Celebrity politics, media and gender

A comparative case study of Rand Paul's and Wendy Davis's filibusters.

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INTRODUCTION

In the sixth episode of season three in the television series *Scandal*, congresswoman Josephine Marcus is giving a live interview at her home regarding her run in the presidential election. The interviewer asks for the candidate's response to rival's accusations that she lacks the experience needed to be next president of the United States.

Marcus:	It is not about the experience, James. It is about gender. Reston [Marcus's competitor] is saying I do not have the balls to be President. It is offensive to me, and to all women whose vote he's asking for.
The interviewer:	Are you saying that Governor Reston is sexist?
Marcus:	Yes. I am. And it is not just Governor Reston speaking in code about gender. It's everyone, yourself included. The only reason we're doing this interview in my house is because *you* requested it. This was your idea. And yet here you are, thanking me for inviting you into my "lovely home." That's what you say to the neighbour lady who baked you chocolate chip cookies. This pitcher of iced tea is not even mine. It's what your producers set here. Why? Same reason you called me a "real live Cinderella story." It reminds people that I'm a woman without using the word… You're promoting stereotypes, James. You're advancing this idea that women are weaker than men. You're playing right into the hands of Reston and into the hands of every other imbecile who thinks a woman is not fit to be commander-in-chief.

The scene went viral, attracting almost 800 000 views on YouTube (Flanagin, 2013, Nov.15). The reason behind its popularity might lie in a fact that it tackles important issues in contemporary American politics. First, it quite adequately illustrates a current situation of women in US politics. On the one hand, female presence on political arena is steadily growing with prominent figures such as Nancy Pelosi being the first female House Secretary from 2007 to 2011, Janet Yellen having the Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System which is a crucial office during economic recession, and Hilary Clinton being named one of the leading potential candidates in the 2016 presidential elections (Centre for American Women in Politics, 2014). Although 2013 was called a women's year in American politics, only 18% of all Congress members are female, which is still far away from an ideal. Furthermore, studies examining representation of female and male politicians show that gender divide is still apparent: media coverage emphasise cultural stereotypes of femininity that position women as inferior to men in politics (van Zoonen, 2005; Bode & Hennings, 2012; Dunaway, Laurence, Rose & Weber, 2013). The way female politicians are framed is of a

tremendous importance as several studies showed, mainstream media have a significant impact on political attitudes and voting behaviour (Ekstrand & Eckert, 1981; Riggle, Miller, Shields & Jonson, 1997; Hayes & Makkai, 2008). Media play a great role in shaping public imaginations about political figures: citizen rarely have a chance to established personal connection with a public officer. Thus, when journalists frame female politicians in a discriminating way, it is highly possible that after a repeated exposure, viewers and readers will develop gender biased perspective (Chang & Hitchon, 1997). The issues of representing female politicians in a certain light brings the discussion to the second essential feature of modern politics that is highlighted in *Scandal's* scene by the characters' remarks about constructing certain setting with a cosy living room and lemonade, which positions the candidate within a traditional image of femininity. A carefully fabricated media personality that appeals to public sentiment can be seen as a symptom of celebrity politics.

Celebrity politics is a type of political communication which exists within the context of popular culture, utilising its tropes in order to construct public personalities with whom mass audiences can establish affective relationships (Marshall, 1997). This can be achieved through exposing more personal, private image of a politician and/or positioning a public figure within the context of popular culture mediums, such as Tony Blair appearing on the cover of *Rolling Stone Magazine,* Barack Obama dancing with Ellen DeGeners on her chat show, or a recently a prevailing trend of politicians being present on social media which encourages more personal, informal and casual form of communication with constituencies (Street, 2012; Turner, 2013). Among numerous social networking sites, Twitter has become a particularly popular tool in political communication (Mergel, 2012). The microblogging platform enables interactive exchange of up to 140-character messages through a network of followers or other media platforms which can be synchronised with Twitter, e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, blogs and news outlets (Hermida, 2010). Thus, Twitter emerges as a means to disseminate official as well as unofficial content which can, in a casual and popular fashion, reach a great number of citizens. Although events such as Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street weighted Twitter with political significance (Shirky, 2010), research conducted by Mergel (2012) shows that Twitter is used by American politicians mainly for self-promotion: posting links to articles and videos about themselves. This indicates that this microblogging platform becomes a site where celebrity politics can be effectively exercised, for it allows politicians to reach mass audiences in a more personal, casual manner. A recent example that illustrates how thanks to Twitter politicians can become popular culture sensations is the filibuster.

In American legislatures the filibuster is a political tool that allows individual or group of politicians to object a certain bill or decision through a lengthy speech. Although studies indicate that Americans have

little interest in legislative processes (Dalton, 2000), the list of top ten most searched politicians on the Google search engine in 2013 were dominated by the names of filibustering politicians, namely Republican Senators Rand Paul and Ted Cruz, as well as Texas Democrat state Senator Wendy Davis (Google trends, 2013). It appears that filibustering is an effective way to get a politician's name in the headlines, evoke interest of mass audience, and thus become a celebrity figure. However, what is so distinctive about these 2013 filibusters that they drew so much public attention? First, it might be an intrinsic quality of filibuster as a legislative procedure which requires stamina and determination to talk for hours presumably in defence of one's beliefs. This endeavour has been already mythicized in public imagination by the movie *Mr Smith Goes to Washington* that shows Jefferson Smith (James Stewart) putting himself heroically on the verge of physical extremes through talking continuously for 24 hours in order to object Senate's corruption and moral decline. The filibuster becomes an opportunity for an individual politician to be at the centre of attention, a "star" of a political event defending his/her views against majority in a truly "Hollywood style." Thus, the filibuster as a legislative tool perfectly fits celebrity paradigm of personalisation that focuses on politician's individual qualities (Corner et al., 2003).

Nonetheless, the filibuster was not invented in 2013, there were numerous politicians filibustering who did not get that much attention. The answer might lie in the changing paradigms of celebrity creation in the age of digital technology. The 2013 filibusters, especially the ones by Rand Paul and Wendy Davis, became a true sensation on the internet involving a great number of online participators. Both politicians' Twitter accounts were updated throughout the filibuster informing about the course of the events, however the reception by online audiences was truly astonishing. Hundreds of thousands watched live streams of the politicians' enduring speeches and millions of tweets were sent: commenting the incidents, showing support, and generating awareness during the filibusters (Larson, 2013, Jun. 23). The intense buzz around Paul and Davis pushed mainstream outlets such as *New York Times* and *CNN,* to not only report on the political background, but also extensively cover intense engagement of online participants. The news cited content published on the microblogging platform by users, such as the most popular tweets, snap shots of YouTube videos, and user-generated memes of politicians, reinforcing at the same time the celebrity effect of linking politicians with popular sentiment. The attention around Paul and Davis indicates that filibuster when "transmitted" online, generates a perfect setting for exercising celebrity politics by creating an affective connection with the public through popular digital media. The celebrity status of the filibustering politicians was also recognised by public, several journalists from outlets such as *Economist, New York Times,* and *The Guardian,* directly referred to Paul and Davis as "celebrities."

The events of filibuster create a great opportunity to research how gender dynamics are played out in political celebritisation. Carrying out comparative studies of gender representation in politics is quite problematic due to the small number of women involved in politics (Bode & Hennings, 2012). Apart from election period when men and women are running for the same office, it is challenging to find instances when female and male politicians are situated in similar circumstances that would allow a valid comparison influenced by limited variables other than gender. Thus, the 2013 filibusters make effective cases for they involve representatives of both genders performing a similar legislative process which constituted them as celebrity politicians. Although celebritisation is not a phenomenon constrained only to women politicians, quite the opposite men are also heavily presented in this perspective, van Zoonen (2005) argues that celebrity politics is more problematic for women, because it emphasises cultural stereotypes that position females as unfitted to the realm of politics. Van Zoonen's claim is backed up by numerous studies which show that contemporary media often undermines female politicians' status through focusing on women's private lives, appearances, and questioning experience as well as viability more frequently than male counterparts (Bode & Hennings, 2012; Dunaway, Laurence, Rose & Weber, 2013). Scholars argue that celebritisation of politics will only grow stronger over time (Corner & Pels, 2003; Street, 2005; Wheeler, 2012), therefore it appears as an important issue to investigate how women are positioned within celebrity politics discourse. Furthermore, as David Hesmondhalgh (2005) remarks, a study on celebrity reveals important issues about media practices and celebrity communication, such as how the stories are constructed, what types of frames and narratives are recurrent. Hence, the cases of filibustering politicians with a great involvement of online audiences, might also offer some insights on how journalists make use of content coming from other than mainstream news sources.

Scholars agree that mainstream media play a dominant force in producing celebrity figures (Marshall, 1997; Corner & Pels, 2003; Kerrigan, Brownlie, Hewer & Daza LeTouze, 2011), so as a result the specific medium has a great impact on how a celebrity is portrayed. Hesmondhalgh offers a useful framework that separates representation of celebrity in media into: a core text providing the basis on which the individual's celebrity is founded, and secondary text that mediates (reports on the former). Applying it to the case of the Paul-Davis filibusters might help in better understanding how the celebrity element was conveyed to the public. Both politicians became sensations on Twitter creating a direct, affective relationship with online audiences. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that since only 16% of American adults have a Twitter account and only 8% get any news form Twitter, most citizens receive the celebrity content from mainstream media, such as television, online news, and print newspapers (Pew Research Center, 2013). Thus, actions on Twitter can be seen as the core celebrity text that originally

produced a celebrity communication pattern, while the coverage of the event in mainstream media is the secondary text which brings the mediated story to most recipients. This is not to say that a content from core and secondary text do not intervene, on the contrary as it has been already mentioned news outlets often cited material from Twitter. However arguably, without the attention from media channels with wider reach, the politicians might have not achieved a celebrity status. Therefore, this paper concentrates on the secondary celebrity texts, namely the coverage of the filibusters by "more traditional" mainstream media channels which most Americans get their news from. The secondary text might reveal cultural practices on how media represent female and male politicians that came to be known as celebrities. Hence, this paper investigates:

RQ1: How does gender influence the framing of a celebrity politician in mainstream media?

Nonetheless, the immense involvement of online users cannot be ignored either, for it constituted a crucial element in the filibuster stories. Furthermore, the Paul-Davis case also shows how journalist sourcing practices change in the age of digital technology where "the news" is influenced by different actors coming from professional journalist background as well as amateur bloggers or regular online users who simply share information within their social media networks. Thus, in order to better understand how a celebrity politician is constructed and how journalist practices might alter in the age of digital media another enquiry arises:

RQ2: How are user-generated media products incorporated in news coverage of filibusters?

In order to answer the research questions, the study incorporates a comparative case study format of media coverage of two filibusters which generated the most public attention in 2013, performed by Republican Senator Rand Paul and Democratic Texas state Senator Wendy Davis. The former filibustered for almost 13 hours against Presidential nomination for John Brennan to the post of CIA director on the 6th of March. The candidacy was quite controversial as Brennan had refused to rule out the use of military drone strikes within the US in "extraordinary circumstances" like the 9/11 terrorist attack. Paul expressed his concerns about the lack of definition as to whom and under what circumstances can be targeted by a lethal weapon which might result in breaking the most fundamental constitutional rights. In a similar vein, three months later on the 25th of June Wendy Davis performed a 13 hour filibuster against a proposed restriction in Texas abortion law, banning all abortions at 20 weeks post-fertilization. Furthermore, the bill would result in shutting most abortion clinics in the state, hindering the access to birth control for

financially disadvantaged women living in smaller cities or distant areas. There are some noteworthy differences in procedures for US Senate and Texas state Senate filibusters. According to the Legislative Reference Library of Texas website, during a Texas Senate filibuster, a senator cannot drink, eat, nor leave the room during the speech. A senator needs to speak only about topics relevant to the bill. When the mentioned rules are violated three times or a senator voluntarily yields the floor, the filibuster ends (Legislative Reference Library of Texas, 2011, May 23). However, US Senate filibuster rules are less strict, they allow a politician to lean on a desk and even give a voice to other members of Senate without consequences. A politician can talk as long as he/she wants on all sorts of subjects until three-fifths of the Senators bring debate to an end by invoking cloture (Fisk & Chemerinsky, 1997). Despite the differences, the main principle remains the same: a politician decides to put on an exhausting procedure to express their opinion in objection to certain legislative actions. Furthermore, both filibusters performed by Wendy Davis and Rand Paul had a similar resonance in media, #StandWithRand and #StandWithWendy were second most trending hashtags on Twitter on the day of their filibusters, and they both received extensive media attention.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The theoretical framework lays out relevant theories concerning the quite complex phenomenon of the filibustering politicians. First, it discusses previous studies on gender framing in political news, and women's position within popular culture. Most studies agree that the significance of female politicians is undermined through emphasising their feminine features such as appearance and nurturing qualities (Sanbonmatsu, 2002; Freedman & Frico, 2005; Armstrong & Gao, 2010; Bode & Hennings, 2012) that, according to van Zoonen (2004), do not easily travel to political field, because they position women as unfitting to serve a public office which requires characteristics stereotypically associated with men. However, in order to understand how this dynamic plays out in celebrity communication patterns, the next section moves to the presentation of debate surrounding celebrity politics. This study uses Marsh's et al. (2010) definition of celebrity politics which in short describes it as a type of communication, or rather an aesthetic of representation that involves an established politician interacting with popular culture. In staging a celebrity politician media play crucial role, thus the last section of theoretical framework deals with newsmaking practices in the age of social media. The advent of the internet created a state labelled by Chadwick as "hybrid" and Deuze "bricoleur" media which implies that a convergence of media in the age of digital technologies allows different actors, from professional journalists to regular social media users, to take active part in creating news. The filibusters generated immense online buzz, especially on Twitter, thus expecting that the coverage of Wendy Davis and Rand Paul would utilise user-generated content, the theoretical framework introduces rapidly evolving literature on incorporating tweets in the news stories. Studies show quite repetitive results that, tweets usually serve illustrative purposes and reporters try to normalise its content according to the principles of more traditional journalism (Lasorsa, Lewis & Holton, 2012; Leuven, Heinrich & Deprez, 2013; Broersma & Graham, 2013). Nonetheless, as Papacharissi and Fatima de Oliveira (2012) argue, Twitter news feeds produce a specific storytelling quality of "affective news" based on subjective experiences, opinions, and emotions, that distinguish them from more traditional practices.

The cases of filibustering politicians generate a quite complex context which in this study is going to be assessed from gender as well as communication studies perspective. This theoretical framework should effectively position the phenomenon in a greater, scholarly debate that allows to better understand the way gender plays out in celebrity politics and how hybrid and bricoleur media affect the way celebrity figure is constructed.

Media coverage and gender

As already mentioned, studies on gender representation in political news show that despite a century of women's emancipation movements, double standards are still prevalent in media. Running for the same office, women receive less coverage in news than men (Freedman & Frico, 2005; Armstrong & Gao, 2010). Sanbonmatsu (2002) shows how the preference for masculine traits over feminine can translate into stereotypes women face in the political sphere. Stereotypes invoking masculine and feminine qualities, as well as traditional notions of male/female are reflected in news stories that concentrate more on emotions, family, personal life, and appearance rather than policy issues in case of women (Bode & Hennings, 2012). Furthermore, media more often question women's viability and experience for running positions than their male counterparts (Jalalzai, 2006). According to Bode et al., (2012) highlighting family and electability when covering women politicians are ways the media perpetuate notions of traditional male/female roles, which can disadvantage women in the political realm where masculine traits are more preferred.

