

Insiders and Outsiders: Presentation of Self on Canadian Parliamentary Websites and Newsletters

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*An ongoing theme in the study of elected representatives is how they present themselves to their constituents in order to enhance their re-election prospects, but there are few examples of studies exploring how elected officials present themselves online. This paper addresses this gap by comparing presentation of self by Canadian Members of Parliament (MPs) on parliamentary websites and in the older medium of parliamentary newsletters. It follows Gulati (2004; *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 9: 22–40) in using nameplate images of MPs in Parliament and their constituencies as proxies for presentations of self as insiders and outsiders, respectively. Specifically, it asks (1) how MPs present themselves online, (2) whether this differs from presentation in newsletters, and (3) what factors explain presentation of self online. The paper finds that MPs are likely to present themselves as outsiders on their websites, that this differs from patterns observed in newsletters, and that party affiliation plays an important role in shaping self-presentation online. The implications of these findings and avenues for future research are discussed.*

KEY WORDS: presentation of self, Members of Parliament, MP websites, campaigning

Introduction

Cultivating and maintaining a positive image is paramount to a political career and opportunities to shape public policy. A legislator's projected image is indicative of how they behave in politics, including how they represent their constituents, and is designed to help develop a local "personal vote" to secure re-election (e.g., Cain, Ferejohn, & Fiorina, 1987). Conversely, electors' perceptions of a "constructed" political personality influences how citizens choose to communicate with their elected representatives about policy matters (e.g., Edelman, 1988).

In the growing body of international research about online representation and campaigning (e.g., Chadwick & Howard, 2009) there has yet to be an exploration of the presentation of self, whether by candidates for office or by elected officials. Moreover, studies of political websites do not tend to consider that how politicians choose to present themselves online may differ from how they choose

to present themselves to audiences via other communications media, such as a newsletter. An elected official's website has a diverse local, national, and global audience of personal contacts, citizens, journalists, bureaucrats, advocacy groups, and party officials, as well as potential challengers. This contrasts with a legislative newsletter that is distributed to constituents' residences and whose audience is the people to whom the incumbent is accountable. Both forms of media offer information about the work that the member has been doing, about the latest government actions, and about community matters, but we do not know if there are differences in how the legislator's image is projected.

In this article we begin to address this gap in the literature by examining a Canadian case of elected officials' presentation of self as insiders or outsiders. We draw on an original dataset of Member of Parliament (MP) communications collected during the fortieth Parliament (2008–11) to explore how they chose to frame themselves on their websites, and compare these styles with their presentations of self in legislative newsletters. We use data on the self-placement of MPs in the recurring nameplate (banner) images on their websites and on their legislative newsletters to address three research questions. First, how do MPs present themselves to their constituents on their websites? Second, does this online presentation of self differ from how MPs present themselves in older mediums, as indicated by legislative newsletters? Finally, what factors explain differences in how MPs present themselves publicly?

We first summarize the academic literature on political image management as it pertains to legislative newsletters and websites. We emphasize theories of presentation of self, particularly among candidates for office and elected officials, and look at how elected officials present themselves to constituents both online and in older mediums. We then explain our methodology and data, and in the ensuing analysis we address our research questions about how Canadian MPs present themselves on their websites as compared with their newsletters. We conclude by exploring the comparative implications of our research and identifying promising avenues for future inquiry into elected officials' presentation of self in an era of e-government.

Literature Review

Sociologists' observations about how humans form impressions of each other extend to interpretations of the strategic game of attempting to control how others see them. Goffman (1959) theorizes that judgments about the "presentation of self" are formed from the moment someone enters the room, and involves a combination of visual and verbal cues. Recognizing the intrinsic value of such impressions, people often seek to theatrically manage their image, and attempt to evoke a desired response from their audience. Berger and Luckmann (1966) explain that perceptions of reality and "knowledge" of a person's identity are therefore subjective social constructs. Leaders appear to their followers as being influential and, by virtue of their elevated social status, of having good ideas (Hogg, 2001).

These theories about image management have been transferred to political science. There is considerable evidence that a favorable visual image has a significant effect on elector evaluations of political choices, can assist candidates in winning elections, and supports elected officials' efforts to drive legislative and policy agendas (Bailenson, Iyengar, Yee, & Collins, 2008; Budesheim & DePaola, 1994; Mattes et al., 2010; Rosenberg, Bohan, McCafferty, & Harris, 2001; Rosenberg & McCafferty, 1987). For instance, a candidate's physical appearance, even if judged only in a photograph included in a campaign flyer, can act as a visual cue for electors to form a judgment about the candidate's competence and suitability for office (Rosenberg et al., 2001). Leaders who project an image of happiness trigger emotional responses that spur positive attitude changes among electors (Sullivan & Masters, 1988), and a candidate whose image is manipulated to project competency, likeability, and integrity achieves more support from electors (Rosenberg & McCafferty, 1987). The type of medium also affects how audiences process information. Just as people infamously had different interpretations of the winner of the 1960 Kennedy–Nixon presidential debate depending on whether they heard it on radio or saw it on television, citizens who have viewed political information on television and on the Internet have interpreted it differently (Kaid, 2002; Kaid & Postelnicu, 2005), providing continued evidence of channel differences.

The controlled image projected by an elected official offers clues about what matters to them, what group of political elites they self-identify with and how they want constituents to perceive them. Gulati (2004) differentiates between elected officials who communicate images of themselves as "insiders" versus "outsiders." Insiders try to convey that they have influence in the political capital, that they have access to power, and that they influence public policy in the national interest. Conversely, by depicting themselves foremost in their constituencies, outsiders project a connection with citizens and their community, and suggest that they are prioritizing local policy matters and are providing services to their constituents. As Yiannakis (1982) and others remark, this image positioning informs us about the relationship between elected officials and electors, and about how constituents perceive that they are being represented. For instance it enables outsiders to build a reputation for symbolic responsiveness and a psychological bond with their constituents (Eulau & Karpis, 1978). The presentation of self also comprises one aspect of representatives' "home styles" as a means of reputation management and developing trust (Fenno, 1978; see also Gulati, 2004). A politician's public image therefore has implications for his or her electability, sphere of policy influence and political career path.

Political impression management invokes political marketing strategies to convey a desired "personality image" (De Landtsheer, De Vries, & Vertessen, 2008). A longstanding media vehicle that elected officials use to project a desired visual presentation is a newsletter. These information bulletins feature a recurring nameplate, headings positioned above news reports, a variety of photographs and contact details. Newsletters are a direct marketing tool that provide and emphasize details that other media do not address, that can target messages to

specific electors through geodemographics, and which allow a legislator to “be discussed in a way which is more laudatory than the press would allow” (O’Shaughnessy & Peele, 1985, p. 116). They are an institutionalized form of communication whereby office staffers choose what content to include since the last newsletter was issued, subject to the approval of the elected official, and the costs of reproduction and distribution are incurred by the legislature.

