

Problem Definition in the Digital Democracy

Fabrizio Gilardi

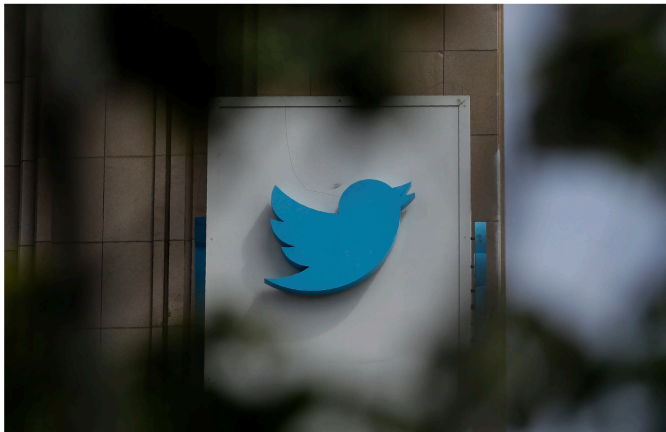
University of Zurich

DYNAMICS, Berlin

November 11, 2019

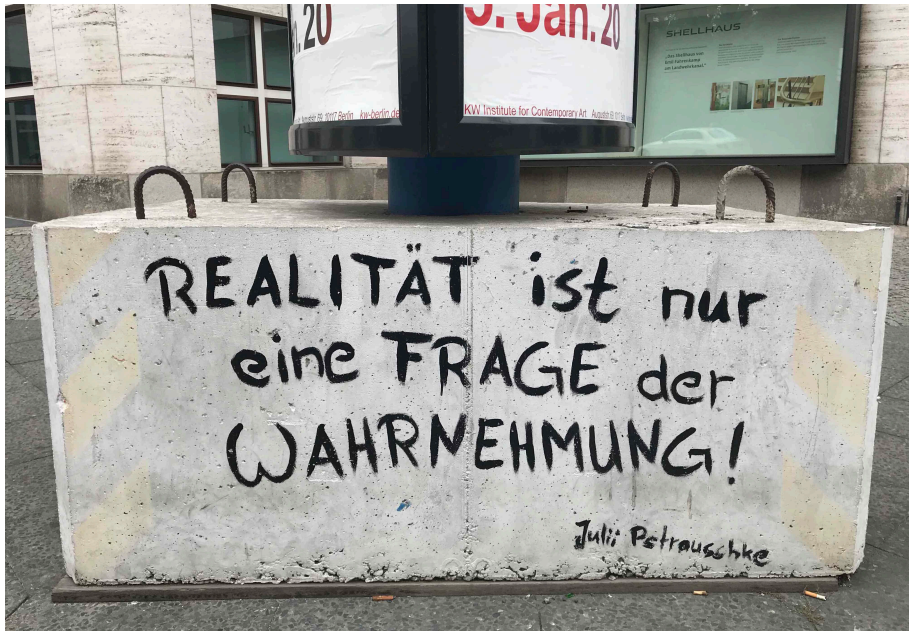
(Updated November 11, 2019)