Van Zoonen (2004) sees all the above signs as symptoms of women's problematic position in the age of celebritisation of politics. Taking a cultural studies approach, she claims that tensions are rooted in the traditional divide where men occupy public while women private spheres of life. Men have an established position in a public realm since they have been representing it for centuries, whereas women were constrained to the domestic space, thus entering political arena as "the others", odd ones, with no symbolic nor cultural capital as female-politicians. Celebrity politics might work out for men, exposing their private lives in honeyed images of spending afternoon with a family or playing golf, and in turn adding a more human touch to their public positions. On the other hand, for women emotionality and personal matters such as home and family, are already culturally defined characteristics. Thus, while celebrity communication pattern concentrated on personalisation, exposes private matters of an office holder, adds a new "flavour" to a male politician, it drags women down to their traditional "cage" of domestic sphere. Therefore as van Zoonen argues, popular culture offers female celebrity politicians narratives that do not travel easily to political field. A strong presence of cultural stereotypes in celebrity discourse is, according to Frances Bonner (2005), due to the fact that in order to create an immediate, affective rapport with a consumer, a celebrity figure needs to evoke impression of familiarity. Thus, producers developing the celebrity of a particular person are circumscribed in their activities by pre-existing texts, representations, and ideologies relating to individual characteristics of a person such as race, gender, sexuality and celebrity culture itself. Celebrity culture of the past, founded on the Hollywood star system, was built on stable

notions of female beauty, enigmatic appeal and corporeal perfection. Even though contemporary female celebrity seems less restrictive in complying to traditional images of femininity because of its continuous self-reflexivity and play with cultural codes of femininity, e.g. Madonna or more recent example Miley Cyrus, female celebrity is still performed as erotic spectacle built on consumption of the sexualised body. The cultural conditions provide unfavourable context for female politicians. Already in 1977, French political scientist Roger-Gerard Schwartzberg noted that while male politicians can import some elements of the star system by performing 'charming leadership', this is not an option for a female politician: 'People would accuse her of frivolity, of flirtation' (quoted in van Zoonen, 2006, p. 293). The quote coming from the late 70s is echoed in a more contemporary study by a non-profit organisation for equal opportunities "Catalyst" (2007), that reveals gender stereotypes can create several predicaments for women leaders. The chief observation is that female leaders have to constantly monitor their behaviour in order to appear professional, because they are ostracised when being stern and straightforward, however when sentimental and compassionate, women are highly scrutinised. The report offers a bitter conclusion: "The same leadership style can be described as assertive in a man but abrasive in a woman" (p. 21).

According to Schwartzberg, the only feminine model of celebrity available to women in politics would be that of the mother, tying into myths of femininity as nurturing and caring. Framing of the first female US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi can be an illustrative example of such practice. Whenever media covered her in a positive light, qualities of a gentle and nourishing leader were very often emphasised, e.g. *New York Times* compares her to a "grandmother at Christmas" when talking about her chances of becoming the next House Speaker (Steinhauer, 2006, Oct.30). Van Zoonen (2006) applies these arguments to the analysis of prominent female politicians Finish Prime Minister Tarja Halonen and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, coming to the conclusion that the women were often portrayed as "nurturing mothers" of their nations, although they deliberately masked their femininity in e.g. keeping their private life away from public and appearing in plain clothing, in order to emerge as legitimate officeholders.

However, a study by Bradley and Wicks (2011) comparing Sarah Palin's and John Biden's portrayal in blogosphere during 2008 presidency election, show that in an online environment that allows multiple voices to be expressed outside mainstream media, both candidates receive the same amount of attention to their policy issues. Although bloggers still talked about Palin's appearance and family life more often in comparison to Biden, the research indicates that internet sphere might have brought changes in representing gender in politics which in effect diminishes reliance on stereotypes. In the case of Paul-Davis filibusters involvement of online audiences was important in staging their celebrity personas by mainstream media. Thus, it might have also affected how the politicians were portrayed in terms of

gender. In order to investigate how celebrity construction of politician might change with a great influence of online audiences in shaping the mainstream news, the first research question asks:

RQ1: How does gender influence the framing of a celebrity politician in mainstream media?

However before drawing any conclusions, it is crucial to understand a complex nature of celebrity politics and the ways it is communicated in media.

Celebrity politics and aesthetic of representation

There are multiple interpretations of celebrity politics. Most scholarly work has focused on individuals coming from the field of entertainment who seek political agenda, such as Arnold Schwarzenegger becoming California governor, Angelina Jolie's actions on a part of UNICEF, or popular practice of celebrity endorsement which aims to attract voters to a certain political candidate (Veer, Becirovic & Martin, 2010; Wheeler, 2013). However, very little attention was given to established politicians who take on communication strategies that resemble the ones of popular culture. The scarcity of scholarly work in that field is quite surprising taking into account that practices like appearing on popular television shows, establishing associations with other celebrities, or interacting with citizens through social media platforms is a recognised and growing phenomenon in contemporary politics (Marsh, t'Hart & Tindall, 2010). Marsh et al. offer a compelling definition of a type of a celebrity politician that this study is interested in:

> Politician celebrities are coming to terms with the media age and consumer culture, attempting to personalise or 'brand' their leadership, and are constantly adapting their political communication strategy to communicate through evolving media, such as radio, television and the internet (Marsh et al., 2010, p. 222).

The mass visibility that is afforded by modern mediated politics especially television and internet, has foregrounded issues of style, appearance, and personality, breaking down "some fences that separate politics from entertainment and political leadership from celebrity" (Corner et al., 2003, p. 2). A majority of scholars disdain celebrity politics for creating a "cult of personality" which places appearance over required competence (Gamson, 1994; Corner & Pels, 2003; Turner, 2004). They see that within celebrity discourse, political communication comes to be defined in conventions of advertising where politicians become stars, politics a drama series, while citizens are spectators. The "media spectacle" suggests that the emphasis on celebrity replaces the complexities of policy with symbolic gestures (Marsh, Hart &

Tindall, 2010). This logic leads to connecting politics with marketing which from a perspective of the democracy-theory vision of the informed and participating citizen, is regarded as a strategy to manipulate voters rather than orienting them (Scammell, 2007).

Negative views on celebrity politics have been contested by several political science theorists, most importantly John Street (2004) and Liesbet van Zoonen (2004), who argue that liaison of politics with popular culture does not necessary offend democratic values. On the contrary, it can harness and reinvigorate democratic system, stimulating public involvement of people who wouldn't be interested in politics otherwise (van Zoonen, 2004). Street (2004) claims that the most appropriate way to understand celebrity politics is as an aesthetic of representation and political performance. As van Zoonen comments, the Greek Sophists believed that virtue was a matter of great performance. Similarly, Niccolò Machiavelli's works demonstrate that it is necessary to form a proper "union of personality and performance" (quoted in van Zoonen, 2005, p.72) to create a convincing political persona. Therefore, while conditions of political communications have changed, the need to determine a persuasive political performance remains timeless. Ankersmit (2002) takes the problem deep down to ontological matters, claiming that representation constitutes the substance itself. Therefore, political power can be articulated only through the act of representation to even appear in the mind of public, positioning power as a product of style and creativity. Thus, celebrity politics shouldn't be conceived as a negative phenomenon, but as Street (2004) states:

> Adoption of the trappings of popular celebrity is not a trivial gesture towards fashion or a minor detail of political communication, but instead lies at the heart of the notion of political representation itself. Whether it constitutes a legitimized basis for representation depends on the political process and cultural performance. Put differently, all politicians are celebrity politicians, only some are more convincing, more 'authentic' performers than others. (p. 447)

The reason for emergence and growing presence of celebrity politics lies in changing paradigms of political participation. Social and cultural fragmentation has become evident in instability and unpredictability of political constituencies. The decline in political membership, diminishing of party identifications and the increase in the number of undecided, floating voters, are signatures of an era of partisan dealingment (van Zoonen, 2004). Corner and Pels (2003) claim that previous partisan allegiances have been replaced by post-ideological lifestyle choices which foreground matters of aesthetic style. They argue that as identification with political parties' declines, the public has favoured "more eclectic, fluid, issue specific and personality-bound forms of political recognition and engagement" (p.7). This gives a rise to more extensive "personalisation" of politics where ideologies are resented by political personalities in

a distinctive manner. Empathy, attraction and even eroticism of personhood can be found alongside more conventional spectrum of respect through contempt. Therefore, in order to appeal to contemporary voters through personalisation, McKernan (2011) argues politicians need to utilize hegemonic, cultural tropes to craft public personalities with whom the electorate can identify. Marshall (1997) argues that the "celebritisation" can be understood as a communication process of filling out political rationality with affective relationships. The use of icons and images of popular culture enables politicians to create a "person of qualities" who not only has to be charismatic and unique enough to hold an important office, but also needs to demonstrate solidarity with the electorate, appearing as being one of them. This generates impression of "representativeness" where people feel that the candidate shares their values, and in effect are more prone to support him/her (Corner et al., 2003). Thus, what other political event can create better circumstances to exercise personal politics and generate "person of quality" effect than the filibuster?

As discussed in the introduction, the filibuster had been mythicized as a heroic battle of minority to secure the wellbeing of a nation. A long exhausting speech which requires continual standing without eating, drinking nor going to the bathroom, bears characteristics of a courageous deed demanding a great deal of self-determination and endurance. Furthermore, doing it against the will of majority resonates with dramatic devices of self-sacrifice and nobility that in some degree might even resemble tropes of Greek tragedy. Therefore, filibuster becomes a particularly attractive context for producing celebrity qualities embedded in cultural symbols. Not surprisingly, such a spectacle filled with dramatic elements, becomes appealing to audiences who will follow a politician almost like a fictional character. This produces fertile ground to develop grand narratives about individual's stamina and a sense of duty. Filibuster becomes a particularly attractive tactic for politicians to create an affective, personal relationship with electorate which, along with reach to mass audience, allows to achieve a status of a celebrity. However, in creating this link media's role cannot be overestimated.

As Kerrigan, Brownlie, Hewer & Daza LeTouze (2011) note, the medium and channel to convey celebrity is one of spectacle. Spectacle frames newsworthiness and creates a context within which celebrity is staged, produced and functions. The content is celebrity. Consequently, the spectacle becomes a carrier of celebrity content. Thus, celebrity is "not a world of events, history, culture, and ideas produced from shifting contradictory real experiences, but artefacts produced from elements of the code and technical manipulation of the medium" (Baudrillard quoted in Kerrigan et al., 2011 p. 1055). Rein, Kotler & Stoller (1997) are more specific, propose the following elements as chief, recurring characteristics of celebrity stories conveyed by contemporary media:

- Drama: beginning, middle, and end revolving around some sort of conflict (killing a bill through filibuster)

- Adversity: a roadblock that has to be overcome (e.g. the bill, tiredness, physical needs)

- Crisis: an event that brings adversity into focus (e.g. senators trying to end the filibuster through cloture)

- Unrelenting talents (politician's skills: their stamina, rhetoric)

- A final reward or climax (success of the filibuster, huge online audience, people's support)

As Marshall (1997) heavily emphasises in his influential book *Celebrity and Power,* while analysing celebrity text it is crucial to be aware of the mediating effects of different technologies from which a celebrity personality emerges for they highly influence the construction of a celebrity figure.

Celebrity, framing and online media

As already mentioned in the previous section, celebrity phenomenon is closely tied to medium from which it emerges. However this relationship has reciprocal qualities: not only has changing specificity of medium heavily influenced the way celebrity has been staged such as advent of television or internet, but also rise of celebrity communication had a great impact on news framing. Lawrence (2010) argues that the style of celebrity communication has significantly affected political journalism by encouraging a more dramatized, assertive, and interpretative reporting. This type of political news is considered as "game" or "strategic" news frame. Game-framed coverage is defined by scholars as a reflection of journalists' persistent focus on drama and conflict, situating political actors and events in a framework of a simplified, two-sided conflict "with the drama generated by the expectations of 'winners' and 'losers' (Lawrence, 2010, p. 95). According to Bennett (1997), game framing is also an effect of American journalism's tendency to, in a truly celebrity manner, personalise news by treating politics as a prevailing, discrete conflict between individual office holders rather than parties. The label "game framing" was inspired by sport news, for game framing style and rhetoric highly resembles the one from sport news with its immense emphasis on competition, emotions, and winning strategy (de Vresee, 2005). Major criticism of game framed political coverage, mirroring the one of celebrity politics itself, is that when politics is presented as a dramatic play of winners and losers, the actual substance of the politics might be marginalised (Lawrence, 2010). An opposite to game framed news is issue-based reporting which conveys substantive political information allowing citizens to understand public policy issues and formulate informed opinions. However, Hallin argues that treating politics as sport allows journalists to maintain an objective stance on political events. "By focusing on the ' "technical" ' aspects of the political game—

strategies, tactics, and wins and losses—journalists can more easily avoid appearing to take sides politically" (Hallin, 1997, p. 25, quoted in Lawrence, 2010, p. 95).

Drawing on previous research and her own analysis of welfare reform's press coverage in 1996, Lawrence contends that game framing is the most visible during election time when issues of political rivalry are the most "newsworthy." However, she also states that policy-making can become an attractive topic for game framing when it is marked by a political conflict that is bound to be resolved in a near future. Circumstances of the analysed filibusters seem to be a perfect fit for game-framed coverage. There is a clear conflict (a politician vs majority in the Senate), drama (strict rules of the filibuster which need to be followed, otherwise the speech ends), personalisation (individual politicians showing off their qualities in public), and a near resolution (end of the filibuster). Furthermore, the categorisation of game-framing and issue-based reporting might also come as beneficial in analysing gender representation in order to find out whether the case of the filibustering politicians agree with previous studies which prove that women get far less issue-based coverage than men. However, before jumping to the analysis part, it is crucial to delineate specificity of news coverage and celebrity politics in the age of internet.

Still, most scholarship concentrates around television and printed media as channels for fabrication of a celebrity politician. However, the advent of internet and social media brought a significantly different paradigm of producing a celebrity which contrast with one-way, mediated communication between a politician and constituencies offered by more traditional media (Turner, 2013). Immediacy, direct address, and interactivity enabled by social media, not only diminish the distance between citizen and a politician, but also gives audiences more agenda in shaping politician's image (Marwick & boyd, 2011). Rand Paul's and Wendy Davis's instances illustrate how political communication can take a form of popular address through "transmitting" their filibusters on Twitter and YouTube. Tweets came not only from their accounts, but most importantly the events were enriched by a great engagement from online audiences who generated their own content with hashtags #StandWithWendy and #StandWithPaul that directly connected users' actions with politician's image. A process of constructing a celebrity politician goes through a similar transformation as other forms of mediated communication in the age of internet proliferation, namely a blending distinction between producers and consumers of online content (Jenkins, 2006). One of the most compelling frameworks to understand how political communication is established in the information saturated society with various actors coming into picture, is offered by Andrew Chadwick and his concept of "hybrid media" (2011).

