

Hi, ladies,

I am writing this to you from Wednesday evening. For a bit today I turned off my phone, my television and my computer. The quiet was comforting as I thought about the fabulous conversation we all had this morning. Thank you for joining me this series and this election in learning and connecting.

Aaron introduced us to the concept of social media as organizing platforms. He set the tone that social media does not enable universal participation nor does everyone have a voice, but he left us with a sense that "new associationism"--that which happens through online platforms--is potentially powerful for communities and for our democracy.

I was happy to be able to have the opportunity to share a bit of myself and my research with you, in an attempt to summarize our path this fall. Jeremy, Alexia, Liz, Megan, Owen and Pablo all talked with us about how people choose their media--whether content or platform. Social identity is means to explain WHY that happens. Of course we all risk living in the echo chambers of listening to media (and friends) who share our viewpoints. We heard this in Peter's talk about the election and Ashlee's attention to the framing of the news. But we also know there is plenty of opportunity. New markets, as discussed by Florian, Mohan and Harlan, and new channels, as Aaron mentioned today, are expanding the media ecosystem.

I hope you will embrace the opportunity of the new. Try new media products even if they don't become part of your regular diet. One thing I didn't mention today: Pick up a local newspaper in cities where you travel. You will learn something. I have every single time I've done this.

We will do a little more learning next week with four faculty members from the medical school. I expect the takeaways for next week to be about how digital technology may serve as an asset in managing mental health and risk management. Specifically, (1) how technology makes mental health resources more accessible and more pervasive; (2) how people can use technology to self-manage health behaviors; and (3) how push technology, such as text messaging, can improve health behavior. I look forward to seeing you and meeting your guests.

I leave you with the words on my last slide today: Talk in person more with more people who don't look like you and don't think like you, and really listen.

I have enjoyed being in this effort with you all. Truly.

We are learning for life, rdm