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Communication in the 2008 U.S. Election
Digital Natives Elect a President

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Book synopsis

The 2008 U.S. election was arguably the most important election of our lifetime: the first African American president was elected to office; the candidacy of Sarah Palin marked only the second time that a major party ticket included a female; and the electoral performance of young citizens – digital natives, greatly attracted by digital media – signaled the highest turnout in a long time. Taking all these issues into consideration, this book offers a landmark examination of the 2008 election from a global perspective, with emphasis on the wide range of digital media utilized by the campaigners and how campaign communication influenced young citizens. The authors argue that the use of digital technologies in the campaign, and the success of Barack Obama in attracting young voters to his cause, provides an excellent case study – perhaps something of a turning point in campaign communication – for carefully examining the emerging role of digital political media, and a continuing renewal in young citizens’ electoral engagement. The wide-ranging contributions to this volume provide a comprehensive examination of a historic political campaign and election. The book’s findings offer revealing answers regarding the content and effects of various forms of political campaign communication, and raise questions and possibilities for future research.

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About the author(s)/editor(s)

Mitchell S. McKinney (PhD, University of Kansas) is Associate Professor of Communication at the University of Missouri. He is co-author/editor of four books, including The 1992 Presidential Debates in Focus, Civic Dialogue in the 1996 Presidential Campaign, The Millennium Election: Communication in the 2000 Campaign, and Communicating Politics: Engaging the Public in Democratic Life (Lang).
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