Hybrid media implies that media texts shouldn't be conceived as being produced by dichotomous forces: traditional or modern mediums: print vs digital technology, hegemonic power or minority voices, professional or amateur journalists, but rather as a mix of various, heterogeneous actors representing both sides of the spectrum (Chadwick, 2011). The ontology of hybridity constitutes an important and suggestive critique of essentialist, dichotomous thinking: it pushes away judgments about creating media content from "either/or" toward "not only, but also". Thus, it becomes particularly applicable for analysing online media that converges products generated by various actors. Chadwick argues that hybrid media concept is particularly relevant in political information cycles where hybridity draws attention to fundamental questions of ideology and power. The Internet allow more voices to influence the creation of news, therefore the content is not produced anymore by a small group elite of politicians, communication staff, and journalists, but also bloggers, activists and regular users who have great power in spreading information across different platforms to massive audience. As Chadwick states:

> Political information cycles are complex assemblages in which the personnel, practices, genres, technologies, and temporalities of online media are hybridized with those of broadcast and press media. This hybridization shapes power relations among actors and ultimately affects the flows and meanings of news (Chadwick, 2011, p.18).

In line with this argument, Deuze (2006) claims that internet has facilitated a bricoleur form of news which is described as remixing, reconstructing, and reusing of separate content originally produced for other media. News sites generally offer repurposed or aggregated materials from other media such as audio and video clips, image galleries, bits and pieces of written text, but also external or internal hyperlinks to a wide variety of different content. Deuze also argues for coexistence of old and new media in online environment rather than former being replaced by the latter. Practices such as established news outlets with more than hundred years of history like the *Washington Post* or *BBC* disseminating their content through Twitter, do not come as a surprise anymore, but are rather seen as norm. The other way around, digitally native news blogs such as *Huffington Post* still adhere to principles of traditional journalism in, e.g. constructing a story narrative (Deuze, 2006).

However, Deuze highlights that facing a vast material available online, bricoleur's strategies are constrained by pragmatism, experience and competence of an individual selecting appropriate materials. This becomes a particularly interesting in the case of analysed filibusters where in one day users generated more than half a million tweets mentioning the politicians. Events such as Occupy Wall Street or Arab Spring bestowed on Twitter a label of a distinctive news outlet (Shirky, 2010). However as already mentioned, seeing Twitter as a mainstream source of information or point of direct contact with a celebrity

politician for masses, becomes quite problematic due to a small number of citizens being present on Twitter. Hermida (2010) argues that Twitter should be seen as a "news radar", system that alerts journalist about trending issues and events. Parmele's (2013) study incorporating interviews with political journalists on how Twitter impacted news making norms and practices, reveal that journalists mainly use Twitter to efficiently and effectively find sources for their stories which can be easily traceable, and in result allowing to explore networks of actors involved in a story. Twitter emerges as a convenient tool for journalists who can add direct quotes to stories from tweets without having the source in front of a microphone or camera. However, both studies emphasise that the biggest challenge facing journalists using Twitter is to find right material among hundreds of millions of tweets sent every day. The authors highlight a crucial role of news media outlets as gatekeepers that determine what user-generated content is incorporated within a story and becomes part of "newsworthiness".

Although the research on the ways user-generated content is incorporated within news stories is quite scarce, some scholars already published interesting, exploratory studies that delineate how journalists make use of digital sources. Leuven, Heinrich and Deprez (2013) in their paper on how Belgian media outlets use sourcing from social media in foreign reporting, shows that this is a common practice, however the role of non-mainstream sources is diminished to illustrating the information in the news article. Two studies performed by Broersma and Graham (2012, 2013) who greatly contributed to understanding how news outlets utilise tweets in their stories, come to similar conclusions. First, they find out that tweets have usually illustrative function, adding extra "flavour" to the story through a testimony from someone who is involved. Here are the examples they were citing:

> Financial Times (16 April 2010), for example, quoted tweets from travellers who were trapped in Iceland in a story about the volcanic ashes that stopped air traffic. In another story on a lawsuit against file-sharing site Pirate Bay, a tweet from one of the Swedish founders of the site was used. His comment on losing the lawsuit was quoted in The Guardian (18 April 2009): 'This is just a theatre to the media' (Broersma at al., 2013, p. 451).

Tweets also functioned as triggers for the story meaning that the conversations on Twitter, e.g. an argument between politicians, could be a big enough event to construct a whole news story around it. Significantly less often tweets were used in a form of Q&A which involved a journalist posing questions to experts on specific issues via Twitter and subsequently publish the answers on the following day, and a "standalone" format that simply means incorporating tweets on their own, e.g. the tweet of the day.

Lasorsa, Lewis and Holton (2012) argue that journalists try to normalize social media by adapting them to existing professional norms and practices, while adjusting these norms to the dynamics of Twitter.

In their quantitative study of more than 20 thousand tweets from top 500 followed journalists on the platform, show that journalists on Twitter, or as they call them j-tweeters, more often offer their own opinions while microblogging than it would be expected in traditional professional setting. Journalists share personal and opinionated information by blending facts and opinions. A study of news values and story-telling forms of Twitter news streams during 2011 uprising in Egypt performed by Papacharissi and Fatima de Oliveira (2012), show similar results as Larosa's et al. research. News feeds collectively generated by citizens, bloggers, activists, journalists, and media outlets created a "drama of instantaneity" which is not necessarily congruent with the western, more traditional idea of fact checking journalism, but focuses on emotionally engaging with readers. The authors name this type of storytelling as affective news, because they blended opinion, fact, and emotion into expression uttered in anticipation of events that had not yet attained recognition through mainstream media. Another important element which comes to presence thanks to the growing sourcing practices from social media is, in a truly hybrid media fashion, allowing alternative and most importantly popular voices to be heard in news. Tweets from ordinary users can be seen, according to Beoersma et al., as giving voice to "vox populi", sharing the power of making news with the consumers. Furthermore, they draw attention to an important aspect that while relying on a politician's tweet without contacting the source and thus having no ability to question nor criticise, politicians gain control over the news discourse. The absence of personal contact seems to "make reporters insecure and cautious; by not paraphrasing and interpreting utterances" (2012, p.413) by directly quoting them, journalists seem to transfer responsibility for the information from them to the sources. Broersma et al. (2013) argue that motives behind journalists' action to incorporate tweets, especially for illustrative reasons, reflect current trend towards personalisation of news:

> Ever more often, news stories get a human angle to make them more appealing and accessible. Personal observations such as those voiced in tweets make it possible to relate abstract topics quite naturally to the experiences of readers (p. 460).

Personalisation of news can be clearly seen as a symptom of celebrity politics. As Aelst, Sheafer, Stanyer (2011) show in their paper on theories concerning personalisation of politician news, it usually takes two forms: individualization regarding shifting media attention from party to individual politicians and privatization which deals with media increasing interest in politicians' private lives and personal characteristics. This definition almost literally copies theoretical understandings of celebrity politics and a type of communication it generates. It can be easily deduced that affective qualities of tweets and personalisation of news all add up as a perfect medium for conveying celebrity politics 2.0. This becomes

particularly relevant for the case of Paul-Davis filibusters where the media coverage extensively drew on content generated by online users. Therefore, in order shed some light on how journalist practices in covering celebrity politician has changed with a growing prevalence of digital technologies, the second research question asks:

RQ2: How are user-generated media products incorporated in news coverage of filibusters?

Most studies mentioned above, took a sample of news articles from various outlets utilising tweets, in a certain time period. However, this research examines certain political event that has a potential to generate sourcing of user-generated content. This allows for investigation of what kinds of media are used in reporting a specific event, and how they are situated in comparison to the whole coverage. This offers a new approach on the matter of non-mainstream sourcing.

Summary

The discussed literature outlines theoretical background for a complex relation between gender, celebrity politics and newsmaking processes in the age of digital media. However, a binding element appearing in all these theoretical disputes, is an issue of personalisation. After uncovering multiple layers of celebrity politics, it comes down to personalisation of legislative processes and political events. Societal and cultural shifts caused a prevailing partisan dealignment in favour of political engagement that is issue specific and personality-bond. As van Zonnen argues, this great emphasis on personalisation becomes quite problematic for female politicians, because it positions them within traditional cultural paradigms of femininity that single out features that stage them as less competent and unfit to hold a public office, in comparison to men. Furthermore, the act of personalising is intensively practiced by media in the face of growing prevalence of celebrity politics, game framing and journalists' tactic to include user-generated content in news stories. Incorporating tweets often inclines following the logic of affective news which blend subjective opinions and emotions with facts. It gives direct voice to people involved in reported events, which very often means not only prominent figures such as politicians and experts, but also regular people. The filibustered politicians generated immense online buzz, especially on Twitter, thus expecting that the coverage of Wendy Davis and Rand Paul would utilise user-generated content to a greater extent than in usual political situations, might shed some light on reporting practices in these new circumstances. Furthermore, drawing on Bradley and Wicks study showing that in blogosphere environment female and male politicians receive quite similar coverage in regards to policy issues, it might seem that this pattern will be to some degree replicated by media covering Davis's and Paul's filibusters which drew attention of hundreds of thousands of microblogging Twitter users.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The operationalization of the research questions is one of the most vital points in the research, thus the methods chapter describes in great detail the steps taken throughout the coding and analysis, as well as clear accounting for methodological choices. The first section explains why this research uses comparative case study format, how the cases were selected and their significance for the population of celebrity politics. Next, the methods of obtaining units of analysis, namely articles and television transcripts dealing with the filibusters, is discussed along with the challenges that emerged throughout the process. The third section is dedicated to a detailed description of content analysis and coding processes, while the actual coding schemes with comprehensive explanation of the codes as well as categories are presented in the next part. At the end, the discussion moves to the essential and problematic issue of reliability in qualitative studies.

Case selection

The thesis uses comparative case study research. As Yin (2013) claims, case study is a particularly appropriate method when the phenomenon analysed is recent and whose context needs to be more thoroughly investigated. Case study allows for a deeper, more detailed analysis of a unique or emerging event which appears as a proper method for exploratory research on celebrity politics and its representation in media. Furthermore, Yin contends that case study is beneficial in shedding some empirical light on an overtly theorised issues, which is highly appropriate for enhancing academic debate on celebrity politics that suffers from a lack of empirical studies (Street, 2004; van Zoonen, 2006; McKernan, 2011, Wheeler, 2012). A closer analysis often results in multiple types of data and variables that should be analysed in "triangulating fashion" (Yin, 2013, p. 17) in order to offer valid and reliable outcomes. Correspondingly, Dahlberg (2001) warns against operationalizing political communication through narrowly defined and measurable indicators, for they neglect aspects which cannot be easily quantified. However, avoiding all specifications make it hard for the research to be compatible with existing theories. Therefore, this paper attempts to comply with Dahlberg's arguments and Yin's propositions through incorporation of quantitative as well as qualitative research methods.

Seawright and Gerring (2008) writing about case selection in mixed methods case studies, note that it can be a quite difficult process since a chosen case or cases should vary on the dimension of

theoretical interest but be representative in order to reflect on a broader population. Choosing from such a diversified population as celebrity politics, might seem as a challenging endeavour, especially because different offices and legislative processes have various meanings and functions that can heavily influence how a certain politician is portrayed. Furthermore, the fact that the number of women in politics who could be seen as possessing celebrity status is quite limited, makes the selection even harder. However, the authors offer useful paradigms which facilitate the process of selection. Although their strategies are approached quantitatively, the reasoning is still built on general ideas that can be easily translated into qualitative methods.

This research follows the model of "similar cases" which is the most appropriate for an exploratory multiple case study research project that seeks to offer generalisation on a certain population. What is particularly useful in this model, is that it requires at least two cases to have similar background condition with one different variable that affects the outcome of the study. Similar background condition in an instance of celebrity politics might mean a comparable political office (president, senator) or event (talk show, public speech) when the celebrity effect is produced. The similar cases approach helps to diminish the influence of complex cultural significations that are attached to different political ranks or events and focus on a certain aspect of theoretical interest. This paper analyses two cases of filibusters (similar background conditions) performed by male and female politicians (different variable: gender), respectively Rand Paul and Wendy Davis. Although there are distinctive differences between the politicians: they come from opposite parties and their filibusters deal with different policies, which might to some extent affect the way Paul and Davis are portrayed, most importantly the filibusters took place within a close time period, involving a similar legislative procedure, and also evoking a great interest from public, which offers satisfactory circumstances for a comparative analysis. Results of the analysis will be generalised to the population of celebrity politicians who belong to the group of public office holder with political background, who actively use communication patterns similar to the ones of popular culture (Street, 2004).

Units of analysis

As Yin (2013) heavily emphasises, stating boundaries of a case study research is crucial since it could embrace multiplicity of factors and perspectives, creating chaotic compilation of various data. Thus, this research strictly limits its unit of analysis to major offline / online news articles and television transcripts, coming from two-week period: one day before the date actual filibuster took place and 13

days after it, in order to encompass a whole perspective on the investigated events: initial reaction of the media and aftermath. The sources were found under a search term filibuster + a politician's name through the Lexis Nexis database which not only stores major newspapers and magazines but also websites crucial for analysing bricoleur media. As already stated, celebritisation is a phenomenon produced and functioning mainly through mainstream media. Wimmer and Dominick (2013) describe mainstream media as any form of communication transmitted through a channel that simultaneously reaches a large number of people. Thus, the units of analysis were retrieved from the most popular news outlets grasping the largest audiences based on the Nielsen data from 2013, including broadcast television material, online articles, and print (Table 1). All articles and transcripts used for the research were stored and are accessible on sin-online.

Table 1: Source Information

Television broadcast	Online news		Print news
ABC	New York Times	http://www.nytimes.com/	New York Times
CBS	Wall Street Journal	http://online.wsj.com/	Washington Post
CNN	USA Today	http://www.usatoday.com/	New York Post
FOX	Washington Post	http://www.washingtonpost.com/	USA Today
MSNBC	Yahoo/ABC	http://news.yahoo.com/abc-news/	
	CNN	http://us.cnn.com/	
	MSNBC	http://www.msnbc.com/	
	Fox News	http://www.foxnews.com/	
	The Huffington Post	http://www.huffingtonpost.com/	
	BuzzFeed	http://www.buzzfeed.com/	
	Mashable	http://mashable.com/	

However, it needs to be noted that while determining what number of recipients television news and newspapers attract, the case of online news consumption is a relatively complicated issue. First, people's choice of online news outlets is much more diversified due to a greater variety of sources than in the case of other mediums. While three most popular television news programmes gather more than 22 million viewers, top three websites get less than 5 million views a day (Nielsen, 2013). Thus, online sources significantly outnumber other ones. Second, more than 30% of Americans get their news from social media websites (Pew Research Center, 2013). Even when appearances on social media platforms lead directly to the actual websites, some users would not click on a link but only read a headline and short description,

still consuming news to some degree but solely on a social media platform. Third, categorising websites as specifically "news outlets" is also quite challenging since a great number of the most popular online platforms are multi-thematic: incorporating traditionally viewed news but also the most popular viral videos and humorous quizzes. In order to solve this problem and assess whether a certain website fits to the category of "news outlet", it was checked whether the website appeared in google news search. These types of challenges are additionally hard to overcome, because there is very little academic work dealing with these issues. Thus, a researcher needs to find their own way in overcoming problems of hybrid media analysis.

Content analysis and coding process

In order to operationalize the research questions and analyse how the celebrity personalities were constructed for both genders as well as types of media content included within news, this study uses content analysis. Content analysis was chosen as appropriate to address the research questions, as media framing of celebrity politicians are really about the substantive components of media content. Krippendorff (2004) states, content analysis is an unobtrusive technique that allows researchers to analyse unstructured data in search of "meanings, symbolic qualities, and expressive contents they have and of the communicative roles they play" (p. 44). Content analysis facilitates a process of detecting recurring motives and trends in producing a celebrity politician by media outlets. In pursuance to transform an unedited text into analysable representations, the news coverage is quantitatively as well as qualitatively coded.

