<b>Jenny Willott</b>	LibDem	Promoter	301	178	327	24	66	85	152	109	5
<b>David Burrowes</b>	Conservative	Promoter	300	199	332	69	46	73	119	83	7
<b>Rachel Joyce</b>	Conservative	Promoter	297	144	185	16	14	19	127	73	0
<b>Pauline Latham MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	296	83	128	9	38	41	220	65	1
<b>Steve Barclay</b>	Conservative	Promoter	293	108	141	38	35	38	82	40	3
<b>Fabian Hamilton</b>	Labour	Promoter	291	161	248	54	42	48	25	46	5
<b>John Penrose MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	291	123	144	65	71	86	112	13	1
<b>Oliver Colvile MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	290	58	87	29	7	11	21	20	2
<b>James Gray MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	286	131	154	60	35	41	181	27	5
<b>Craig Whittaker MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	280	233	336	61	32	43	31	106	2
<b>Rosie Cooper MP</b>	Labour	Speaker	280	64	81	7	32	33	45	4	32
<b>Iain Stewart MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	263	84	94	48	3	3	17	8	3
<b>Nigel Dodds</b>	Democratic	Speaker	249	34	55	7	9	10	166	25	1

	Unionist										
<b>Nick Clegg</b>	LibDem	Promoter	246	165	236	1	105	137	124	115	5
<b>Hugo Swire</b>	Conservative	Promoter	242	114	180	10	129	173	37	75	6
<b>Mark Field MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	240	143	225	6	20	23	121	75	6
<b>paulcmaynard</b>	Conservative	Promoter	235	138	202	36	20	38	90	60	0
<b>Clive Efford</b>	Labour	Promoter	231	106	147	53	21	24	23	22	0
<b>Jon Cruddas</b>	Labour	Promoter	231	127	184	14	61	69	167	73	4
<b>David Nuttall MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	214	130	182	31	53	69	28	45	1
<b>Geoffrey Cox MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	209	44	50	9	4	4	103	9	1
<b>Jo Johnson</b>	Conservative	Promoter	205	138	231	16	38	47	84	101	7
<b>Simon Wright MP</b>	LibDem	Educator	203	158	278	35	63	81	43	75	6
<b>Ian Lavery MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	197	101	195	32	55	74	42	48	8
<b>Peter Aldous MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	197	42	70	4	144	249	101	31	2
<b>James Duddridge</b>	Conservative	Speaker	196	34	39	6	9	11	42	22	11

<b>Charles Kennedy</b>	LibDem	Promoter	195	67	102	11	29	33	85	33	1
<b>Chris Skidmore MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	193	98	154	13	31	32	85	65	1
<b>Jim Sheridan</b>	Labour	Speaker	191	13	16	5	3	3	21	2	0
<b>Andrew Bridgen MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	190	59	75	18	5	6	28	20	4
<b>Iain Wright</b>	Labour	Promoter	185	152	218	32	62	79	23	101	4
<b>Yvonne Fovargue</b>	Labour	Promoter	185	119	167	27	85	107	49	38	26
<b>Paul Uppal</b>	Conservative	Promoter	184	102	140	22	56	66	48	39	1
<b>John Glen</b>	Conservative	Speaker	178	21	35	3	5	7	38	7	10
<b>Maria_MillerMP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	170	108	191	15	59	85	35	60	1
<b>David Rutley</b>	Conservative	Promoter	161	113	169	27	27	33	48	49	23
<b>Iain McKenzie</b>	Labour	Speaker	159	28	33	11	13	14	68	11	1
<b>Tristram Hunt</b>	Labour	Speaker	158	33	49	11	21	21	110	8	0
<b>Louise Ellman MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	157	38	83	2	22	24	91	29	0
<b>Andrea Leadsom</b>	Conservative	Promoter	152	63	95	5	79	108	48	39	6

