Open Anthropology Project

Twitter and the Iranian Election Protests
An Annotated Bibliography

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The focus of this bibliography is on news articles, primarily. While not a complete list of every article online, video, document and blog post published on what some have called the "Iranian Twitter Revolution," this is a fairly representative list of many of the more prominent sources and interesting perspectives, and it may prove useful for teaching and research purposes. When extracts from the article are used in place of commentary, the extracts appear inside quotation marks. The items below are listed by **type of resource** (all text items [newspaper articles, blog posts], video links, and audio podcasts), in **chronological order**, and by the **name of the publisher** for items on the same date. In listing the items by chronological order, the intention is to facilitate analyses that explore how the story developed over time.

Anyone who has published an item on Twitter and the Iranian election protests, especially subsequent to the dates below, should feel free to add them by leaving comments at the bottom. Otherwise, this document will not be updated.

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ARTICLES:

No date, or pre-June 2009

Attempted Iran media clampdown meets Internet age
ABC News, Rebecca Santana And Barbara Ortutay, no date
http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=7868308
This report assumes that because Iran's government "clamped down" on mainstream media reporting, that as a consequence Twitter and other social media then carried the information slack. It's a suggestive possibility, but not demonstrated fact.

The Alexa rankings confirm that Twitter's penetration in Iran is nearly 0%
Grande Strategy: Strategy and Analysis, Islamic Perspective, n.d.
http://www.grandestrategy.com/2009/06/alexa-rankings-confirm-that-twitters.html
"The Iran election hype has nothing to do with democracy and everything to do with effecting US public opinion. Why are "Iranians" microblogging in English and on Twitter (which they do NOT use)? According to Mehdi Yahyanejad, manager of a Farsi-language news site based in Los Angeles, "Twitter's impact inside Iran is zero… here, there is lots of buzz, but once you look . . . you see most of it are Americans tweeting among themselves." The Alexa rankings confirm that Twitter's penetration in Iran is nearly 0%."

HerdictWeb: Country Report: (In)Accessible Sites in Iran
http://www.herdict.org/web/explore/country/IR
This site tracks key social networking sites and when, or whether, they are being blocked inside Iran. For Twitter-specific reports, see:
http://www.herdict.org/web/explore/detail/id/IR/2633;jsessionid=B4DAD79D4E9CBF459DE8D
20D4C4E18E9

Condi's Party Starter
The New Yorker, Jesse Lichtenstein, 05 November 2007
http://www.newyorker.com/talk/2007/11/05/071105ta_talk_lichtenstein
Regarding the State Department's Jared Cohen, who would figure with Twitter and events in Iran: "Cohen helps advise the State Department on "counter-radicalization," youth, and education, with a special emphasis on the Muslim world....'When we talk about the people of the Islamic world, the irony is that the majority of those people—sixty per cent—are under the age of thirty,' Cohen said recently, over a tuna steak at an Upper East Side restaurant. A former soccer player, with lightly moussed hair, he wore jeans, a blue shirt, and a herringbone jacket. He continued, 'I always say that the largest party in every country—the largest opposition group in every country—is the youth party'."

Twist: Trends for #iranelection on Twitter
http://twist.flaptor.com/trends?gram=iranelection&span=720

10 June 2009

Iran's Wired Generation Challenges Ahmadinejad
WIRED: Danger Room, Nathan Hodge, 10 June 2009
http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/irans-wired-generation-challenges-ahmadinejad/
Before the election protests, Facebook was the SNS getting the attention concerning Iran, and without any grandiose claims - Extract: "Twitter, Facebook and other social networking tools have been a factor in election campaigns around the world. Now it's Iran's turn: Supporters of Mir Hossein Mousavi, the main opponent of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, are going online to organize for Friday's elections in Iran. Facebook is emerging as a particularly important campaign tool. As Elham Khatami of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reports, Facebook has become a way to circumvent state-run media, which tends to favor the incumbent administration. Mousavi now counts over 36,000 Facebook friends, a network that could prove a potent way to mobilize voters under 30, who make up around half of the electorate. His supporters have also created a Twitter page and a YouTube channel.

13 June 2009

The Revolution Will Be Twittered
The Atlantic, The Daily Dish, Andrew Sullivan, 13 June 2009
http://andrewsullivan.theatlantic.com/the_daily_dish/2009/06/the-revolution-will-be-twittered-1.html
The main significance of this article is that it appears to have been the very first to proclaim this to be a "Twitter revolution."

Taking to the Streets — and Tweets — in Tehran
WIRED: Danger Room, Nathan Hodge, 13 June 2009
http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/taking-to-the-streets-and-tweets-in-tehran/
A very short post, mostly to feature a video, indicating the blocking of text messaging in Iran - Extract: "It appears the authorities may have blocked text messaging, a key organizing tool of

opposition candidates like Mir Hossein Mousavi. Twitter users reported that SMS service had gone offline just before polls opened. Game over? Not quite. Iranians have organized protests in Tehran, and some demonstrators are using social media to post video and updates."

14 June 2009

The Persian Abyss: Iranian reactions from across social media outlets
The Jerusalem Post, Ricky Ben-David, 14 June 2009
http://cgis.jpost.com/Blogs/persianabyss/entry/iranian_reactions_from_across_social
The Jerusalem Post was one of the first mainstream media source to seize on the alleged Iranian Twitter revolutionaries: "Twitterers, facebookers and bloggers from Iran and across the world have been logging minute-by-minute accounts of what has happened since the election results were announced. Some Twitter feeds from Iran such joined the social network mere hours ago have already amassed thousands of followers. A cursory search on Twitter of #iranelection turned up thousands of entries in real time, including videos, pictures and blog articles. Iranians have used Twitter to announce various gatherings and to recount eyewitness reports of people being beaten by police."

Engaging in Iran: The Contested Election, Twitter, and the Response Inside and Out
techPresident, Nancy Scola, 14 June 2009
http://techpresident.com/blog-entry/engaging-iran-contested-election-twitter-and-response-inside-and-out
Extract: "As we saw in Moldova, the idea of a 'Twitter Revolution' isn't always borne out by the facts, at least to the extent that the uprising would have not taken place without the tool. At this historic moment in time, it's fascinating to watch -- and participate in -- how a political conflict can evolve online, how those outside the immediate sphere of its influence have a role in the chain of events, and all that interest and passion can feed back into the cycle of how events play out...."

15 June 2009

The Revolution Will Be Twittered
Anthropology.net, 15 June 2009
http://anthropology.net/2009/06/15/the-revolution-will-be-twittered/
Extract: "I remember taking an ethnography class as an undergrad about the social, cultural, and political revolutions that happened in the Soviet block in the 80's and 90's. We discussed topics like how news was disseminated and how there was a massive identity shift. It seems as if this weekend, I saw something similar but not what was traditionally found on television, traditional media, or in a classroom. For the first time in a I witnessed a massive revolution on the Internet."

Tweeting Iran: Elex news in 140 characters or less
Associated Press, 15 June 2009
http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090616/ap_on_re_mi_ea/ml_iran_twitter
One of the best pieces of analysis from mainstream media: "In Iran, as in many still-developing countries, Internet usage is mostly still a phenomenon of the affluent, the youth and city-dwellers

— meaning Twitter and other networks are used mostly by the young and liberal — and may overemphasize their numbers while ignoring more-conservative political sentiments among the non-connected. Supporters of reformist challenger Mir Hossein Mousavi are more likely to use Twitter and Facebook. Poorer, less-educated voters have flocked to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Twitter co-founder Biz Stone acknowledged the limited group of users in Iran, who don't necessarily represent the mainstream. 'Because Twitter is still a nascent service the sentiment is likely narrow,' Stone said in an e-mail Monday to The Associated Press....'If you follow Twitter you will think that Tehran is going through another .... revolution' said Hossam el-Hamalawy, an Egyptian blogger and activist who often uses Twitter. 'And that's not the case.'...Gaurav Mishra, the 2008-09 Yahoo Fellow at Georgetown University, said he hasn't seen any evidence in past events such as the Moldova elections that Twitter was the dominant way people are organizing. 'It's sometimes difficult to differentiate the hype from the media,' he said. 'Just because people are tweeting about something doesn't mean that there's actually coordination involved'."

Follow The Developments In Iran Like A CIA Analyst
The Atlantic, Marc Ambinder, 15 June 2009
http://politics.theatlantic.com/2009/06/follow_the_developments_in_iran_like_a_cia_analyst.php
Urging Twitter readers to be critical of the veracity of tweets.

The Revolution Will Be Twittered
The Atlantic, Marc Ambinder, 15 June 2009
http://politics.theatlantic.com/2009/06/its_too_easy_to_call.php
Extract: "It's too easy to call the weekend's activities the first revolution that was Twittered, but when histories of the Iranian election are written, Twitter will doubtless be cast as a protagonal technology that enabled the powerless to survive a brutal crackdown and information blackout by the ruling authorities."

The Iranian twitter-lution
BBC News, Paul Mason, 15 June 2009
http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/newsnight/paulmason/2009/06/the_iranian_twitterlution.html
Not only hypes the Twitter revolution and buys into the alleged Iranian presence on Twitter, it also wrongly claimed that Iran's PRESS TV was not accessible at that time (I checked, and it was accessible, without delay): "Suddenly it's possible to follow what a section of the Iranian population is thinking and doing, in almost realtime, on twitter....Some of the twitterers are reporting the SMS network being taken down but as I write there is one hour old news and views of the events in Tehran and beyond."

On Technology and Revolution
Center for a New American Security, Andrew Exum, 15 June 2009
http://www.cnas.org/blogs/abumuqawama/2009/06/technology-and-revolution.html
Extract: "...we Westerners might confuse the protests of the young, urban, and technologically savvy to be somehow representative of the population at large. The urbane urban classes of the Earth see themselves in each other. Persons living in New York and London might have more in common with one another than they would with persons from Sale Creek, Tennessee and Glencoe, Scotland, respectively. And those same urban classes might identify with those

Western-clothed, rioting youths protesting in Farsi and English on the streets of Tehran. But are their protests representative of Iranian people overall?* Are we simply finding common cause with a technologically-assisted minority and confusing it for a popular movement?....If you grow too dependent on social media the state can shut down, you've got a pretty big weakness. The counter-revolutionary forces, of course, have all kinds of secondary communications equipment they can use. The revolutionary forces might not."

"Where is My Vote?": Iranian Expats Organize Online
DigiActive, Mary Joyce, 15 June 2009
http://www.digiactive.org/2009/06/15/wimv/
Most of the focus of this article is on Facebook, which has some relevance to Twitter usage as well.

The Twitter Revolution
Mother Jones, Kevin Drum, 15 June 2009
http://www.motherjones.com/kevin-drum/2009/06/twitter-revolution
Extract: "It's true that however things turn out in Iran, this will probably be forever known as the Twitter Revolution. And yet, I want to dissent a bit....there was just too much of it; it was nearly impossible to know who to trust; and the overwhelming surge of intensely local and intensely personal views made it far too easy to get caught up in events and see things happening that just weren't there. It was better than cable news, but not exactly the future of news gathering. Grade: B-."

Social Networks Spread Defiance Online
The New York Times, Brad Stone and Noam Cohen, 15 June 2009
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/16/world/middleeast/16media.html?_r=3&ref=media
An uncritical report that takes much at face value, another interesting incidence of mainstream media appearing a bit too eager to move aside and make way for the tweets - Extract: "Iranians are blogging, posting to Facebook and, most visibly, coordinating their protests on Twitter, the messaging service. Their activity has increased, not decreased, since the presidential election on Friday and ensuing attempts by the government to restrict or censor their online communications.....Twitter is aware of the power of its service. Acknowledging its role on the global stage, the San Francisco-based company said Monday that it was delaying a planned shutdown for maintenance for a day, citing 'the role Twitter is currently playing as an important communication tool in Iran'."

The Limits of Twitter
Obsidian Wings, publius, 15 June 2009
http://obsidianwings.blogs.com/obsidian_wings/2009/06/the-limits-of-twitter.html
Deflating that sense of awesome geek power - Extract: "the tweets could be stopped (more on that below). In fact, I worry that Twitter's success in Iran will create a false confidence that the Internet can't be stopped, and that people's digital voices can't be silenced. They can -- and we should understand that keeping an open global Internet requires aggressive effort and activism."

Iran can no longer suppress its youth: YouTube, Facebook and other websites have brought down a virtual wall between Iran and the West, writes Leyla Ferani

Telegraph, Leyla Ferani, 15 June 2009
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/personal-view/5543122/Iran-can-no-longer-suppress-its-youth.html
Extract: "The recent protests have a new dimension: they were organised – and publicised – online. Iranians intent on change are using Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other blogging sites as a loudspeaker to amplify their anger towards the regime....Any regime which blocks websites, text messages and phone calls proves immediately that it fears the power of communication. But despite Ahmadinejad's totalitarian aims, the Iranian government's online barricades are easily evaded. By giving a new generation of Iranians the right to protest, Web 2.0 has become a powerful reformist tool, because for the first time, the people of the Islamic Republic are being watched – and can communicate with – a worldwide audience."