Twitter Will Ban All Political Ads, C.E.O. Jack Dorsey Says

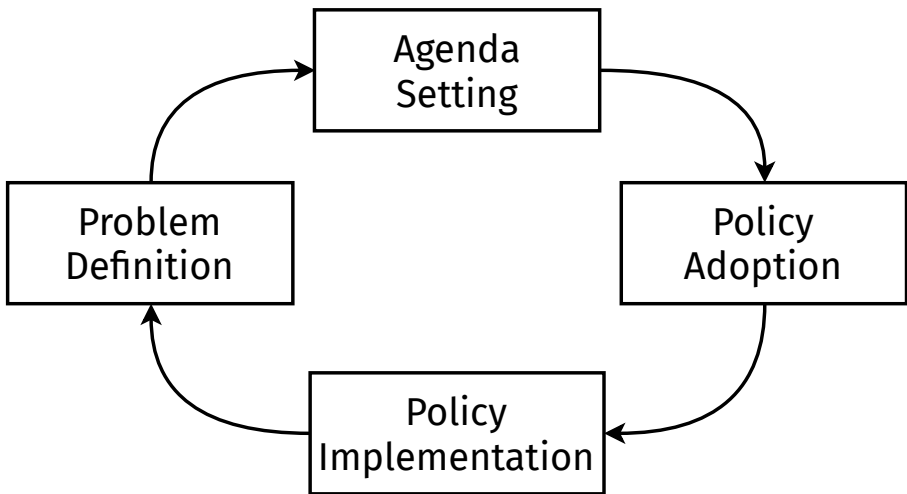


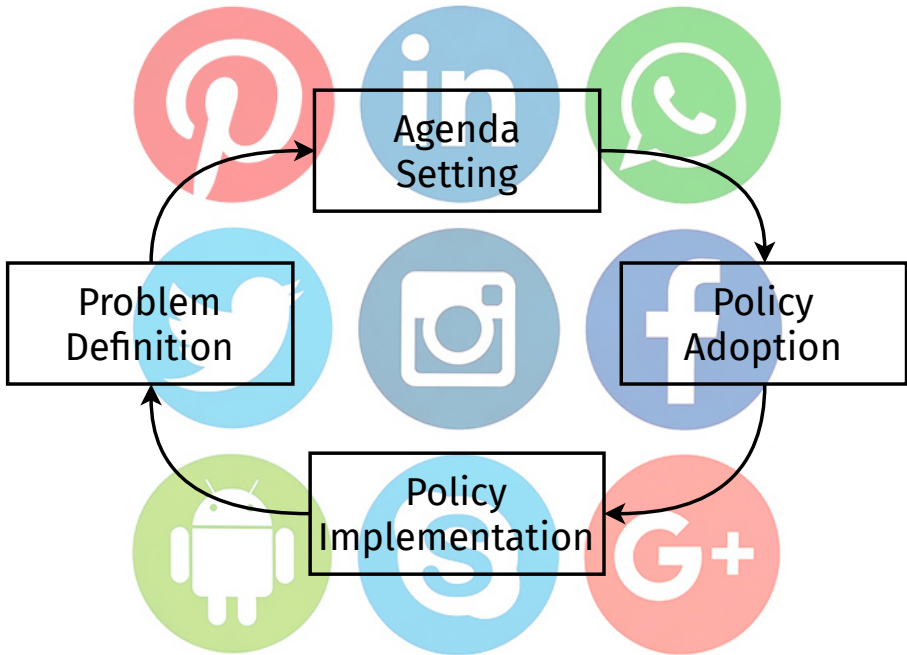
The action by Twitter is a stark contrast to how Facebook handles political advertising. Jeff Chiu/Associated Press

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/30/technology/twitter-political-ads-ban.html>)



(Berlin, near the WZB, September 2019)





Digital democracy means that digital technology...

1. ...changes how public administration works
2. ...enables new forms of political engagement
3. ...affects how citizens form political opinions



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E-ID-Referendum

Wir wollen keinen digitalen Schweizer Pass von privaten Unternehmen!

Der Bundesrat und das Parlament wollen einen historischen Systemwechsel: Private Unternehmen sollen in Zukunft den digitalen Schweizer Pass (E-ID) ausstellen und sensible private Daten verwalten. An die Stelle des staatlichen Passbüros treten Grossbanken, Versicherungsgesellschaften und staatsnahe Konzerne.

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Die E-ID ist eine der demokratiepolitisch wichtigsten Entscheidungen: Es geht um die offizielle Identität der Bürgerinnen und Bürger der Schweiz. Verträge, Finanztransaktionen, Gesundheitsinformationen und auch Behördengeschäfte, wie die Steuererklärung oder die politische Entscheidungsfindung, werden zukünftig digital mit Hilfe einer E-ID abgewickelt werden.