For the quantitative analysis a coding software Wordij which analyses volumes of text for the co-occurrences of words (Danowski, 2009), was used. Co-occurrence analysis refers to a technique that explore relationships of how words are used in a body of text. Words appearing near each other represent concepts which have some form of semantic connection within the body of text being analysed (Leetaru, 2012). The visualisation of co-words correlation was performed by Gephi software that enables more detailed analysis of interrelations between certain nodes (words in this case) (gephi.org). The nodes were evaluated according to the modularity property which compartmentalises a whole network into sub-networks that group nodes (words) according to their closeness in the text (Paranyushkin, 2011). Detection of the community structure allows to see the contextual clusters more precisely, e.g. when the modularity analysis shows words unemployment and family belonging to one cluster, this might mean that the issue is recurrently framed within societal dimension probably talking about the influence an unemployment

rate has on wellbeing of regular citizens. This process effectively reveals recurring, thematic patterns in the produced texts.

Using computer software for content analysis helps to reliably analyse large volumes of data at a high speed. However, as most scholars warn future researchers, computers recognises only character strings, but fail at grasping meaning or rather significance of a certain issue in a fuller context (Krippendorff, 2004, Leetaru, 2012). Thus, this paper follows "computer-aided text analysis" approach recommended by Krippendorff which simply divides analytical tasks into what humans and computers do best. Quantitative analysis of words co-occurrence by Wordij and Gephi serves as a background for a more insightful qualitative examination and human coding of selected articles.

Qualitative reading and coding was performed with QDA miner which is a mixed-methods, analysis software that assists in managing and coding qualitative data (Provalis Research, 2012). It allows for semi-hand coding meaning that, while the qualitative reading and coding process take place in a computer environment which facilitates the process of finding certain codes, organising them, performing basic statistical (mainly descriptive) operation, the main action of highlighting a certain passage that applies to a specific code is the same as in the fully hand coding. Thus, I believe it cannot be conceived as a fully computer nor hand coding. The selection was based on theoretical saturation method which simply indicates that sampling and data collection continue until new conceptual insights appear. However, as Glaser (2004) notes, the process shouldn't end when a researcher finds no new descriptive codes, categories or themes emerging from the analysis of data, but also the "conceptual density" should lift the theory above the description and show how various codes, categories, and concepts interconnect. The coding scheme has been based on detecting news "frames" in the analysed texts. Most generally, news framing can be seen as an organisation of media content providing immediate context for recipients through selection, emphasis, and absence of certain facts and ideas (Dimitrova & Connolly-Arhen, 2007). However, given the diversity of framing devices, there are multiple varying definitions of framing (D'Angelo, 2002), rather than presenting them here, it is more beneficial to highlight how the frames were identified throughout the analysis. This study uses a definition for identifying news frames according to four categories developed by Capella and Jamieson (1994):

1. News frame must have identifiable conceptual and linguistic characteristics.
2. News frame should be commonly observed in journalistic practice. In other words, it needs to frequently appear in analysed texts.
3. News frame must be possible to distinguish from other frames.

4. News frame needs to be recognisable by others and not be merely an effect of researcher's imagination. This problem is naturally solved by testing reliability of coders.

Nonetheless, each research question required different approach in terms of framing analysis. The first one: **how does gender influence the framing of a celebrity politician in media,** is answered from a "frame-setting" view which examines an interaction between news frames and socio-political discourses surrounding the issue (de Vreese, 2008). Looking at the problem from this perspective allows to see how the representation of Wendy Davis and Rand Paul in the scenario of celebrity politics reflects cultural constructs of gender. Through comparing what topics were most recurrent for the cases and how they were presented, the study could expose whether double-standards are still apparent, and if so what form they took on in the celebrity politics setting. The second research question: **how are user-generated media products incorporated in news coverage of filibusters,** called for a different, more complex treatment. First, from the group of qualitatively analysed units, was chosen a number of articles which incorporated user-generated content such as tweets, YouTube or Vine videos, and memes. Then, the units were analysed from "framing devices" perspective that refers to the factors that influence the structural qualities of news frames (de Vreese, 2008). The outcomes were aimed to show how the frames were manifested in the text, meaning how and what kind of user-generated content was incorporated within the news story and what significance it barriers, e.g. whether a tweet was separately positioned or within the main narrative and how it affected story framing.

The process of creating the coding scheme took inductive as well as deductive approach, meaning that some of the categories were inspired by the previous studies while others emerged from the material during the course of the analysis. This method was chosen in order to preserve a "thread" with previous studies dealing with gender representation in media and sourcing methods, while still remaining open to new findings. Following instructions proposed by Saldana (2012), coding took two cycles. The initial coding, better known as open coding, aimed to break qualitative data into distinct parts, examining them and comparing for similarities and differences. This phase served as a starting point providing the research with analytic leads for further examination. Within the initial coding process two types of coding were incorporated:

- **Descriptive coding** which simply summarises in a word or short phrase the basic topic of a qualitative data. Description is the foundation for qualitative inquiry, and it primarily leads to "categorised inventory, tabular account, summary, or index of data content", essential for further stages of coding (Saldana, 2012, p.72).

- **Provisional coding** codes text according to previously established principles. As already mentioned, in the case of this study provisional coding was inspired by the previous research on gender representation of politicians in news, but also Rein's et al. elements of celebrity's story and Lawrence's distinction of game and issue-based news. Nonetheless, the coding schemes from the other studies served more as a guidance to coding rather than firmly following them throughout the analysis. Thus, some of the categories were incorporated within the study in a direct or modified form while others were completely dropped off.

The second cycle of coding took the following steps:

- **Focused coding** which searches for the most frequent initial codes to develop the most salient categories in the analysed text, from descriptive and provisional coding. The function of this step was to focus on the most significant findings and path a way for axial coding to organise outlining of the categories and sub-categories.

- **Axial coding** refers to bringing the patterns detected by focus coding and finding connections between them. The main goal for this process was to relate categories to sub-categories. Here, the coding scheme went through several transformation: composing, grouping, ungrouping, and deleting categories as well as sub-categories while coding the whole set of qualitative data numerous times, in order to offer a ground for theoretical coding.

- **Theoretical coding** delivered a final coding schemes (Table 2 and Table 3) which were utilised for the final reading of the analysed articles and television transcripts. It involved all the essential categories and sub-categories for addressing the research questions.

Table 2: The coding scheme for RQ#1

GAME FRAME	ISSUE FRAME
Celebritisation	**Substance of the legislation**
Drama	Legislative issues
Celebrity / star	Implication of the legislation on citizens' lives
Reference to popular culture	Effectiveness of the filibuster
Personal issues	**Democratic values**
Appearance & outfit	Deliberation
Family & personal background	Exercising democratic principles through the legislation
Political strategy	
Political future of the politician	
Conflicts with other politicians	
Self-promotion	

Table 3: The coding scheme for RQ#2

Type of media content	Tweet
	Photo
	YouTube video
	Vine video
	Meme
	Other
Content	Reporting the course of events
	Expression of support
	Expression of criticism
	Unidentified
Function	Illustrative
	Trigger for the story
	Other
Source	Politician
	Expert
	Journalists and media outlets
	Activists and regular online users
Location	Incorporation within a news story
	Standalone

Coding schemes

The frames were divided into two, more general, grand frames: **game** and **issue-based** according to the distinction proposed by Lawrence (2007). The game frame embraces elements that are distinctive of celebrity politics and its affective as well as personalised qualities. **Celebritisation** frame was inspired by Rein's et al. elements of celebrity story and consists of sub-categories that directly position a politician as a celebrity figure:

- Drama refers to adding dramatic narration/tone in reporting the events of the filibusters. This frame was present when events were described with affective words, focused on obstacles, crisis, and emotions. E.g., this is a non-dramatic presentation of the story:

  The senator must stand and speak continuously on topics related to the underlying bill. The senators can't take a break (for snacks, bathroom, etc.), and can't even lean on their desk. Republicans tried multiple times to call points of order against Davis to try and stop the filibuster (*ABC news,* 2013, Jun. 27, para. 17).

  And this is one where dramatic tone is present:

  Republicans monitored virtually her every move and word, waiting to catch her violating Texas' obscure filibuster rules, which prohibited her from leaning on her desk or straying off topic. At one point they objected when a fellow Democrat tried to help put a back brace around Ms. Davis, who at that point had been standing for about seven hours straight (*New York Times,* 2013, Jun. 27, p.18).

  Quite often this category overlaid with other which meant that a certain paragraph was coded as drama and e.g. conflicts with other politicians.
- Celebrity/star: this code refers to directly naming or implying that the filibustering politicians are celebrities or political stars often through highlighting their popularity on social media during the filibuster.
- References to popular culture: applied when the politician or filibuster is compared to tropes existing within popular culture realm (most often coverage refers to Jefferson Smith, main character from *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*). This establishes link between a politician/legislative procedure and popular culture.

The following frame, **personal issues** also to some degree reflect celebritisation of the politician, however because it has been so crucial for gender studies in politics, it was outlined in order to allow for comparison between male and female politicians. The codes are quite straight-forward:

- Appearance & outfit regards remarks about the politician's clothing and appearance.

- Family and personal background refers to the politician's private information including relationships, family issues, and other personal matters.

The last frame belonging to the game group is **political strategy** which portrays political events in a competing, truly game manner:

- Political future marks comments about politician's chances in the forthcoming elections.

- Conflicts with other politicians deals with passages that highlight personal conflicts among the politicians.
- Self-promotion codes coverage which suggests that the politicians performed the filibuster mainly for raising their political profile.

The frames that belong to the issue-based grand frame aim to convey information about political events with no particular colouring, but rather focusing on the essence of the filibuster and its significance in a fuller context. **The substance of legislation** is a frame that refers to the core subject of the filibuster through two codes:

- Legislative issues codes paragraphs that describe and explain the subject of the filibusters: the anti-abortion bill #5 and John Brennan's nomination for the CIA's director.
- Implication of the legislation on public refers to segments of coverage that deal with influence of the filibusters on citizens' lives, rights, and liberties. In case of Rand Paul, it mainly revolves around individual's security (uncontrolled use of lethal weapon by a government), while Wendy Davis triggers discussion about women's reproduction rights.
- Effectiveness of the filibuster covers an assessment of a filibuster: whether it was a right form of political action in given circumstances.

The next frame **democratic values** codes segments of the analysed texts that position the filibusters in a greater debate about democracy. This category was quite unexpected and inductive in its nature, however its persistence was so strong in the data that it needed to be included.

- Deliberation covers text segments talking about how the filibuster triggered regular citizens to get involved in legislative processes through demonstrating in a Senate or mobilisation on social media.
- Exercising democratic principles through the legislation refers to the bits of text that express how the use of filibuster inscribes itself with principles of democratic system.

User-generated content was also coded in order to give some measurable dimensions into how the incorporation of user-generated content differs for Davis and Paul. As it can be seen, the categories are quite straightforward and rely on coding schemes used by previous studies. The type of media simply codes a specific medium which is incorporated within a story: tweet, image, video, and meme: meaning an image with a short title or a phrase that circulates online. Content regards what kind of message a certain media piece contains.

- Reporting the course of events refers to containing factual statements, reporting what is happening on the place.
- Expression of support is an emotional testimonial conveying words of admiration, affiliation, encouragement.
- Expression of criticism is a manifestation of condemnation, disagreement, argument.

Function, based on the study by Broersma and Graham (2013), implies what role a media piece serve in a story. However, this is the category in which units of analysis are articles not media generated content, because it is a type of a whole story that dictates whether media is used to illustrate some events or a certain media product triggered attention and was at a centre of coverage.

- Illustration was present when a tweet or video served as a presentation of an already made point.
- Trigger codes media pieces that were newsworthy enough for journalists to build a story around it.

Sources seem also quite important in the study, for quoting politicians or experts give a story more political weight, while sourcing regular people more populist tone. Location codes news stories whether the media products were incorporated within the story, as an active part of the narrative that adds information or standalone: as an individual entity in the coverage.

Reliability

As it can be observed, some of the categories in the scheme such as drama, can seem as relatively subjective to measure, thus to establish reliability an additional coder was involved in the coding process. The coder was trained and analysed 10% of the chosen sample. Krippendorff's α was used to assess reliability of the coders with 0.7 as the minimum acceptable level (Krippendorff, 2004). The overall reliability coefficient among two researchers, for both cases was 0.77, giving a reliable outcome.

As Yin contends the most challenging part of case study research is to arrive to generalisations which could be further utilised in further academic works. Theory and theoretical propositions that go into an initial design of a case study, as empirically enhanced by findings, will have formed the groundwork for analytic generalisations. He compares a case study to an experiment which investigates one phenomenon that contributes to the academic field. Analysing two outstanding cases that have a potential to significantly contribute to the existing theories of celebrity politics and produce new strands of argument, together with meticulously described methods will enable this thesis to arrive at generalising conclusions.

Furthermore, this project relies heavily on previous research: incorporating already proposed ideas, arguments, and even coding schemes which not only preserve theoretical but also empirical continuation of this research. Thus, this comparative study shouldn't be conceived as an alienated entity, but more as a part of an organism of a theoretical body.

Summary

This thesis uses a comparative case study of Wendy Davis's and Rand Paul's filibusters. In order to operationalise the research questions, it involves qualitative as well as quantitative content analysis of news articles and television transcripts, performed by hand and computer coding. Case study format and content analysis cause challenges that a researcher needs to confront. Qualitative content analysis and coding might seem as too subjective and relying on researcher's individual reading. This problem has been addressed through employing intercoder reliability test measured by Krippendorff's α, reliance on coding schemes and directions from other studies dealing with similar topics, as well as incorporating computer software to examine all units of analysis and see how the results are reflected in qualitative observations. Case study research due to a small sample might pose difficulties in generalising outcomes to a bigger population. However, since celebrity politics received very little empirical investigation, case study with its format allowing for a close scrutiny of an examined phenomenon, allows to detect certain issues, patterns, and interrelations that might help future scholars doing research on a similar topic. Furthermore, this study heavily relies on theories and methodologies of previous works, thus creating a continuation of thoughts brought up by previous scholarly work in that area which enables to make more courageous and general conclusions.

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents results of the quantitative and qualitative content analysis. First, it concentrates on the qualitative reading and semi-hand coding of the selected sample, which offer answers to the first research question: **how does gender influence framing of a celebrity politician in mainstream media?** It compares frequencies of the codes between Davis and Paul as well as observations emerging from qualitative reading. Next, the results from qualitative study are compared with the quantitative analysis of all units performed by Wordij and Gephi software, serving as a validation and background for the analysis of the sample. The following section presents results for the second research question: **how are user-generated media products incorporated in news coverage of filibusters?** This section shows what type of media products, content, function, sources and technical incorporation of tweets were utilised in the coverage of the filibustering politicians.

Results RQ1: How does gender influence the framing of a celebrity politician in mainstream media?

The search brought 147 articles and television transcripts concerning Wendy Davis and her filibuster, while Rand Paul's filibuster generated 173. The disparities can be easily explained by the fact that Paul is a US Senator performing a legislative procedure in US Senate, so it is clear that he generated more media attention than a Texas state Senator who filibustered against the bill that would only affect state legislation. Nonetheless, although the number of units is not the same, the amount of words is almost equal: around 35k in both cases, which makes them almost exact in the amount of coverage. Sampling of the units for qualitative analysis and coding, in accordance to theoretical saturation, produced 42 articles and transcripts from the Davis's case and 47 from Paul's. The results are shown in the tables 4 and 5.

