

Trust and social capital in the Internet age

Fabio Sabatini
Francesco Sarracino

BBVA Foundation-Ivie Workshop 2014
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performance in times of crisis”

Universitat de València. Facultat d'Economia
October 24, 2014

socialcapitalgateway.org/editor

- Sapienza University of Rome and Laboratory for Comparative Social Research, Higher School of Economics, Russia.
- Social Capital Gateway.
- Blog in *Pagina 99*, *Il Fatto Quotidiano* and *MicroMega*.



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Against Madeleine McCann's parents



W. Bro. Gerry McEann
@FakeRC



+ Segui

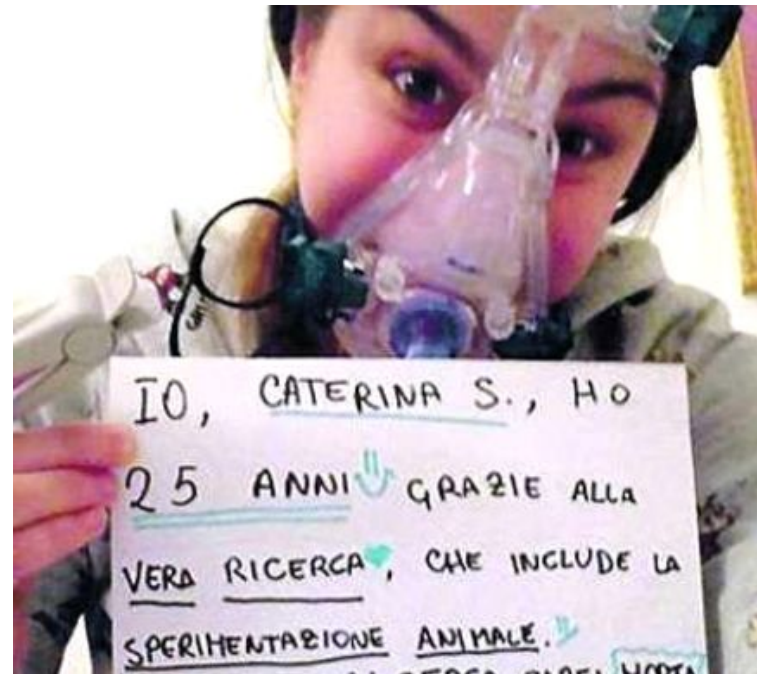
RT @19Barbara57: @PierreJouet It's not pointless! Madeleine #McCann is missing and someone is guilty. <<=

↳ Rispondi ↻ Retweet ★ Preferito ⋮ Altro

It was her,.....



Against Caterina Simonsen



Samuele Paoli

Era meglio se morivi a 9 anni brutta imbellice.. Io sperimenterei sulle persone come te.

8 minuti fa · Mi piace ·  1

Lampedusa shipwrecks

- On 3 October 2013, a boat carrying migrants from Libya to Italy sank off the Italian island of Lampedusa. 155 survivors were rescued.
- **Death toll: 360.** A lot of children among them.
- A few days later, a second shipwreck occurred near Lampedusa: at least 34 individuals were later confirmed dead.
- In Italy, media report about such shipwrecks at least on a weekly basis. What is the public's reaction?



“I am not racist, but...”

[REDACTED] 30 Set
Sento puzza dei marocchini ambulanti al mare, **non sono razzista** ma la loro pelle fa un certo odorino
da Ozzano dell'E Risposta Retweet Aggiungi ai preferiti Altro

[REDACTED] 30 Set
@ckyenge **NON SONO RAZZISTA** MA NESSUNO OBBLIGA NESSUNO A VENIRE QUI SE COME VIVIAMO NOI NON VA BENE!!!
Conversazione

[REDACTED] 1 Ott
Ora scusate **non sono razzista** nel modo più assoluto ma quando gente straniera fa così mi verrebbe voglia di mandarli via a calci in culo
da San Benedel Risposta Retweet Aggiungi ai preferiti Altro

[REDACTED] 3 Ott
Io **non sono razzista** ma gli zingari proprio al rogo
Espandi

[REDACTED] 2 Ott
Chi mi conosce sa bene che **non sono razzista**, ma qui stiamo veramente esagerando!!! fb.me/14SoZ5Bob
Espandi

[REDACTED] 11h
Non pensate male, **non sono razzista**, però ho le mie idee riguardo l'immigrazione e tutti gli immigrati che vengono qua in Italia.
Espandi

[REDACTED] 30 Set
La maggior parte degli incidenti, stupri e altre cose capitano per colpa degli stranieri. **Non sono razzista**, ma la cosa mi da fastidio.
Espandi

[REDACTED] 2 Ott
Io **non sono razzista** ma siete in Italia, non a Baghdad
da Oderzo, Treviso

[REDACTED] 2 Ott
Poi io **non sono razzista** eh.. Però il mio autobus sembra la fottuta ambasciata del Pakistan
Espandi

[REDACTED] 2 Ott
Non sono razzista, anzi.. Ma queste robe mi fanno schifo. O sei regolare,
Lavori e vivi come gli altri o fuori dalle balle.
Espandi

[REDACTED] 20h
Non sono razzista, ma a furia di vedere furti, stupri e rapine da parte di gente di colore, ma a finire che lo divento!
da Naples, Naples

[REDACTED] 11h
[#lampedusa](https://lampedusa) spero muoiano tutti (**non sono razzista**, i miei idoli sono asiatici e sono innamorata di un nero, è solo che hanno rotto il cazzo!)
Espandi

“Let’s shot and drawn these monkeys.”

