



The Internet, Social Networks and Civic Engagement in Chinese Societies

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The Internet in China reflects many contradictions and complexities of the society in which it is embedded. Despite the growing significance of digital media and communication technologies, research on their contingent, non-linear, and sometimes paradoxical impact on civic engagement remains theoretically underdeveloped and empirically understudied. As importantly, many studies on the internet's implications in Chinese societies have focused on China. This book draws on a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to advance a balanced and context-rich understanding of the effects of digital media and communication technologies, especially social media, for state legitimacy, the rise of issue-based networks, the growth of the public sphere, and various forms of civic engagement in China, Taiwan, and the global Chinese diaspora. Using ethnography, interview, experiment, survey, and the big data method, scholars from North America, Europe, and Asia show that the culture and impacts of digital activism depend on issue and context.

This book was originally published as a special issue of *Information, Communication & Society*.

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