Table 4: Game frame

	Celebritisation			Personal issues		Political strategy		
CASE	Drama	Celebrity/star	Reference to pop culture	Appearance & outfit	Family and private background	Future of the politician	Personal conflicts	Self-promotion
Wendy Davis	77	27	36	41	29	23	17	6
Rand Paul	55	11	40	3	13	17	19	14
Total	132	38	76	44	42	40	36	20
Chi square	3.66	6.76 ***	0.211	26.94***	6.095***	0.9	0.111	3.2*
Significance: *** $p<.001$ ** $p<.01$ * $p<.05$								

Table 5: Issue-based frame

	Substance of the legislation			Deliberation	
CASE	Legislative issues	Implications of the legislation	Effectiveness	Citizen participation	Exercising democratic principles
Wendy Davis	60	43	8	45	7
Rand Paul	74	48	18	12	10
Total	134	91	26	57	17
Chi square	1.43	0.27	3.846*	19.105***	0.529
Significance: *** $p<.001$ ** $p<.01$ * $p<.05$					

The results show that celebrity frame was more often used to report Wendy Davis's filibuster than Paul's. The reason why Wendy Davis's story receives more dramatic coverage, can be partially explained by specificity of the events: the end of Davis's filibuster was quite tense due to an uncertainty whether the voting was before or after midnight which was decisive for the success of filibuster. In addition to this, more restrictive state rules of filibustering in Texas might have triggered more thrilling tone for Wendy Davis. However, a closer analysis shows that the main drives of drama in the filibusters which are conflicts with other politicians and physical stamina, appeared in the coverage of both politicians quite evenly: conflicts with other politicians occurred 17 times in Davis's stories and 19 in Paul's, while remarks about physical endurance needed to perform filibusters received 22 recognitions in the Davis's case and 24 in Paul's. The crux of the matter lies in a fact that Davis's filibuster was from the very beginning until the second voting on the bill the following week, covered as a constant, dramatic fight between conflicting forces. This is how the filibuster was presented in the first phase, before the midnight turmoil:

> Sen. Wendy Davis of Fort Worth started, in her pink sneakers, the filibuster at 11:18 a.m. CT Tuesday. It will need to last till midnight — almost 13 hours of standing — to derail a vote on the harsh anti-abortion bill in the Republican-dominated Texas Senate (*CNN*, 2013, Jun. 25).

It was analogically framed the day of the second voting: "tonight, it is a true Texas showdown. The state senator, in pink tennis shoes, versus the governor" (*ABC news*, 2013, Jul. 1). In comparison, Paul's coverage usually took more settled form:

> Tea Party firebrand Senator Rand Paul talking and talking and talking on the floor of the Senate. He started late this morning, just before noon. And he is opposing the nomination of John Brennan to be head of the CIA. And the use of drones against US citizens (*ABC news*, 2013, Mar. 6).

And this is how the situation was framed after the voting for Brennan's nomination: "the Senate voted 63-34 to approve President Obama's nomination of John Brennan to lead the CIA Thursday afternoon, ending a week of debate that featured one of the longest filibusters in Senate history" (*USA Today,* 2013, March 7, para. 2). Both politicians went against the party majority in Senate with similar ratio of disproportion: for each Republican in US Senate there is 1.4 Democrat, while for each Democrat there is 1.5 Republican in Texas Senate. Thus, an explanation that there was more conflict in Texas Senate because of antagonism towards Democrats is not quite valid, and is rather grounded in a prevailing impression that Texas is a deeply red state. Wendy Davis was also significantly more often framed as a celebrity than Rand Paul. This could be justified by the fact that Rand Paul was a well-know, established politician before the filibuster, while Wendy Davis was a true overnight sensation who was brought into the national political arena thanks to the buzz around the filibuster. Nonetheless, the accusations that a filibuster was a way to raise a

politician's profile was significantly more often addressed to Paul than Davis. This might suggests that media did not see Davis as using the legislation tool to gain popularity, but maybe other aspects such as her pink sneakers triggered a celebrity frame, as *Washington Post* sub-title states: "Wendy Davis strode onto the floor of the Texas Senate chamber on Tuesday in rouge-red running shoes, and came off it early Wednesday morning as the Democratic Party's newest star" (*Washington Post,* 2013, Jun. 27, p.1). Furthermore, the words "celebrity" and "star" occurred 73 times in Davis's coverage in comparison to only 7 in Paul's, meaning that significantly and quite directly Wendy Davis is portrayed as a politician celebrity. On the contrary, in terms of references to popular culture both politicians get very similar numbers, but they are differently distributed. Wendy Davis is most often linked with popular culture through the immense buzz her filibuster created on social media. On the other hand, Paul is frequently compared to Mr. Smith, and media repeatedly cited his remarks about a potential drone killing Jane Fonda when she was demonstrating against war in Vietnam in 70s. Paul asked rhetorical question whether the actress would be eliminated today by US military forces for affiliating herself with an enemy. From all different stories that Rand Paul brought up during his 12 hour speech, media focused specifically on that one. However, this might be due to journalists often bringing up Senator McCain's criticism which directly addressed Jane Fonda case undermining validity of Paul's filibuster. Remarkably, although both politicians received similar attention on social media and internet in general, it was Wendy Davis who got framed more often in that context. This act, to some extent, strengthen Davis's ties with the citizens, suggesting that through gaining so much support from online public she became a true representative of people's voice.

Framing personal issues of the politicians shows a significant disproportion which repeats findings from previous studies. Remarks about Davis's appearance and outfit occurred 41 times in comparison to only two in the case of Rand Paul (*N=89*) = 29.94, p<.001. Media paid an immense attention to Wendy Davis's pink sport shoes she was wearing while performing the filibuster. Not only was it mentioned in every text reporting on the event, but even when she was invited for the CNN interview a reporter asked her to show the shoes to the camera, and later half of the discussion revolved around this piece of outfit. A similar pattern can be detected in covering the issue of family background, Rand Paul received 13 mentions concerning his family matters, Davis significantly more: 29 mentions (*N=89*) = 6.095, p<.001. It is quite surprising, because even though Wendy Davis's has a "newsworthy" background with being single-mother and eventually graduating from Harvard with a law degree, it is Rand Paul whose father is an established American politician who used to be considered a serious candidate for presidential elections in 2012. Thus, it could appear that there would be more media attention focused on comparing son to his

father in news. On the other hand, journalists seem to be almost obsessed with smuggling personal information about Wendy Davis: "Democratic Senator Wendy Davis took to the floor of the Texas Senate at 11:18 a.m. in pink tennis shoes and began what she hoped would be a nearly 13 hour filibuster of an abortion bill"(*CNN,* 2013, Jun. 26, para.1). And:

> Davis, who became a single mom at 19, enrolled in community college and went on to graduate with honors from Harvard Law School, started Tuesday with 1,200 followers on Twitter - and had no less than 87,000 by late Wednesday (*New York Post*, 2013, Jun. 27, p. 22).

The examples show that even though an article and transcript do not discuss Davis's private background extensively, information about her shoes and past needs to be included, even in a seemingly irrelevant context.

In terms of framing political strategy, both politicians received a similar amount of coverage. They were almost equally considered as promising candidates in forthcoming elections, for Wendy Davis it was 2014 gubernatorial elections while for Rand Paul presidential election in 2016. It appears as qualities represented by the politicians during their filibusters position them as suitable leaders for the state and nation. Similarly, in both cases conflicts between the politicians was a quite popular motive which definitely contributed to the dramatization of the events. Media focused on Texas's Governor Rick Perry's attack on Wendy Davis day after the filibuster when he implied that she should have been the one to advocate rather than oppose anti-abortion law, because she was a daughter of a single, poverty stricken mother who could have decided to have an abortion in such circumstances. In the case of Rand Paul, the coverage highlighted John McCain's criticism of Paul's filibuster calling him a "wacko bird" and implying that his concerns that a regular American would be attacked by a drone without a trail, were senseless. In both instances the conflicts were described as having competitive background suggesting that Perry and McCain were afraid of losing their positions and thus attacked potential rivals. However, significantly more often journalists accused Rand Paul of performing the filibuster to mainly promote himself than Wendy Davis. This might suggest that Davis emerged as a more "authentic" celebrity politician than the Republican.

The issue-based frame that appears to be on the other side to game/celebrity frame is also unevenly distributed among the politicians. From the first view, the substance of the legislation appears to attract similar attention in both cases. Legislative issues get 74 occurrences for Paul and slightly less, 60 for Davis. This might have heralded changes in framing female and male politicians as diminishing double standards in mass media, however a closer look at framing legislative issues gives quite an opposite

impression. Although the numbers of appearances are similar, the amount of coverage is unevenly distributed: the topic of legislative issues for Rand Paul's filibuster was given a space of 6192 words, while Wendy Davis's only 3206 words, nearly half of Paul's case. It is particularly remarkable since legislative issues surrounding Paul's filibuster against John Brennan's nominations were rather straightforward in comparison to a complex Texas Senate Bill 5 which would ban abortions at 20 weeks post-fertilization, mandate that a doctor performing termination have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital, and require clinics to meet the same standards as other surgical health-care-facilities. Nonetheless, the male politician was given more coverage on the policy issues, while the most typical way to frame Davis's filibuster was to provide the most basic information about it:

> The leg-numbing filibuster by Wendy Davis, a Fort Worth Democrat -- in which she stood and talked for more than 11 hours at the Capitol here, never sitting, eating, drinking or even using the bathroom to help block passage of an anti-abortion bill supported by the state's top Republicans -- was not the longest such marathon, by Texas standards (*New York Times*, 2013, Jun. 27, p.18).

As it can be observed in the example other information such as physical endurance and pink sneakers, were more important than an essence of the filibuster. In the case of Paul, framing focuses much more on the factual side, reporting mostly relevant information with little dramatic colouring:

> Late Thursday afternoon, the Senate went on to address what Mr. Paul had been seeking to delay with his filibuster, the confirmation of John O. Brennan as director of the Central Intelligence Agency. After Democrats threatened to keep in the Senate in session through the weekend to deal with the confirmation, Republicans allowed a quick vote and Mr. Brennan was approved, 63 to 34 (*New York Times,* 2013 Mar. 7, p.1).

The stories about general implication or impacts of the legislation for the public were quite equally distributed among the politicians. It is quite hard to transfer differences in framing this aspect in respect to gender due to disparities and specificity of the subjects of the legislation. Rand Paul drew attention to the civil liberties and government's uncontrolled intrusion into a regular citizen's life which were seen as breaking basic constitutional principles. Furthermore, his filibuster also put on spot US military drone attacks whose victims are often regular people. Media several times cited case brought up by Rand Paul, involving series of US drone strikes in Yemen in 2011 that killed Islamic militant Anwar Al-Awlaki, his 16-year-old son, and seven of his colleagues. On the other hand, Wendy Davis's filibuster sparked a discussion about women's reproduction rights, e.g. how the new bill might affect access to abortions for women that live far away from the city and cannot afford trips to hospitals which the new law would require from them. Interestingly, journalists leaned towards Wendy Davis and her political stance describing Texas Bill

5 as "harsh" and "radical", while Rand Paul's concerns that American citizens might be killed without their prior knowledge by a drone, were sometimes seen as rather conspiracy theories than actual danger. Contrariwise, Rand Paul's filibuster triggered significantly more focus on assessing effectiveness of his filibuster which occurred in 18 articles and television transcripts in comparison to 8 in the Davis's case ($N=$ 89) = 3.846, $p<.05$. Media much more often compared Paul's filibuster to other longest filibuster in American history, even though Davis filibuster was one hour longer than her male counterpart's.

Results of framing deliberation brought some meaningful disparities between the politicians. Citizen participation was significantly more often covered while talking about Wendy Davis 45 times and only 12 times in the case of Paul ($N=89$) = 19.105, $p<.001$. Media put a great emphasis on mobilization on social media that Davis's filibuster sparked and a crowd that gathered on Texas Senate gallery: supporting the politician and sometimes even disrupting the order while screaming loudly. A quite unusual presence of a citizen crowd during a legislation process in Senate might be an explanation for an extensive coverage on citizen participation in the case of Davis which highly outnumbers Paul in that manner. However, an additional coding in that category shows that the crowd was mentioned 14 times while social media buzz 31. A much less attention paid to the social media popularity in the case of Paul comes as a true surprise, because both politicians generated similar online buzz, but it is a woman who gets more coverage on the topic. The scope of disproportion can be illustrated by the occurrence of word "Twitter": it is mentioned in Paul's coverage 74 times, while in Davis 143 times which is almost two times more often. The issue of how exercising a filibuster aligns with democratic principles was a relatively recurring motive in media coverage of the events. When talking about Davis, journalists often quoted people saying that the filibuster is a welcomed action reviving people interest in politics, such as this quote from a journalist illustrates: '"Politics has been so dormant in Texas,' said Evan Smith, the editor of The Texas Tribune, whose livecast of Davis's filibuster was viewed by 182,000 people. 'The point is, the world is watching now"' (*CNN,* June 28, para. 9). In the case of Paul's filibuster, commentaries concerning the exercise of democratic principles were made in regards to filibuster joining and involving other politicians in a substantive debate on the government's unregulated use of drones:

> Some learned about why Paul was standing against the nomination of Brennan. Others learned what a filibuster is and why it is important in government. Even those who disagreed with Paul's rhetoric were able to respect his right to speak for the Senate minority against an increasingly power-hungry executive branch. Even hardcore liberals from Code Pink to Van Jones were tweeting respect for Paul's conviction to speak for hours and hours on end (*Huffington Post,* 2013, Mar. 7, para. 7).

It shows that the filibuster, and celebrity politics seem to cause discussion and reflection on the state of democracy in contemporary America.

Quantitative analysis of all units

Visualised results of co-word analysis of all units effectively show the most recurring topics in Wendy Davis's (Figure 1) and Rand Paul's (Figure 2) coverage and how it differs. They, to a great extent, mirror the observations made by the qualitative reading and coding.