Iranians Protest Election, Tweeps Protest CNN
TIME, James Poniewozik, 15 June 2009
http://tunedin.blogs.time.com/2009/06/15/iranians-protest-election-tweeps-protest-cnn/
Extract: "As much talk as there is about Twitter and other social media supplanting the likes of CNN in covering breaking news, they're really another source rather than a replacement—and Twitter users know that as well as anyone else. Thus, they want—and demand—big news organizations to step up, nimbly and responsively, to cover fast-changing events like this....If you follow the streams of tweets on the Iran election, they are unsurprisingly favorable to Mousavi, given that the conversation is dominated by Westerners and the sort of younger, urban Iranians who were Mousavi's base. One source of frustration seemed to be the reluctance of mainstream news organizations, CNN included, to quickly question the legitimacy of the vote—something hard to ascertain, however fishy things seemed, because Western news organizations don't have the kind of field polling and research in Iran that they do in, say, New Hampshire."

What if Twitter is leading us all astray in Iran?
True/Slant, Joshua Kucera, 15 June 2009
http://trueslant.com/joshuakucera/2009/06/15/what-if-we-are-all-wrong-about-iran/
Many doubts about Twitter, rumour-mongering, misinformation, validity: "None of this is to excuse the behavior of the government after the election results came out. Or to diminish the bravery and courage of the people who are out in the streets in Tehran getting beaten. But what if it's based on a lie? A Twitter-fueled, mass delusion of a lie? That the one third of people who voted for Mousavi convinced themselves, via a social media echo chamber that selectively picked rumors and amplified them until they appeared true, that they in fact represented two thirds of the country? And then tried to bring down the government based on that delusion? Maybe it's not the case this time. But doesn't this entire episode seem to show how such a thing could happen? And then what?"

Iran's Tweets: Windows into Protests - or Digital Mirrors?
WIRED: Danger Room, Nathan Hodge, 15 June 2009
http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/irans-tweets-windows-into-protests-or-digital-mirrors/
Extract: "The Tweets are coming in furious and fast from Iran's growing pro-democracy movement. And it's hard not to get caught up in the sense that all of Iran is getting swept up in internet-powered protests. Andrew Exum wonders whether our enthusiasm for social media can

color our coverage of events. 'Are we simply finding common cause with a technologically-assisted minority and confusing it for a popular movement?' he asks. 'One observer of the Moldova protests noticed the way in which we Westerners get fascinated by "Twitter revolutions" because, hey! We use Twitter too!' So is coverage of the post-election protests really all about gullible Westerners identifying with hip, young Tehranis, those middle-class kids with the hair gel and bad hijab?"

[Activists Launch Hack Attacks on Tehran Regime](http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/activists-launch-hack-attacks-on-tehran-regime/)
WIRED: Danger Room, Noah Schachtman, 15 June 2009
http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/activists-launch-hack-attacks-on-tehran-regime/
Hacking organized via Twitter - Extract: "Pro-democracy activists on the web are asking supporters to use relatively simple hacking tools to flood the regime's propaganda sites with junk traffic. 'NOTE to HACKERS - attack www.farhang.gov.ir - pls try to hack all iran gov wesites [sic]. very difficult for us,' Tweets one activist. The impact of these distributed denial of service (DDOS) attacks isn't clear. But official online outlets like leader.ir, ahmadinejad.ir, and iribnews.ir are currently inaccessible. "There are calls to use an even more sophisticated tool called BWraep, which seems to exhaust the target website out of bandwidth by creating bogus requests for serving images," notes Open Society Institute fellow Evgeny Morozov."

[The Revolution Will NOT Be Twittered](http://techpresident.com/blog-entry/revolution-will-not-be-twittered)
techPresident, Tom Watson, 15 June 2009
http://techpresident.com/blog-entry/revolution-will-not-be-twittered
An over inflated sense of one's own geek power? Extract: "There is something like digital catnip on the breakfast bar for western politicogeeks in the story of Iran's disputed election and the ensuing power struggle roiling the Middle East's largest theocracy. Anything that suggests that some of the tools and tricks adopted among the wired, iPhone-wielding politically active classes in the United States may be used to - dramatic pause - start a revolution in one of the world's most dangerous countries carries the potency of a synthetic narcotic injected into the great XML vein of the Internet..."

[Could Iran Shut Down Twitter?](http://futureoftheinternet.org/could-iran-shut-down-twitter)
Jonathan Zittrain, *The Future of the Internet and How to Stop It*, 15 June 2009
http://futureoftheinternet.org/could-iran-shut-down-twitter
Extract: "The very fact that Twitter itself is half-baked, coupled with its designers' willingness to let anyone build on top of it to finish baking it (I suppose it helps not to have any apparent business model that relies on drawing people to the actual Twitter Web site), is what makes it so powerful. There's no easy signature for a tweet-in-progress if its shorn of a direct connection to the servers at twitter.com. And with so many ways to get those tweets there and back without the user needing twitter.com, it's far more naturally censorship resistant than most other Web sites."

16 June 2009

[Twitter's Activist Initiation:](http://www.forbes.com/2009/06/16/twitter-iran-election-markets-equity-dissent.html) By accommodating Iranian dissidents the microblogging site has gone from allowing political activity, to courting it
Forbes, Andy Greenberg, 16 June 2009
http://www.forbes.com/2009/06/16/twitter-iran-election-markets-equity-dissent.html

Iranian protests are good for Twitter's business - Extract: "Twitter's role as a protest tool fits snugly with its business motives....'They've recognized that they've inherited this responsibility,' says Rohozinski. 'But they'd also be foolish not to recognize that there's a business case for supporting the Iranian protesters'."

More on Twitter and protests in Tehran

Foreign Policy, Evgeny Morozov, 16 June 2009

http://neteffect.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/06/16/more_on_twitter_and_protests_in_tehran

Extract: "One of the most discussed online initiatives of the last 24 hours has been a campaign to change users' Twitter location to Tehran. This has been done in order to confuse the authorities about the real users tweeting from Tehran and thus make it safer for them to continue operating. Nice in theory, but I am not sure it works in practice. The Iranian authorities already have lists of probably a hundred sensitive bloggers and Twitter users that could snatch easily; I don't think they would go after those who have just started doing this. I don't think it's the lack of knowledge that prevents them from doing this; it's a combination of political factors. However, this confusion over locations would also make it next to impossible to elucidate Twitter's actual role in fueling and sustaining protests in Tehran. If I had a 'Twitter revolution' thesis to protect here (and I don't – I only do Moldova), this is exactly would I be encouraging people to do: the more Twitters we have on the ground, the easier it is to argue that Twitter did play a role. In short, you can kiss good-bye to any scholarly research into the actual impact of Twitter on protests in Iran, simply because the number of Twitter users in the country would be severely inflated and impossible to arrive at."

Washington Taps Into a Potent New Force in Diplomacy

The New York Times, Mark Landler and Brian Stelter, 16 June 2009

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/17/world/middleeast/17media.html?_r=3&scp=2&sq=Twitter&st=cse

Ironic message of this piece is that "the days when regimes can control information are over"...yet...: "The Obama administration says it has tried to avoid words or deeds that could be portrayed as American meddling in Iran's presidential election and its tumultuous aftermath. Yet on Monday afternoon, a 27-year-old State Department official, Jared Cohen, e-mailed the social-networking site Twitter with an unusual request: delay scheduled maintenance of its global network, which would have cut off service while Iranians were using Twitter to swap information and inform the outside world about the mushrooming protests around Tehran....Mr. Cohen, a Stanford University graduate who is the youngest member of the State Department's policy planning staff, has been working with Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and other services to harness their reach for diplomatic initiatives in Iraq and elsewhere. Last month, he organized a visit to Baghdad by Mr. Dorsey and other executives from Silicon Valley and New York's equivalent, Silicon Alley. They met with Iraq's deputy prime minister to discuss how to rebuild the country's information network and to sell the virtues of Twitter."

Activists call on U.S. to provide unfettered Internet access to Iranian citizens

Nextgov, Aliya Sternstein, 16 June 2009

http://www.nextgov.com/nextgov/ng_20090616_2671.php

Activists, particularly with the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) call on the U.S. government to protect Iranian communication on the Internet by providing anti-censorship tools, specifically

calling on Voice of America (VoA) to take the lead. In the meantime, the Obama administration contradicted any claims that it was directly using Twitter to contact Iranian protesters. Extract: "'As the president indicated last week, the enthusiasm and robust debate these elections engendered captured the attention of the world, and the essential right of people to express themselves peacefully needs to be respected,' [State Department spokesman Ian] Kelly added. In an interview with Nextgov, State Department spokeswoman Megan Mattson noted that the Iranian people were among the larger foreign populations to register for text message updates during the president's June 4 speech in Cairo on Muslim relations. But U.S. officials are unlikely to be interacting with voters through social networking at this time, she said. 'I don't imagine that we've been actively trying to engage them in any way via Twitter or anything like that,' Mattson said, referring to the blast text-message service that reformists have been using to assemble demonstrators."

Interesting Questions Raised by Iranian Twitter Activism
O'Reilly Radar, Timothy M. O'Brien, 16 June 2009
http://radar.oreilly.com/2009/06/fomenting-a-revolution-via-twi.html
The negative and interventionist effects of American Twitter uses against Iran - Another Operation AJAX? - Extract: "American Twitterers used the power of the medium to push our own media machine to increase coverage of the story via #CNNFail and #iranelection, and several dedicated observers did some important work to create proxies allowing the Iranian opposition to circumvent network restrictions. While it is amazing to see individuals using technologies such as Twitter to sidestep repressive government censorship, Twitter has also made it easier for observers, a world away, to become active participants in an unfamiliar political system at times taking vigilante action against the server infrastructure of a nation-state...."

Twitter Increases Capacity, Pats Itself On Back, Denies Being A Covert Government Agency
TechCrunch, MC Siegler, 16 June 2009
http://www.techcrunch.com/2009/06/16/twitter-increases-capacity-pats-itself-on-back-denies-being-a-covert-government-agency/
Extract: "[Twitter co-founder Biz] Stone goes on to give a verbal pat on the back all those involved. But the interesting part of this post comes towards the end, when Stone writes, 'However, it's important to note that the State Department does not have access to our decision making process'" -- does not mention Iranian ex-pat on Twitter Board, tied to "pro-democracy" campaign.

Twitter Blog: Up, Up, and Away
Twitter, 16 June 2009
http://blog.twitter.com/2009/06/up-up-and-away.html
Extract: "When we worked with our network provider yesterday to reschedule this planned maintenance, we did so because events in Iran were tied directly to the growing significance of Twitter as an important communication and information network....It's humbling to think that our two-year old company could be playing such a globally meaningful role that state officials find their way toward highlighting our significance."

"Inane and Half-Baked" Twitter Is the Forrest Gump of International Relations
Wall Street Journal, All Things Digital, Kawa Swisher, 16 June 2009
http://kara.allthingsd.com/20090616/inane-and-half-baked-twitter-is-the-forrest-gump-of-international-relations/?mod=ATD_rss
A different angle criticizing the Twitter Revolution thesis, even while upholding it: "Twitter is so simplistic and silly that it is a perfect digital tool to overthrow a government–which is kind of makes the trendy microblogging service the Forrest Gump of international relations. Stupid is as stupid does, of course, but what it does illustrate quite smartly is that word of mouth–a concept as old as humanity–remains the most powerful way of distributing information. While not always reliable, masses of people chattering away has always been the most fluid way in which news has been disseminated and received. Although much of that can be mundane and borderline idiotic, one cannot deny its impact. What one can deny, though, is the hype that inevitably follows in the wake of every one of these breakthrough technologies like Twitter. That's a mistake, because it is how the tools are used by people, more than the tools themselves, that should be the focus."

Iran Reporting = MSM Fail?
WIRED: Danger Room, Nathan Hodge, 16 June 2009
http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/iran-reporting-msm-fail/
Extract: "So is this the moment when citizen journalism will show its real potential, and put the bad ol' MSM to shame? After all, social media like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube have become one of the primary ways for circumventing the government's information blockade....As we learned last year during the war between Georgia and Russia, the world of new media often failed to deliver on its promises, and citizen journalists often merely amplified local propaganda rather than delivering facts. The sheer volume of information coming out of Iran, however, is something entirely new and remarkable: It's created a tremendous mosaic of coverage that has actually complemented traditional news reports."

17 June 2009

Iranian Traffic Engineering
Arbor Networks, Craig Labovitz, 17 June 2009
http://asert.arbornetworks.com/2009/06/iranian-traffic-engineering/
How could anyone in Iran have been tweeting on the days following the election when physical Internet traffic had been shut down? - Extract: "In normal times, DCI carries roughly 5 Gbps of traffic (with a reported capacity of 12 Gbps) through 6 upstream regional and global Internet providers. For the region, this represents an average level of Internet infrastructure (for purposes of perspective, a mid size ISP in Michigan carries roughly the same level of traffic). Then the Iranian Internet stopped. One the day after the elections on June 13th at 1:30pm GMT (9:30am EDT and 6:00pm Tehran / IRDT), Iran dropped off the Internet. All six regional and global providers connecting Iran to the rest of the world saw a near complete loss of traffic."