Continuano i viaggi della disperazione verso il nostro Paese.
Soccorse 1000 persone, tra le quali 133 bambini.

Immigrazione, soccorse altre mille persone: ci sono anche 133 bambini

www.fanpage.it

Stamattina sono arrivati oltre 400 profughi; per stasera attesi al porto di Augusta i 500 stranieri soccorsi tra lunedì e martedì. Intanto...



Carmen Rando Vengono xhè l.italia gli da 25,00 euro al giorno piu la ricarica telefonica a noi italiaani che ci danno ,,,,, solo nuove tasse

Mi piace · Rispondi · 29 · 14 ore fa



Gennaro O Bello Ippolito Vengono xhè l.italia gli da 25,00 euro al giorno piu la ricarica telefonica a noi italiaani che ci danno ,,,,, solo nuove tasse

Mi piace · Rispondi · 2 · 3 ore fa



Luca Leggiadro basta sbarchi aiutiamoli a casa sua

Mi piace · Rispondi · 5 · 11 ore fa



Simone VascOnvolto Giglio Affondateli TUTTI!!.

Mi piace · Rispondi · 4 · 12 ore fa



Mara Pellizzer Mitragliatrici a piu nn podsor

Mi piace · Rispondi · 13 ore fa



Massimo Macario Annegassero. Ste cimmie

Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 14 ore fa



Mario Borruto Affondiamoli a flotte

Mi piace · Rispondi · 12 ore fa



Valeria Boschi Marcia su Roma con mussolini!!!!

Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 14 ore fa



Danilo Giovannini Affonnateli tutti! Hanno rotto!

Mi piace · Rispondi · circa un'ora fa



Claudio Grande Mettere la corrente in acqua sarebbe una buona soluzione sprecare le munizioni non e giusto.

Mi piace · Rispondi · 2 ore fa



Maria Di Palma be noi dobbiamo pagare le tasse a quelli che arrivano in Italia ,se no come fanno a dare 25,00 euro al giorno? vergogna

Mi piace · Rispondi · 3 · 10 ore fa



Rita Di Tullo Ma io Mi Chiedo Come Fano A D'avere Tanti Soldi Per Viaggiare Se Sono Poveri Ma...io

Avrei Un Dubbio Ki Mi risponde PAOLA Badii Moooo

Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 10 ore fa



Massimo Caucci Buttategli la benzina e dategli fuoco in alto mare,nessuno lo saprà. Quà in italia non cé li vogliamo. Devono stare a casa loro.

Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 10 ore fa



Wolf Wolfgiuseppeagliati ecco mettono in prima linea i bambini approfittatori della bonta delle persone

Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 9 ore fa



Michele Di Mauro Una soluzione c è : reintegrare le vecchie SS! sicuro si terranno alla larga per il futuro

Mi piace · Rispondi · 12 ore fa



Paolo Andretta a rogo!!!! o mandateli a casa mia!!!

Mi piace · Rispondi · 13 ore fa



Ivan Colla Bisogna Silurarli e quelli che sbarcano ai Forni !

Mi piace · Rispondi · 7 ore fa



Dea Di Loreto ho sempre detto.....riportateli indietro.....altrimenti sparate a vistaaaaaa...

Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 12 ore fa

- In addition to vile comments on “generalist” pages (such as newspapers’ and magazines’ Facebook pages), **an impressive number of racist and fascist pages were created on Facebook.**

Raccolta statistica di commenti ridondanti



Raccolta statistica di
commenti ridondanti
Community

Liked Following Message

Timeline About Photos Likes

PEOPLE

30,203 likes

Roberto Ricciuti, Stefania Campana and 9 others like this.



Raccolta statistica di commenti ridondanti

19 hours ago



Buitoni Italia
6 ore fa · Modificato

Buitoni Idea Per un pollo tenero e gustoso! Scopri



Marzia Bi Disgusto totale...e per che cosa? Per la panza piena, d'orrore tra l'altro...

Mi piace · Rispondi · 12 · 5 ore fa




Emanuela Nucci Mangiare carne è assurdo sia dal punto di vista etico che da quello salutista


“Tutte troie” (Women are all whores)





la Repubblica
2 ore fa


Fiori d'arancio per Elisabetta Canalis e Brian Perri. Si blindato ad Alghero, tra fotografi e vip <http://larep.it/1uOIJZG>

 **Amerigo Tessari** Si è trombata mezzo mondo Complimenti al marito □□□□
Mi piace · Rispondi · 8 · 2 ore fa

 **Paolo Femia** Finalmente è riuscita ad incastrare qualcuno
Mi piace · Rispondi · 5 · circa un'ora fa


 **Francesco Candeloro** tutte troie...
Mi piace · Rispondi · 5 · 2 ore fa

 **Mauro Matteini** Sembra che stamattina, lui abbia esposto il lenzuolo macchiato...
Mi piace · Rispondi · 4 · 47 minuti fa


 **Maurizio Di Stefano** ma l'abito bianco non vuol dire purezza????/ faccia come il culo.....
Mi piace · Rispondi · 3 · 51 minuti fa


 **Marcello Ottaviani** Canalis=usato sicuro!
Mi piace · Rispondi · 3 · 2 ore fa


 **Marco Giorgi** dopo innumerevoli metri di cazzo paragonabile alla strisce dell'autostrada..ecco la svolta! 😊 Qundo si dice "usato(a) sicuro!".
Mi piace · Rispondi · 3 · 2 ore fa