Ein Umfragen zeigt, dass über 80% der Bevölkerung den digitalen Pass vom Staat beziehen wollen. Statt dem Wunsch der Bevölkerung Rechnung zu tragen, verabschiedet sich der Bund und das Parlament mit der Privatisierung der E-ID von einer staatlichen Kernaufgabe. Dagegen ergreifen wir das Referendum! Danke für Ihre Unterstützung.



Unterstütze diese Kampagne jetzt mit deiner Unterschrift.

Anrede

Vorname

Nachname

E-Mail

Weiter





jack



@jack

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While internet advertising is incredibly powerful and very effective for commercial advertisers, that power brings significant risks to politics, where it can be used to influence votes to affect the lives of millions.

1:05 pm - 30 Oct 2019

4,760 Retweets 42,385 Likes



251



4.8K



42K



Why big tech should fear Europe

To understand the future of Silicon Valley, cross the Atlantic



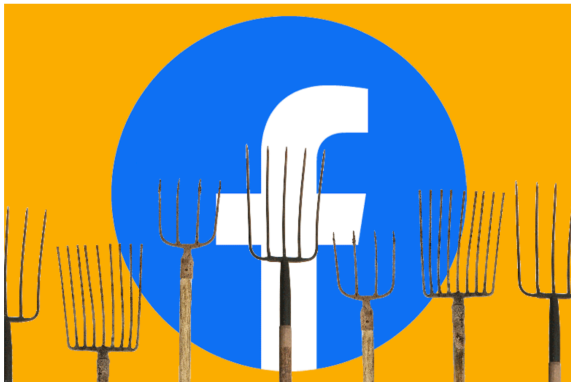
(<https://www.economist.com/leaders/2019/03/23/why-big-tech-should-fear-europe>)

Breaking Up Facebook Would Be a Big Mistake

Disliking big tech companies is not a sound legal basis for dismantling them.

By TYLER COWEN

JUNE 13, 2019 • 7:30 AM



(<https://slate.com/technology/2019/06/facebook-big-tech-antitrust-breakup-mistake.html>)

Lawmakers seem confused about what Facebook does — and how to fix it

If lawmakers want to regulate Facebook, they might need to get on the same page about what problem they're trying to solve.

By Emily Stewart | Apr 10, 2018, 7:50pm EDT



(<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/4/10/17222062/mark-zuckerberg-testimony-graham-facebook-regulations>)

A research agenda: four questions

1. How are problems framed as politically relevant in a context increasingly dominated by digital technology?
2. How can problem definition be measured using computational social science approaches?
3. How do political actors frame policy responses to digital technology's implications for democracy, and why?
4. What impact do different policy frames have on opinions regarding policy responses to digital technology's implications for democracy?

Why it matters: substance

- ⌘ Understand policy responses to digital technology's implications for democracy
- ⌘ Highly salient problem, acute need for expertise

Why it matters: theory

- ⤵ Literature on digital technology and politics doesn't consider problem definition
- ⤵ Agenda setting and problem definition literatures don't consider the role of digital technology

Why it matters: methods

- ⤵ Elusive problem: the empirical measurement of policy frames with observational data
- ⤵ Potentially useful for many different questions

Problem definition → policy frames

- **Problem definition:** “policy problems are not a priori givens but rather are matters of definition; what is at issue in the agenda-building process is not just which problems will be considered but how those problems will be defined” (Elder and Cobb, 1984, 115)
- **Policy frames:** “the presentation or discussion of an issue from a particular viewpoint to the exclusion of alternate viewpoints” (Baumgartner et al., 2008, 106)

