

The National Museum of Language

Amelia C. Murdoch Speaker Series

presents

From the telegraph to the Internet: How both governments and protesters exploit new communications technologies

Presented by Irene Wu, Ph.D.

January 22, 2012

2 P.M. – 4 P.M.

How do activists use communications technology? How do governments influence communications?

While the Internet is still new, using technology to communicate is not. Media are as old as cave paintings. However, the Internet and mobile phones bring something new to politics. Protesters organize by phone and Facebook. Online support groups give strength to those suffering from discrimination. The Internet space is both a new public square and a new private sphere.

New communications technology enables people to participate in a broader array of networks and enables them to deepen and enrich their relationships with people in these networks, more easily and cheaply. The technology facilitates the rise of new communities, enables them to build social capital, and increases the likelihood of collective action. Today that technology may be social media, yesterday it was the mobile phone, before that it was the television, the telegraph, and the newspaper.

This lecture explores these ideas using historical examples from China, India, Brazil, Canada and other countries to examine the political communities enabled by networks of people, machines, ideas, and information.

Irene S. Wu is Consumer Research Advisor in the Consumer and Government Bureau of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and is serving on the White House Task Force for Smart Disclosure. Previously, she was Chief Data Office (Acting) in the International Bureau of the FCC, where she guided studies on international trends in regulatory policy on telecommunications, Internet, and media. Dr. Wu also teaches at Georgetown University. Dr. Wu received her B.A. from Harvard University and Ph.D. in International Relations from Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.

FREE ADMISSION; Reservations required due to limited space. Reply to phone or email listed below. Directions: <http://www.languagemuseum.org/directions.html>



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