<b>John Healey MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	152	107	172	29	16	17	32	47	17
<b>John Robertson</b>	Labour	Promoter	148	91	141	3	23	29	96	76	1
<b>Annette Brooke</b>	LibDem	Speaker	140	2	2	0	1	1	133	2	0
<b>Nick Hurd</b>	Conservative	Speaker	140	15	22	3	26	33	6	8	0
<b>Andrew Selous MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	139	1	1	0	0		6	1	0
<b>Charlotte Leslie MP</b>	Conservative	Educator	134	125	236	39	64	78	36	49	9
<b>Geraint Davies MP</b>	Labour	Speaker	130	35	47	10	24	37	64	6	6
<b>Simon Reeve</b>	Conservative	Speaker	123	24	35	10	9	9	12	8	3
<b>John Hemming</b>	LibDem	Promoter	122	88	109	35	6	8	48	12	1
<b>Stephen Doughty</b>	Labour	Educator	118	88	163	15	62	87	11	37	17
<b>Anne Marie Morris</b>	Conservative	Novice	117	50	66	33	9	10	14	2	0
<b>Peter Bone MP</b>	Conservative	Communicator	117	100	192	33	8	10	9	51	2
<b>Thomas Docherty MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	117	54	90	5	18	21	71	27	11
<b>Roger Godsiff MP</b>	Labour	Speaker	110	12	15	4	6	6	90	1	0

<b>Mark Hunter MP</b>	LibDem	Promoter	109	57	73	2	36	37	37	27	0
<b>Danny Alexander</b>	LibDem	Promoter	108	57	87	6	14	18	18	39	8
<b>Matthew Offord</b>	Conservative	Speaker	105	3	3	0	3	3	8	0	4
<b>Eric Pickles</b>	Conservative	Promoter	104	56	108	11	24	28	27	27	10
<b>John Mann's Office</b>	Labour	Promoter	100	73	110	13	37	50	34	35	0
<b>Mark Simmonds MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	99	41	67	2	57	74	20	23	1
<b>Greg Clark</b>	Conservative	Promoter	97	32	51	4	26	27	43	17	11
<b>Jonathan Djanogly</b>	Conservative	Promoter	96	61	81	14	10	16	44	33	0
<b>Richard Benyon</b>	Conservative	Speaker	96	14	18	9	9	10	8	2	1
<b>Chris Ruane MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	95	47	60	4	15	23	64	34	3
<b>Virendra Sharma MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	95	31	61	5	13	24	31	8	1
<b>Steve Reed MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	87	61	123	19	31	39	12	32	1
<b>Hywel Williams AS/MP</b>	Plaid Cymru	Novice	86	9	10	1	71	72	2	8	0
<b>Stephen Timms</b>	Labour	Promoter	78	43	44	34	1	1	22	0	0

<b>Anne McIntosh</b>	Conservative	Speaker	73	18	30	6	3	5	18	9	15
<b>David Cameron</b>	Conservative	Speaker	72	16	23	0	31	37	7	0	33
<b>Dr Liam Fox MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	72	19	29	4	36	45	24	6	3
<b>Michael Moore</b>	LibDem	Promoter	72	27	44	3	15	16	7	18	6
<b>Mark Harper</b>	Conservative	Promoter	68	51	64	1	18	25	17	44	6
<b>Amber Rudd</b>	Conservative	Promoter	64	42	61	14	24	32	4	15	7
<b>Clive Betts</b>	Labour	Speaker	62	1	1	1	0		62	0	0
<b>Rushanara Ali</b>	Labour	Promoter	61	57	115	6	23	29	5	43	10
<b>Andrew Jones MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	58	43	62	11	24	33	32	12	5
<b>Ann Coffey MP</b>	Labour	Novice	57	28	43	8	0		22	9	8
<b>Mark Pawsey</b>	Conservative	Promoter	57	30	38	1	5	8	24	9	1
<b>Anna Soubry MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	55	7	10	0	3	3	51	3	0
<b>Nicola Blackwood</b>	Conservative	Speaker	55	4	4	0	0		54	0	0
<b>Mark Pritchard</b>	Conservative	Speaker	53	0		0	0		1	0	0

<b>Steve Webb</b>	LibDem	Speaker	50	3	3	1	1	1	14	0	0
<b>Guy Opperman MP</b>	Conservative	Promoter	44	18	23	1	22	26	21	13	0
<b>Sarah Champion MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	44	13	18	1	23	25	5	8	3
<b>Vince Cable</b>	LibDem	Promoter	44	21	33	0	16	18	25	13	7
<b>Frank Roy</b>	Labour	Promoter	43	18	24	3	10	12	7	9	2
<b>Naomi Long MP</b>	Alliance Party of NI	Promoter	41	21	36	6	8	12	13	11	1
<b>Alan Whitehead MP</b>	Labour	Promoter	40	17	24	10	5	6	22	3	1
<b>Lorely Burt</b>	LibDem	Novice	39	10	17	1	13	17	17	3	9
<b>fiona mactaggart</b>	Labour	Promoter	38	26	34	2	12	13	4	11	1
<b>Julie Elliott MP</b>	Labour	Novice	38	27	56	4	14	15	4	19	3
<b>Linda Riordan MP</b>	Labour	Novice	38	16	20	4	5	5	3	6	0
<b>About David Heath MP</b>	LibDem	Promoter	35	23	30	5	17	21	8	16	1
<b>Andy McDonald MP</b>	Labour	Novice	34	7	11	1	3	5	4	3	8