Studies of legislator newsletters have focused on American congressmen’s direct mail. An incumbent’s franking privilege sustains a favorable impression on constituents when mailings are repeated over time (Cover & Brumberg, 1982). Members use newsletters to project styles consistent with their ideological leanings or their political seniority and, especially among women, to claim credit for policy benefits that constituents are likely to want (Dolan & Kropf, 2004; Yiannakis, 1982). However, there is a risk that constituents may interpret congressional messages differently than they were intended, such as an insider being on the wrong side of emergent anti-Washington feelings (Lipinski, 2004). In Canada, MPs’ franking privilege entitles them to create and mail newsletters to constituents to inform them about work carried out by their elected representative. These “householders” are defined as “printed materials sent by Members to inform their constituents about legislative activities and issues. Members are allowed to print and mail up to four householders per calendar year per household in the Member’s constituency” (Canada, 2011).¹ Thus, a legislative newsletter involves producing an information bulletin every 3 months whose production, publication, and mailing costs are incurred by the Parliament of Canada. While the specific content of each edition of a newsletter varies, the office staffers who prepare the content tend to reuse a personalized template that features a nameplate across the top, similar in style to a newspaper or any common newsletter.

The presentation of self in newsletters is being supplemented by image management in the online public sphere. Research in the e-government literature emphasizes how the Internet has opened up government to citizens by providing opportunities to access public services as well as information about government and politics (e.g., Jaeger, 2005; Kent & Taylor, 1998; Margetts, 2009; Silcock, 2001). The result, according to some analysts, is greater government transparency, increased awareness of policy positions, and new means for governments to communicate with citizens. Yet there are indications that e-government has been incremental rather than transformational (e.g., West, 2004). More ominously, politicians are using digital media as a tool to circumvent scrutiny, to control how their image is projected, and to manipulate policy agendas (e.g., Marland, 2012). For instance Papacharissi (2002, p. 644) reminds us that website content creators may present “a carefully controlled performance through which self presentation is achieved under optimal conditions.”

Government and political websites have become a major form of communication with citizens. In the American case, D’Alessio’s (2000) analysis of Congressional election candidates’ websites in the 1990s finds that incumbents were less likely to have sites than challengers were, ostensibly because Congressmen

preferred the established medium of direct mail whose benefits were known. A study of Congressmen's websites found that Democrats and representatives of electorally marginal districts were more likely to project that they were emphasizing constituent service (Adler, Gent, & Overmeyer, 1998). More recent research has established that Congressmen learn from how their peers present themselves online and that there are "invisible networks" within states that result in similarities of presentation of self (Esterling, Lazer, & Neblo, forthcoming). By comparison, British MPs have been found to use the Internet for media agency and public information including establishing legitimacy, encouraging party activists, and image positioning (Jackson & Lilleker, 2004). These MPs now believe that a variety of online mechanisms for communication with constituents enhance their future re-election prospects (Jackson, 2011). Jackson (2006) observes that a sample of British MPs' e-newsletters appears to be similar to printed newsletters with a variety of formats that emphasize foremost the member's constituency role.

The Internet has grown from being a political warehouse for speeches and low-resolution photographs to a sophisticated interactive medium that is rich with staged photographs and video. It provides an excellent source of data to quantify how elected officials wish to be perceived. Canada is a good case, because in 2010 its citizens spent more time online than any other citizens in the world (Perreux, 2010), and yet Canadian political parties' and politicians' use of information communication technologies tends to lag behind that of their peers in the United States (Barbour, 1999; Koop & Jansen, 2009; Small, 2010). While existing research provides an impression of what Canadian political parties and partisan citizens do online, we still have a poor understanding of how individual legislators use the Internet in Canada. A survey of MPs in 1999 indicated that their websites were often posted in conjunction with an election and/or through the coordination of their political party (Barbour, 1999). Small's work on Internet politics in Canada finds little difference between major and minor parties' online presence (Small, 2008) and establishes that the parties have prioritized a one-way flow of information over interactivity with electors (Small, 2010, 2012). Jansen's (2004, p. 3) look at Western Canadian politicians' websites differentiates between candidate-controlled sites that persuasively seek votes during election campaigns, party-controlled sites about local representatives, and those sites created by elected officials that are paid for with an office budget and which "are intended to provide information about the [legislator's] activities and government services available to the constituency." In this burgeoning area of study the analysis of political parties' online electoral behavior has thus superseded analysis of MPs' websites.

Research Questions

We follow Gulati (2004) in assigning "insider" status to images portraying MPs in Ottawa and "outsider" status to images portraying MPs in their constituencies. MPs convey insider status through images that situate them within

the House of Commons asking questions in Question Period, working in committees, or standing in front of the Parliament buildings in the nation's capital, Ottawa. The image conveyed is one of political influence and power. In contrast, by presenting an image among constituents or participating in local events, "outsiders" convey the impression that they have maintained roots in their constituencies and connections to their constituents; that they have not been "Ottawa-ized;" and that they are bringing the views of their constituents to Ottawa rather than the other way around.

Our first question is, how do MPs present themselves to their constituents on their parliamentary websites? Canada's national political parties are highly disciplined, even by Westminster standards (e.g., Malloy, 2003), and so most MPs have little role to play in the legislature. Backbenchers may have opportunities to participate in legislative business such as speaking to government bills, delivering petitions, introducing private members' bills, or perhaps sitting on a legislative committee. However, party MPs are expected to vote in unison, to communicate party messages and, with the exception of free votes, to voice their differences behind closed doors.

Most MPs thus have few opportunities to present themselves to Canadians other than through the Internet. Websites, in contrast to newsletters, which are directed solely to MPs' constituents, allow MPs to communicate simultaneously with a local and a national audience, including the media and central party operatives. Therefore, we expect that on their parliamentary websites many MPs would present themselves as insiders who have political influence, such as by projecting national symbols.

We can also hypothesize whether this online presentation of self differs from how MPs present themselves in older mediums with an exclusively local reach, as indicated by legislative newsletters. One result of strong party discipline is that most MPs focus on their service functions, such as assisting electors with getting access to government programs, sorting out immigration problems, or advocating for a solution to a problem of concern to constituents (Docherty, 1997). Such casework is essential to the development of local personal votes that assist in MPs' re-election campaigns. Furthermore, MPs believe that such constituency work is crucial to regaining party nominations. Canadian parties, particularly the Liberal and Conservatives parties, have never developed strong central party offices to coordinate candidate selection (e.g., Koop & Sharman, 2008); nominations are therefore controlled in a decentralized manner by local constituency associations (e.g., Koop, 2010, p. 896).² Accordingly, we expect that MPs would portray themselves as local and service-oriented in newsletters, because these are mailed directly to constituents. Therefore, we anticipate that MPs are more likely to present themselves as outsiders in legislative newsletters, such as by projecting local images.

