iPS Institute of Policy Studies

ENGAGING MINDS

EXCHANGING IDEAS

'Digital Frontiers Series: 1'

Seminar on
"Assessing the Rationality of Political Online Space: Man and Machine"

Wednesday, 11 February 2015

Conference Room, Level 1, Oei Tiong Ham Building

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School of Public Policy

National University of Singapore

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Introduction

Tan Tarn How

11 February 2015

Introduction

- IPS Digital Frontiers Series
  - Digital village
  - GovCom: 1 to 1
- Why this project?
- Why should online space be rational?

1 Research question

How can we quickly and reliably know, track and anticipate public political opinion?

2 What is public opinion?

- Assumption that people have an opinion
- Hawthorne effect, Heisenberg effect
- Question/priming effects
- Fear of political reprisal
- Social acceptance
- Spiral of silence
- Recall effects

3 Tools for sensing public opinion

- Voting
- Surveys (online, offline)
- Content analysis: Human coding, machine

Each tells us different things of a picture

4 Public opinion sensing criteria

- Accurate
- Fast, even real-time
- Emergent, trending

5 Applications

- Predict and manage election/referendums
- Day to day sensing, tracking, prediction
- Longer-range forecasting: emergent phenomenon

6 How do the different tools compare in criteria and applications? How can we use these tools together to develop ways of sensing that are accurate, fast, predictive?