<b>Jeffrey Donaldson MP</b>	Democratic Unionist	Novice	34	32	47	16	5	6	6	9	1
<b>Hazel Blears</b>	Labour	Novice	32	23	47	1	5	8	16	14	2
<b>Graham Allen MP</b>	Labour	Novice	30	4	12	0	3	3	5	4	2
<b>Lindsay Hoyle MP</b>	Labour	Novice	30	20	30	12	5	5	4	3	4
<b>Karen Bradley</b>	Conservative	Novice	29	22	27	6	23	23	12	3	3
<b>andrew murrison</b>	Conservative	Speaker	27	0		0	0		0	0	0
<b>Guto Bebb</b>	Conservative	Novice	27	8	8	0	0		27	0	0
<b>Julie Ann Hilling</b>	Labour	Novice	27	21	31	1	9	10	13	14	0
<b>David Drew</b>	Labour	Communicator	26	22	25	14	1	1	1	0	0
<b>Martin Vickers</b>	Conservative	Speaker	26	0		0	0		4	0	1
<b>John Pugh MP</b>	LibDem	Novice	23	15	21	6	1	1	5	1	0
<b>Michael Ellis</b>	Conservative	Novice	23	7	13	4	1	1	4	2	0
<b>Sheila Gilmore</b>	Labour	Promoter	23	10	16	4	5	5	17	2	1

<b>Nia Griffith</b>	Labour	Speaker	21	3	6	2	0		1	0	9
<b>Gavin Williamson MP</b>	Conservative	Novice	19	6	7	3	1	1	1	1	0
<b>Stephen McPartland</b>	Conservative	Novice	19	1	1	1	0		15	0	0
<b>Glenda Jackson</b>	Labour	Novice	18	12	17	0	2	2	9	12	0
<b>John Stevenson MP</b>	Conservative	Speaker	18	3	4	0	1	1	1	2	0
<b>Gerald Howarth</b>	Conservative	Novice	17	3	3	0	1	2	3	2	0
<b>Jonathan Evans MP</b>	Conservative	Novice	17	10	21	1	1	1	5	9	3
<b>Heather Wheeler</b>	Conservative	Novice	16	5	5	2	1	1	10	0	0
<b>Malcolm Wicks</b>	Labour	Novice	16	6	8	0	4	4	8	2	0
<b>Mark Lazarowicz</b>	Labour	Promoter	15	10	13	2	2	2	3	8	0
<b>David Davies</b>	Conservative	Novice	14	3	6	2	1	1	2	1	1
<b>Andrew Rosindell MP</b>	Conservative	Novice	13	4	4	3	0		1	0	0
<b>Tobias Ellwood</b>	Conservative	Novice	13	0		0	0		1	0	0
<b>Gerry Sutcliffe</b>	Labour	Novice	9	6	14	2	6	6	7	3	0

<b>Bill Cash</b>	Conservative	Novice	8	0		0	0		3	0	0
<b>Frank Field's Team</b>	Labour	Novice	7	3	4	0	2	2	6	2	0
<b>Jim McGovern</b>	Labour	Novice	7	0		0	0		7	0	0
<b>Justine Greening</b>	Conservative	Novice	6	4	6	0	3	3	5	1	0
<b>Andrew Miller MP</b>	Labour	Novice	5	3	5	0	2	2	3	3	1
<b>Stephen Hammond MP</b>	Conservative	Novice	5	0		0	0		0	0	0
<b>Adam Afriyie</b>	Conservative	Novice	2	1	2	0	0		0	0	0
<b>Craig Whittaker</b>	Conservative	Novice	2	0		0	1	1	0	0	0
<b>Ming Campbell</b>	LibDem	Novice	2	2	4	0	0		1	2	0
<b>Jessica Lee MP</b>	Conservative	Novice	1	0		0	0		0	0	0
<b>Mark Durkan MP</b>	SDLP	Novice	1	0		0	0		1	0	0

The End.