 **Raffaele Cicorella** Il velo ?????? si è scopata 3/4 degli uomini di spettacolo di mezzo mondo (quelli famosi che si conoscono) !!!!!!!!
Mi piace · Rispondi · 2 · circa un'ora fa

 **Alex Cangiano** Ma sta troia nn stava con Clooney?
Mi piace · Rispondi · 2 · circa un'ora fa

 **Gianni Lazzarin** Insomma appena ha trovato uno disposto a sposarla ha detto si !!!!
Mi piace · Rispondi · circa un'ora fa


 **Pietro Colombo** finalmente ha trovato un pirla che la sposi
Mi piace · Rispondi · circa un'ora fa

 **Mara Bacchiega** Ma chi se ne frega di questi di questi esseri senza senso ,si è sposato anche mio fratello e ha pure battezzato senza tante storie👏👏


Mi piace · Rispondi · 2 · 2 ore fa

 **Gianni Savoretti** Puttanalis!


Mi piace · Rispondi · 2 · 2 ore fa

 **Ma Ra Maceli** con tutto quello che sta succedendo in medio oriente la gente si preoccupa del matrimonio di questa marchettara .povera italia


Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · circa un'ora fa

 **Rosario Giacalone** C'è da dire che il vestito bianco su una donna che ad oggi si e' fatta deflorare anche le orecchie, appare grottesco.


Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · circa un'ora fa

 **Enzo Ippoliti** ma che fa porta il vestito bianco, allora e vergine.

Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 2 ore fa

 **Gioacchino Rizzo** Non mi sposerei mai con una che ha preso uccelli da tutte le parti.


Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 2 ore fa

 **Funa Carlo** hai trovato finalmente il cazzo giusto?????


Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 2 ore fa

 **Betty Piccinno** C'è l'ha fatta....

Mi piace · Rispondi · 1 · 2 ore fa

 **Marco Bazzato** La Canalis con tanto di velo, a mo di simbolo di virginal farlocco candore, purezza e illibatezza!


Mi piace · Rispondi · 4 · 2 ore fa

 **Gian Maria Ponzetti** non me ne frega niente de sta mignotta!


Mi piace · Rispondi · 3 · 2 ore fa

 **Gianluca Elponti** Illibata. Vergine sposa!


Mi piace · Rispondi · 3 · 2 ore fa

 **Sere TrueStory** aleluia almeno cosi speriamo.k nn si parli piu de questo cesso ambulante. una in meno!! u.u

Mi piace · Rispondi · 20 minuti fa

 **Andrea Palombi** Sta cocainomeeee....e pure zoccolaa

Mi piace · Rispondi · circa un'ora fa

 **Teseo Balzani** La fa RENDERE BENE quella PASSERA!!

Mi piace · Rispondi · circa un'ora fa

“Let’s torture, rape, prostitute, kill her”

Beppe Grillo 23 hours ago

Cosa succederebbe se ti trovassi la Boldrini in macchina?

Giuseppe Passacantando la lascerei al G.R.A a battere, non sa fare altro
Like · Reply · 15 hours ago

Giacomo Potito La porterei a battere sulla Melegnano e a fine turno se ha incassato poco la gonfio di botte!!
Like · Reply · 10 hours ago

Massimo Venturi haha fantastico la porterei in un porcile a mangiare merda come sempre ha fatto
Like · Reply · 11 hours ago

Massimiliano Desmo Novenovenove Lorenzini Il migliore!!!!
Like · Reply · 12 hours ago

Monteleone Nicola Io la prenderei a calci e pugni mi dispiace che una donna.
Like · Reply · 12 hours ago

Nunzia Cannavacciuolo io a questa gli metterei un palo nel culo ,così almeno urlerebbe per qualcosa,sta baldracca...
Like · Reply · 14 hours ago

Dolly Jolly Sporcherai la macchina di sangue!! Mi berrei una bottiglia di jak e direi che ero come lei! Incapace di intendere e volere!!
Like · Reply · 16 hours ago

Marco Mantovani la strozzerei!!!!
Like · Reply · 16 hours ago

Francesco Fornelli Mi farei fare subito un pompino
Like · Reply · 16 hours ago

Sorace Antonio Io la butterei sui sedili.....
Like · Reply · 16 hours ago

Lucio Sorrentino la butterei a calci in culo fuori dall'auto
Like · Reply · 17 hours ago

Alessandro Martone La prendo a calci nel culo!
Like · Reply · 19 hours ago

Domenico Rubolino Magari!!mi capitasse!! Brutta stronza,,
Like · Reply · 19 hours ago

Agnese Di Russo non ci arriva in macchina se la vedo la metto sotto con una botta di acceleratore!!!!!!!!!!!!!! poi mi possono anche arrestare!!!!
Like · Reply · 21 hours ago

Walter Ciarrocchi Sicuramente dimostra più attitudine ad un'attività serale sul raccordo anulare, a €50,00 la botta, che a fare la presidente del Parlamento. . .
Like · Reply · 20 hours ago

Pablo Sessantotto Calci in culo.....beh una botta prima.....??.....mah....
Like · Reply · 20 hours ago

Antonio Mascia Se mi dovessi trovare in macchina la signora B. Prima me la trombo poi mi faccio dare 50€ poila scarico vicino ad un cassonetto
Like · Reply · 21 hours ago

Jordan Giordano Cattonar La maglia della troia Boldrini è quella rossa!!! Che c'entra la camicia nera? È una comunista di merda fino a l'osso! Voi che siete di sinistra, accettate di essere delle merde e lasciate il movimento!
Like · Reply · 20 hours ago

Daniele Cheppaesedemerda Diotallevi la scarikerei sulla tangenziale x il turno di notte..
Like · Reply · 20 hours ago