Profile: The Kid at the State Department Who Figured Out the Iranians Should Be Allowed to Keep Tweeting
BayNewser, 17 June 2009
http://www.mediabistro.com/baynewser/twitter/profile_the_kid_at_the_state_department_who_fi

gured_out_the_iranians_
should_be_allowed_to_keep_tweeting_119136.asp
Extract: "...imagine our further surprise when we learned this young gentleman wasn't one of Barack Obama's social media geniuses, but instead was a Condi Rice pick hired specifically to advise the State Department on young people in the Middle East and how to 'counter-radicalize' them. According to the *New York Times*, it was Jared Cohen, a member of the Policy Planning Staff, who contacted Twitter on Monday, inquiring about their plan to perform maintenance in what would be the middle of the day, Iran time. Following that contact, Twitter decided to postpone their maintenance so that it would take place in the middle of the night Iran-time, even though that meant it would be the middle of the day U.S. time. The Times noted that the move marked 'the recognition by the United States government that an Internet blogging service that did not exist four years ago has the potential to change history in an ancient Islamic country'."

From the tumult in Iran, Twitter emerges as a powerful social tool
Christian Science Monitor, Matthew Shaer, 17 June 2009
http://features.csmonitor.com/innovation/2009/06/17/from-the-tumult-in-iran-twitter-emerges-as-a-powerful-social-tool/
This article follows along the lines of the "Iranian Twitter revolution" theme, while minimizing early cautions against the hype of both Twitter and the Iranian uses of Twitter.

Iran's Twitter Revolution
Foreign Policy in Focus, Patrick W. Quirk, 17 June 2009
http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/6199
Extract: ""Everybody try to film as much as poss[ible] today on mobiles…these are eyes of world," declared a posting on user Persiankiwi's Twitter page. The poster urged Iranians to take to the streets on Monday, June 15, and document the government-sponsored crackdown against rallies in support of demands by Mir Hossein Mousavi, the primary reformist challenger. Mousavi allegedly lost in an apparent landslide of nearly two-to-one against incumbent president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Iran's recent presidential election. Web-based technology, such as the social messaging service Twitter and online video-sharing site YouTube, have enabled Iranians to document and disseminate to the world images of and information on repression in the wake of the recent election. Through these online outlets, photographs and short films showing police forces beating and bloodying protesters clad in green — the Mousavi campaign's signature color — have bypassed the Iranian government's attempts to control Internet access, and are now being viewed from Isfahan to Indianapolis."

Iran: Islamist bloggers react to protest movement
Global Voices, Hamid Tehrani, 17 June 2009
http://globalvoicesonline.org/2009/06/17/iran-islamist-bloggers-react-to-protest-movement/
A different perspective - Extract: "While international media is awash with news about how Mousavi supporters are using the internet to make their views known, several bloggers are using the same tools to make a case against the opposition candidate. Before the election, more than 100 bloggers publicly declared their support for Ahmedinejad on a campaign website created by his followers that made use of both YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter."

Twitter counts more than armouries in this new politics of people power: Iran's green drama combines the energy of a dissatisfied youth with the rivalries of a fragmented regime
Guardian (UK), Timothy Garton Ash, 17 June 2009
http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/jun/17/iran-election-protests-twitter-students
Unabashedly embracing the "Iranian Twitter revolution" thesis: "Probably the single most important thing the US state department has done for Iran recently was to contact Twitter over the weekend, to urge it to delay a planned upgrade that could have taken down service to Iranians for some crucial hours of people power protest. Welcome to the new politics of the 21st century."

YouTube Diplomacy and Iran
The Huffington Post, Andrew Rosen, 17 June 2009
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/andrew-rosen/youtube-diplomacy-and-ira_b_217035.html
Extract: "The ascendant technological revolution which we are witnessing is fueled by a younger generation using Facebook, Twitter, SMS, MMS, YouTube, Demotix, and other Web 2.0 tools and services. They are communicating with each other and with strangers, collaborating on organizing protests, and sharing information worldwide. A multitude of unemployed and unhappy voices, once passive, are now active, animated, and eager for change." -- The author notes that "the Obama Administration's use and encouragement of Web 2.0 tools is...illustrative of their true intentions: they are decidedly on the side of this technological revolution....In the past three months, the Administration has begun to pursue 'YouTube Diplomacy' and has appeared to lay down three cornerstones to commit its policy here." Those cornerstones are: (1) "the launch of YouTube Diplomacy with the President's message on the Feast of Nawroz. The video stood in stark contrast to the Iranian leadership's labels of President Obama pursuing 'imperialist business as usual';" (2) "the President's speech to the Muslim world at Cairo University"; (3) "the encouragement of Web 2.0 communications between Iran and the West". Four lessons we have learned about YouTube diplomacy? (1) "Millions of connections can beat one message"; (2) "The Emperor Has No Clothes - The Iran vs. The World dichotomy seems to be dying, if not only the distorted, tightly-held view of a few"; (3) "The Ayatollah is basically powerless against this technology"; (4) "technology adapts faster than a poor regime". Rosen lists the following "volatile implications": (1) "We have no idea what will happen when YouTube diplomacy fails"; (2) "Similarly, we have no idea what happens when Web 2.0 confronts military power"; (3) "People who use YouTube and Twitter are self-selecting"; (4) "We still do not have an adequate contextual understanding of images, Tweets, videos, or communications via Facebook, or their implications"; (5) "The reliability of information relayed via Web 2.0 is suspect"; and, (6) "This technology revolution does not present a political alternative to the Vileyat-al-Faqih".

Is JPost behind the 'Iranian Twitter Revolution'?
The Jerusalem Post, Ricky Ben-David and Rachel Geizhals, 17 June 2009
http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1245184858248&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FPrinter
While seeking to counter a "conspiracy theory" that Israelis were seeding the "Iranian Twitter revolution" with propaganda designed to create rift between Iranians and Hezbollah and Hamas, the Jerusalem Post only continues to spread that idea in this article, claiming it as true without any attempt at substantiation: "And while 'unverifiable' may be an accurate description for now,

many accounts from Iran's Twitterers have turned out to be true. One important example includes several Twitter reports on Sunday that government forces were heard speaking Arabic, raising suspicions that Hizbullah and Hamas reinforcements have been brought in."

'Twitter war' - kilobyte stronger than the megaton
The Jerusalem Post, Yaakov Lappin, 17 June 2009
http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1245184859494&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2F
ShowFull
Rather than dispute the quality of the "information," the Jerusalem Post claims that it just too much. At the same time the article highlights Twitter's value for psychological warfare: "It is Twitter which has most notably come to play an indispensable role in pumping out this type of information, forming a virtual pipeline connecting Iranian dissidents to one another and to the outside world. 'Twitter is most suited to a psychological information war, and right now in Iran there is a war over information,' Dr. Yaniv Levyatan, an expert on information warfare at the Ezri Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies of the University of Haifa, told The Jerusalem Post. 'This is the first Twitter war'."

Winning the propaganda war, in 140 characters or less
The Jerusalem Post, E.B. Solomont, 17 June 2009
http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1245184859500&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2F
ShowFull
Extract: "David Saranga, consul for media and public affairs at the Israeli Consulate in New York....'There is a lot of room to include dialogue between people,' Saranga said. 'We can bypass governments. People can speak to one another.' In fact, the intersection between Twitter and diplomacy took on a more urgent bent this week following the elections in Iran, when Iranians used Twitter to share information about escalating protests in Teheran. In a nod to Twitter's powerful role, the US State Department asked Twitter to delay a scheduled maintenance shutdown of the site to coincide with the middle of the night in Iran."

Hillary Clinton defends Twitter efforts for Iran
Los Angeles Times, Paul Richter, 17 June 2009
http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fgw-twitter18-2009jun18,0,5845567.story
(Article also claims that Twitter was used by Iranians for organization purposes) Extract:
"Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Wednesday defended U.S. efforts to ensure that the Twitter social networking service has remained available for use by Iranian protesters, even as Tehran complained about U.S. interference in its affairs....Clinton said she considered it important to keep 'that line of communication open and enabling people to share information, particularly at a time when there [were] not many other sources of information. . . . It is a fundamental right for people to be able to communicate.' Iranians protesting the reelection of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad have been using the medium to organize demonstrations because they do not have access to other communications."

America's Iranian Twitter Revolution
Open Anthropology, Maximilian C. Forte, 17 June 2009
http://openanthropology.wordpress.com/2009/06/17/americas-iranian-twitter-revolution/
Extract: "So in this Twitter revolution, Twitter is not representative of Internet users, Internet use

is not representative of a wider population, the youth are not representative of the youth, and the Iranians may not even be Iranian. Fantastic indeed, this power of 'social media'."

Twitter and Critical Thinking
Open Salon, Stellaa, 17 June 2009
http://open.salon.com/blog/stellaa/2009/06/17/all_that_twitters_is_not_gold
Critique of Twitter hype and the problem of veracity. Extract: "How critical are you of the source of the Tweet? Do you understand the complexity of the politics and why all the Twitters may not be from reliable, or legitimate sources? Like the printing press, the radio, the television, the pen and the newspaper, do not park your critical thinking. Actually, you now must sharpen your critical thinking. You must sharpen your crtical thinking and skepticism. Remember, all these sources were used for propaganda....There seems to be a frenzy that is fueled by the immediacy of the medium. Any questioning, or critical thinking is viewed as a wet blanket, or some kind of party pooper. The momentum creates this force that if you do not join, you will be left out. And who wants to be left out? It's hard to be critical of masses that buy into new trends, movements, or sentiments."

Doubting Twitter: Let's not get carried away about its role in Iran's demonstrations
Slate, Jack Shafer, 17 June 2009
http://www.slate.com/id/2220736
Extract: "...my zeal for Twitter knows a limit: Unlike several other technology-friendly journalists, I've found it more noise than signal in understanding the Iranian upheaval. I'm not saying that there is no signal to be found; I'm just saying that my cognitive colander isn't big enough to strain out Iran information I can rely on. Slate contributor Joshua Kucera made this point two days ago in True/Slant, compiling an early list of erroneous data points about the Iranian uprising that Twitterers were circulating: 3 million people demonstrating against the regime, the house arrest of Mir Hossein Mousavi, and the annulment of the election by authorities, for instance."

Iran Protests: Twitter, the Medium of the Movement
TIME, Lev Grossman, 17 June 2009
http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1905125,00.html
Extract: "The U.S. State Department doesn't usually take an interest in the maintenance schedules of dotcom start-ups. But over the weekend, officials there reached out to Twitter and asked them to delay a network upgrade that was scheduled for Monday night. The reason? To protect the interests of Iranians using the service to protest the presidential election that took place on June 12....Twitter isn't a magic bullet against dictators. As tempting as it is to think of the service as a purely anarchic weapon of the masses, too distributed to be stoppable, it is theoretically feasible for a government to shut it down, according to James Cowie, CTO of Renesys, a company that collects data on the status of the Internet in real time. While Iran has a rich and diverse Internet culture, data traffic into and out of Iran passes through a very small number of channels. It's technically relatively trivial for the state to take control of those choke points and block IP addresses delivering tweets through them. The SMS network is even more centralized and structured than the Internet, and hence even easier to censor."

Watch Out for Twitter Hype in the Iran Elections

US News & World Report, Robert Schlesinger, 17 June 2009
http://www.usnews.com/blogs/robert-schlesinger/2009/6/17/watch-out-for-twitter-hype-in-the-iran-elections.html
Even if one could argue that the "Iranian revolution" will be "Twittered," the author doubts whether that is a good thing. The author argues that some are confusing Twitter as an organizing tool (which means it is also great for government surveillance of opposition activists) with Twitter as a reporting tool which actually involves the circulation of often unsubstantiated rumour. Generally, a defense of professional journalism.

Iran Elections: A Twitter Revolution?

Washington Post, Evgeny Morozov, 17 June 2009
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/discussion/2009/06/17/DI2009061702232.html
A question-and-answer session with readers about the role of Twitter, very balanced - here is some criticism of cyber utopianism: "I would caution against such an openly cyber-utopian perspective. As we have seen in the last few days, cyber activism without context could actually be extremely harmful as well. For example, we saw a lot of calls for Twitter users to participate in cyber-attacks on pro-government Web sites in Iran. While this seems nice in theory -- wouldn't it be nice to help the opposition there by shutting down government's propaganda channels? -- it also has had a negative effect on the overall Internet connectivity in the country. Simply put, attacking the Web sites of Ahmadinejad supporters has made life worse for everyone else, including their opponents. This is the kind of cyber-activism we'd rather avoid. Another similar instance has been a campaign to publicize lists of so-called 'proxy servers' that could help bypass some of the restrictions imposed by the government. Many Twitter users were posting links to them. However, by publicizing them too much, they also destroyed the value of such proxy servers, simply because the government and its loyalists also obtained access to them and proceeded to ban them. So, it's very important not to get too starry-eyed about it and try to be as strategic as possible. Also, if you are not fully sure about the impact that your act of online support might have on the situation on the ground, you'd better think twice about engaging in it."