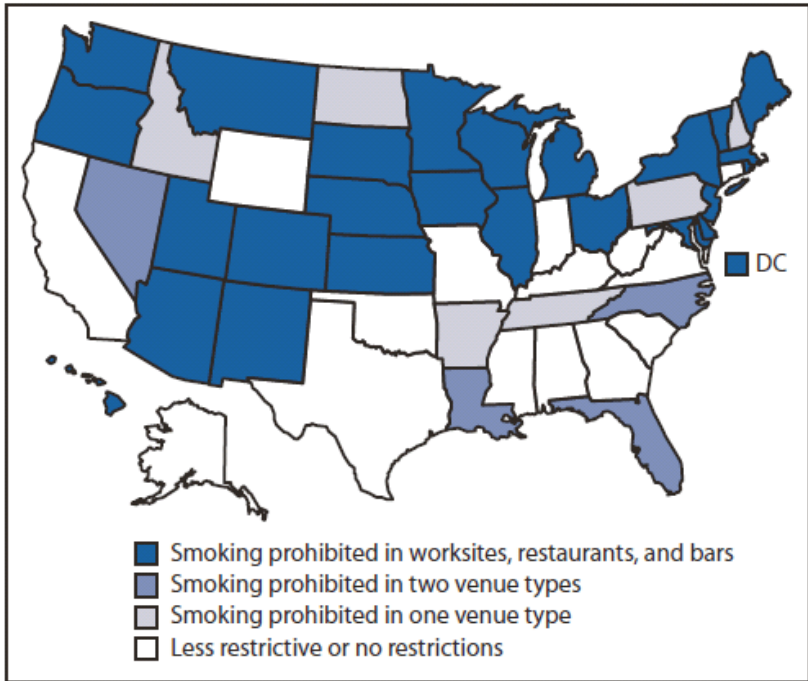
(Gilardi et al., 2019)

Austria, the 'ashtray of Europe', bans smoking at eateries

Updated 6 days ago · Published on 1 Nov 2019 9:20PM · 0 Comments



(<https://www.themalaysianinsight.com/s/194076>)



Empirical approach

- ⤵ Smoking bans in US states, 1996–2013
- ⤵ 560,000 newspaper articles, 49 newspapers, 49 states
- ⤵ Supervised classification to identify relevant paragraphs (< 5%)
- ⤵ Unsupervised text analysis of newspaper paragraphs (topic modeling, STM) (Roberts et al., 2016)

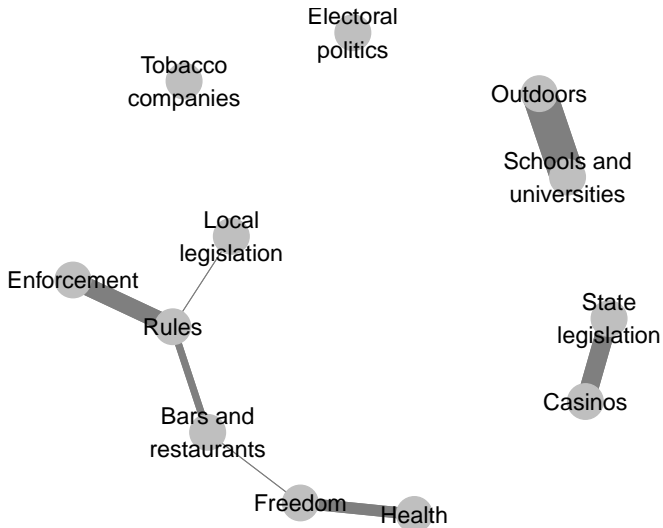
(Gilardi et al., 2019)