Finally, we seek to explain differences in how MPs present themselves publicly. We hypothesize that partisan affiliation—the parties that MPs are members of—exercises an important effect on presentation of self. This is because

there are important differences in Canadian parties' orientations to representation and the roles of MPs in the policymaking process.

The Conservative and Liberal parties, the only parties to have ever formed a national government in Canada, have privileged the role of the leader and cabinet in determining policy, which has left backbenchers to emphasize constituency service while maintaining a national consciousness. This is particularly true for the Liberal party, Canada's quintessential brokerage party, which has been such a fixture in Ottawa's corridors of power that it earned the moniker "the government party" (e.g., Whitaker, 1977). We would therefore expect a mixture of insiders and outsiders among these parties' representatives.

This anticipated juxtaposition is best illustrated by the Conservative party, which was in power at the time of the analysis. Many of its members from provinces west of Ontario, including Prime Minister Harper who represents Calgary Southwest, had been MPs and/or party members with the Reform Party of Canada and subsequently the Canadian Alliance party in the 1990s and early 2000s. The foundations of these protest parties were in a stream of populism that held that MPs should act as delegates for their constituents (e.g., Flanagan, 1995). Given the protest roots of many members of the Conservative party, including its leader, we would expect that many of its MPs would tend to present themselves as outsiders.

In addition, we expect that members of the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Bloc Québécois tend to present themselves as outsiders. We reason that NDP MPs would choose to portray themselves as outsiders given that the party has never formed a government at the federal level and because of its enduring populist streak (e.g., Laycock, 2005, p. 177). Bloc Québécois MPs are especially expected to present themselves as outsiders. The Bloc is a nationalist party that only runs candidates in Québec, with an underlying ideology of promoting Québec's independence, so we would anticipate that the party's MPs would be vehemently opposed to presenting themselves as insiders in the Canadian Parliament.

Data and Methodology

We build on Gulati's work (2004) by looking at two forms of media and by applying his typologies to a parliamentary system of government. Content analysis is a useful method to study the presentation of self. This might involve looking at the variety of text and technology, such as font colors (Papacharissi, 2002), or contextual aspects such as geographic location, political institutions, philosophies, and attitudes (Kluver, Jankowski, Foot, & Schneider, 2007). Analyzing legislators' newsletters is a rich source of data that is underused because "they are often difficult to collect and time-consuming to analyze" (Lipinski, 2004, p. 11). When analyzing the newer medium of legislators' website content their homepages need to be emphasized because, as with newsletters and other media, first impression images are so important (Dolmaya, 2010; Gulati, 2004). Gulati grouped Congressmen's homepages into three categories—national (e.g., symbols

of Washington, business attire), local (e.g., states, landscapes, casual attire), or neutral (e.g., official picture with a flag)—and considered variances by party, local ideology, seniority, gender, and race. He did not find a dominant presentation style and observed only some slight variations, such as women being more likely to project an outsider image, leading him to call for more research in this area.

In the first of two phases of data collection we sought to obtain MPs' newsletters. Figures 1 and 2 provide examples of Canadian MP newsletters.³ Although these are publicly funded and disseminated documents there are logistical challenges in obtaining such ephemera because there is no central repository.⁴



SCARBOROUGH- GUILDWOOD REPORT

Autumn 2010

Hon. John McKay, P.C., M.P.



**ONE OF CANADA'S FINEST
PARLIAMENTARIANS SPEAKS AT
BREAKFAST MEETING**

"For historians, it started with the Magna Carta in 1215," was the way MP Derek Lee began his speech. For his audience of over 80 friends and supporters, the recent uproar about the releasing of documents about the treatment of Afghan detainees was more familiar. Many had not realized that tensions between the power of the government (or in earlier days, the king) and the people had been at the centre of political life over the centuries.

Derek Lee has been a Member of Parliament for 20 years. During that time he has amassed a thorough knowledge of the rules respecting the way the institution works. His law book on the subject, *"The Power of Parliamentary Houses to Send for Person, Papers & Records: A Sourcebook on the Law and Precedent of Parliamentary Subpoena Powers for Canadian and Other Houses" (1999)* is the seminal document in the area he discussed on that Saturday morning. It is very clear to him that the committees of Parliament and the House itself have the right to see all relevant documents in



**Constituency Office
Manager Layla
Sharif gave away
Canada Day
posters at the
breakfast.**



Millie Tavener, Scarborough-Rouge River MP Derek Lee and I at the Scarborough-Guildwood Federal Liberal Association breakfast

the course of their work. This was at the heart of the struggle between the Harper government and the Special House of Commons Committee on Afghanistan.

When Speaker Peter Milliken ruled that the Committee had the "undeterred right" to these papers, he was expressing a vital truth. Democratic governments rule by the will of the people. Lee went on to explain that, because there are very sensitive issues involved, three MPs from different parties have been given the responsibility of reviewing the papers and protecting that sensitivity, while giving the committee appropriate access.

In thanking our guest, I commented that we may not appreciate what this man has done for us, but the bottom line is this: In a true democracy, the people tell the government what to do!

A WARM BLANKET CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE



(l to r) Joanie Joaquin, Executive Director of the Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (formerly West Hill Community Services), Kevin Bonnick, social support worker at the food bank, Rick DeLang, volunteer at the food bank and Steve Maszynk, Manager of Public Affairs, Insurance Brokers Association of Canada, with me at the presentation of fifty blankets to the Centre.

Every year the Insurance Brokers Association remembers the people in Canada who do not have the luxury of comfortable beds when winter comes. When they asked me what group in this riding could best distribute 50 warm blankets to needy people, I knew at once where they should go. The newly-named Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities is the most highly-regarded agency in our area, professional and compassionate, skilled and knowledgeable about where the most appropriate recipients would be.

It was a hot and muggy day in August when the presentation of the cozy purple blankets took place, but winter will be here in a few months. On a cold February night, a warm blanket can be the difference between life and death to someone, and this gift might just make that difference.

NOVEMBER 11th
Remembrance Day

How will you remember?

Our veterans are ordinary men and women who did extraordinary things to protect our freedom and build a safer world for us to live in. They gave everything they were and everything they had.

We can show our nation's pride in our veterans and their families in many ways.

- We can wear a poppy;
- We can attend a Remembrance Day ceremony;
- We can talk with someone returned from Afghanistan and let him or her know that we honour their service;
- We can ask someone who has served in earlier wars about their experiences;
- We can ensure that veterans wounded in the service of our country are supported during their convalescence and for as long as they need assistance;
- We can respect and befriend families who have lost loved ones in the Armed Forces.

**At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
we will remember.**

HON. JOHN MCKAY, P.C., M.P. SCARBOROUGH-GUILDWOOD PAGE 1

Figure 1. Example of Canadian MP's Newsletter, Coded as "Insider."