Twitter Is a Player In Iran's Drama: State Dept. Asked Site to Keep Running

Washington Post, Mike Musgrove, 17 June 2009
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/16/AR2009061603391.html?hpid=topnews
Extract: "The State Department asked social-networking site Twitter to delay scheduled maintenance earlier this week to avoid disrupting communications among tech-savvy Iranian citizens as they took to the streets to protest Friday's reelection of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The move illustrates the growing influence of online social-networking services as a communications media. Foreign news coverage of the unfolding drama, meanwhile, was limited by Iranian government restrictions barring journalists from 'unauthorized' demonstrations. 'One of the areas where people are able to get out the word is through Twitter,' a senior State Department official said in a conversation with reporters, on condition of anonymity. 'They announced they were going to shut down their system for maintenance and we asked them not to.' A White House official said 'this wasn't a directive from Secretary of State, but rather was a low-level contact from someone who often talks to Twitter staff.' The official said Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, tweeted, according to news reports. 'Twitter is simply

a medium that all Iranians can use to communicate,' the official said. Twitter did not respond to a request for comment yesterday."

Iran: Before You Have That Twitter-Gasm….

WIRED: Danger Room, Nicholas Thompson, 17 June 2009
http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/iran-before-you-have-that-twitter-gasm/
Extract: "Before we all have a collective Twitter-gasm about the short-messaging service's use in Iran, let's breathe for a second. Yes, it's useful; yes, it's great for following the events here in the U.S.; yes, it might one day be a driving tool for revolution. But it's an overstatement to call it 'the medium of the movement,' as Time did. We have no idea how many Tweets are spreading through RSS, Facebook pages, and text-messages. Nor do we know how info gets into every Twitter feed. But there's evidence that the reach of some of the most prominent Iranian 'Green Revolution' Tweeters may not be as great as it first appears. For example, many of the Iranian tweeters described in the Western press seem to have between 10,000 and 30,000 followers. That's a lot; but Ashton Kutcher it ain't. And many of those followers are in the U.S. Check out @Change_for_Iran, @persiankiwi, @StopAhmadi, @persiankiwi, or @mousavi1388 and you'll see a lot of American names. At least in the first few pages, it seems to be about a third who are clearly in the U.S."

18 June 2009

Hillary Clinton Defends Twitter-Iran Position

Billing & OSS World, 18 June 2009
http://www.billingworld.com/articles/regulatory/hilary-clinton-defends-twitter-iran-position.html
Extract: "Secretary of State Hilary Clinton is defending her department's decision to ask Twitter to stay up and running during presidential election protests in Iran. 'It is a fundamental right for people to communicate,' Clinton said."

Anonymous Joins Fight Against Tyranny In Iran

Business Pundit, Jay Fowler, 18 June 2009
http://www.businesspundit.com/anonymous-joins-fight-against-tyranny-in-iran/
An awe-struck piece of romanticization that has the unintended consequence of demonstrating another venue through which agents of the U.S. state may be involved in the information war against Iran - Extract: "Anonymous joined the game. 'Anonymous' as the group is called has no leader, no structural hierarchy, but is somehow organized. Made up of every possible profession to include even hackers and business professionals alike, Anonymous has proven in their fight against Scientology, that they are a force to be reckoned with. 'Anons' as they have come to be known started Tweeting open Iranian proxies, as well as started a forum http://iran.whyweprotest.net offering advice and help to Iranian protestors as how to surf securely and avoid censorship. They are also telling Protestors to turn off their cell phones as the government can track them via BT antenna, find, and arrest them later. A link was also posted of proxies that the Iranian Government is using to get around their own firewalls. Anonymous is not going to pull any punches, they have never done so. Under the guise of Anonymity, their numbers are strong. Cells of Anonymous are willing and prepared to fight this fight, they do not let tyranny go un-punished or unreported."

Iran accuses Canada, U.S. of inciting protests: Rulers blame western countries for supporting social networking websites
Canwest News Service, Mike Blanchfield, 18 June 2009
http://www.vancouversun.com/news/Iran+accuses+Canada+inciting+protests/1707819/story.html
Iran's government is taking seriously the idea that social media are being used by hostile governments: "Iranian officials summoned Canada's top diplomat and the Swiss envoy -- who represents U.S. interests -- accusing the North American countries of helping destabilize Iran by supporting such social networking sites as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, which the Islamic regime has tried to ban".

With Iran crisis, Twitter's youth is over
CNET News, Caroline McCarthy, 18 June 2009
http://news.cnet.com/8301-13577_3-10267946-36.html
The author points to the discomforting realization of a two year-old startup, with no business plan, lawsuits against it for misinformation, being thrust into a geopolitical role. The author also notes that not until the Iranian protests has Twitter been so much in the public eye. The article is largely critical of Twitter's internal organization and direction-setting.

How Iran's Internet works
Cosmic Log, Alan Boyle, 18 June 2009
http://cosmiclog.msnbc.msn.com/archive/2009/06/18/1970353.aspx
Extract: "An analysis of Iran's Internet reveals a deep level of diversity, with a level of surveillance (and surveillance-dodging) that goes just as deep....Iran has one of the world's most extensive Net filtering systems, on a par with China's....anonymity cloaks much of the traffic coming out of Iran nowadays. That goes for opposition activists, but it also goes for the Iranian government and its agents. Thus, there's something of a spy-vs.-spy battle going on: There's no easy way to know who is really messaging what, especially when it's passed along by numerous Twitter outsiders....A classic example was the back-and-forth Twittering over what opposition presidential candidate Mir Hossein Mousavi's supporters should be doing on Friday, which is shaping up as a crucial day in the post-election crisis. Mousavi and Karoubi ask supporters not to attend Friday prayers in Tehran,' a widely followed Twitterer known as Persiankiwi reported. But other Twitter messages read, 'Mousavi Facebook and Twitter possibly hacked. Please delete tweets about not attending Friday prayers'."

Is Twitter Really a Tool for Democracy? Guatemala offers a counterpoint to Iran
Double X, Elizabeth Lazar, 18 June 2009
http://www.doublex.com/section/news-politics/twitter-really-tool-democracy
Extract: "Iran is the latest proof for cyber-utopists that the Internet is our best hope for global democracy and progressive politics. Bloggers are deep in the debate about whether Twitter is responsible for organizing the street protests in Tehran, or merely reporting them. But there are some Twitter doubters out there, and I add myself to their ranks. If Twitter is the face of democracy, who, exactly, does it represent? In Iran, like many developing countries, most of the Internet users are affluent, young urbanites. The poor, the illiterate, the less urbane are not online, and this muddies the picture. I don't know about Twitter's effect in Iran, but Guatemala's own recent Twitter coup is case in point...."

How (Twitter and) I Crashed Iran's Propaganda Web Sites
Esquire, Josh Koster, 18 June 2009
http://www.esquire.com/the-side/opinion/twitter-hacks-iran-election-propaganda-061809
Preamble: "A top new-media activist looks back on his role in the Twitterati's rise to power this week — and why it didn't stop Ahmadinejad's".

Iranian Protesters Cling to Twitter as Key Lifeline Amid Crackdown
FOX News, 18 June 2009
http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,527068,00.html
Praising and hyping the "twitter revolution" -- extract: "The microblogging service Twitter is increasingly becoming Iranian protesters' lifeline to the outside world, as international news organizations are banned from covering the demonstrations."

Iran's cyber-revolution gets a hand from Canada
The Globe and Mail, Omar El Akkad and Matt Hartley, 18 June 2009
http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/cyber-revolution-gets-a-hand-from-canada/article1184881/
"Iran's biggest mass protest since the 1979 Islamic revolution – sparked by what is seen by many Iranians as a sham election – has become a full-fledged global movement, fought on and fuelled by the World Wide Web. The cyberrevolution's epicentre is the microblogging site Twitter. Often disparaged as trivial because of its 140-character limit on posts, the site has proved to be an extremely effective way for activists to post rapid-fire updates on the situation on the ground in Iran....Without tools such as Psiphon, most Iranians would still be unable to gain access to sites such as Twitter".

Iran Election and the Twitter Revolution
Mathaba, 18 June 2009
http://www.mathaba.net/news/?x=620748
Extract: "Not all that twitters is gold: a handful of anonymous people have managed to misinform the major western news networks, and thus mislead millions of people concerning current events in Iran. In this case, do blame the messenger: MSM news networks." This article sharply attacks several "Twitter myths": (1) "a myth about Twitter's popularity. The vast majority of Twitter accounts are dormant, most people tweet once at most and then never again. Only 10% of twitter users make up for 90% of all messages ('tweets'); (2) "most Twitterers follower numbers mean nothing. Most accounts we've looked at have the vast majority of followers using automated bots"; (3) "Iranians do not tweet in English, but in Farsi, and you have absolutely no way to know that a certain Twitterer is genuine or fake, nor male or female, nor where they are located. Only a tiny minority of Iranians have even heard of Twitter or FaceBook"; (4) "there is plenty of software around that simply puts out lots of messages at timed intervals under multiple accounts".

The Web vs. the Republic of Iran: Twitter gives Iranians a voice, but the government still controls the Internet
Technology Review, Anne-Marie Corley, 18 June 2009
http://beta.technologyreview.com/printer_friendly_article.aspx?id=22893&channel=web&section=

Focusing mostly on the ability of the Iranian government to block and filter Internet access, this article also questions the extent to which Twitter may be popular with Iranian protesters.

Iran's "Twitter Revolution" — myth or reality?

World Focus, Gaurav Mishra, 18 June 2009

http://worldfocus.org/blog/2009/06/18/irans-twitter-revolution-myth-or-reality/5869/

Extract: "The story which I'm reading in the media is that of the 'Twitter Revolution.' And the story is that Twitter is one of the key things used to organize these protests, and the State Department is contacting Twitter to make sure it doesn't go down, and so on and so forth. That's the wrong story — it's the wrong story in Iran, it was the wrong story in Moldova. There is no 'Twitter Revolution.' We haven't seen a 'Twitter Revolution,' and I don't think we'll ever see a 'Twitter Revolution.' The revolution in Iran is not about Twitter. It's about Iranian people protesting against perceived irregularities in the election. It's a grassroots movement, and we're abusing it in many ways by calling it a Twitter Revolution. It's a big country with one of the biggest elections around the world, and clearly Mousavi supporters and Ahmadinejad supporters — all of them — have huge offline networks who are getting people to mobilize, getting support and getting people to come out and protest. We are underestimating the value of that network in a country like Iran or a country like India or China — that is a network which culturally matters. Even in the U.S., that is a network that matters. So we're really underestimating the value of that network by saying this is a 'Twitter Revolution.' On a scale of one to 10, if 10 means it is a legitimate revolution, I would say Twitter as an organizing tool is at five or six."

Iran, citizen media and media attention

Ethan Zuckerman, *My Heart's in Accra*, 18 June 2009

http://www.ethanzuckerman.com/blog/2009/06/18/iran-citizen-media-and-media-attention/

Extract: "- Social media is probably more important as a tool to share the protests with the rest of the world than it is as an organizing tool on the ground. - Iranians have been accessing social networking sites and blogging platforms despite years of filtering - there's a cadre of folks who understand how to get around these blocks and are probably teaching others. - Because so many Iranians use social media tools - often to talk about topics other than politics - they're a 'latent community' that can come to life and have political influence when events on the ground dictate."

19 June 2009

Why Iran's Twitter revolution is unique

AXcess News, Yigal Schleifer, 19 June 2009

http://www.axcessnews.com/index.php/articles/show/id/18209

Extract: "new-media experts say that Iran's civil resistance movement is unique because the government's tight control of media and the Internet has spawned a generation adept at circumventing cyber roadblocks, making the country ripe for a technology-driven protest movement. 'This is a country where you have tens of thousands of bloggers, and these bloggers have been in a situation where the Internet has been filtered since 2004. Anyone worth their salt knows how to find an open proxy [to get around government firewalls and filters], knows how to work around censorship,' says Ethan Zuckerman, a research fellow at Harvard University's Berkman Center for Internet and Society in Cambridge, Mass. 'The Iranian government, by

filtering the Internet for so long, has actually trained a cadre of people who really know who to get around censorship'."

The Whole World is Watching: The Iranian Uprisings and the Challenge of the New Media

CounterPunch, Henry A. Giroux, 19-21 June 2009

http://www.counterpunch.org/giroux06192009.html

Undiluted, repetitious euphoria over "screen culture": "As the uprisings in Iran illustrate, the new electronic technologies and social networks they have produced have transformed both the landscape of media production and reception, and the ability of state power to define the borders and boundaries of what constitutes the very nature of political engagement. Indeed, politics itself has been increasingly redefined by a screen culture and newly emergent public spaces of education and resistance embraced by students and other young people. For example, nearly 75 percent of Iranians now own cell phones and are quite savvy in utilizing them. Screen culture and its attendant electronic technologies have created a return to a politics in which many young people in Iran are not only forcefully asserting the power to act and express their criticisms and support of Mir Hussein Moussavi but also willing to risk their lives in the face of attacks by thugs and state sponsored vigilante groups. Texts and images calling for 'Death to the dictator' circulate in a wild zone of representation on the Internet, YouTube, and among Facebook and Twitter users, giving rise to a chorus of dissent and collective resistance...."