Figure 1: Co-word analysis of Wendy Davis's coverage in Gephi.
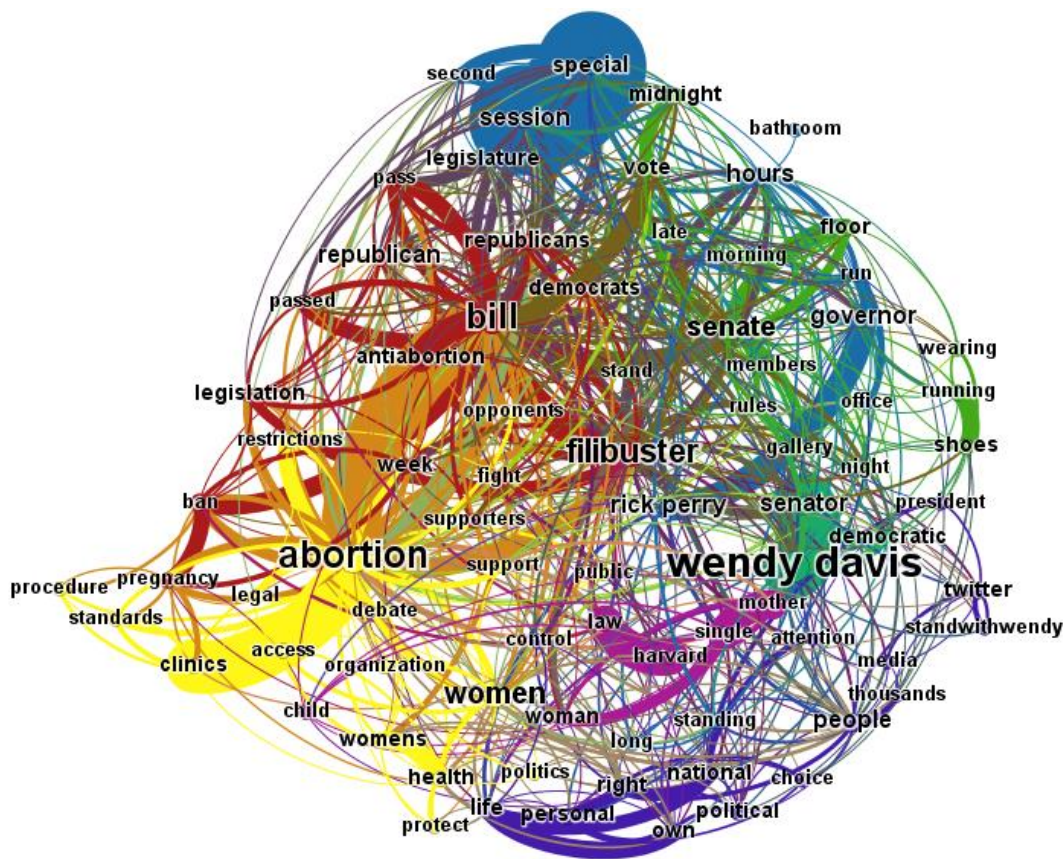
The conceptual clusters on the graph illustrates that the coverage of Wendy Davis revolved around four themes: "bill", "filibuster", "abortion", and "Wendy Davis" herself, which have a heavily dramatic as well as populist tone. Bill, naturally, refers to the Texas Senate Bill 5 which through a close presence of opposites such as "democrat-republican" and "opponents-supporters" as well as affective words like "fight" in a relatively nearby area, implies that the coverage persistently framed the events as a conflict, adding drama to the story. In addition to this, one of the most recurring element is Rick Perry whose attack

on Wend Davis was also conveyed as a dramatic battle on an individual level. The following issue of "abortion" signals that while some aspects of the bill with words such as "clinics", "standards", and "procedure" were indeed present in the coverage, main focus revolves around controversies evoked by the bill and ethical dilemmas. Strings such as "protect-life", "own-choice" "politics-personal-right", and "women's-health" suggests that the debate was not really cantered around the bill, but how it would affect women, adding emotional weight to representation of the events. The topics surrounding Wendy Davis also agree with previously discussed results. The graph shows that media paid particular attention to Davis's personal issues- string "wearing-running-shoes", and social media buzz- string "attention-media-standwithwendy-twitter." Although, a string about her private background: "single-mother-Harvard-law" also indicates an intensive focus on the Democrat's personal life, a high co-occurrence might be an effect of citing Rick Perry's comments about Davis's life which were not counted in the semi-hand coding, because they emerged in quoting a politician not a journalist emphasising this issue.

The case of Paul's co-word analysis also agrees with qualitative reading and coding, showing that his coverage was more issue centred than Davis's. There seems to be three main clusters- Rand Paul, filibuster, and drone which stick primarily to the substance of the legislation.

**Figure 2: Co-word analysis of Rand Paul's coverage in Gephi.**
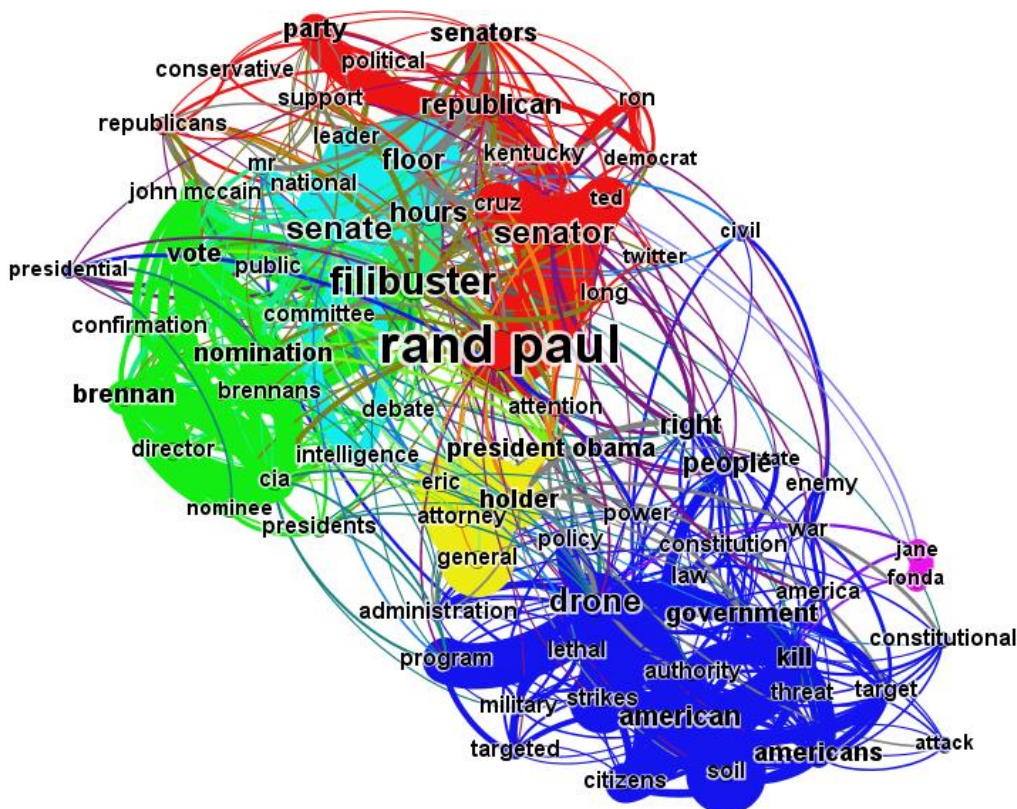
There is a string that deals with a sheer matter of legislation: Brennan-confirmation-CIA-vote, another one focusing on the events of filibuster which involved support of fellow party colleagues: support- Ted Cruz-senate-party-senator. There is another cluster under drone umbrella which deals with issues of civil liberties which might be in jeopardy with John Brennan's nomination: targeted-American-citizen-soil-military-strike, civil-right-constitution, and kill-threat-target. Rand Paul in his neighbour has attention-filibuster-debate- long which refers to his prolonged filibuster. There is a mention of Jane Fonda which is not linked to any parts of the debate, it is more of a funny fact cited alongside other matters of Paul's filibuster.

It can be clearly seen that Paul's coverage highly contrasts with Davis. He generated more attention to the substance of his political actions, while these elements are also present in Davis's graph, they are less evenly distributed and include personal information and controversies surrounding issue of abortion, which generate more dramatic and emotional tone.

Results RQ2: How are user-generated media products incorporated in news coverage of filibusters?

Within the articles and television transcripts chosen for qualitative analysis, 15 articles emerged that directly included user-generated content in the case of Wendy Davis and 13 for Rand Paul. Before discussing how the media generated content was incorporated within the stories, it is useful to present what type of content was utilised and how it differs in respect to gender. First, coding of media content revealed that journalists much more often took a chance to add sources from social media when talking about Wendy Davis- 71 times than Rand Paul's 54 times (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Type of media content

Type of media content
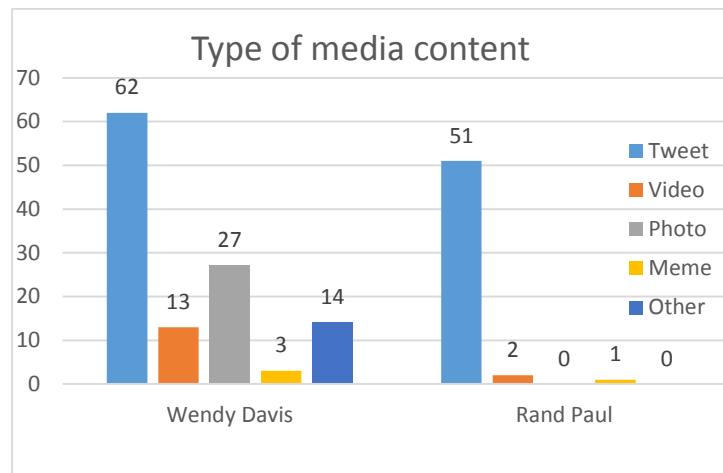
Furthermore, Davis generated more diversified forms of user-generated media with mostly tweets in number of 62, 27 photos, 13 videos, 3 memes and 14 others that were Amazon.com reviews. News stories which incorporated the reviews were reporting how after the filibuster, comments under Mizuno running shoes became politically tainted. This is an example of the most cited one:

2,999 of 3,024 people found the following review helpful
★★★★★ **Marathon shoe for marathon filibustering**, June 25, 2013
By **M. Black**
This review is from: **Mizuno Women's Wave Rider 16 Running Shoe (Apparel)**
The next time you have to spend 13 hours on your feet without food, water or bathroom breaks, this is the shoe for you. Guaranteed to outrun patriarchy on race day.

However it has to be noted here that, the photos and videos were most frequently part of a tweet sent with a hashtag #standwithwendy. Thus, although it might seem as there is a great variety of media, their source and bearer is still Twitter. The type of media used for the Kentucky Senator was significantly more uniform which consisted with a great majority of tweets with only text- 51, two videos and one meme.

The message conveyed by the media products also show important disparities that to some extent mirror the findings of qualitative and quantitative analysis (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Content of the media products
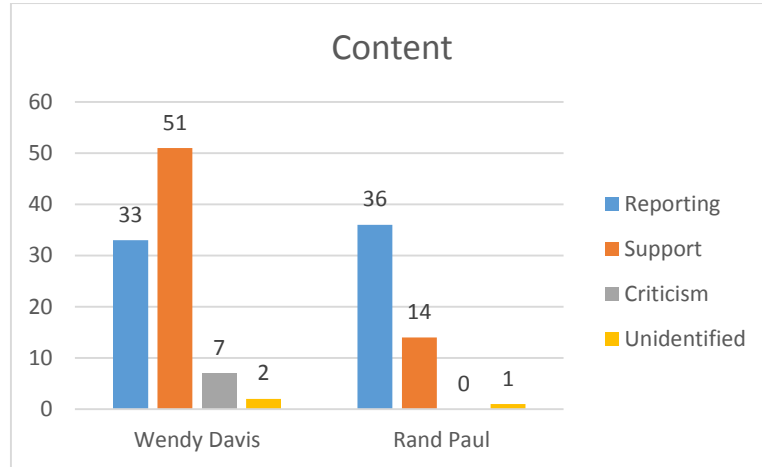
Most importantly, Wendy Davis trigged much more affective content, consisted of mostly expressions of support, than her male counterpart. Furthermore in the case of Texas state Senator, very often whenever a user-generated media product held reporting qualities, it also had emotional weight.

This tweet with vine video is a typical example of a merging reporting with affective message which was a quite prevailing pattern in Davis's coverage. The video shows policemen taking out protesters who disrupt the Senate order while the title "Hell no we won't go!" and hashtag #standwithwendy express support for the filibustering politician. Blending of reportage with emotional testimonials, which is a symptom of "affective news" (Papacharissi et al., 2012), adds dramatic tone to the events. On the contrary, media products chosen for Paul's coverage convey mainly factual information about the course of the events with voices of support being in minority. The reason why user-generated content is more affective in Davis's case while Paul's more factual, lies in the function it serves in news stories (Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Function of the user-generated content**
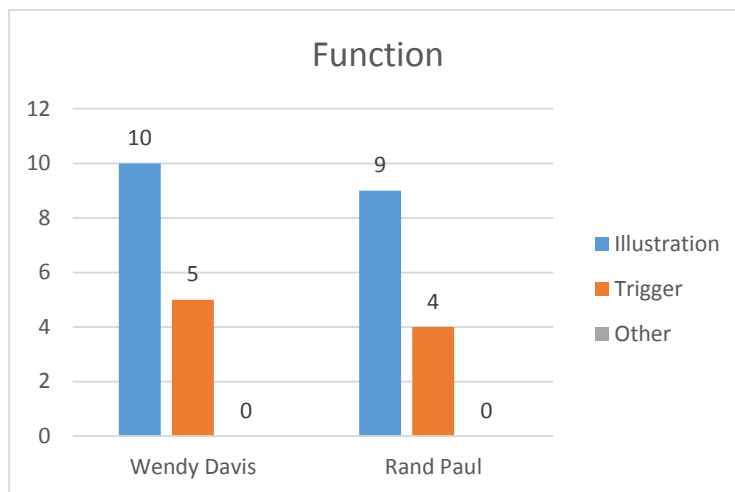
The results show that user-generated content serves mainly illustrative functions. Thus, the coding of tweets used in the stories reflects trends detected in the analysis of the coverage, which for Wendy Davis means drama and focus on citizen participation, while for Paul more settled, substantive debate. Wendy Davis also notes relatively high number of news stories for which online buzz around the filibuster was a trigger. They mainly refer to the amazon reviews of Mizuno running shoes that drew a great interest among journalists.

Sources also mirror the findings from the previous analysis to some extent (Figure 6). The results clearly show that Wendy Davis's story relies more on vox populi idea giving the voice to regular citizens and activists, at the same time reinforcing the affective, even populist framing of the female politician.

Figure 6: Sourcing
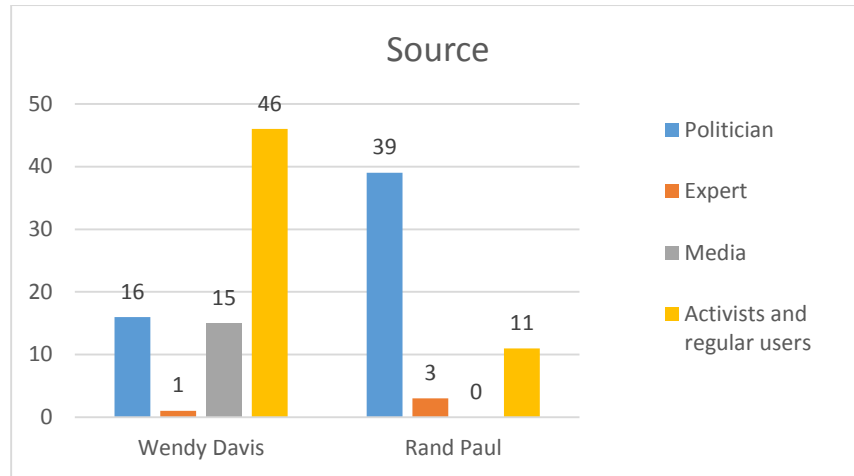
In Davis's case also media outlets themselves were often sourced, usually the tweets came from *Associated Press, BuzzFeed, and Texas Tribune* which were reporting the events when other main news sources had not yet covered the story. The most quoted politician in Davis's case was President Obama's tweet supporting Texas Senator in filibustering the bill, framed as an evidence of an importance of the statewide political event that gradually had been evolving to a national matter. In a quite opposite fashion, user-generated content used for Paul's coverage consists primarily of tweets coming from his own account conveying the most prominent quotes that at the same time carried information about the course of the events:
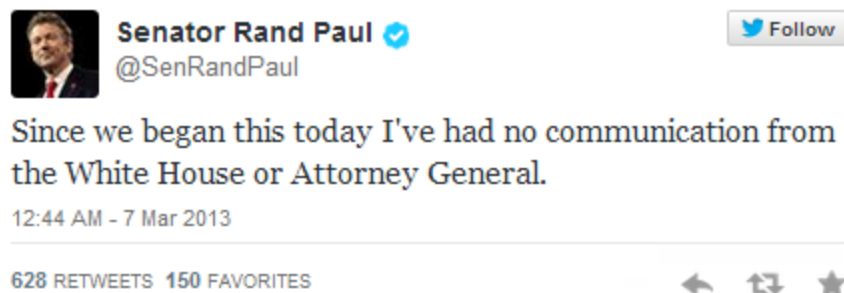

Naturally, it was not Paul himself sending the tweets since he was performing the filibuster, but his office which took a great care in transmitting the filibuster online, as the GOP strategist stated: "Twitter is woven through the DNA of this filibuster, taking an obscure legislative process into the public space" (quoted in

Stanton, 2013, Mar.7, para. 11). Although the response surpassed their highest expectations, the coverage mainly incorporates content generated by political figures. Apart from Paul's tweets, media often quoted Palin's tweet supporting the filibustering Senator from Kentucky:

The results of location coding show that in most cases user-generated content is integrated within the news story.