Measuring policy frames

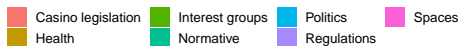
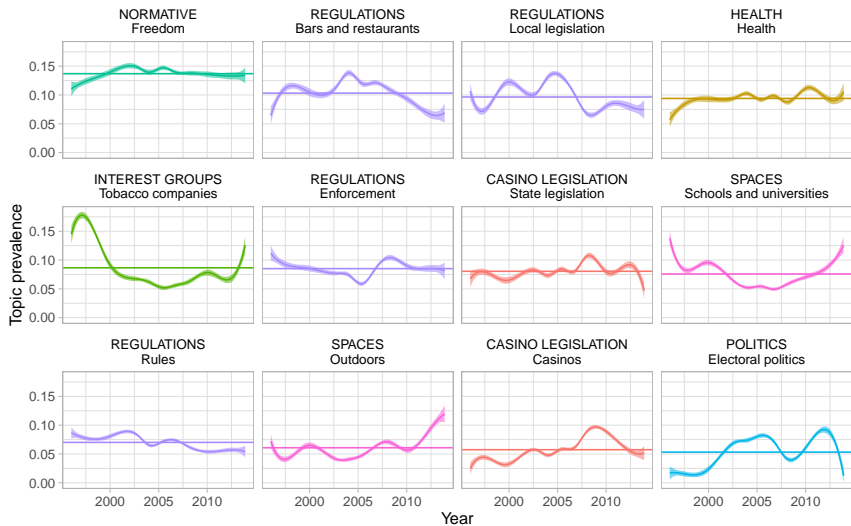
- ⤵ Which aspects of smoking bans are emphasized in a text?
- ⤵ Topics ↔ frames (DiMaggio et al., 2013)
- ⤵ More precisely:
 - Topics as building blocks of frames
 - Topic correlations as indicator of complexity of frames

Topic correlations

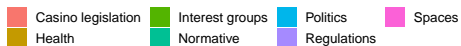
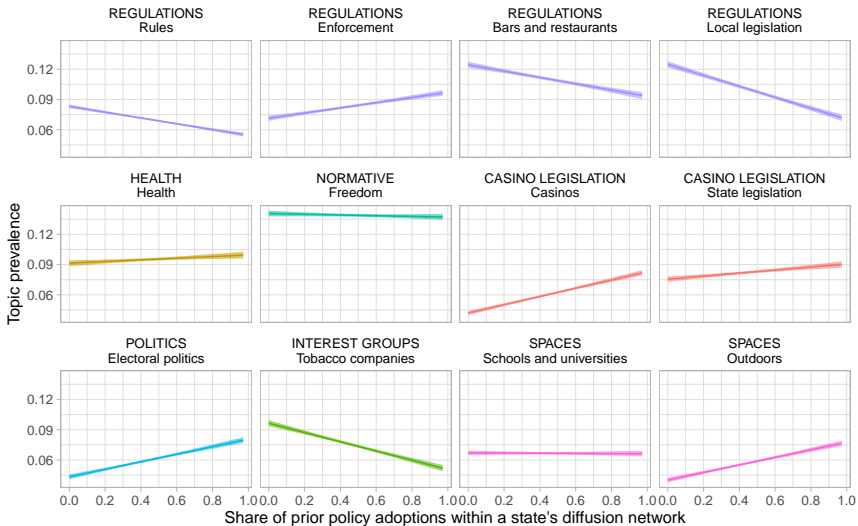
OVERALL



Time trends



Diffusion



US tech companies call on France to abandon digital tax plans

Executives and lobbyists criticise measure but urge against retaliation

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Jeff Bezos says Amazon is writing its own facial recognition laws to pitch to lawmakers

The tech giant's hope is that federal lawmakers will adopt much of its draft legislation.

By Jason Del Rey | @DelRey | Updated

EU plans sweeping regulation of facial recognition

Brussels explores rules to give citizens explicit rights over their data

The Cambridge Analytic affair reveals Facebook's "Transparency Paradox"

Sinan Aral, a professor at MIT, fears the fallout from could limit researchers' access to

Privacy concerns could derail unprecedented plan to use Facebook data to study elections

By Jeffrey Mervis | Sep. 24, 2019, 4:50 PM

I Sold Political Ads for Google. Banning Them Won't Work.

Tech companies can help fix what's wrong with digital political advertising. Instead, Twitter is declaring the problem insoluble.

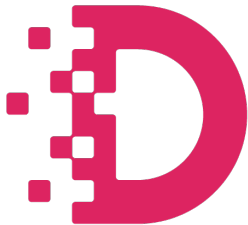
NOVEMBER 6, 2019

Jeffrey Webb

Worked in digital advertising at Google from 2011 to 2016

Problem definition in the digital democracy

- ⌘ Understand policy-making in the digital age using computational social science tools
- ⌘ Understand political responses to digital technology's implications for democracy



DigDemLab.io

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