Information Is Overrated: Twitter's not gonna change our world

Forbes, Elisabeth Eaves, 19 June 2009

http://www.forbes.com/2009/06/18/foreign-policy-iran-vietnam-rwanda-opinions-columnists-social-media-twitter.html

Extract: "The power of information to save the world has frequently been overrated, and it's happening again. The notion of a 'Twitter Revolution' taking place in Iran has gone from a misguided but catchy headline to a subject of debate to a cliché in the week since the Iranian election. This cycle demonstrates that, yes indeed, information is circulating at a faster and faster pace and in ever greater amounts. What it does not demonstrate is that all this information-sharing is instrumental in actual regime change."

My sound bite is better than your sound bite: Friday quiz

Foreign Policy, Evgeney Morozov, 19 June 2009

http://neteffect.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/06/19/my_soundbyte_is_better_than_your_soundbyte_friday_quiz

List of the top soundbites concerning the thesis of there being an "Iranian Twitter Revolution," and soundbites from critics and critics of critics.

The Irony of Iran's 'Twitter Revolution'

Global Voices, Gaurav Mishra, 19 June 2009

http://globalvoicesonline.org/2009/06/19/the-irony-of-irans-twitter-revolution/

Critical of the Twitter Revolution thesis - Extract: "When the dust settles down on the Iran election crisis, we will see that Twitter was more useful as a media tool and not as an organizing tool. We will see that Twitter didn't really change much in Iran in terms of organizing the protests, but it did play an important role in engaging the international community in the protests and focusing media attention on the protests....the on-ground organizing in Iran is probably

happening via mobile phones and offline networks, the same networks that were previously used to mobilize Mousavi's supporters to go out and vote for him. Calling the Iran protests a 'Twitter Revolution' is not only distracting but also dangerous because it reduces a legitimate broad-based grassroots movement to what's quickly becoming a cliche, after Moldova."

The Reality of Generation Y's Virtual World
Information Dissemination, 19 June 2009
http://www.informationdissemination.net/2009/06/reality-of-generation-ys-virtual-world.html
Reading this article leads one to ask questions of who the "Iranian" twitterers really were, since regardless of proxies and anti-censorship software, actual Internet traffic as such was cut off, a point that is apparently completely lost on the author - Extract: "Twitter has become not only a tool for channeling population centric political power against a government, but perhaps even a tool for leveraging population centric military power. As I observe the events unfolding online surrounding the Iranian elections, I see a sustained global, generational, multinational cyber skirmish against the current government of Iran with the intent of expressing political support for the Iranian people....Iran has 6 major telecommunications companies, but all internet traffic is filtered through the state owned Data communication Company of Iran (or DCI), which is essentially the firewall for network traffic in and out of Iran....One the day after the elections on June 13th at 1:30pm GMT (9:30am EDT and 6:00pm Tehran / IRDT), Iran dropped off the Internet. All six regional and global providers connecting Iran to the rest of the world saw a near complete loss of traffic. Most Internet traffic to Iran goes through Reliance (formerly Flag) Telecom, the major Asia Pacific region underseas cable operator. Singtel, a major pan-Asian provider and Türk Telekom also provide significant transit. Initially, DCI severed most of the major transit connections into Iran. Within a few hours, a trickle of traffic returned across TeliaSonera, Reliance and SignTel — all well under 1 Gbps. As of 6:30am GMT June 16, traffic levels returned to roughly 70% of normal with Reliance traffic climbing by more than a Gigabit."

In Iran, The Revolution Will Be Tagged
NPR, Andy Carvin, 19 June 2009
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=105679927
Extract: "But does that mean innumerable Iranian activists have planned their protests on Twitter? Not exactly. Unfortunately, it's difficult to gauge just how many Iranians are on Twitter. The Web analytics company Sysomos estimates that only 8,600 user profiles indicate they're from Iran, and it's likely that only a subset of them are currently active on Twitter and involved in protests. More likely, text messaging, phones and face-to-face interactions are playing a much larger role in their activities. Why is Twitter getting all the attention? For one thing, Twitter has become the social media darling of journalists. Between its utility as an information-gathering tool and the exuberance resulting from celebrities embracing Twitter, it's become a pop culture phenomenon that is hard for them to ignore."

Canada's Psiphon Inc. on Frontlines of Iranian Netwar: Custom "Right2Know" nodes push BBC Persian, Radio Farda, Youtube, Facebook to Iranian Netizens
Psiphon Press Release, Toronto, 19 June 2009
http://psiphon.ca/press%20releases/psiphon-PR-0609.pdf
"The world's leading information delivery assurance service, Psiphon Inc. confirmed today that it is actively engaged on the frontlines of the Iranian netwar, announcing a range of innovative

tools and tactics designed to keep citizens within Iran connected with the outside world through the Internet. 'We have gone on the offensive,' says Rafal Rohozinski, Psiphon CEO, 'ensuring that Iranians have access to the information they need and deserve so that they can make informed decisions for themselves during this time of crisis.' The company is employing dedicated 'psi-operators' whose job it is to propagate Psiphon nodes and engage with the Iranian community both inside and outside Iran - working 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The psi-operators are using social networking platforms like Twitter and Facebook, as well as emails lists and forums, to propagate connection information to Psiphon's "Right2know" nodes, which contain customized content sourced from BBC Persian, Radio Farda, YouTube and other websites and services banned by Iranian authorities. The service has surged over the last several days, with thousands of Iranians logging on at a rate of about one per minute as the psi-operators spread newly set up Psiphon nodes".

Iran Roundup: "Re-tweeting Is a Kind of Reporting"
techPresident, Nancy Scola, 19 June 2009
http://techpresident.com/blog-entry/iran-roundup-re-tweeting-kind-reporting
A bit of a rambling piece, more useful for the implications of its title.

Facebook, Google Go Persian, Aiding Iran's Activists
WIRED: Danger Room, Noah Schachtman, 19 June 2009
http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/facebook-google-go-persian-helping-irans-activists/
Noting the extent to which a wide range of entities went out of their way to facilitate, promote, and exploit the protests in Iran, including some that otherwise assist Chinese censorship or collaborate with the Department of Homeland Security in surveillance at home - Extract: "Some of the Web's leading firms are rolling out new features, to accommodate worldwide interest in the protests in Iran — and to not-so-subtly help out the pro-democracy movement inside the country....both Facebook and Google's translation service added Persian language support, which should make it even easier for the Iranian opposition and its growing global network of supporters to connect."

20 June 2009

The repercussions of a 'Twitter revolution'
Boston Globe, Evgeny Morozov, 20 June 2009
http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/06/20/the_repercussions_of_a_twitter_revolution/
Extract: "It's true that social media could do wonders when it comes to making many people aware of government's abuse or the venue of a rally. However, organizing protests is quite different from publicizing them; the former requires absolute secrecy, the latter one strives for the opposite. Discussing logistical matters on Twitter is simply going to attract unnecessary attention of the government and other detractors. This is why most such discussions take place on secure private platforms like e-mail or instant-messaging. Besides, not all online activism is effective activism. What good is the ability of foreigners to contribute via Twitter if their contributions only worsen the situation for activists on the ground?"

Digital Activism in Iran: Beyond the Headlines
DigiActive, Hamid Tehrani, 20 June 2009
http://www.digiactive.org/2009/06/20/iran-beyond-headlines/
Extract: "While the mainstream media has focused on the role of Twitter and decentralized organizing, the real picture of digital activism in Iran is more complex. Protests are organized centrally by the campaigns of reformist candidates and then that information is disseminated both online and off. The role of citizens with regard to social media is as citizen journalists, using YouTube and Twitter to report on what is happening, rather than to organize the protests. Since this activity is intended for an international audience (and is in English) it is no wonder that this use of social media is more visible to a Western audience than the online tactics actually being used to organize the protests."

Twitter opens eyes to Iran's unrest: Social network earns new respect
Edmonton Journal, Paula Simons, 20 June 2009
http://www.edmontonjournal.com/Entertainment/Twitter+opens+eyes+Iran+unrest/1717104/story.html
The author appears to convey very different messages in close proximity to one another: "Twitter, the micro-blogging social network once derided by its critics as a vapid venue for meaningless gossip and solipsistic exhibitionism, has been earning new respect, now that dissenters within Iran and their supporters abroad have co-opted the site. It's hard to tell, from this remove, how useful Twitter has been within Iran to help protesters plan and communicate. The strength and the weakness of Twitter is that it is an utterly open forum. It's hardly practical to plot a revolution on a site where agents of the state can monitor your every conversation, or pass themselves off as supporters. But there's no denying the impact of Twitter as a social catalyst outside of Iran."

In Tehran, fantasy and reality make uneasy bedfellows (It's said that the cruel 'Iranian' cops aren't Iranian at all. They're Hizbollah militia)
The Independent, Robert Fisk, 20 June 2009
http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/fisk/robert-fiskrsquos-world-in-tehran-fantasy-and-reality-make-uneasy-bedfellows-1710762.html
Extract: "Now for the very latest on the fantasy circuit. The cruel 'Iranian' cops aren't Iranian at all. They are members of Lebanon's Hizbollah militia. I've had this one from two reporters, three phone callers (one from Lebanon) and a British politician. I've tried to talk to the cops. They cannot understand Arabic. They don't even look like Arabs, let alone Lebanese. The reality is that many of these street thugs have been brought in from Baluch areas and Zobal province, close to the Afghan border. Even more are Iranian Azeris. Their accents sound as strange to Tehranis as would a Belfast accent to a Cornishman hearing it for the first time. Fantasy and reality make uneasy bedfellows, but once they are combined and spread with high-speed inaccuracy around the world, they are also lethal."

Twitter on the Barricades: Six Lessons Learned
The New York Times, Noam Cohen, 20 June 2009
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/21/weekinreview/21cohenweb.html?_r=2
Extract: "But does the label Twitter Revolution, which has been slapped on the two most recent events, oversell the technology? Skeptics note that only a small number of people used Twitter to

organize protests in Iran and that other means — individual text messaging, old-fashioned word of mouth and Farsi-language Web sites — were more influential. But Twitter did prove to be a crucial tool in the cat-and-mouse game between the opposition and the government over enlisting world opinion. As the Iranian government restricts journalists' access to events, the protesters have used Twitter's agile communication system to direct the public and journalists alike to video, photographs and written material related to the protests....So maybe there was no Twitter Revolution. But over the last week, we learned a few lessons about the strengths and weaknesses of a technology that is less than three years old and is experiencing explosive growth."

On Solidarity and Resistance and Iran
Resistance Studies, Magid Shihade, 20 June 2009
http://resistancestudies.org/?p=397
Extract: "A Pakistani blogger claims that some Israeli "activists" have been participating in the Twitter messaging campaign during the elections and events afterward in Iran. Whether that is the case is to be verified later. What we can verify is that the U.S. government requested from Twitter to postpone their scheduled maintenance of the site so that those who are using it in the election campaign in Iran continue to do so."

21 June 2009

#IranElection Crisis: A Social Media Timeline
Mashable, Ben Parr, 21 June 2009
http://mashable.com/2009/06/21/iran-election-timeline/
Extract: "One of the striking aspects of the #IranElection crisis has been the heavy use of social media. Iranians have relied on it to spread information on protests and to communicate their situation to millions of concerned people worldwide. In fact, so much has been recorded via social media that it is possible to understand the progression of events through it. Thus, we have built a timeline of events utilizing information recorded via social media. This timeline uses Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, and Wikipedia to paint a broad picture of the situation, as well as the growing conversation around it."

Unrest in Iran raises profile for Twitter
Mercury News, Patrick May, 21 June 2009
http://www.mercurynews.com/business/ci_12661100?nclick_check=1
The author seems to highlight Twitter as way for groups to "move" and coordinate, but looking more at how the events in Iran may benefit Twitter: "The Iran protest effort is already being called the Twitter Revolution. But what does it mean to Twitter, the quirky startup that has yet to show how it will monetize the cybercircus it seems to have created almost by accident? 'These events are putting Twitter on the world's stage,' says marketing consultant and early Twitter adopter Rod Bauer. 'It's proving to be a political force that's gone way beyond the expectations of its founders. And as far as a business model, I think they're a little bit uncertain how to proceed'. Twitter officials didn't return calls seeking comment about its business plans or mushrooming traffic...."

Can Twitter turn politics into profit?
The National, George Cosh, 21 June 2009
http://www.thenational.ae/article/20090621/BUSINESS/706219948/1137
Extract: "As Iran's political problems entered their second week, a new technology has become the medium that the world uses to search for up-to-the-second news on the events. Twitter, the micro-blogging online platform, whose popularity has snowballed since its debut two years ago, provides enough valuable insight for major media organisations to rely on it for original reporting, particularly once their own reporters had been forced out of the country....Iran's volatile political climate has, in turn, become Twitter's finest hour."

