



Tweeting for your Second Amendment rights: A content analysis of how the NRA uses Twitter to serve its members and target its opponents

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PURPOSE: Identify the multiple ways in which the NRA uses Twitter to function both as a public that challenges its opponents and an organization that mobilizes its members.

Theoretical Framework

Situational Theory of Publics

Followed by Grunig and Hunt (1984)

Dual Activist Roles Framework

Followed by Aldoori and Sha (2007)

Literature Review

#Activism

#SocialMedia

#Twitter

2014 - IPRRC - Miami, FL - Title - Authors
Purpose - Theoretical Framework - Literature
Review - Methods - Research Questions -
Findings

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Method

Qualitative content analysis applied to examine 807 tweets posted by the NRA on its main Twitter page from June 2012 to March 2013



Research Question 1

Does the NRA use Twitter to serve either of the two roles (public or organization)?



Research Question 2

If it does, what are the types of tweets used by the NRA to serve the activist as public role?



Research Question 3

If it does, what are the types of tweets used by the NRA to serve the activist as organization role?



MovingForward



Findings

@RQ1 Tweets fulfilled one or the other of the two roles. 633 tweets within public role. 174 tweets within organization role.



Findings

Continued...



"Activist as public" role

7 Themes



Findings

@RQ2 Seven themes identified that fit into the activist as public category



Denouncing the Opposition (N=170)

Senator Dianne Feinstein Moves To Ban ALL Assault Rifles, High Capacity Magazines, and Pistol Grips <http://inv.lv/UcsmAD>

#Iowa Rep. wants state lawmakers to ban semi-autos & "start taking them" from owners who refuse to surrender their guns [http://www.dncityview.com/2012/12/26/...](http://www.dncityview.com/2012/12/26/)



Publicizing Supporters (N=179)

Survey: Federal Licensed Firearms Retailers Overwhelmingly Oppose 'Universal Background Checks' <http://nssf.it/XqH1Ly>

#Wyoming senators seek to stop international threat to U.S. gun freedom <http://www.enzi.senate.gov...>



Incidents that support the organization's cause (N=35)

#ArmedCitizen: A Marine Corps veteran stopped a man from kicking a woman to death by holding the suspect at gunpoint <http://fox6news.com/...>

#ArmedCitizen: A Kansas farmer shot a fugitive when the fugitive threatened to kill him <http://www.theblaze.com/...>



Attacking individual opponents (N=60)

@JoeBiden & @BarackObama don't understand self-defense and they don't respect your rights <http://www.youtube.com/...> #NRA #BidenControl



Requests for grassroots advocacy (N=83)

Call Congress today and urge them to cosponsor @MikeKellyPA / @JerryMoran effort opposing the UN ATT 202-224-3121 #notonourwatch

Urgent #NewMexico Update: ACT NOW to Stop Gun Control House Bill 77 <http://www.nraia.org/...>



Hypocrisy on behalf of opponents (N=11)

Most people who want us to be unarmed are armed, have armed bodyguards, or work & live surrounded by armed security <http://dailycaller.com/...>



Attacks on arguments of the opposition (N=95)

If all you need to defend yourself is a 1-round mag, why do police carry numerous larger mags plus a rifle/shotgun in patrol cars?

"Activist as organization" role

5 Themes



Findings

@RQ3 Five themes identified that fit into the activist as organization category



NRA victories (accomplishments) (N=11)

#NRA has launched a print campaign against Democrat Senators seeking reelection in 2014 <http://www.breitbart.com/...>

Bill Advances to Stop EPA from Regulating Your Ammunition <http://www.nraia.org/...>



Requests for feedback (N=35)

Vote for your favorite gun in the NRA Firearm Face Off? Vote between @GLOCKInc 17 & @ColtFirearms Python <http://tinyurl.com/...>

If you could purchase your ideal firearm, what would you buy and why?



Requests for membership (N=46)

Don't forget to stop by @Cabela this weekend for #NRA Weekend! Get a free gift if you join/renew your membership! <http://graphics.nra.org/...>

Want a chance to win an #NRA Life Membership and \$30,000 in gear from @SearchForWest? Enter here: <http://inv.lv/NB3Rdr>



Promoting NRA events (N=68)

Join us for the #NRA Annual Meetings & Exhibits in #Houston, #Texas, May 3-5, 2013 <http://www.nraam.org/> #NRAAM pic.twitter.com/...



Messages directed to minority populations (N=11)

More women giving guns a shot <http://abcnews.go.com/...> #ProGun

At firing ranges across the country, a growing number of women are learning to use firearms and honing their skills <http://www.nytimes.com/...>