**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
SYDNEY-VICTORIA**

**MARK
EYKING**

Summer-Fall 2010

A Message from Mark:

Dear Constituents:


It was an amazing summer this year and long overdue. I hope you and yours had an opportunity to enjoy the fine weather. I had the pleasure to meet many of you from New Waterford to Pleasant Bay.

During the summer I had the honour of hosting Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff and over 100 Liberal Caucus members in Baddeck. For three days Baddeck provided a backdrop on national newscasts and on 24 hour news channels. This meeting gave a nice boost to the local economy and many who attended stayed for several days before and after the event. I also invited my caucus colleagues to do outreach to our communities. Among the many meetings that took place included meetings with veterans, fishers, First Nations communities, Marine Atlantic officials, municipal officials and others.

I was very pleased that our leader reinforced the call for federal funding of the Sydney harbour dredging project. As Michael Ignatieff said, "The Conservatives are dragging their feet for no good reason when Cape Bretoners' jobs are at stake."

Prior to our meetings in Baddeck residents in northern Cape Breton faced very difficult times as heavy rains washed out roads and cut-off Meat Cove from the rest of the Island. I visited with residents shortly after the disaster and called on the federal government to assist with the clean up.

Over the past number of months we lost several community leaders including former




MI'kmaq Chief of Membertou Lawrence Paul, Victoria County Councillor Robert Maclellan and businessman Irving Schwartz. Each will be greatly missed and to all those who have lost a loved one I offer my thoughts and prayers.

As we head into the fall students are back at school and MPs are back in Ottawa. There are many issues to deal with especially at a time of economic uncertainty. Our party is dedicated to the issues at hand especially the economy.

As the new Opposition Critic for Rural Affairs I plan to press those issues of concern to rural Canada including protecting our post offices, attracting doctors and nurses, support for volunteer firefighters, and the need for enhanced cell phone and broadband internet coverage.

Our office continues to deal with hundreds of cases each month but the greatest concerns have been raised by those on EI and those who rely in our Canada pension system. Pension rates are simply not keeping up with the cost of living and changes to EI are punishing seasonal workers. All contributors to EI including employers are going to be hit with huge increases in EI premiums.

I pledge that I will continue to pressure the government on these and other issues of importance to Cape Bretoners.


Sincerely,


EYKING HOSTS NATIONAL CAUCUS IN BADDECK


The energy at the 2010 Liberal Summer Caucus in Baddeck was amazing! The Liberal Express rolled into Cape Breton to a rally of supporters and media amid a sea of red and white thunder sticks welcoming the arrival of the big white bus.

The Liberal caucus was there to celebrate a successful summer tour, talk about what we heard from Canadians and look ahead to the fall Parliamentary session.

Over 500 people crowded the grounds of the Inverary Inn Baddeck to enjoy a rousing speech by Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff followed by a BBQ and a concert by local entertainers.



Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff arrives on the Liberal Express in Baddeck.



National media covering the Liberal Caucus in Baddeck.

Working for Cape Breton

<p>Constituency 500 Kings Road Sydney NS, B1S 1B2 Tel: (902) 567-6275 Fax: (902) 564-2479</p>	<p>Ottawa House of Commons Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6 Tel: (613) 995-6459 Fax: (613) 995-2963</p>
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Eykinm1@parl.gc.ca
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Figure 2. Example of Canadian MP's Newsletter, Coded as "Outsider."

Our multistage process of gathering legislative newsletters began with emails sent to the Ottawa offices of all Canadian MPs in July 2010 requesting that we be mailed the MP's most recent newsletter, which in many cases was titled Spring 2010. This was followed by a second email inquiry 2 weeks later. As anticipated some offices ignored or refused our requests outright; occasionally political staffers needed verbal assurances that the newsletter would not be used to embarrass the MP, and other assistants said that their office did not keep copies on file. In September a third email was sent from a different address to non-respondents requesting that material be provided to us by post or electronically.

These attempts were supplemented by downloading newsletters from MPs' websites which, when available, had been uploaded in Adobe Portable Document Format (pdf) and thus appear to have been identical to the printed versions. In a final effort, two rounds of telephone calls were placed in October 2010 in English or French as appropriate to the Ottawa offices of any remaining MPs and, if necessary, to an office in their electoral district to obtain an example of a newsletter. That such a degree of effort was required to obtain public documents for academic research may be foremost explained by the intense competitive nature of the fortieth Parliament. Party discipline and centralized communications, which are common traits of parliamentary politics, were intensified in a period of minority government where MPs faced the regular possibility of a snap election, which eventually occurred in March 2011.⁵

These efforts collected newsletters from 144 of the 305 offices (three seat vacancies existed over this period), for a total response rate of 47 percent (see Table 1). This ranged from a high of 66.7 percent of NDP offices to a low of 18.8 percent of Bloc Québécois MPs.⁶ The data collection method of receiving samples in response to our email and telephone inquiries ($n = 79$) was significantly strengthened by downloading examples from websites ($n = 65$). A sample of the newsletters in our database indicates that while some MPs issued them every 3 months as permitted by the House of Commons, often labeling them as Spring, Summer, Fall, or Winter, others issued just two or three per year, with Christmas mailings sometimes taking the form of calendars. As the decision to produce a newsletter rests with MPs it is unclear to what extent, if any, this uneven distribution indicates a data collection issue.

In the second phase of our data collection we located and archived the homepages of MPs' personal websites. Note that we collected this information for *all* MPs that had a website, not just the MPs for whom we obtained a newsletter. Unlike newsletters, elected officials' websites were relatively easy to locate using the Google search engine (but see D'Alessio, 2000). Sites were located in January 2011 using search terms such as the MPs' names. For example, for Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, the Conservative MP for Whitby-Oshawa, we looked at the homepage of his personal site www.jimflahertymp.ca. This serves as Flaherty's main online identity, as opposed to subsections of the Conservative Party of Canada's site, of the Parliament of Canada's MP online profile information, or of other online identities such as Facebook or Flaherty's subsequent re-election

Table 1. Breakdown of Members of Parliament Newsletters

	Bloc Québécois	Conservative	Liberal	NDP
MPs as of July 2010	48	144	77	36
Method received				
By post	4	31	26	14
By email	0	2	1	1
Downloaded	5	35	16	9
Total MPs represented	9	68	43	24
Response rate (%)	18.8	47.2	55.8	66.7

website. We then archived these websites by printing screenshots of them for future analysis. Figures 3 and 4 provide examples of these screenshots.