Twitter: The tweet that shook the world -- Beloved by celebrities from Stephen Fry to Britney Spears, the social messaging service, with its limit of 140 characters, is now a global phenomenon and, as the Iranian crisis has proved, a powerful political tool
The Observer, Bobbie Johnson, 21 June 2009
http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2009/jun/21/observer-profile-twitter-internet
A "Twitter revolution," will maybe, to some extent: "The site undoubtedly played a vital role in spreading the story from inside Iran to the outside world, as thousands of web users and mobile phone addicts passed on messages and pictures documenting events on the ground. It is easy to overestimate Twitter's value inside Iran, where word of mouth, phone calls and text messages were almost certainly more important in helping to organise rallies. But its influence in making the story global was very real. All of this attention marked the latest high point in Twitter's dizzying ascent, a rapid rise that has seen its crew of geeks find themselves at the heart of geopolitics more by accident than design.

A Look at Twitter in Iran
Sysomos blog, 21 June 2009
http://blog.sysomos.com/2009/06/21/a-look-at-twitter-in-iran/
Their research claims that the majority of Iranian Twitter users joined between March and June, 2009, and that of all Iranian Twitter users, 93% are located in Tehran, while 0.94% are in Shiraz and 0.83% in Mashhad. Regarding the #iranelection stream, on June 11, 51.3% of all its Tweets came from Iran, while 27% came outside the country, and 21.6% of Tweets did not include a location. On June 19, 40.3% Tweets about the election came from outside Iran as the media and blog coverage about the protests in Tehran attracted global attention. Meanwhile, the percentage of Tweets from Iran fell to 23.8%, while 35.7% of users did not provide a location. The lower percentage of Tweets from Iran could also could be due to reports the Iranian government is blocking access to the Internet and Twitter.

Reading Twitter in Tehran? Why the real revolution is on the streets -- and offline
Washington Post, John Palfrey, Bruce Etling and Robert Faris, 21 June 2009
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/19/AR2009061901598_pf.html
Extract: "Yes, this revolution is being tweeted, blogged and Facebooked -- and not just in Tehran....Yet for all their promise, there are sharp limits on what Twitter and other Web tools such as Facebook and blogs can do for citizens in authoritarian societies. The 140 characters allowed in a tweet are not the end of politics as we know it -- and at times can even play into the hands of hard-line regimes. No amount of Twittering will force Iran's leaders to change course....First, Twitter's own internal architecture puts limits on political activism. There are so

many messages streaming through at any moment that any single entry is unlikely to break through the din, and the limit of 140 characters -- part of the service's charm and the secret of its success -- militates against sustained argument and nuance....Second, governments that are jealous of their power can push back on cyberspace when they feel threatened. The Iranian state runs one of the world's most formidable online censorship regimes. In the past week alone, officials have blocked access to YouTube, Facebook and the majority of Web sites most often cited by reformist segments of the Persian blogosphere....Third, the blogosphere is not limited to young, liberal, anti-regime activists; state sympathizers are increasingly active in the battle for online supremacy. Our research into the Iranian blogosphere shows that political and religious conservatives are no less prominent than regime critics."

22 June 2009

[The Fog Machine: Iran, Social Media and the Rise of Genetically Modified Grassroots Organizations](http://www.counterpunch.org/bratich06222009.html)
CounterPunch, Jack Z. Bratich, 22 June 2009
http://www.counterpunch.org/bratich06222009.html
Examines the role of social media in narrating the Iranian protests as a form of cyber-war or info-war, bringing in various youth and democracy institutes run by American NGOs with linkages to the State Departments as likely leading to the artificial seeding of messages and movements, hence "Genetically Modified Grassroots Organization" (GMGO): "Neither wholly emerging from below (grassroots) nor purely invented by external forces (the Astroturfing done by public relations groups), these emergent groups are seeded (and their genetic code altered) to control the direction of the movement". Bratich speaks of "rumour bombs" and asks: "What are the 'facts on the ground' when social media produce a bottom-up mist? In these latest infowar escapades, we need to revise our concepts: not the fog, but the fog-machine of war".

[Exposing Canada's Role in US "Black-Ops" in Iran](http://www.dominionpaper.ca/weblogs/dawn/2736)
The Dominion, 22 June 2009
http://www.dominionpaper.ca/weblogs/dawn/2736
Extract: "'Canada's Psiphon Inc. on the Frontlines of Iranian Netwar,' reads a June 19 press release by Ontario based Psiphon Inc. 'The company is employing dedicated "psi-operators" - staff whose job it is to propagate Psiphon nodes and engage with the Iranian community both inside and outside Iran - working 24 hours a day, seven days a week.' 'The psi-operators are using social networking platforms like Twitter and Facebook, as well as emails [sic] lists and forums, to propagate connection information to Psiphon's 'Right2know' nodes, which contain customized content sourced from BBC BBC Persian, Radio Farda, YouTube and other websites and services banned by Iranian authorities,' continues the release...."

[Online Activism](http://lair.fierydragon.org/2009/06/online-activism/)
The Lair, 22 June 2009
http://lair.fierydragon.org/2009/06/online-activism/
Extract: "It seems like a made-for-a-VC-presentation fairytale – an oppressed people rise up, converge online and overthrow the comedic villain that everyone loves to hate. It could even be the next "You Got Mail" (You Can Haz Tweets?). On the face of it, I should be all over this – power to the people, information should be free, and hey, it's Iran. My (completely irrelevant

and probably unedified) view from several thousand miles away is that there could be worse things that a change of regime. And that this view is probably diametrically opposed to my country's foreign policy causes me much amusement."

A Primer For Hacking Twitter

Mashable, Stan Schroeder, 22 June 2009

http://mashable.com/2009/06/22/primer-twitter-hacking/

Extract: "Twitter could be 'hacked' (not necessarily in the technical sense; perhaps more likely in the way of social engineering) to present fake news as real, or to distort some real life situation in order to achieve a goal....someone, someday, will surely try to orchestrate a major, fake news event with the help of Twitter. The question is, whether the Twitter ecosystem is set up in such a way to be able to quickly discern what is real, and what is not. Due to the shortness of its messages, the lack of organization in the way of (real) threaded discussions, and an overall lack of solid structure, I fear that Twitter's community might be quite easily fooled into believing a completely fabricated story, and due to Twitter's rising influence, it's a scary idea."

Bush Advisor: Twitter Founders Should Get Nobel Peace Prize

TechCrunch, MC Siegler, 22 June 2009

http://www.techcrunch.com/2009/06/22/former-deputy-national-security-advisor-twitter-founders-should-get-nobel-peace-prize/

Extract: "Speaking to Fox News, Mark Pfeifle, a former Deputy National Security Advisor to George W. Bush, offered up this appraisal of the Iran situation: 'If there's anybody that should possibly get a Nobel Peace Prize in the next time around, it should be the founders of Twitter who delayed the tuning up of their system in order for an amazing amount of tweets to be sent out in the last week or so'."

Commentary: Twittering journalism

UPI, Arnaud de Borchgrave, Editor at Large, 22 June 2009

http://www.upi.com/Emerging_Threats/2009/06/22/Commentary-Twittering-journalism/UPI-75191245675600/

Clearly a "Twitter revolution" argument: "Twitter demonstrated it can mobilize hundreds of thousands for street demonstrations against a despotic regime. Inconsequential social networking became instant social mobilization -- and sources of reporting for television networks whose correspondents were ordered to pack their gear and fly home....thousands of demonstrators turned instant journalists are firing their electronic weapons, twittering away the standards of foreign reporting, tweeting the future of journalism, and tweaking history."

Tweets From Iran Read 'Round the World: Social networking ran into social upheaval after the disputed Iranian presidential election

U.S. News & World Report, Alex Kingsbury, 22 June 2009

http://www.usnews.com/articles/news/world/2009/06/22/tweets-from-iran-read-round-the-world.html

Same "Twitter revolution" slant, but with an added twist of caution: "But the anonymity of social networking necessitates caution. CNN, which aired numerous user-submitted reports from Tehran, noted that it could not vouch for the authenticity of all the reports from bloggers, tweeters, and YouTubists. Demonstrators associated with the campaign of candidate Mir Hossein

Mousavi, meanwhile, warned that protesters should be wary of Iranian government officials posing as opposition members. 'Ignore all post except from reliable sources,' cautioned one activist." [Does not ask what makes a source "reliable" in Twitter.]

Iran's Web Spying Aided By Western Technology: European Gear Used in Vast Effort to Monitor Communications
Wall Street Journal, Christopher Rhoads and Loretta Chao, 22 June 2009
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124562668777335653.html
Social Media are Surveillance Media Too - a Twitter Counter-Revolution - Extract: "The Iranian regime has developed, with the assistance of European telecommunications companies, one of the world's most sophisticated mechanisms for controlling and censoring the Internet, allowing it to examine the content of individual online communications on a massive scale. Interviews with technology experts in Iran and outside the country say Iranian efforts at monitoring Internet information go well beyond blocking access to Web sites or severing Internet connections."

Perils of Iran's Web-Driven Revolution
WIRED: Danger Room, David Axe, 22 June 2009
http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2009/06/perils-of-irans-web-driven-revolution/
Extract: "The popular protests over Iran's contested election are firmly rooted on the Web — on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Persian Websites. The potential of Tweeters, in particular, represents a 'paradigm shift,' Dr. Anne-Marie Slaughter, director of policy planning for the State Department, said last week. Tehran has the tech to track Tweets, according to The Washington Times. Plus, despite Iranians' voracious Internet appetite, there are just a handful of Internet Service Providers in Iran — and Tehran can restrict which URLs these ISPs make accessible. So protesters have turned to proxy servers, to dodge the regime's Net filters, MSNBC notes. One Ohio man was reportedly attacked, by stone-throwing assailants, for helping set up these proxies."

23 June 2009

Twitter proves powerful in raising awareness of situation in Iran
Chicago Tribune, Rex Huppke, 23 June 2009
http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-talk-huppke-iranjun23,0,6393108.story
Is the Twitter Revolution just faddish and hypocritical, or is it about individuals' personal needs to reach out, and maybe even create a broader awareness? -- Extracts: "People who might normally send out tweets about what they had for lunch are now issuing cries of support for the throngs of Iranians protesting election results....With Twitter and other social media sites, the speed at which ...symbolic statements of protest or support can be circulated is staggering."

ANALYSIS / Twitter won't make Iran protesters bulletproof
Haaretz, Benjamin L. Hartman, 23 June 2009
http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1094790.html
Extract: "Outside of Iran, it's easy being green these days. The streets of major cities worldwide host swirling masses of light-emerald protestors on a semi-daily basis, the throngs blending into a peaceful mix of nationalities hoisting V signs to the sky. It's hard to remember an international protest movement that received such international coverage, or that awakened such great

passions in third-party observers, most of them quite detached from the Middle East or Iran. It's hard to understand why the 'Green Revolution' (or, nauseatingly, 'the Twitter Revolution') has sparked such an outpouring of sympathy from the world...Social networking sites have made this revolution different, but they don't insure that the end result for the protestors will be any less bloody, or that an authoritarian regime will somehow be forced to make concessions. The tired 'the world is watchingt refrain has been heard for decades, and only in a handful of instances has it slowed the hand of tyranny. Further, the repeated refrains that it will cost the Islamic Republic 'legitimacy' in the eyes of their people and the international community seem a bit empty, almost implying that the mullah state was legitimate to begin with....But when the bullets and the truncheons really begin to fly in Tehran, an iPhone or a Twitter account won't make you bulletproof."

25 June 2009

Date line: #IranElection
Al-Ahram Weekly, Amira Howeidy, Issue No. 953, 25 June--01 July 2009
http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2009/953/re1.htm
Extract: "As the post-election political crisis has unfolded in Iran -- or Tehran, to be precise -- the Western media has seemed intent on portraying any political upheaval as synonymous with Twitter, the social networking and micro-blogging service....If this whole dynamic had a code name, it would be Operation Twitter....Western news channels, newspapers, agencies and radio stations appear to be obsessed with Twitter. Story after story on the social network site as a source of information from inside Iran appeared, even before the Iranian authorities imposed restrictions on the movement of foreign correspondents. The fixation on what 'twitters' were 'tweeting' -- on the BBC for example -- was evident well before the Iranian government asked its correspondent to leave the country on 22 June."

The Iranian Protests and the Mainstream Media: You Provide the Tweets, We'll Provide the Info War
CounterPunch, Jack Z. Bratich, 25 June 2009
http://www.counterpunch.org/bratich06252009.html
Extract: "In sum, the very basics of reporting (when, where, who, what?) have become unverifiable. However, the 'why' seems relatively clear for pundits, anchors, and other infomancers. Lingering Cold War fantasies dominate their visions, now with a theocratic twist: People Power vs. Iron Fists, Democracy vs. Dictatorship, Freedom vs. Repression. Neglected is the soft control of information warfare. We could call this a Cyborg Fist in the Velvet Glove."