Aldo Resta la butterei dalla macchina in corsa
Like · Reply · 20 hours ago

Gianfranco Alessio Sciarretta Che le rimarrebbero solo due scopate...
Like · Reply · 20 hours ago

Marisa Ferrara fuori dall'auto a 300 all'oraahhhahha
Like · Reply · 20 hours ago

Alfredo Rossetti la farei a pezzi con la motosega,partendo dagli arti inferiori e cauterizzandole le ferite x farla resistere fino alla fine.
Like · Reply · 23 hours ago

Corvo Rosso la abbandono in autostrada legata a 90° al guard rail
Like · Reply · 22 hours ago

Johny Johnny La faccio succhiare
Like · Reply · 22 hours ago

Marco Zanelli Io sinceramente gli taglierei la gola e la ficcherei in una buca....sta troia di merda bastarda ladra infame puttana schifezza lurida mignotta...e sono stato gentile
Like · Reply · 22 hours ago

Sondaggi reali Partecipate ai nuovi sondaggi sul sito: www.sondaggiireali.com

Luca Mercurio Magari in parlamento ci fossero le camicie nere...
Like · Reply · 1 · Yesterday at 3:11pm

She is Laura Boldrini: journalist and politician who has been President of the Chamber of Deputies of Italy since 16 March 2013.

He is Beppe Grillo: leader of the 5 Stars Movement (*Movimento 5 Stelle*).

They are Grillo's followers.



Che cosa è diventato il Movimento 5 Stelle? - Il Fatto Quotidiano
www.ilfattoquotidiano.it

Like · Comment · Share

1

Barbara Colvieux Colvecchio and 10 others like this. [Top Comments](#)



Write a comment...



Giorgio Paglieri Da quando i fascisti facevano votare i cittadini su una espulsione da un gruppo parlamentare?

Like · Reply · 6 · 4 hours ago



Paolo Crivellari qualcosa che uno come te non può capire povero stronzo!

Like · Reply · 1 · 4 hours ago



Salvatore Inghilleri voi finti partigiani, fareste bene ad occuparvi del fascismo finanziario e dei relativi lacchè, ossia la corrotta politica tutta (compresa gran parte dell'informazione di regime)... invece di fare le pulci ad un movimento che vota on line l'espulsione di personaggi che da un anno invece di dissentire nelle assemblee, hanno creato personali uffici stampa per sparare a zero ogni sempre su chi li ha portati in parlamento...

Like · Reply · 1 · 4 hours ago



Giacomo Crosa ma che acido ti sei preso Fabio Sabatini?

Like · Reply · 1 · 4 hours ago



Lux Æterna te lo dico io cosa è diventato il M5S, è diventato qualcosa di molto serio di cui fate bene ad aver paura perché il primo obiettivo da raggiungere è quello di mandarvi via! fascista sei tu che con il tuo regime tratti i cittadini come schiavi!

Like · Reply · 2 · 4 hours ago



Alessandro Cantini ...evidentemente si sente realizzato e protetto in questa italia...infatti l'Italia è bella perché è varia...anzi avariata....

Like · Reply · 3 hours ago



Lucilla Polipo Quanto fango buttate su un partito sempre più forte che vi fa solo paura...siete RIDICOLI. Mille volte meglio il M5S che gli altri pagliacci che stanno al governo e si fanno chiamare veri politici!

Like · Reply · 3 hours ago · Edited

Women and hate speech

- **Women have a higher likelihood to be targeted by hate speech.**
- Pew Research Center: women and men have been logging on in equal numbers since 2000, but the vilest and most harsh communications are still disproportionately lobbed at women (Fallows, 2005).
- Women are more likely to report being stalked and harassed on the Internet. 72.5 per cent of people who reported harassing incidents from 2000 to 2012 were women, according to Working to Halt Online Abuse (WHOA).



Women and hate speech

- Teenage girls are significantly more likely to be cyberbullied than boys.
- Journalist Amanda Hess reports in the *Pacific Standard* that: “**Just appearing as a woman online, it seems, can be enough to inspire abuse**”.
- In 2006, researchers from the University of Maryland set up a bunch of fake online accounts and then dispatched them into chat rooms. Accounts with feminine usernames incurred an average of 100 sexually explicit or threatening messages a day. Masculine names received 3.7”.



The screenshot shows a tweet from Brianna Wu (@Spacekatgal) with the text: "And, here's the part of the night where I call the police." Below the tweet are interaction options: Reply, Retweet, Favorite, Pocket, and More. A reply from Death to Brianna (@chatterwhiteman) is visible, stating: "@spacekatgal I've got a K-Bar and I'm coming to your house so I can shove it up your ugly feminist cunt." The tweet has 592 retweets and 216 favorites. The timestamp is 5:14 PM - 10 Oct 2014.

Brianna Wu is an American video game developer. With Amanda Warner, she founded *Giant Spacekat*, an indie development studio in Boston, Massachusetts.

Is this way of dealing with public figures and unknown others representative?

- We don't know yet.
- **However:**
 - It is more widespread than you think.
 - It is important to investigate how this aggressive mode of dealing with others affects the perceptions and behaviors of the (whole) population of social media users.

How does it make you feel?

- Reading these comments?
- Dealing online with people who behave unpolitely and aggressively?
- Being targeted with hate speech?
- Being involved in endless online conversations with people with with values and beliefs totally different from yours?
- Watching these people manifest their “orrible” views online.