A methodological challenge for content analysis is that coding large volumes of information may not be strictly comparable across mediums over time. Most newsletter content changes with each issue whereas a website's content can change multiple times a week or even throughout the day. Therefore for both newsletters and homepages we coded a generally static yet prominent source of content: the nameplate.⁷ This is the design that appears at the top of a page and is thus truly the first impression that Goffman (1959), Gulati (2004) and others were

Carolyn Bennett | MP for St. Paul's

Home Liberal.ca RSS Français

Liberal Home Blog Issues Meet Carolyn Services St. Paul's Videos Events Contact

Députée de St. Paul's
Member of Parliament for St. Paul's

Carolyn Bennett

Harper: I Make the Rules!
POSTED ON 06. JAN. 2011 IN BLOG
<http://uranowski.wordpress.com/2011/01/05/imaketherules-gov/>
Read more »

The Kings Speech.... important movie.... important issue....was thrilled to see it today with Peter who'd seen it at TIFF
POSTED ON 03. JAN. 2011 IN BLOG
Peter was so happy to see this movie again.... the relationship between Bertie and Lionel a relationship for the ages - King/Commoner but for all of us ... it's about respect....
Read more »

Greenwood College School.... a total inspiration the grade 12 Challenge....challenged me !!!
POSTED ON 03. JAN. 2011 IN BLOG
Inspired by these amazing students honoured to be part of the panel this am on community participation ... the United Way, Pathways to Education.... and my humble contribution on 'democracy between elections' and the role of civil society in public policy.... as always ('cept in Ottawa !) the Question period was the best [...]
Read more »

Live Right Now.... thrilled that CBC is doing this important series
<http://carolynbennett.liberal.ca/1/7/2011 12:59:19 PM>

NEW Winter 2011 Householder

Carolyn's Presentations
Various Presentations by Carolyn

Open Parliament
What is happening at the Hill

Carolyn Bennett on Facebook
You like this. Unlike · Admin
Page · Error
You like this. Unlike · Admin
Page · Error

1,473,472 people like Carolyn Bennett

Will Mark Jan Kazuki Watanabe

Figure 3. Example of Canadian MP Website Homepage, Coded as "Insider."

Note: Availability of legislative newsletter is mentioned midpage, right side.

Siobhan Coady | MP for St. John's South—Mount Pearl

Home Liberal.ca RSS Français

Liberal Home Biography News and Events Services In the Riding Photos Videos Contact

Member of Parliament for St. John's South—Mount Pearl
Siobhan Coady

Liberals Present Conservatives with Fake Invoice for Partisan Government Advertising
POSTED ON 05. JAN. 2011 IN PRESS RELEASES

After learning that Conservative MPs knowingly broke government advertising rules by forging ahead with their hyper-partisan Economic Action Plan website (EAP), Liberals presented the Conservative Party with an invoice to repay taxpayers the jaw-dropping \$45 million they spent on partisan advertising.

The Liberal Party also demanded that the government take down the offending website, and pledged to bring the matter before the House of Commons Government Operations Committee as soon as possible.

Read more >

Event: Town Hall on the Economy with Liberal Finance Critic Scott Brison, M.P.
POSTED ON 28. DEC. 2010 IN EVENTS

Wednesday, January 19, 2011
7pm - 8:30pm
The Masonic Temple, 6 Cathedral Street

"To gain better insight on this important federal issue and to provide the opportunity for you to express your viewpoint and concerns, I encourage you to attend," said Coady. "Everyone is welcome. I value your input and intend to make these community consultations an integral part of my approach as your Member of Parliament."

Read more >

Statement: Christmas Message from MP Siobhan Coady
POSTED ON 20. DEC. 2010 IN STATEMENTS

[http://siobhancoady.liberal.ca/\[1/7/2011 1:37:41 PM\]](http://siobhancoady.liberal.ca/[1/7/2011 1:37:41 PM])

Certificates
Personal messages of congratulations are available for Birthdays and Anniversaries

E-Updates
Sign up to receive periodic updates from Siobhan.

Join the Liberals
Join the Liberal Party of Canada

Make a Donation
Give \$10, \$20, \$50 or \$100 — Siobhan needs your support

Victory Fund
Contribute to a Liberal Victory

Volunteer
Sign up and volunteer for the election

Siobhan Coady on Facebook
Like Unlike Admin Page - Error You like this. Unlike Admin Page - Error

1,321,321 people like Siobhan Coady

Carl Chasid Juliana Ann

Figure 4. Example of Canadian MP Website Homepage, Coded as "Outsider."

concerned with. A nameplate is similar to the banner across the top of a newspaper that projects the name and is periodically redesigned. It sets the tone of the content design, is the most recognizable aspect, and is emblematic of the brand's look and feel. Nameplate design variations include such style techniques as blocking with color, clipping images, using a "less is more" approach, and incorporating icons or teasers (French, 2010). A coding emphasis on nameplates facilitates a strong consistency of analysis between websites and newsletters.⁸

We coded nameplates on MP websites and on legislative newsletters in an identical manner along a single dimension. We considered a nameplate to be the banner at the top of the front page that provides key information about what the

content is, such as its title. It is usually a graphic image that includes text, photos and/or images. It tends to appear in the same place and in the same format in each edition. We did not code any photos or images that appeared on the front page that were not part of the nameplate.

We categorized the dominant presentation of the nameplates on websites and newsletters as Ottawa (insider), constituency (outsider), or other (e.g., both or neither). "Insider" text and imagery in nameplates were deemed to be foremost of the Parliament buildings, legislature offices, or related iconography. This could include the Peace Tower, the House of Commons buildings, the legislature's coat of arms, or the MP signing a registry book in a parliamentary office or standing in the legislative chamber. "Outsider" text and imagery were of the MP's electoral district, such as a nonlegislature backdrop like a lake, or of the MP working in the constituency or engaging in "folksy" local activities such as digging a hole for a sapling. Nameplates that contained a variety of text and images that did not allow the nameplate to fit exclusively into the "insider" or "outsider" categorizations, such as of just an official MP photo, were coded as "other."

Two coders each coded all of the nameplates of MP websites and the newsletters to ensure intercoder reliability (see, e.g., Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). The coding process was straightforward as it involved determining the physical locations of MPs in the images presented in the nameplates. This meant that coders identified whether the nameplates exclusively signaled the legislature in Ottawa, exclusively featured an electoral district or constituency aspect, or if the nameplates did neither exclusively. Owing to this simplicity, there was very little disagreement between coders, and in the event of interpretative disagreement the nameplate was coded as "other."

Analysis

How do MPs present themselves in the nameplate images contained on their parliamentary websites as compared with legislative newsletters? We hypothesize that, on average, MPs are more likely to use media with a global reach to present themselves as political insiders and to be more likely to present themselves in local media as outsiders who are connected with their constituents. Figure 5 summarizes the proportions of first impression images in MP websites and newsletters that place the MP in the capital, in the constituency, or in neither location.