Good work on Iran, new media, but don't get smug
Globe and Mail, Tabatha Southey, 25 June 2009
http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/columnists/tabatha-southey/good-work-on-iran-new-media-but-dont-get-smug/article1190751/
Not a "Twitter revolution" article: "...calling this a 'Twitter revolution' over-credits technology and undermines the Iranian protesters. It's as if those were the Sims on the streets in Tehran and the prisons....It's amazing how technologically savvy and yet still credulous the generation raised on the Internet can be. In some ways, it's like a generation of 1950s dads with their encyclopedia sets - so quick to cede authority."

140 Characters of Protest
Pew Research Center, 25 June 2009
http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1267/iran-twitter-revolution
Extract: "Some have already dubbed the protests in Iran to be the 'Twitter Revolution.' Certainly the political unrest in Iran has demonstrated as never before the power and influence of social media. How big has the subject been in the social media conversation in recent days and what role does the discussion appear to be playing?"

26 June 2009

Media fantasies in Iran: It was only a matter of time before revolution in Iran, believed dissidents and media in the west. They were wrong
Guardian, Abbas Barzegar, 26 June 2009
http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/jun/26/iran-media-revolution-dissidents
The accidental Iranian "revolution" is a media-induced fantasy, ignoring the millions of supporters behind the government, and the fact that the opposition has never called for an overthrow of the system of governance.

A Twitter Timeline of the Iran Election: In some ways, social media defined the protests surrounding Iran's election. Here are the most noteworthy events, as told through tweets
Newsweek, 26 June 2009
http://www.newsweek.com/id/203953/output/print
When mainstream media became retweet machines -- Extract: "Twitter, in particular, played a key role, allowing opposition supporters to communicate and organize protests, as well as to pass on information about what was happening on the ground to one another and the outside world. Below, we offer a rough timeline of events since the June 12 election, along with a daily sampling of tweets about events in Iran. (Note: Though we've made every effort to select tweets from informed posters, we have not been able to confirm the accuracy of the information contained in the posts...)."

The Iranian Election on Twitter: The First Eighteen Days
Web Ecology Project, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 26 June 2009
http://webecologyproject.org/WEP-twitterFINAL.pdf
This study claims to have collected all tweets about the Iran election protests, across several discussion streams beyond #iranelection. In fact, it shows that #iranelection accounted for 42% of tweets on Iran's protests. From 7 June 2009 until the time of publication (26 June 2009), they recorded 2,024,166 tweets about the election in Iran. Approximately 480,000 users have contributed to this conversation alone. 59.3% of users tweet just once, and these users contribute 14.1% of the total number. The top 10% of users in their study account for 65.5% of total tweets. 1 in 4 tweets about Iran is a retweet of another user's content.

28 June 2009

ANALYSIS / Even the CIA gets its Iran updates via Twitter
Haaretz, Amos Harel, 28 June 2009

http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1094648.html
Extract: "The limits of intelligence. It's not much of a surprise, but what's happening in Iran, from the election results to the enormous protests, is a stark reminder of the limits of intelligence. We might even assume that the CIA is getting more information on the events from CNN (constrained as it is by the Iranian authorities), the blogosphere and Twitter, than from its agents deep in the land of the ayatollahs. Western intelligence has been focusing on the nuclear program a lot more than the Iranian regime's stability."

It's not a Twitter revolution in Iran
Z Net, Reese Erlich, 28 June 2009
http://www.zcommunications.org/znet/viewArticle/21814
Extract: "Iran is not undergoing a Twitter Revolution. The term simultaneously mischaracterizes and trivializes the important mass movement developing in Iran....First of all the vast majority of Iranians have no access to Twitter. While reporting in Tehran, I personally didn't encounter anyone who used it regularly. A relatively small number of young, economically well off Iranians do use Twitter. A larger number have access to the Internet. However, in the beginning, most demonstrations were organized through word of mouth, mobile phone calls and text messaging. But somehow 'Text Messaging Revolution doesn't have that modern, sexy ring, especially if you have to type it with your thumbs on a tiny keyboard. More importantly, by focusing on the latest in Internet communications, cable TV networks intentionally or unintentionally characterize a genuine mass movement as something supported mainly by the Twittering classes."

30 June 2009

A journalistic conundrum: When does Twitter count as a reliable source?
Christian Science Monitor, Matthew Shaer, 30 June 2009
http://features.csmonitor.com/innovation/2009/06/30/a-journalistic-conundrum-when-does-twitter-count-as-a-reliable-source/
Extract: "...should Twitter be used as a source for mainstream media outlets? That's the question being raised today after a reporter for BNO News found evidence that CNN has recycled tweets from PersianKiwi, a popular Iranian Twitter user. As BNO's Michael van Poppel discovered, in a June 24 article CNN appears to have repeated several words and phrases from PersianKiwi's feed – and attributed those comments to various 'sources'."

Twitter's Role in Iranian Election Crisis Debated
Wall Street Journal, Kimberly Chou, 30 June 2009
http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2009/06/30/twitters-role-in-iranian-election-crisis-debated/
Extract: "Coverage of Iranian tweets overshadowed coverage of political turmoil itself this month, argued New York Times columnist Frank Rich at a Personal Democracy Forum panel Tuesday about the future of media and the Internet. 'As great as Twitter was for getting the story out, it overstated the revolution,' Rich said."

July 2009

Iran: networked dissent
Le Monde Diplomatique, Christiann Christensen, 01 July 2009
http://mondediplo.com/blogs/iran-networked-dissent
Extract: "These events show the potential role of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs and YouTube in facilitating protest and dissent during times of conflict and suppression — as well as enabling the spread of state propaganda and surveillance. The Iranian case reveals the new and complex role of social media in contemporary geopolitics. For traditional media such as newspapers, television and radio are often territorially-bound, and thus subject to national laws (libel, censorship) and political-economic power structures (political pressure, ownership bias, advertiser demands); whereas social networking media are often decentralised, non-hierarchical and contain user-generated content....While the majority of tweets on Iran came from outside the country, a handful of highly influential individuals inside became vital sources of information....Though we should not over-romanticise technologies such as Twitter and Facebook, what we have witnessed in Iran was unique. The US State Department even asked Twitter to delay a planned upgrade to their system that would have disrupted daytime service to Iranians. Twitter complied....Social media have made possible the presentation of alternative discourses to local and global audiences, challenging the orthodoxies of those in power."

#iranelection - Twitter topics & historic events
Examiner.com, Harold Nolte, 03 July 2009
http://www.examiner.com/x-6207-Using-Computers-Examiner~y2009m7d3-iranelection--amazing-Twitter-trending-topic-stats-and-historic-events-cited
A basic recounting of some of the main landmarks of "#iranelection" on Twitter, accompanied by charts showing when and by how much that stream was trending in Twitter.

Iran: The Game of Nations
Monthly Review, Azmi Bishara, 03 July 2009
http://www.monthlyreview.org/mrzine/bishara030709.html
Bishara endorses the critical assessment of this blog's piece: "The Twitterers on Iran speak and write in English. One cannot even ascertain whether they were really from Iran. The messages are brief -- a phrase, a slogan, a titbit [sic] of information. Perhaps some of it is true, but there is undoubtedly a lot of hearsay, rumour and falsehoods mixed in there. There was no way to ascertain the source or the veracity. There were pictures and video clips, but how can you tell when and where they were actually taken? Iranians took part, certainly. But Israelis and Americans did too, in far larger numbers, and some of these claimed to be Iranian. In short, a surrogate revolution was being waged for the Iranian people between one cappuccino and the next from people's homes in Nebraska and Oklahoma....To put this phenomenon into perspective as far as the recent events in Iran are concerned, only a third of Iranians have Internet access. Moreover, if 74 per cent of Canadians with Internet access had never heard of Twitter before the events in Iran, how many Iranians knew about it? Some groups of youth succeeded in outwitting the official media. However, that does not make them a better or more reliable source of information. When you hear Israeli fabrications of the sort, 'Hizbullah and Hamas recruits were seen beating demonstrators in Tehran,' which have that familiar ring of, 'Iranian revolutionary guards are fighting in Lebanon and Gaza,' you know that something is not quite right with this alternative news source."

Iran Pro-Regime Voices Multiply Online
Wall Street Journal, Christopher Rhoads and Geoffrey A. Fowler, 03 July 2009
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124658422588090107.html
The **other** "Iranian Twitter Revolution"? Extract: "Supporters of Iran's regime are taking a cue from the opposition's strategy: They're mounting an online offensive....over the past week, a growing number of Iranian users of Twitter -- the online service that allows users to send short messages -- have been "tweeting" in favor of the regime, according to Internet security experts and others studying the development....The online protest movement appears to be losing steam."

Twittercraft: Foreign Policy by Other Means
Huffington Post, Michael Shtender-Auerbach, 06 July 2009
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-shtenderauerbach/twittercraft-foreign-poli_b_226289.html
Extract: "Twitter's enabling role in Iran dovetailed quite closely with American foreign policy interests, allowing Washington to maintain a plausible distance as foment was spread across the Islamic Republic. It is not always the case, however, that America's technology firms operate in sync with our country's interests abroad....The innocuous request from the State Department and Twitter's granting of it are the kind of cooperation between government and business that ought to be extended to other areas of foreign policy. That is not to imply, of course, that American technology companies should blindly pursue the interests of Washington, nor Washington the technology companies'. But when those interests overlap, as they did recently in Iran, greater cooperation is both good politics and good for business. Twitter, Google, and YouTube do not come with a "Made in the U.S.A." label, but the Iranian people may not notice the difference."

Why the Internet is a double-edged sword: The upbeat age of Obama is also an era of virtual tyranny. Take Iran's Twitter Revolution and the tracking of online dissidents
Globe and Mail, Abraham Cooper and Harold Brackman, 07 July 2009
http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/why-the-internet-is-a-double-edged-sword/article1204659/
Extract: "There's little reason to believe the Internet could have stopped genocide in 20th-century Europe any more than it has in 21st-century Africa....Let's face it: From the invention of the printing press to the telegraph, to radio and television and to the Internet, innovation has always been a double-edged sword. Contrary to the technological utopians, there is no such thing as an invention whose potential for good cannot be perverted for evil."

Twitter revolution or Iranian evolution?
Talk Radio News Service, Tala Dowlatshahi, 08 July 2009
http://talkradionews.com/2009/07/twitter-revolution-or-iranian-evolution/
Extract: "As Mark Pfeifle, former Deputy National Security Advisor for strategic communication and global outreach at the National Security Council stated this week: 'Neda became the voice of a movement; Twitter became the megaphone. Twitter became a window for the world to view hope, heroism, and horror.' Pfeifle went on to recommend that Twitter be nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. Pfeifle is not alone in acknowledging Twitter's significance. I spoke with Farhan Haq, in the UN Secretary-General's Spokesperson's office and he said the UN is gradually coming to recognize the importance of Twitter and online social networking tools in garnering support for injustice and the clampdown of freedom of expression: 'The UN greatly supports

freedom of expression, and the tools/technology to promote these freedoms, anytime. We want to ensure the activities of Iranian people and the peaceful protests in Iran are not hindered in any way. The UN Secretary-General spoke to Shirin Ebadi two weeks ago about working together to better support the will of the people in Iran. The UN has in recent months been using Twitter as a means for spreading information. A most recent example is the selection of the new Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). During the voting campaign, results were twittered out to the global community on a daily basis'."

Iran's crackdown proves that the 'Twitter revolution' has made things worse
Telegraph blogs, Will Heaven, 8 July 2009
http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/willheaven/100002576/irans-crackdown-proves-that-the-twitter-revolution-has-made-things-worse/
This piece contains a paradox: on the one hand, Twitter was quite ineffective in bringing down the Iranian regime; on the other hand, it was effective in helping the crackdown on dissent. Extract: "Almost a month on from Iran's presidential election, it is now time to recognise that the so-called "Twitter revolution" has utterly failed to achieve anything - save dead and injured young Iranians, and up to 2,000 new political prisoners. President Ahmadinejad retains power after a violent crackdown. There has been no recount of the votes. And the blatantly rigged election results have been upheld. So what went wrong? Well, I would argue that the answer is twofold. Firstly we need to accept that there was a hell of a lot of hype surrounding the online freedom emerging in Iran. Despite what Bobbie Johnson wrote in The Observer, Tweets do not 'shake' the political world. More accurately, we have just witnessed a mini dotcom boom and bust: YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and Flickr were seen to be 'powerful political tools'. They aren't. Especially when they are only being used by a relatively small urban elite."

Experts tout role of new media in Iranian protests
Jerusalem Post, Sam Greenberg, 12 July 2009
http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1246443788490&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull
Extract: "Twitter's role in the recent Iranian protests has been exaggerated, but new media were crucial in enabling an online community within and beyond Iran to convey information to protesters otherwise shut off from independent news sources, according to new media experts" -- much of the article in facts contains statements by experts who contradict the headline completely.