Life of a content specialist for Debate.org

- **She can easily recite the most common** sexist, racist and homophobic slurs. She's privy to some of the most hateful language you've ever heard. And for about a year, she read it over and over again, every single day.

From Mashable.com: <http://mashable.com/2014/09/28/moderating-the-trolls/>



Life of a content specialist for Debate.org

- Many of the site's discussions involved vibrant, positive conversations about important political and social issues.
- Yet, as a moderator, she watched in real-time as some built their arguments around slurs, launching ad hominem attacks based on gender, race and sexuality.
- For Chrum, life before taking a job as a comment moderator was like a bubble; she didn't know that many people still believed Satan created homosexuals and that God made women to serve men.

Life of a content specialist for Debate.org

- “The comments rattled her during the day and then consumed her at home. She worked long days and even checked the site during the weekend. Sometimes she meditated, trying not to think about the comments at all. At work, she’d turn to a few co-workers in exasperation after reading a particularly cruel comment.”
- “We can kind of share that misery together,” she said. “They give me that reassurance that sometimes **people say things on the Internet that they would never say to anyone in person.**”

Life of a content specialist for Debate.org

- “When you see things that you feel very emotional about, it sticks with you, even if you don’t know the person,” she said.
- “When it’s just a faceless, person-less comment, and it’s comment after comment after comment, **it makes you lose faith in humanity.**”

2 papers so far

- Sabatini, F., Sarracino, F. (2014). Online networks destroy social trust. [arXiv:1409.0267](https://arxiv.org/abs/1409.0267)
- Sabatini, F., Sarracino, F. (2014). Online networks and subjective well-being. [arXiv:1408.3550](https://arxiv.org/abs/1408.3550)
- **Research question:** how do online interactions affect social trust and face to face interactions?

The possible transmission mechanisms

- Reaction to online incivility.
- Exposure to diversity.
- Demolition of false consensus.

Reaction to online incivility

- To trust is to assume that a person or institution will “observe the rules of the game” (Citrin and Muste 1999: p. 465) and to believe that those involved will act “as they should” (Barber 1983).
- Mutz and Reeves (2005: p. 3): “In face-to-face settings where people disagree about politics, there are strong social norms likely to be observed for purposes of these interactions.
- Face-to-face exchanges are relatively polite. Although people occasionally yell at one another and stomp their feet over political differences, such behavior is far more common in mediated presentations of political views.
- Norms involving politeness are extremely strong; most people are polite most of the time.”

Reaction to online incivility

- In principle, people might expect SNSs users to behave in online networks by the same social norms usually acknowledged in physical interactions.
- However, SNSs offer public forums for discussion – such as Facebook’s “public pages”, “groups”, and “communities”, as well as commenting platforms for online magazines and newspapers (e.g. Disqus) – where **individuals are likely to deal with strangers in a more aggressive and unscrupulous way than they would in a physical meeting.**

Reaction to online incivility

- In online environments, unknown strangers are “invisible” and their reaction to provocative behaviors may be easily neutralized (for example by simply withdrawing from the conversation, or even by “blocking” them through the network’s privacy settings).

- As a result, people care less of the risk of offending others in a conversation.



- **In physical interactions**, we usually think twice before insulting a person who politely expresses an opposing view.

weblogcartoons.com



- **In online interactions**, dealing with strangers who advance opposite views in an aggressive and insulting way seems to be a widespread practice, whatever the topic of discussion is.



- Following Mutz and Reeves (2005, APSR, about televised incivility), we argue that when unknown others violate interpersonal social norms and behave aggressively and offensively in online environments, people react as they would if those aggressions and offenses were perpetrated in real life: they feel anxiety, distress, and loose trust in others.



False consensus

- The psychological literature has shown that most people tend to overestimate the extent to which their beliefs or opinions are typical of those of others.
- People generally assume that their own opinions, beliefs, preferences, values, and habits are “normal” and that others also think the same way that they do.
- This cognitive bias leads to the perception of a consensus that does not exist, or a “false consensus”

False consensus

- This bias is especially prevalent in closed networks where individuals tend to think that the collective opinion of their reference group matches that of the larger population.
- Online networks, however, allow users to acquire more detailed information about the preference types and behaviors spread outside of individuals' narrow reference groups.

False consensus

- People who previously felt part of a majority may discover to be surrounded with preference types they dislike.



A homophobic user may discover to be surrounded with people supporting gay marriage.

A Real Madrid supporter may discover that Barcelona's supporters are spread all over the world.

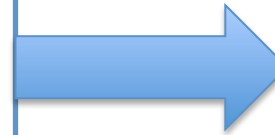
Etc.

Diversity

- In face to face interactions where we usually select a narrow circle of well-known friends and acquaintances to discuss political and moral issues.
- Facebook and Twitter create rooms for discussion in which selection mechanisms are weak or absent.
- Diversity is much more diffused in the global population of Internet users than in their limited reference groups.
- Empirical studies have shown that, at least in the short run, diversity along ethnic, religious, and socio-economic characteristics may be a powerful source of frustration and distrust towards unknown others (Alesina and La Ferrara 2006)

Hypotheses

- Facing unpolite and aggressive ways of dealing with others
- Being targeted with hate speech



Destroy social trust

- Facing diversity
- Unveiling the false consensus



Destroy social trust

Hypotheses

- If the previous hypotheses are true, then we expect social media use to be significantly associated with lower levels of social trust.
- For women, this association should be higher.
- On the other hand, based on previous literature we also expect social media use to be associated with a higher probability of meeting with friends.