In both cases we learn that many MPs prefer to play it safe by appearing as neither insiders nor outsiders. It is somewhat unexpected that on their websites MPs were more likely to present themselves in their constituencies rather than in Ottawa. Over two-fifths (42.8 percent) of the online images on MPs' websites situated them within their constituencies. This was higher than the percentage of websites that placed MPs in neither location (38.2 percent) and substantially higher than the percentage of websites placing MPs in Parliament (19.1 percent). The highest proportion of newsletters (47.6 percent) placed MPs in neither location; these were for the most part simple business-style portraits of MPs.

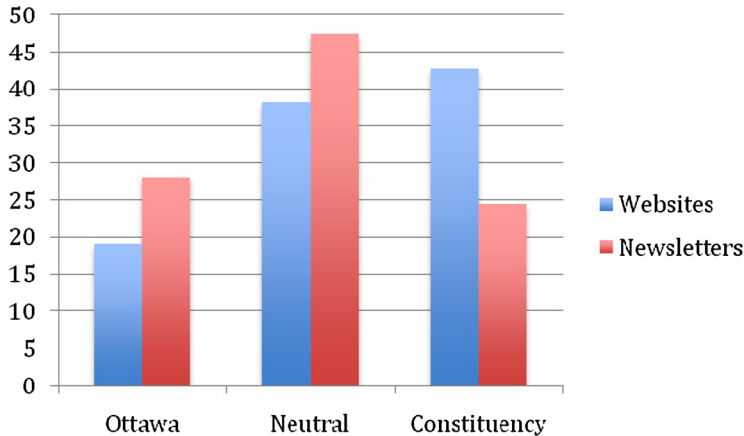


Figure 5. Proportion of First Impression Images in MP Websites and Newsletters.

It was also unanticipated that over a quarter (27.3 percent) of newsletters would place MPs in Parliament, whereas a slightly smaller proportion (less than 25 percent) placed MPs in their constituencies. This was unexpected in part because one would think that Canada's single member plurality electoral system would incentivize MPs' presentation of self through newsletters in their constituencies.

This finding suggests that presentation of self online and offline is unrelated. Table 2 investigates this further by presenting a crosstab of presentation of self in both websites and newsletters. These data indicate that there appears to be little relation between presentation of self online and offline. Only 35 percent of MPs who presented themselves in Ottawa on their websites similarly presented themselves in Ottawa in their newsletters; likewise, only 30 percent of MPs who presented themselves in their constituencies on their websites presented themselves in this manner in their newsletters. A chi-square test confirms that there is no statistically significant relationship between presentation of self on parliamentary websites and in parliamentary newsletters (chi-square with one degree of freedom = 4.560, $p = 0.336$).

This analysis allows us to develop four distinctive presentation styles depending both on how MPs present themselves to constituents and their consistency in their doing so. The four presentation styles are: (1) consistent

Table 2. MPs' Presentation of Self in Parliamentary Websites and Newsletters (Row Percentages)

		Focus of Newsletter		
		Ottawa	Neutral	Constituency
Focus of Website	Ottawa	12 (35.3)	14 (41.2)	8 (23.5)
	Neutral	14 (33.3)	21 (50.0)	7 (16.7)
	Constituency	13 (20.6)	31 (49.2)	19 (30.2)
Total		39	66	34

Note: Includes only MPs for which we obtained both newsletters and website archives.

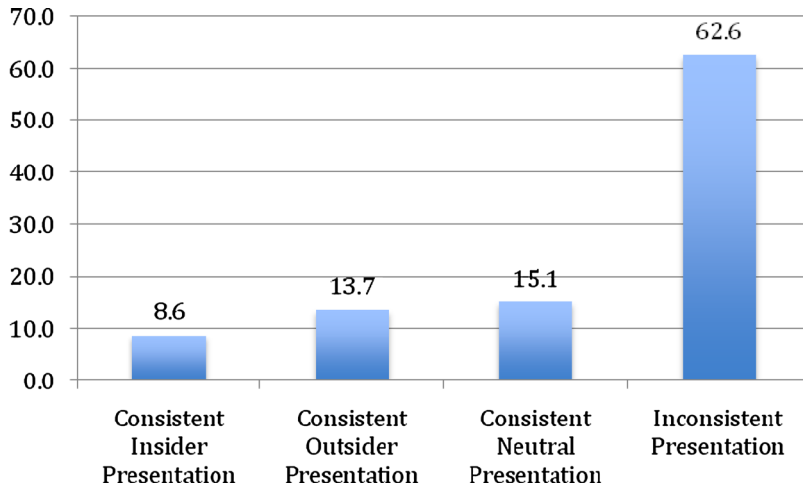


Figure 6. Proportions of MPs Employing Presentation Styles.

insider presentation, (2) consistent outsider presentation, (3) consistent neutral presentation, and (4) inconsistent presentation. Figure 6 illustrates the proportions of these four presentation styles in our sample of MPs.

It is immediately apparent that the vast majority of MPs in our sample are in fact inconsistent in their presentation of self in online and offline mediums. Only 37.4 percent of MPs were consistent in their presentation of self in websites and newsletters; in contrast, 62.6 percent of MPs were inconsistent. While this may be thought to reflect a lack of consideration paid to presentation of self, we believe that such inconsistent presentation is a product of differing global and local audiences for these two mediums.

The portrayal of MPs on their nameplates on parliamentary websites and in their newsletters reflects those MPs' self-evaluations as insiders or outsiders, or of their understanding of their own roles as legislators and representatives. What underlies these self-evaluations; or, what factors can account for differences in how MPs present themselves to their constituents? We hypothesize that partisan affiliation should exercise a significant effect on presentation of self, with parties with the fewest seats (in this case the NDP and especially the Bloc Québécois) more likely to present themselves as outsiders (i.e., connected with their constituency). Distinguishing MPs on the basis of their party affiliation finds that this hypothesis generally holds true, with some exceptions. Figure 7 presents the percentages of MPs in each party that presented themselves as insiders and outsiders on their websites and in their newsletters. As hypothesized, NDP members were disproportionately more likely to project an outsider image that was in tune with their constituency.

Though the number of cases is small ($n = 9$), which itself may indicate a disconnect from Ottawa, our expectation that Bloc Québécois MPs would not choose to present themselves as Ottawa insiders also held true in both mediums,



Figure 7. Percentages of MP Presentation of Self in Websites and Newsletters, by Party.

however it is somewhat surprising that their communication of neutrality trumped constituency imagery. Our expectation held that Liberals would be most likely to project a national consciousness. The Conservative party results are the most perplexing because of the divergence in messaging between mediums going in the opposite direction than we had predicted. Online, the governing Conservatives were most likely to project an outsider status, whereas offline they leaned toward neutrality or insider status. As that party was most likely to unify its communications, including newsletters, it is possible that central influences played a role, as Barbour (1999) finds. In all cases this univariate analysis suggests that the political party of elected officials matters when it comes to how they present themselves to their constituents.⁹

We now turn to testing the effect of party on presentation of self in a multivariate analysis. While partisan affiliation is the explanatory variable of

interest, we have included two sets of control variables to enhance the robustness of our findings.