Figure 7: Location
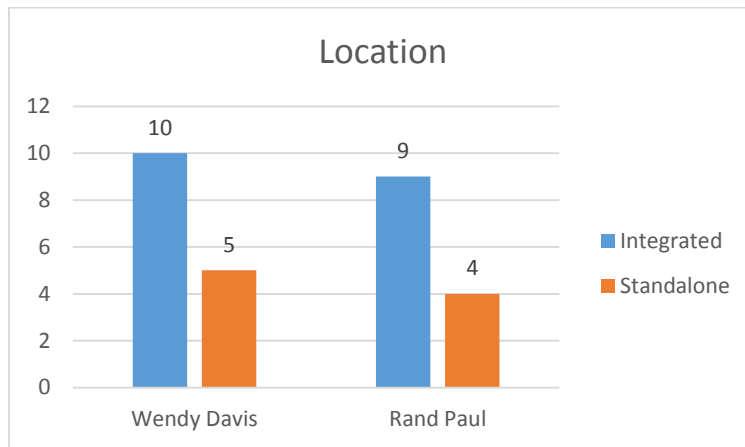
This comes with an agreement to the results of the function of the tweets which is mainly illustrative, thus they need to be incorporated within the story to e.g. adding someone's testimony. Media often cited Barack Obama's tweet with a link to a YouTube stream of the filibuster, when his support for Davis was mentioned. Usually the trigger-function inclines the standalone format, but that does not necessarily mean lack of news quality. On a contrary, in some news stories tweets were positioned in a way that without any additional comments made by the authors they "told" the course of the events of the filibuster. Here, it is crucial to note that arranging tweets in a chronological or thematic order allows print and digital media that do not want to include a videos, to form a kind of "a live narrative" similar to the television one. Simple

tweets and the ones containing visuals can form a coverage that shows how an event or someone's statement evolves, producing "tweet story". However, as it might be expected, the way the tweets were laid out varied in respect to the politicians. In the case of Wendy Davis, there were various media types put together in order to create a dramatic narrative of the events. The story usually starts from a tweet from Wendy Davis's account informing about the filibuster:

Then, a string of tweets coming from various sources with different content conveys how the events were developing throughout almost 13 hours of filibustering. It is a blend of multiple photos and videos of the crowd gathered in Texas Senate, some images of Davis speaking on the Senate floor, people's expressions of support, and tweets of media outlets as well as journalists reporting what was happening. Tweets convey news qualities themselves- there is a lot one can say with 140 characters, but with additional media such as images and video, it can create a quite effective way of telling news stories, e.g. this is how *Mashable* in their tweet-story shows without using any additional, the moment when politicians and audience realised that the voting for the bill occurred after midnight, making it invalid:

BuzzFeed News ✔
@BuzzFeedNews

🐦 Follow

RT @CecileRichards: BREAKING: Lt. Gov. Dewhurst
has agreed that #SB5 is dead.

9:20 AM - 26 Jun 2013

112 RETWEETS 20 FAVORITES

ChrisTomlinson ✔
@cltomlinson

🐦 Follow

I know Planned Parenthood telling crowd is dead, that
may be. Senators in meeting, I have to wait for them to
tell me for sure #txlege #sb5

9:23 AM - 26 Jun 2013

17 RETWEETS 4 FAVORITES

FOX 4 NEWS ✔
@FOX4

🐦 Follow

Reports from outside Senate say #SB5 did not pass.
Awaiting official word.

9:22 AM - 26 Jun 2013

18 RETWEETS 7 FAVORITES

The Associated Press ✔
@AP

🐦 Follow

BREAKING: Texas lt. gov. reverses himself, declares
vote on tough abortion bill came too late to pass.
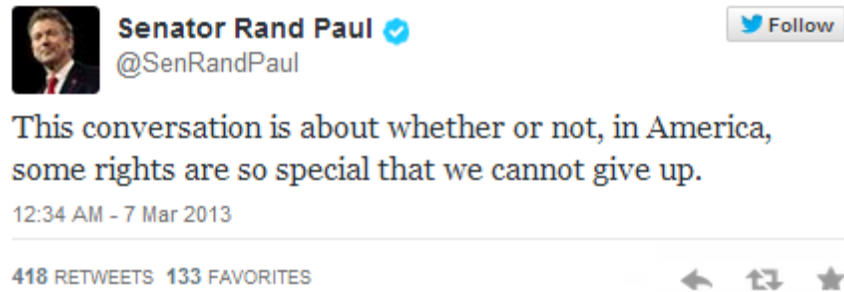
9:46 AM - 26 Jun 2013

1,949 RETWEETS 357 FAVORITES

It can be easily seen how effectively information can be transmitted only through tweets sent during the event. This extract also illustrates that tweets can be organised in a form resembling traditional narrative: there is an establishing point of the story (Davis's tweet about starting the filibuster), a crisis (tweets about the voting being too late), and resolution (tweet saying that the bill did not go through). Furthermore, the tweet-story has also a great potential in building tension, almost like in television news coverage raising readers' anticipation of what is coming next. On the contrary Paul's tweet-stories don't show progression of the events, even though there were some crucial moments, such as when the filibustering Senator rejects an offer to give up his protest for a vote on a non-binding resolution on drones, Ted Cruz reads

supporting tweets generated by online public, or the times when other politicians bring Paul food which would make an attractive material for game/celebrity coverage – emotional bonds between the politicians. Nevertheless, the tweet-stories focus mainly on his speech. Usually they start similarly to Davis's stories, with the first tweet from Paul informing about the start of filibuster:

> **Senator Rand Paul** @SenRandPaul   14 hrs
> Speaking on the Senate floor at length & actively filibustering Brennan's nomination until further notice Tune into @cspan now #filiblizzard
>
> Collapse   ← Reply   ⇄ Retweet   ★ Favorite   ••• More
>
> **586**   **163**
> RETWEETS   FAVORITES
>
> 9:53 AM - Mar 6, 2013 · Details

Then, the string seems to offer something of an evolution of his thought:

> **Senator Rand Paul** ✔   🐦 Follow
> @SenRandPaul
>
> This conversation is about whether or not, in America, some rights are so special that we cannot give up.
>
> 12:34 AM - 7 Mar 2013
>
> 418 RETWEETS   133 FAVORITES   ←   ⇄   ★

> **Senator Rand Paul** ✔   🐦 Follow
> @SenRandPaul
>
> One of the things we have to ask: What kind of standard will there be? If we're going to kill Americans in America, what kind of standard?
>
> 12:35 AM - 7 Mar 2013
>
> 511 RETWEETS   131 FAVORITES   ←   ⇄   ★

Senator Rand Paul ✔
@SenRandPaul

Our right, as an American, to be tried in a court by our peers, should not be given up on.

12:36 AM - 7 Mar 2013

814 RETWEETS 240 FAVORITES

It can be seen from this layout also taken from *Mashable* that, tweets create a certain path of an argument that unregulated law of drone use poses threat to American citizens and it is against the Constitution. Although it does not much resemble a natural utterance of one's thought, the main idea can be sensed by a reader. Furthermore, a direct tweet incorporated within a text, gives a story an impression of authenticity. It is not some journalist paraphrasing politician's words but a direct quote, "supposedly" typed by a politician which illustrates how mediation between a source although news to a reader is undermined. In addition to this, a fact that a tweet contains a photo of an account's owner, also adds another dimension to the personalisation of news, bring a recipient and a source even closer.

Summary

The results to the first research question examining gender framing replicate to some extent previous studies. Wendy Davis received much more coverage on her private issues: shoes and family matters, while the substance of her filibuster did not get as much attention as in the case of her male counterpart. Furthermore, the media focused on Davis's ties with the public, citing significantly more often her popularity on social media than Paul's, even though both politicians generated equally intensive online buzz. Furthermore, Davis's filibuster was reported more frequently in a dramatic manner which contrasted with Paul's more subtle and factual coverage. Nonetheless, there was an equal distribution of the substance of the filibusters dealing with its implications on citizens' lives, showing that in regards to this aspect of policy the male and female politicians received similar attention.

Results regarding the second research question exploring how user-generated content was incorporated within news, also mirror findings of previous studies. Tweets most often were positioned within the news story and served illustrative function. Their incorporation reflected main framing patterns of the politicians: Wendy Davis's filibuster was covered in a dramatic manner, thus chosen tweets also had emotional weight analogical to the one of affective news, while more serious and cooled down tone of Paul's filibuster triggered tweets that conveyed his thoughts on drone policy. However, the findings also show how affective news can not only be conveyed by the content of the tweets, but also organisation

which can recreate traditional patterns of narration. This exhibits how journalist try to normalise user-generated content according to traditional practices of newsmaking processes.

DISCUSSION

Introduction

      This chapter situates the findings in a bigger picture, tying them closer to the arguments laid out in theoretical framework. First, the issue of celebrity politics is discussed in more general terms with an emphasis on personalisation. It singles out observations made while analysis Davis's and Paul's filibusters that contribute to the overall debate on celebrity politics. The next section is more specifically dedicated to gender and answering the first research question. It emphasises the most crucial differences in the coverage of both politicians, their signification, and how postfeminist theory might apply in understanding the case of Wendy Davis. The last section offers insights to the second research question, discussing how user-generated content was incorporated within news stories. It also aims to situate the findings in a hybrid media debate, displaying its relevance as well as shortcomings.

Celebrity politics

      Before starting a discussion on how gender is manifested in celebrity politics, it is useful to reflect on the construction of celebrity politics itself in the age of hybrid media. The analysis has shown that the filibusters recreated Marsh et al.'s (2010) idea of "media spectacle" symptomatic of celebrity politics, in which a legislative procedure was given faces of politicians who were framed as distinctive personalities. Davis and Paul as politicians interacted with a popular type of communication (Twitter) that personalised the way their political actions were covered by media. Personalisation is a fundamental element of celebrity politics, and this study has shown how filibuster as a legislative tool generates game framing that effectively transfers celebrity communication into media coverage. The drama built around the politicians more intensive in Davis's case, utilised tropes already delineated by scholars which are conflicts between individual politicians and the significance in future elections, but it also incorporated a high level of personalisation-privatization (Aelst, 2011) that does not get that much academic attention despite its essential role. The game frame highly personalised the politicians, drawing attention to their character traits that allowed them to endure through 13 hours of constantly speaking, as well as underscored sheer physicality of the Senators. Media very often cited Paul's last words before finishing the filibuster which referred to his biological needs: "I would try to go another 12 hours and try to break Storm Thurmond's record, but there are some limits to filibustering and I am going to have to go take care of one of those here" (Paul quoted in O'Keefe, 2013, Mar. 6, para. 2). The subject of Paul's bladder also came back with Harry Reid's comment on Paul's physical endurance: "One thing I learned from my own experience with

talking filibusters: To succeed, you need strong convictions but also a strong bladder. Senator Paul has both" (Reid quoted in Camia, 2013, Mar.6, para. 11). This shows to what extent the personalisation was advanced in the case of filibustering politicians. Nonetheless, the concentration of personalisation in Davis case and attention to her pink sneakers cannot be compared with Paul's. They were mentioned in virtually every piece of news on the Texas state Senator and even some articles were dedicated completely to the piece of attire. The pink sneakers became equally important to Davis's political profile as the filibuster itself.

However, what is essential in celebrity politics and its framing in media is the creation of a "person of qualities" (Marshall, 1997) who forms an affective bond between a politician and citizens, through popular culture tropes. This phenomenon was transferred through game framing, staging Rand Paul as "defender of civil liberties" and Wendy Davis as a "folk hero." While writing about the Kentucky Senator, media emphasised his personal qualities such as strength, conviction, and dedication that allowed him to "heroically" talk for almost 13 hours in defence of citizen security and rights preserved by Constitution. It is crucial to highlight here that his stance to protect American's rights was framed in a more legislative perspective talking about certain laws, procedures, and policies regarding the issue. Although some journalists pointed out that his concerns don't have serious fundaments and are more of a conspiracy theory, great majority supported his endeavour for starting a debate on how US government uses drones within and outside American borders. Media often affirmed the importance as well as sentimentality of Paul's filibuster with recurring comparisons to James Stewart's character from *Mr Smith Goes to Washington.* All in all, he appeared as a tireless protector of citizens' rights against majority. On the contrary, through a much more frequent mention about her popularity on social media, crowd supporting her in Senate, and sourcing tweets from activists as well as regular people, Wendy Davis emerged as a folk hero. Her political actions were often framed in respect to how they would affect lives of regular women, situating Davis to some degree within populist agenda. Furthermore, media often "smuggling" facts from her personal life – being a single mother and later graduating from Harvard with a degree in law - which really fit the paradigm of "self-made man", produced an image with whom regular folks supposedly could relate to. Media's obsession with her shoes also positioned her as a regular person or rather woman who for 13 hour marathon speaking chooses comfortable clothing. Furthermore, frequent remarks about pink colour of the sneakers, bestow on the politician more female, almost girly qualities. Framing Davis in a dramatic, affective manner changes a relationship with her to a more personal, intimate, and less official, in comparison to Paul who appears as a more "professional" politician with a greater emphasis on political substance in his case. The creation of "person of qualities" in both cases opens up questions about

representativeness of celebrity politicians. The analysis has shown that filibuster communicated within paradigms of popular culture, creates conditions for staging politicians that appear as representative, dedicated, and valuable. Both "defender of civil liberties" and "folk hero", despite some differences, suggest that the politicians serve their office on at least satisfactory level, taking quite challenging paths to protect citizens' rights.

An important observation that emerged as early as the coding process started, is that media coverage reflects on some elements that appear in a theoretical discussion on celebrity politics. As already emphasised, critics of this "more relaxed" type of political representation accuse it of hollowing the substance of political debate and investing all the energy into the marketing practices rather than exercising real politics. This has been detected in the analysis by recurring comments stating that the politicians decided to perform the filibuster mainly for self-promoting purposes, rather than trying to defeat injustice. Some commentaries were quite straightforward in claiming that the filibuster was a cynical action, especially in the case of Paul:

> What you have here is this rambling madness that`s going on out there, with other Republicans coming out to help him, as you know senators do during these things, so he can rest his voice. You have Ted Cruz, in an homage to atheism, I suppose, reading from Ayn Rand tonight on the Senate floor.  And this -- what I`m watching is nothing but a fundraising stunt at this point (*CBS news*, 2013, Mar. 8).