Data

- Pooled cross-section drawn from the 2010 and 2011 waves of the “Multipurpose Survey on Households” (*Indagine multiscopo sulle famiglie*) provided by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat).
- Nationally and regionally representative sample of approximately 24,000 households, roughly corresponding to 50,000 individuals.

Social capital

- The **structural dimension** is given by face to face interactions, as measured by the **frequency of meetings with friends**.

Respondents were asked to report how many times they meet their friends on a scale from 1 (in case they have no friends) to 7 (if respondents meet their friends everyday).

Social capital

- **Cognitive dimension - Social trust** was measured through:

- The Rosenberg question – “Generally speaking...”

- The “wallet question”: In the city or area where you live, imagine you lost your wallet holding money and your identification or address and it was found by someone else. How likely do you think your wallet would be returned to you if it were found by a stranger?”.

Online networking

- We measure social networking with two dichotomous variables reporting:
 - 1) Participation in social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.
 - 2) Participation in chats, newsgroups, and forums.



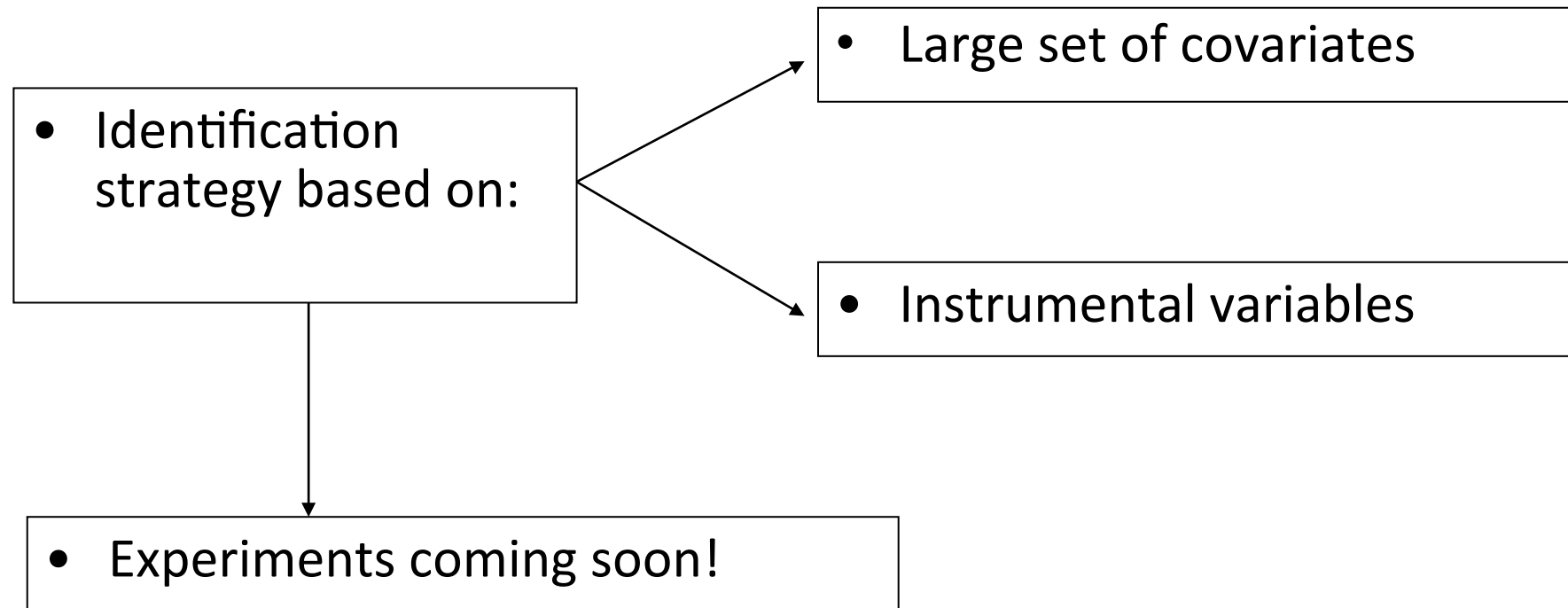
Identification issues

We cannot discard the hypothesis that online networking is **endogenous to social interactions and social trust**

Common bias: Individual effects, such as personal characteristics or exogenous shocks, may be correlated with both online networking and the two dimensions of social capital we account for.

Reverse causality might also arise. For example, people who meet their friends frequently may be encouraged to join online networks to strengthen existing social ties. Reverse causality may also work in the opposite direction to the extent to which people who have no (or just a few) friends may look for interactions on Facebook to alleviate their social isolation.