The first set of control variables relates to MPs' own personal characteristics. Gulati's (2004, p. 33–35) examination of differences in presentation of self on websites focuses on the personal characteristics of Senators and Members of Congress, in particular on gender, seniority, and ethnicity. Of most significance was gender: he finds that Democratic women were most likely to portray themselves as outsiders and Republican women the most likely to portray themselves as Washington insiders. Gulati speculates that Republican women were likely to present themselves as insiders in an attempt to convince doubtful conservative constituencies that women can indeed take on leadership roles in Washington. In the following analysis, we test the effects of MPs' gender, provincial and municipal political experience, visible minority status, and seniority (measured in number of terms served) on the likelihood of MPs presenting themselves as insiders or outsiders in their websites and newsletters.

The second set of control variables relates to characteristics of MPs' electoral districts. We test the proposition that MPs are presenting themselves as insiders or outsiders in response to local conditions by including a variable measuring the competitiveness of their constituencies and their own vulnerability as candidates. The expectation here is that greater vulnerability should lead to a focus on local matters in an effort to augment an MP's local "personal vote" to draw upon in re-election campaigns. Competitiveness is measured by MPs' margins of victory in the preceding general election of 2008. We included explanatory variables for province and region in our logit models to follow; however, these variables were not related to presentation of self and so were removed from all of our models.

Table 3 presents the results of four logistical regression models. Presentation of self as insiders and outsiders on websites and newsletters is regressed on the explanatory variables described above. All dependent variables are binary, coded

Table 3. Effects of Personal, Constituency, and Party Characteristics on Insider and Outsider Presentation

	Websites		Newsletters	
	Insider	Outsider	Insider	Outsider
Gender	-0.369 (0.447)	0.522 (0.324)	0.004 (0.463)	0.159 (0.451)
Provincial experience	0.155 (0.594)	-0.173 (0.421)	-1.487 (1.050)	0.198 (0.577)
Municipal experience	-0.303 (0.453)	-0.438 (0.353)	0.122 (0.450)	-0.002 (0.501)
Visible minority	0.593 (0.614)	-0.269 (0.584)	0.196 (0.701)	0.775 (0.662)
Cabinet	-2.118 (1.060)	0.131 (0.417)	-1.095 (0.795)	0.022 (0.736)
Terms served	-0.061 (0.106)	-0.072 (0.091)	0.026 (0.119)	0.040 (0.128)
2008 Margin of victory	0.008 (0.011)	0.004 (0.009)	-0.006 (0.012)	0.008 (0.013)
Conservative	-1.202 (0.416)	1.231 (0.392)	-0.087 (0.461)	-0.481 (0.591)
New Democrat	-2.482 (0.787)	2.050 (0.484)	-0.925 (0.698)	1.560 (0.548)
Bloc Québécois	-20.889 (6580.267)	0.027 (0.488)	-19.754 (6551.717)	-0.410 (0.719)
Observations	283	283	144	144

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; bold reflects statistical significance at 5 percent or better.

as “1” if the MP presents themselves in the way specified in the model and “0” if not (e.g., in the first model, MPs were coded as “1” if they presented themselves as insiders on their websites and “0” if they were presented in any other way). Independent variables consist of (1) dummy variables for gender, previous municipal experience, previous provincial experience, visible minority, membership in cabinet, and partisan affiliation variables, and (2) variables expressing exact values for the number of terms served (experience) and 2008 margin of election victory variables. The table reports both coefficients and standard errors; coefficients in bold represent statistical significance at 5 percent or better.

We find that personal and constituency-level explanatory variables do not effectively explain the likelihood that MPs present themselves as insiders or outsiders (Table 3). Of the personal variables included, only one, membership in the federal cabinet, returned a statistically significant result. In this case, cabinet ministers were less likely to present themselves as party insiders. This is to be expected, given that such MPs are known in their constituencies as ministers, and worry about being branded locally as being out of touch with constituency matters. This also supports our view that central party forces played a role in why backbench Conservative MPs also often projected an outsider status in the websites.

It is noteworthy that none of the other personal-level explanatory variables exercised an influence on MPs’ presentation of self. This includes gender, previous experience, identity, as well as seniority. While MPs bring a range of experiences and backgrounds to their work, these diverse experiences do not appear to affect how MPs present themselves to their constituents in either new or old mediums. Furthermore, the constituency-level variable employed—candidates’ margins in the previous election—does not exercise an influence on presentation of self. What matters most to an MP’s presentation of self, it seems, is partisanship.

Our expectations concerning the effect of party on presentation of self are largely borne out. Dummy variables for Conservative, NDP, and Bloc MPs are included whereas Liberal MPs are excluded; positive coefficients therefore indicate that MPs in those parties are more likely than Liberal MPs to present themselves in the ways specified in the four models, whereas negative coefficients indicate the opposite. On websites the governing Conservatives were *less likely* than the opposition Liberals to present themselves as insiders and were *more likely* than Liberals to project an outsider status. The same is true for New Democrats. However, this effect appears to be substantially weaker in newsletters; only NDP MPs were more likely than Liberals to present themselves as outsiders in that medium.

These findings appear to confirm that the populist, delegative streaks of these parties were manifesting themselves in how their MPs presented themselves online to constituents. Conservative and NDP MPs were more likely than Liberals to present themselves as outsiders and less likely to present themselves as insiders. Differences in how MPs present themselves online are due largely to partisan affiliation, with several characteristics of the parties (time in office,

populism, nationalism, etc.) finding expression through differing presentations. It is reasonable to expect that this distinctive style of presentation will expand to other aspects of these MPs' home styles.

Discussion, Limitations, and Future Research

Academics are paying increasing attention to the ways that political parties and elected representatives communicate with constituents and electors; this has been extended here to how representatives present themselves to their constituents. We have (1) used images presented on websites—as well as in an older medium, legislative newsletters—to identify how MPs present themselves to their constituents, and (2) uncovered the factors underlying MPs' decisions to present themselves in certain ways. Our research affirms Gulati's finding (2004) that legislators do not exhibit a dominant presentation style and supports his observation of only some slight variations between members. However, the application of his typologies to the parliamentary system of government has added to a body of evidence about the pervasiveness of partisanship. Furthermore we have found variations between mediums.

Our data indicate that Canada's elected officials are most likely to project an "outsider" image online. This is consistent with research that suggests that high discipline means that the most important work most MPs perform is service in the constituencies. Docherty (1997), for example, demonstrates that MPs find this aspect of their jobs to be the most rewarding. In addition, MPs report that failing to provide service to their constituencies can result in subsequent electoral defeat (Docherty, 1997, p. 106). Given that MPs and their staffers are incentivized to look at each others' websites through the recognition of the need to conform in visible communications it makes sense that there would be similarities within parties. Since three of the four political parties had ideological roots as outsiders, and given that an election was pending due to the circumstance of a minority government, it makes sense that most MPs in the fortieth Parliament presented themselves as outside Ottawa working on behalf of their constituents.

