EDITORIAL PREFACE

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E-politics, an emerging area of research that the International Journal of E-Politics focuses on, encompasses a number of different sub-areas. The first sub-area is the politics of the information technology (IT) area, including the politics of the IT industry and the political activities of executives and employees within this industry. A second sub-area concerns the politics of virtual communities and social networking communities. Here, the emphasis is on the social dynamics of computer mediated communities. Finally, E-Politics focuses on technology mediated political behavior of grass roots movements or formal political entities (parties), including the political activities of local, national, and international organizations.

The papers in the second issue of IJEP represent all the above areas, including government control of the media, political actions and counter-actions in social networking communities, the politics of RFID in industry and in society, and the political impact of Internetized Television, a new arena for E-Politics that combines the Internet with Television. In addition to providing an overview of the literature in each of these areas, the four papers in this issue discuss cutting edge moral dilemmas.

The first paper, Careful What You Say: Media Control In Putin’s Russia – Implications for Online Content, by Katherine Ognyanova, outlines the practices of state control of Internet content in Russia. The paper suggests that the tools that are used to control “objectionable” materials on the Russian Web are not Internet-specific. Rather, they should be seen as an extension of the censorship mechanisms used in traditional media. This paper raises fascinating questions about electronically mediated overt and covert censorship which apply to regimes in countries other than Russia, such as Iran, China, etc.

The second paper in this issue, The Breastfeeding Controversy and Facebook: Politicization of Image, Privacy and Protest, by Yasmin Ibrahim, focuses on Facebook and its recent decision to invoke its obscenity clause to bar users from posting pictures of breastfeeding women on their personal pages. The paper discusses the uproar that resulted from this decision and the complex developments that this decision led to, particularly in terms a new understanding of the distinction between on-line and offline experiences and the rules that govern behavior in each of these domains. This paper demonstrates that images, users’ notions of images, and the use of images as symbols of dissent and activism in online communities can and are politicized and ways that were not possible before.

The third paper in this issue, Radio-Frequency Identification and Human Tagging: Newer Coercions, by Nada K. Kakabadse, Alexander Kouzmin and Andrew P. Kakabadse, focuses on the ethical challenges of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology. The paper incorporates an analysis of RFID development and provides insights concerning the future of RFID, particularly as it pertains to human-centred RFID technology and its impact on individuals’ privacy, safety, and civil liberty. The paper concludes with an identification of
the critical areas surrounding “human branding”, suggesting the need for research and public deliberation on the ethical dilemmas that are associated with RFID technology.

The fourth paper in this issue, *Skai (TV) - YouTube Debate: A New Era of Internetized Television Politics*, by Anastasia Deligiaouri and Panagiotis Symeonidis, focuses on the convergence of television and Internet technologies and the impact of this phenomenon during the 2007 national elections in Greece. Based on the results of their survey of TV users in Greece, the authors discuss the political and communicative challenges imposed by this new form of E-politics and the manner in which different sectors of the population seem to be affected by it and ready to take advantage of it. This paper demonstrates that emerging technologies often have unexpected consequences and that this applies to E-Politics, as well as, to many other areas.

The interview that follows the papers in this issue was conducted with Professor Seymour (Sy) Goodman, one of the foremost leaders of research on cyber security. The interview focused on the politics of cyberspace security and the differences between the decision making processes and power plays in the area of cyber security and other areas where security is central, such as the military and the automotive industry. The interview with Professor Goodman outlines the major challenges in cyber security today, the political forces that shape these challenges, and the political solutions that will be needed to address these challenges.

Finally, the issue is concluded with a book review, kindly contributed by a member of the IJEP editorial board and the Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Information Privacy and Security (JIPS), Professor Chuleeporn Changchit. The review of the book, *Computer Security, Privacy, and Politics: Current Issues, Challenges, and Solutions* (by Ramesh Subramanian) complement the interview with Professor Goodman by highlighting the political aspects of cyber security.

It is my hope that you will find this issue interesting and that it will inspire you to explore the area of E-Politics further.

Best Wishes

*Celia Romm Livermore*

*Editor-in-Chief*

*IJEP*