Identification strategy



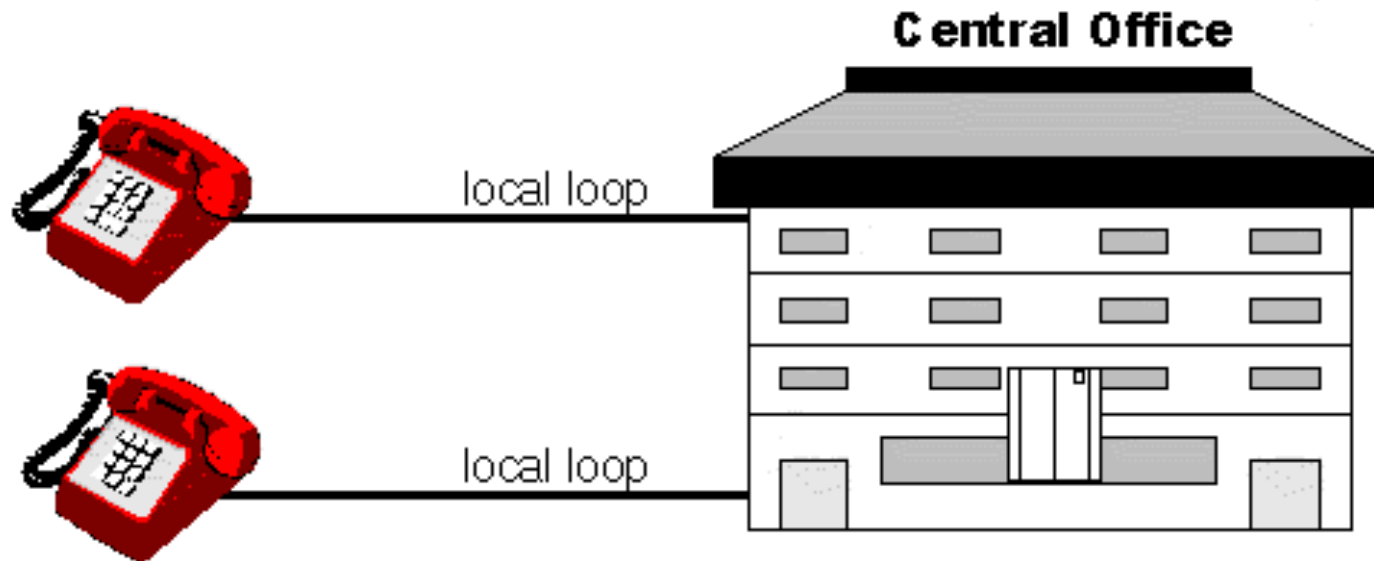
Instruments

- 1)** The percentage of the population for whom a DSL connection was available in respondents' region of residence.
 - 2)** Regional digital divide, given by the percentage of the region's area that was not covered by optical fibre.
- Both the instrumental variables were measured in **2008**, two years before the first wave of the Multipurpose Household Survey we employ in our study.

Instruments

- 3rd possible instrument: regional density of local loops.
- Further ideas? Feedback most welcome!

The Local Loop



A local loop is the physical link or circuit that connects from the demarcation point of the customer premises to the edge of the common carrier or telecommunications service provider's network.

Orthogonality: local loops

- **The location of local loops was determined several decades before the advent of the Internet, based on the orographic features of the territory.**
- If the distance between final users and local loops is above a certain threshold (approximately 4.2 kilometres, corresponding to 2.61 miles), then the band of the copper wires serving telephone communications cannot be wide enough to support a fast Internet connection
- In 2007 most rural areas were generally characterised by the high length (≥ 4.2 kilometres) of local loops, which ultimately depended on the imperviousness of the territory.
- As a consequence, **these areas in most cases lacked the infrastructures needed for the diffusion of the DSL broadband** (Agcom, 2011).



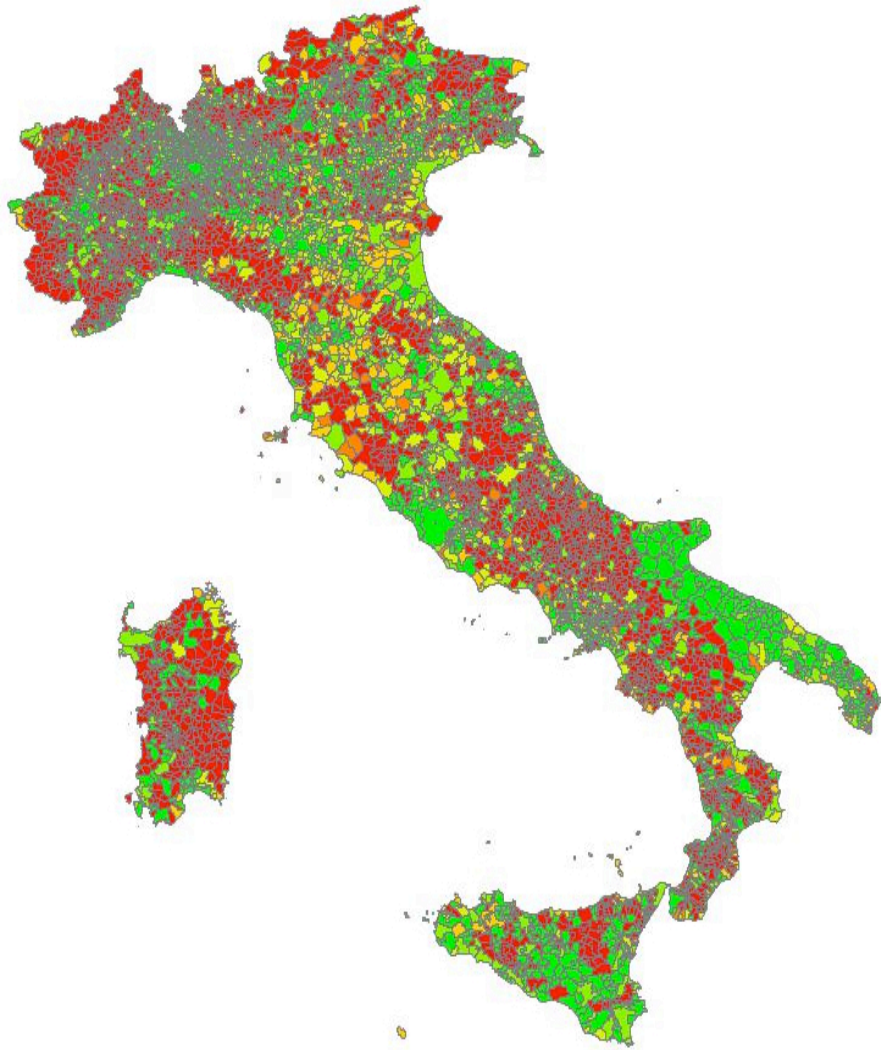
If this is
< 4.2 Km

You can easily
have broadband



If this is
> 4.2 Km

It is **NOT** easy to
have broadband



Darker areas are those with the worst coverage.
 Green areas have the best coverage.