Foreign Policy: Iran's Terrifying Facebook Police
NPR, Evgeny Morozov, 13 July 2009
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=106535773
Extract: "the Iranian authorities are paying very close attention to what's going on Facebook and Twitter (which, in my opinion, also explains why they decided not to take those web-sites down entirely - they are useful tools of intelligence gathering). Second, it means, as far as authorities are concerned, our online and offline identities are closely tied and we have to be fully prepared to be quizzed about any online trace that we have left....Third, this reveals that some of the spontaneous online activism we witnessed in the last few weeks - with Americans re-tweeting the posts published by those in Tehran - may eventually have very dire consequences, as Iranians

would need to explain how exactly they are connected to foreigners that follow them on Twitter."

Iran's Twitter Revolution
New University, Arash Rastegar, Vol. 42, No. 32, 13 July 2009
http://www.newuniversity.org/main/article?slug=irans_twitter_revolution_194
The majority of the article is *not* about Twitter, apart from the following - Extract: "Twitter single handedly punched a hole in Iran's governmental censorship. Iranians exposed the violence on the streets by constantly 'tweetting' everything they witnessed. YouTube, has allowed Iranians to upload videos of the protests and of police violence that the rest of the world would not have been able to view otherwise. British Broadcasting Company began broadcasting in Farsi to provide Iran with a non-censored view of what was occurring in their country. The era of selective censorship is over. Technology, and not violence, is a new, effective ways to challenge the government."

How Iran is using the internet to 'hunt down' online protesters
Telegraph, Will Heaven, 14 July 2009
http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/willheaven/100003235/how-iran-is-using-the-internet-to-hunt-down-online-protestors/
Extract: "It appears I am not the only one who thinks the 'Twitter revolution' has proven extremely dangerous for Iranian internet users. Support comes from Timothy Karr, the Campaign Director of Free Press, a US 'media reform' think-tank. He has bad news. While I highlighted the fact that the Iranian government is using Facebook and Twitter to track people through their usernames – especially those on publicly listed profiles – Karr examines (in the Huffington Post) the more high-tech methods used by the regime to 'hunt down' protesters. The Islamic government, he tells us, is now able 'to pinpoint the location of online protesters and arrest them'.

Why Twitter? Why Twitter could subvert government censorship in Iran when other Web 2.0 services could not
Center for Strategic & International Studies, Joshua Roberts, 18 July 2009
http://csis.org/blog/why-twitter-why-twitter-could-subvert-government-censorship-iran-when-other-web-20-services-cou
Extract: "While the effect Twitter had on the scale of the protests following the disputed Iranian election remains uncertain (there are only 19,000 registered Twitter users in Iran, while estimates for the number of protestors range from a few hundred thousand to three million), there is no doubt that Twitter played an essential role in broadcasting the events on Tehran's streets to the world. Journalists were deported and detained, text messaging and cell phone service were temporarily jammed, Facebook was blocked, and internet traffic is always subject to finely-turned filtering in Iran. Yet, despite these obstacles, Twitter enabled individual citizens to keep up-to-the-minute information flowing out from Iran's borders. So, the question remains: Why was Twitter, as opposed to other social networking sites or Web 2.0 services, able to circumvent Iran's stringent censorship regime? The answer, as Harvard law professor and Internet expert Jonathon Zittrain put it, lies in Twitter's 'half-baked' design."

Starting a revolt in 140 characters
Inquirer, Erwin Oliva, 18 July 2009

http://opinion.inquirer.net/inquireropinion/talkofthetown/view/20090718-216110/Starting-a-revolt-in-140-characters
Relating Twitter in general, and the Iranian experience, to the Philippines.

All a Twitter: How Social Networking Shaped Iran's Election Protests
Right Side News, James Jay Carafano, 21 July 2009
http://www.rightsidenews.com/200907215605/editorial/all-a-twitter-how-social-networking-shaped-irans-election-protests.html
Extract: "The American government should pay close attention to the Iranian experience. Web 2.0 technologies have a potentially important role to play in a range of endeavors related to U.S. national security, from public diplomacy to communicating with citizens during catastrophic disasters. Government must become practiced in effectively employing these technologies, battling malicious actors online, and ensuring the resiliency of the global open network of free debate made possible by social-networking tools. Accomplishing this three-fold mission demands that the U.S. government place more emphasis on the professional development of its workforce, the roles and responsibilities of federal agencies for turning Web 2.0 into Government 2.0, and implementing more robust public-private partnerships."

Gordon Brown says technology can change foreign policy: Internet can create fairer global society
InfoWorld, Siobhan Chapman, 23 July 2009
http://www.infoworld.com/d/networking/gordon-brown-says-technology-can-change-foreign-policy-460
Extract: "[British Prime Minister Gordon Brown] said technology - such as blogs, YouTube and Twitter - meant that the world could no longer be run by 'elites'....foreign policies could be formed by listening to the opinions of people 'who are blogging and communicating with people around the world'....'We have the means to take collective action and take collective action together'."

Twitter and Revolution
Media Daily News, Eric Sass, 23 July 2009
http://www.mediapost.com/publications/?fa=Articles.showArticle&art_aid=110329
Extract: "To succeed in attracting users, online communities must recognize and serve a communal need, and Twitter has clearly done that in Iran. In the first days of the June uprising, Western news reports were filled with anecdotes of Web-savvy Iranians coordinating protests via online social networks. The main opposition candidate, Moussavi, was said to be maintaining contact with supporters at least, in part, via Facebook and Twitter....Ironically, the main problem for Twitter as a revolutionary tool wasn't Iran's technophobic gerontocracy, but the crowds of well-intentioned foreign sympathizers who flooded the site with expressions of support."

Twitter Revolution?
Watching the Watchers, 23 July 2009
http://watchingthewatchers.org/indepth/27126/twitter-revolution
Extract: "we failed to articulate how the global conversation has changed and could change even more because of Twitter: In light of the recent Iran elections and the subsequent Twittering that followed the controversial results, it seems that the ultimate revolutionary use of Twitter and

similar SMS services may not be in the US and already heavily-connected and broadbanded regions, but in areas of the world where mobile phones have the high penetration rates. Often, these same regions have news and information services that don't always (or ever) function in a democratic fashion."

PODCASTS:

PODCAST: What Is The Value Of Tweets From Iran?
NPR, 22 June 2009
http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=105762132
Extract: "Many protesters use Twitter to communicate amongst themselves and with the outside world. But some question the veracity of the information that is being posted on the micro-blogging service."
[audio http://www.openanthropology.org/nprtwitter.mp3]

VIDEOS:

COMPLETE VIDEO STREAM: OPEN ANTHROPOLOGY TV
http://openanthropology.vodspot.tv/search?q=twitter&commit=Search

VIDEO: Jared Cohen (State Dept. official who intervened with Twitter), "Children of Jihad" on MSNBC
MSNBC, 24 February 2008
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lKA_NkHuJ8

VIDEO: Twitter: Our Window to Iran (Bijan Sabet, an Iranian-American who is on the board of Twitter, sales pitch for its political power)
FOX Business Network, 16 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=REl-WR4SqaY

VIDEO: Clay Shirky: How cellphones, Twitter, Facebook can make history
TED, 16 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_iN_QubRs0

VIDEO: US gov't asks social networking site Twitter to ensure the service in Iran
CCTV, 17 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-hgyvWwqVw

VIDEO: Twitter and Iran
Channel 4, 17 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvyZkPj82y8

VIDEO: Iranian Officials Posting To Websites To Give False Information,Twitter Saves The Day
FOX News, 17 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSv8OCF4x_U

VIDEO: Twitter's role in Iran coverage
FOX, 17 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SPuxiHYXmc

VIDEO: Iran: The Twitter Revolution
MSNBC, 17 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cl3kvYEBZ4E

VIDEO: Secretary of Defense Robert Gates speaking about Twitter and Iran
CBS News, 18 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7MB_vXWfRQ

VIDEO: Twitter Revolution in Iran? "Not quite Twitter, not quite a revolution"
CNN, 18 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpQC-DJL_Ho

VIDEO: Iran: Digital Revolution (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube)
NBC, 18 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rWiRj9wlpY

VIDEO: The Trouble with Tweeting about Iran
Reuters, 18 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fqwCEpQRyU

VIDEO: Hillary Clinton Supports Twitter Use in Iran: "I wouldn't know a Twitter from a tweeter"
SBARTSTV, 18 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNlYNYsSMDk

VIDEO: Former Deputy National Security Adviser Recommends Twitter for Nobel Peace Prize
FOX News, 22 June 2009
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfjjlZn4_Lc

Comparisons with other "Revolutions":

Rioters of the world unite
Economist, 18 December 2008
http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12815678
Extract: "Already, the Greek riots are prompting talk of a new era of networked protest. The volume of online content they have inspired is remarkable. Photos and videos of the chaos, often shot with cellphones, were posted online almost in real time. Twitter, a service for exchanging short messages, has brimmed with live reports from the streets of Athens, most of them in Greek but a few in English."

Moldova's Twitter Revolution
Foreign Policy, Evgeny Morozov, 07 April 2009
http://neteffect.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/04/07/moldovas_twitter_revolution
Extract: "Cellphones and text messaging are widely believed to have played a crucial role in fostering the Orange Revolution in Ukraine (or at least, making the protests as widespread and successful as they were); the Berkman Center at Harvard published probably the most comprehensive study of the role that social media played in the Orange Revolution (even though I criticized some of its cyber-utopian assumptions in a recent essay for Boston Review). Could it be that five years after the famous protests in Kiev's Maidan Square another technology - Twitter - will usher in another revolution in neighbouring Moldova?"

More analysis of Twitter's role in Moldova
Foreign Policy, Evgeny Morozov, 07 April 2009
http://neteffect.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/04/07/more_analysis_of_twitters_role_in_moldova
Not the Iran "Twitter Revolution" of course, but this previous case provided a number of the tropes, and what should have been sobering lessons, for those positing "Twitter Revolution" hypotheses - Extract: "1. One paradox is that there are relatively few Twitter users in Moldova to start with....2. Moldovans abroad played an important role by participating in the protests remotely by helping to keep the story alive via Twitter....3. It really helped that even non-technology people in the U.S. and much of Western Europe are currently head over heels in love with Twitter....4. The use of Twitter has been limited to mobilization of some local supporters and raising international awareness....5. There were some major differences with the Orange Revolution events in Ukraine."

Student Protests Are Turning Into A Twitter Revolution In Moldova
TechCrunch, Leena Rao, 07 April 2009
http://www.techcrunch.com/2009/04/07/student-protests-are-turning-into-a-twitter-revolution-in-moldova/
Extract: "Students in Moldova are using Twitter as a tool to mobilize opposition against a communist victory in Moldovian elections....Twitter has long-been been a popular platform for breaking news, but this adds a new twist to the powerful capabilities of the micro-blogging service. The protests no doubt would have happened anyway and it is not clear how may of the actual protesters in Moldova are on Twitter. But it seems to be helping both as a coordinating tool and as a way to disseminate information about the events that are unfolding to the rest of the world."

Students use Twitter to storm presidency in Moldova: Student protesters stormed parliament and presidential buildings in the ex-Soviet state of Moldova
Telegraph, 07 April, 2009
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/moldova/5119449/Students-use-Twitter-to-storm-presidency-in-Moldova.html
Extract: "Organisers used the social networking site Twitter to rally opposition to a Communist victory in legislative elections."

The myth of the Moldova 'Twitter revolution'
Frontline, Daniel Bennett, 08 April 2009
http://frontlineclub.com/blogs/danielbennett/2009/04/the-myth-of-the-moldova-twitter-revolution.html
Extract: "a number of commentators claimed that this was the beginnings of the first Twitter revolution and that Twitter had played a 'key role in organising the protests'. The Telegraph, for example, jumped straight in with this headline: 'Students use Twitter to storm presidency in Moldova'. Another Telegraph blog post pointed to this foreign policy piece which claimed that after the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, Twitter 'will usher in another revolution in neighbouring Moldova'. A TechCrunch post on a similar theme is being retweeted numerous times as I write. But where's the evidence? Not many of the people who have actually written these and similar articles have bothered to find some tweets that might hint at some kind of organisational role for Twitter...."

Golpe de Estado in Honduras: No Twitter Revolution in Honduras
To the Roots, Daniel Schmidt, 29 June 2009
http://totheroots.wordpress.com/2009/06/29/golpe-de-estado-in-honduras-no-twitter-revolution-in-honduras/
Extract: "No one is comparing the protests to Iran, and it's clear why. Obviously there is no internet (or power) for the people of Honduras – a major problem for the fickle do-gooders in Western democracies. If one cannot see it, if one is not horrified – then it's easy to look away. There will be no tweets from Honduras, no upper-class revolt. For Honduras, the upper-class, the oligarchical class, is against social movements and is, in fact, orchestrating and supporting the ideology of this coup. There is a surprising solidarity of classes protesting in Iran – it has way more wealth than Honduras – makes it easier for the West to support. Mousavi's support for privatization and neoliberalism doesn't hurt. Neither does the Honduran military's."