Our data point to variations in how elected officials present themselves in new media versus old media. MPs tended to position themselves as outsiders on their websites, but not in their newsletters. Our data demonstrate decisively that partisanship matters when it comes to how Canadian MPs present themselves to their constituents. Partisan affiliation made an important difference in shaping presentation of self online, but not in newsletters, where MPs have more freedom to cultivate their own presentation styles due to the local reach of the medium. This finding is an important nuance for students of political communication, who must not assume that politicians project similar imagery in all mediums, even in a political system with party cohesiveness that is as stringent as Canada's.

Our data support theories that the longstanding behaviors of political elites will gravitate online (Chadwick, 2006). The Internet provides new opportunities for elected officials to reach out to constituents in an innovative, interactive manner. In theory, a more libertarian medium should allow MPs to present

themselves in ways that are not affected by parties, which is an attractive proposition given the extent to which the discipline that parties demand permeates almost every aspect of MPs' professional lives. Nonetheless, party was the most important predictor of presentation of self among MPs. A website is much more accessible and visible, and reaches beyond the confines of households in an electoral district, and can be monitored by the party center. Yet, rather than representing a victory of the party whip, the relative absence of identical branded nameplates leads us to suspect that partisan tendencies reflect the shared experiences and beliefs of MPs from the same parties. However more research is needed to establish if MPs do self-select to communicate a common ideology, rather than being commanded to do so.

We acknowledge that our use of a large dataset describing presentation of self in parliamentary websites and newsletters leaves open the possibility that MPs are not themselves involved in the selection of images for public presentation. Many MPs may leave such tasks to their legislative and constituency assistants who compile and write their websites and newsletters. Moreover, one of the MPs included in our dataset informed us that the Parliament of Canada offers electronic templates for newsletters, that because Parliament funds newsletters all MPs therefore face common content restrictions, that MPs within the same party often partner to share the costs of website design, and that a party may seek to impose a consistent brand look on all of its members' websites.¹⁰ Even so, in most cases we believe that MPs were engaged in how they were presented on their homepages and on the front page of their newsletters. A substantial literature exists demonstrating that politicians are very concerned with how they are presented to the public (e.g., Fenno, 1978) and thus we find it improbable that MPs would tend to ignore this aspect of presentation. Even among those elected officials who entrust such decisions to their staff it is implausible that they would never have passed judgment on the central imagery contained on a nameplate. Our past informal conversations with MPs also suggest that they do pay attention to their visual representation. Finally, we have provided a convincing theoretical rationale for our findings in this paper, notably the uncovering of a significant partisan effect on presentation of self. Further research, however, is needed to confirm the role of MPs in determining how they are presented on websites and newsletters with rigorous qualitative methods, particularly interviews with MPs or their legislative or constituency assistants.

Future research should proceed in three additional directions. First, further comparative research can build on Fenno's and Gulati's work, and on this first attempt to apply their theoretical framework to the Canadian case. Within Canada this could examine cases across Parliaments and at the provincial level of government. This would be complicated by the difficulty of accessing data and by the lower incidence of newsletters funded by provincial legislatures. A more robust comparative undertaking would collect data from legislatures outside of North America.

Second, it is possible to delve deeper into how Canadian MPs present themselves to their constituents in other aspects of their legislative newsletters

and websites, or indeed vis-à-vis other forms of communication. Our analysis has concentrated exclusively on nameplates and we have not considered any other content in the newsletters or websites. For instance, when stories are added to either of these media, do they tend to focus on MPs' activities in the legislature, such as speaking during Question Period and engaging in committee work? Or do they focus on the service activities of MPs in their constituencies? Or, given the strength of partisanship, to what extent do they communicate similar messages among members of the same party?

Third, it would be useful to explore the extent to which presentation of self is related to other orientations and activities of politicians. For example: elected officials tend to be free to decide how often they consult their constituents on representational matters using mechanisms such as questionnaires and town hall meetings. Is presentation of self a marker for their willingness to go directly to the people on matters of local importance? In this respect, self-presentation may have implications for how we understand the propensity of elected officials to engage in public consultation with constituents. In addition, it may act as a marker for politicians' career goals with, for example, insider presentation as an indication that he or she wishes to rise through the party ranks to a leadership position. These propositions can be explored by linking data on presentation of self to other characteristics and orientations of the people's elected representatives and the relationship, if any, with political influence.

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Notes

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1. For ease of readership we refer to householders as legislative newsletters. Canadian MPs are also entitled to distribute unlimited mailings to 10 percent of the number of households in their electoral district. We have excluded these from our analysis since they may feature party messaging rather than constituency matters. This practice became controversial during the thirty-ninth and fortieth Parliaments when some MPs mailed negative partisan materials to residents in other districts. In April 2010 the rules were changed so that "10 percenters" are distributed only within members' own constituencies.
2. While party leaders may appoint candidates or overrule locally nominated candidates, this occurs infrequently (Koop and Bittner 2011, 437).
3. Figures 1-4 are reproduced with permission of the MP. We profile a selection of Liberal MPs for consistency purposes and because the Liberal party had an interim leader when we sought permission, which we anticipated would increase the likelihood of securing a favorable response.
4. This was confirmed during email correspondence with an employee of the Library of Parliament.

5. Dolan and Kropf (2004) and Jackson (2006) also experience difficulty locating legislators' newsletters online. Yiannakis (1982) obtains newsletters after interviewing a sample of legislators' assistants whereas Lipinski (2004) accesses a full universe of mailings through the Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards.
6. We report response rates by party to demonstrate that we collected relevant information from each of the major parties represented in the House of Commons at the time of analysis. This is crucial given that party affiliation is later found to exercise a significant affect on how MPs present themselves to their constituents.
7. A limitation of our analysis is that some nameplates in early 2010 (the production date of most of the collected newsletters) on parliamentarians' websites may have changed by January 2011. However, we feel that there is value in the "snapshot in time" approach taken here, as it ensures consistency between the MP websites examined. Furthermore, we have discovered through our own observations over time that website nameplates rarely change.
8. By comparison Adler, Gent, and Overmeyer (1998) analyze casework, namely information about constituent services and contact information for offices and staff.
9. Chi-square tests within parties reveal no statistically significant relationships between presentation of self in newsletters and on websites (BQ = 0.467, $p = 0.495$; Conservative = 6.449, $p = 0.168$; Liberal = 3.291, $p = 0.510$; NDP = 0.725, $p = 0.948$).
10. Interview with author, March 12, 2011.

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