Instruments' orthogonality

- 2008 level of regional DSL or fibre coverage cannot *per se* exert a direct influence on individual social capital. Rather, their availability in the area creates the premise for the individual choice to purchase a fast-speed access and, subsequently, to participate in SNSs.
- DSL or fibre coverage in the region of residence have never been found to be correlated with social interactions and social trust at the individual level.
- DSL and fibre coverage in 2008 cannot be endogenous – in the sense of reverse causality – to the individual involvement in online networks in 2010-2012.

Instruments' orthogonality

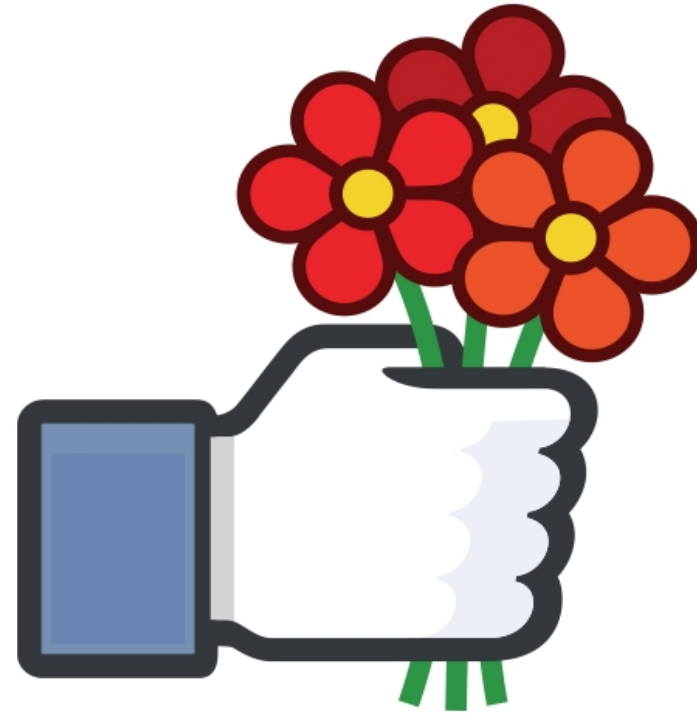
- The digital divide in terms of fibre coverage basically depends on orographic differences between regions, which generated a variation in access to fast Internet across Italian regions that is exogenous to people's social capital.
- The assumption of orthogonality of the instruments is not disconfirmed by the tests of over-identifying restrictions we run in the context of IV estimates.

Controls

- The technology that respondents used to connect to the Internet. Possible categories were cable broadband (optical fibre, intranet, PLC, etc.), satellite or other wireless connections (e.g. wi-fi and wi-max), wireless connection through a tablet and or a mobile phone employing a 3G mobile telecommunication technology, wireless connection employing a 3G modem (e.g. a USB key), or connection with a WAP or a GPRS mobile phone.
- Age (both in linear and squared form), gender, marital status, the number of children, education, work status, and
- The time spent in commuting (in minutes).

Main results

- Face to face interactions are strongly significantly and POSITIVELY correlated with online networking.



These results are robust: 1) to all the estimation methods we employed in the analysis, including probit and ordered probit estimates, 2SLS estimates conducted through the CMP estimator developed by Roodman (2009), and other techniques. 2) to all the models specification we tested.

Main results

- Social trust – however measured – is significantly and NEGATIVELY correlated with online networking.



These results are robust: 1) to all the estimation methods we employed in the analysis, including probit and ordered probit estimates, 2SLS estimates conducted through the CMP estimator developed by Roodman (2009), and other techniques. 2) to all the models specification we tested.

Marginal effects after IV estimates suggest that the use of SNSs is associated with:

- **24% higher** probability of meeting friends frequently (at least once per week),
- **8% lower** probability of thinking that others can be trusted
- **8% lower** probability of thinking that a stranger would return a lost wallet.



Marginal effects after IV estimates suggest that the use of chats, forums, and newsgroups is associated with:

- **27% higher** probability of meeting friends frequently.
- **7% lower** probability that others can be trusted.
- **7% lower** probability that a stranger would return a lost wallet.

Other results

- Women show:
 - 1) a significantly lower propensity for participation in networks like Facebook and Twitter and in chats, forums, and newsgroups.
 - 2) a significantly lower propensity for face to face interactions.
 - 3) a significantly higher propensity to trust others.

Gender effects

- **Being a woman significantly raises the probability to loose social trust as a consequence of online interactions.**



Limitations of the study

- We “only” have a pooled cross section: no longitudinal data.
- We know whether individuals use social media or not, we don’t know how and how much they use them.
- We cannot measure exposure to diversity nor to hate speech.
- We don’t know the “position” of individuals in “their” networks (i.e. their Bonacich centrality).

Next steps

- Testing the effect of
 - Diversity
 - Hate speech
 - Anonymityin **laboratory experiments**.
- Collecting more detailed survey data through the administration of a more specific questionnaire to a representative sample (not only students) → Russia?
- Analyse the effects on well-being (we do have preliminary evidence based on SEM estimates).

Thank you!



**YOUR WORDS HAVE POWERS.
USE THEM WISELY.**

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