> There are easier ways for a senator to hold up a piece of business - in this case, the nomination of John Brennan as CIA director Paul knew that a rare "talking" filibuster would be hard to ignore. Was he trying to boost his national profile? Was he trying to embarrass President Obama? The answer is probably yes on both counts (*Washington Post,* 2013, Mar.7, para.3).

Wendy Davis also evoked similar allegations, but they were framed in a considerably less hostile tone:

> This is Texas, this is not Massachusetts, the governor in this case is completely in tune with public opinion, and right now long -- late-term abortion is not a popular issue with the public in general. So I think she made a very dramatic show and got a lot of attention, but I think politically, she's on the wrong side of this issue" (*MSNBC news*, 2013, Jun. 27)

However, media attention was focused more on dimensions on celebrity politics that are associated with its more positive outcomes. Street (2004) and van Zoonen (2004) argue that celebrity politics can be beneficial, enhancing democratic values through stimulating public involvement and reaching people who would otherwise remain ignorant to the political issues. These issues were frequently mentioned and discussed by journalists, thus an additional category "deliberation" was incorporated within the coding scheme. Remarks on how filibuster enhanced democratic values and sparked citizen participation were quite prevailing in the coverage, highlighting the importance of these elements in political events. It is

significant, for not so many political situations generate that much attention to principles of democratic system: how it allows to protect or limit rights of some group of citizens, for what purposes politicians use them, and finally whether the democratic system is still able to perform its role after 200 years. The appearance of deliberation category and self-promotion in the coding scheme, signifies that complexity as well as controversies surrounding celebrity politics that do not trouble only theoreticians, but also media practitioners notice distinctive elements about it. The fact that they seem to be sensitive to it, but also name politicians as celebrities and stars in a certain setting, means that the specificity of celebrity communication in politics is not just an abstract term used among the scholars, but there is a mutual understanding across different media about this phenomenon. This could only indicate that celebrity politics is becoming a prevailing phenomenon not only among political scientists, but also in the minds of public.

Gender and celebrity politics

The study confirmed that within the celebrity communication pattern unequal representation of a male and female politician, is still prevalent, and to a great extent mirrors previous findings. Wendy Davis's filibuster generated game/celebrity frame much more often than Rand Paul, drawing media's attention to her shoes, personal life, and social media buzz rather than substantive elements of the legislation she represented. Journalists framed Texas state Senator's filibuster within a dramatic paradigm, reporting the events using affective words and, as the analysis of tweets have shown, user-generated content that brought a great intensity of emotional value. This framing highly contrasts with more settled and factual presentation of Paul's filibuster which, as the co-word analysis proves, was more "to the point". This discrepancy exhibits that Paul's filibuster received more "serious" treatment than Davis which resembled more of a dramatic spectacle built on a battle between conflicting forces. Despite the fact that, media also gave a lot of attention to a disagreement between Paul and other politicians that criticised his filibuster, especially McCain, this conflict was not framed as dramatically as Texas state Senator's.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that, even though media did not pay too much attention to Davis's objection to the anti-abortion bill, the implications of legislation on citizen's lives received a similar amount of coverage as her male's counterpart. This can be explained by a great involvement of online public and crowd in Texas Senate that journalists often commented on. A usual pattern involved a mention of people taking actions either online: watching YouTube stream and tweeting, or in the Senate gallery, and description of the reasons lying behind their actions. Media quoted regular people claiming that the

Bill 5 would significantly hinder access to abortion, make it less financially affordable, constrain women's reproduction rights, but also opposite arguments that Bill 5 rises standards of the abortions and preserves women's health. Thus, an element of game frame considerably triggered a more extensive coverage of the issue frame. This is also reflected in the co-word analysis where words associated with women's reproductive rights are frequently recurring. Therefore, it appears as giving voice to vox populi through Twitter sourcing (Broersma et al., 2013) changes the nature of a politician's framing, in this instance it generated discussion about the implication of the legislation on people's lives. This to some extent agrees with Bradley and Wicks (2009) findings that bloggers more evenly discuss female and male politicians when it comes to the policy issues, and thus reduce difference of covering male and female politicians. Online media indeed bring some change in diminishing double standards in media coverage. However, it has to be noted that discussion about women's rights emerged, supposedly because it was a part of a social media sensation that made Davis a star. Thus, it might be suspected that if the reproductive matters were not part of the "newsworthy" story, its role would have been less important.

Media's fixation about Davis's sneakers painfully replicates findings from other studies comparing political coverage of male and female politicians. It shows that the process of political personalisation is embedded within cultural stereotypes and still draws on a trope that femininity is expressed through physical appearance (van Zoonen, 2004; Gill, 2007). Among all 147 articles covering Davis's filibuster, there was only one highlighting the fact that the politician's shoes took all the attention from the important matters of the Bill 5. Nonetheless, the journalist wrote it in a negative tone, accusing Davis of being responsible for generating the situation. Thus, it appears as personalisation focused on women's appearance deal damage to their image of political figures, because it situates them as being more preoccupied with their looks rather than substantial, political matters. However, the way shoes story evolved in media throughout the time is quite interesting, and remarkably changes the course. As already mentioned, the reviews on the Amazon.com site of the Mizuno sneakers Davis was wearing became a space of discussion about controversies surrounding abortion and women's rights. Media took notice of this unusual practice, and while covering the story, the journalists framed the shoes as a symbol of female empowerment and Davis as a feminist hero. Wendy Davis transferred her filibuster achievements which bear tropes of strength, determination, and pro-choice view to the pink sneakers. The heroic symbolism can be traced in media's coverage, quotes coming from respectively *USA Today* and *Mashable* clearly illustrate it: "she wore the shoes that allowed Texas women to choose" (*USA Today,* 2013, Jun. 27, para. 2), "the Mizuno Women's Wave Rider 16 running shoes, worn by Texas state Sen. Wendy Davis (D) during her epic filibuster earlier this week, have become a symbol of the pro-choice position" (*Mashable,* 2013,

Jun. 27, para. 1). Reviews expressed female concerns that Republican policy of restricting abortions constrains their individual rights. It does not come as a surprise since reproduction law has always been of a great concern within an empowering debate. An access to birth control increased female participation in education and labour market, liberating women from biological restrains (Chiappori & Oreffice, 2008). This issue always evokes emotional and engaging debates, partly because it touches on a highly personal sphere where gender, cultural and ethical matters come into account. Nonetheless, through buying and wearing the shoes, users felt they identified with the political views represented by the Texas state Senator. Thus, it might appear as van Zoonen's findings that female candidate hide their feminine features in order to appear as legitimate politicians, might not be the only way to successfully deal with double standards in politics. Wendy Davis embraced the "shoes fixation", she appeared with them during the television interviews and with some hidden annoyance, patiently answered the questions dealing with the piece of clothing. Then, the shoes gaining a symbolic capital of representing feminist views, triggered discussion about women's rights that bears characteristics of democratic deliberation.

It appears as scholars should look into gender representation in contemporary media through postfeminist perspective which does not discredit traditional femininity as discriminating for women, but shows that relation between stereotypically feminine tropes and emancipation is much more complex (Moseley & Read, 2002; Gill, 2007). Braithwaite (2002) defines postfeminist theory as one that enhances early feminist thought evolved during the first and second wave, with additional perspectives such as gender, race, class and important for this study, popular culture, that enrich the debate about women's position in contemporary world. Postfeminism takes into account the more "joyous" and "fun" aspects of woman's life exploring life-style choices that previous feminist perspectives failed to address (Gill, 2007). It needs to be highlighted the model examples of postfeminist characters are Bridget Jones, Ally McBeal, and Carrie Bradshaw from *Sex and the City.* The early critics of postfeminism called it an actual backlash to the feminism, because it centres too much on self-indulgent, narcissist, individual female experiences and pleasures rather than aiming for political activism and social change (Heywood & Drake, 1997; Aronson, 2003). However postfeminism does not simply privilege the personal or individual over the political or specific types of activism, but rather entails a range of explorations of the possibilities connecting those two feminist dimensions - it is a way of articulating changes and the evolution of feminisms in the current moment. Braithwaite also claims that, the crux lies in a fact that ironically the most criticized aspect of postfeminism which is conceived as a an engagement with those signifiers and practices of seemingly traditional femininity, does not necessarily mean the same thing in 21st century as it did 150 years ago. Thus, dismissing media practices that represent women within a traditional femininity discourse without

a closer examination of how it is framed, might be a sign of ignorance. The coverage situates Davis firmly within a popular culture: the news concentrates on her online celebrity status and pink shoes. However, these elements don't necessarily discredit the debate from articulating feminist and women's rights stances. A famous feminist phrase "the personal is political" which in the 70s signified personal female issues such as domestic violence or health care becoming part of a public debate, encouraging women to be politically active, in the case of Davis attains new meaning. The personal (shoes) intersects with political (women's rights), the distinction that generates so much controversy collapses, and it transforms into a message that for some women, as the amazon reviews show, seems important and politically engaging.

Celebrity politics by its definition entails liaison with popular culture, therefore scholars analysing gender representation within celebrity communication should always be aware of a complex relation between popular culture and gender. As Davis's instance has shown emphasising traditional feminine traits in news coverage does not directly imply that a female politician is discriminated, and receives less attention to substantive political matters she stands for. As mentioned in the previous section, Wendy Davis was framed as a folk hero, representing voice of ordinary citizens, which might have situated her in a stereotypical image of the "nurturing mother", taking care of her children-electorate, but it does not imply she is not a suitable political leader. On a contrary, the overall tone of Davis coverage is more positive than Paul's, the analysis has shown that journalists often described the Bill 5 as "harsh" and "restrictive", when commenting on Rick Perry's attack media often took her stance claiming that it was made on a personal ground which lowers standards of political debate. Therefore, drawing on postfeminist theory claims, female politicians could articulate their political power drawing on traditional tropes of femininity, no matter how controversial it sounds. The evolution of Davis's coverage shows how the negotiation of cultural signifiers – shoes - associated with femininity through popular culture, especially online media, might rise her profile as a suitable political leader.

This fits to a trend detected by recent research on gender perception of leadership qualities that shows personal traits associated traditionally with femininity become more desirable in business as well as political leaders. In a study carried out by Pew Research Centre (2011) on what are the most desirable qualities of a politician, respondents believed that women are better at "working out compromises, keeping government honest, representing your interests and standing up for what they believe" (p.8). All of these traits have been ranked of high importance for voters when considering which candidate will be most fit for the job. Election studies conducted since the mid 1960's have shown that: "important characteristics for the ideal presidential candidate... honest[y], moral character, and talk[ing] about nation's problems-remain important attributes for both the public and for the media" (Trent, Trent, Short-

Thompson, Mongau & Metzler, 2005, p. 148). The data collected by Pew Research Centers reveals that in fact, traditional feminine qualities are the ones voters crave in a candidate. The studies performed in corporate environment also show similar results, stereotypically feminine traits: supporting, networking, inspiring, team building, and consulting, revealed to be valuable and desirable in CEO's and business owners (Pew Research Center, 2010; Eagyly & Szczesny, 2011). Thus, women deprived of symbolic capital as female politicians, might try to negotiate it within feminine discourse instead of negating it.

User-generated content

Taking into account great involvement of online audiences in the filibusters and abundance of user-generated content, media rather reluctantly incorporated it in the news. The dominant function of the user-generated content, mainly tweets, was to illustrate, enhance a story or a point with a direct quote/ testimony. This to a great extent replicates findings detected in previous studies. As already touched on in the previous section on celebrity politics and media, this practice reinforces the trend of personalisation of news. Including a tweet from a politician's account diminishes the distance between source and a recipient, creating a sense of immediacy similar to the one from affective news, rather than mediation related to more traditional journalist practices of sourcing. As Paul's case shows, inclusion of tweets can also form a thread of one's thought or a more complex idea through a certain organisation. However, Broersma and Graham's claim that sourcing from Twitter allows politicians to regain the power over news discourse, is maybe a bit too far-reaching due to the fact that it is still journalists who are gatekeepers deciding what type of content finds its way to news. Furthermore, even though Broersma et al. argue that with more prevailing utilisation of tweets as news sources, takes away some power from elite news organisation, and it is given to vox populi, this study shows that the process is highly controlled by media outlets. Taking into account that tweets serve illustrative purposes, if a journalist is willing to present a politician in a different light, he or she would simply not incorporate the tweet in the story. Nonetheless, citing a tweet can come as a sign of authenticity, because it provides a source directly, showing readers that the information has its roots and it is not a product of a journalist's imagination nor manipulation. In the times of journalist crisis when reporters are under pressure to write as much as possible in a short period of time, have to rely on the material from third parties, and have little time for investigation and fact checking (Phillips, 2010; Broersma et al., 2013), sourcing from social media might appear as a true gift saving their time, work, and asserting accuracy. Thus, incorporating user-generated

content actually might be beneficial for media outlets, because it helps to preserve an impression of reliability of information.

A closer analysis of tweets that serve as a trigger for a story, has shown another dimension to affective news proposed by Papacharissi et al., which lies in a sheer organisation of tweets. First it has to be noted that, tweets used in the case of Davis replicated the findings by Papacharissi et al. that a recurring pattern of blending fact with opinion together with additional content such as short vine videos and images, creates affective news. However, through a certain organisation of tweets in the story other dimensions of affective news might arise, such as creating a tense, narrative progression of certain events. Here, it has to be emphasised that while incorporating user-generated content might seem as innovative practice, journalists tend to normalise it through replicating paradigms from traditional reporting practices. It has been quite clearly reflected in a way the narrative of tweets was staged, affirming to the most classical model of narrative: exposition-crisis-resolution (White, 2000). Furthermore, the way tweets are utilised in both trigger and illustrative fashion, reflects the framings represented by all other texts. Davis's filibuster was covered in general, as a highly dramatic event, and the choice of user-generated content only strengthened this impression. The tweets conveyed affective news through sourcing of regular people and activists who often added visual materials that underpin emotional weight. Tweets were organised in a way that conveyed dramatic tension, especially close to the end of the filibuster. On a contrary, Rand Paul was depicted by media in a more settled and factual fashion which is reflected in a fact that most of tweets came from him or other politicians, even though he generated similar buzz from regular users. When the tweets were put together they form a certain thought on a drone policy that expressed concerns about its execution and civil liberties. Therefore, it looks like even when tweets appear in a trigger form, they still to some extent serve the illustrative purposes mirroring mainstream framings. Nonetheless, media still more often incorporates user-generated content in an illustrative form, integrated within a layout of news story, than forming only twitter based narrative.

Situating findings of this study in a bigger picture of hybrid media, it appears as the online public indeed has some power on the shape of news. This was the most evident in the case of Davis and how her online sensation also triggered more extensive coverage on what the bill meant for Texan women, and generated nationwide discussion about abortion. Nonetheless, it appears as the user-generated content is still quite reluctantly used by media outlets, and when it is, journalists try to normalise it according to the traditional journalist practices: tweets serve illustrative function and usually reflect an overall trend in covering a certain subject. This reinforces reporters' positions as gatekeepers who are in a considerable

control of what goes to the millions of viewers and readers. Thus, an idea of bricoleur in mainstream media with various media products coming from different sources incorporated within a news story, seems as an improbable scenario in the near future. Davis-Paul filibusters created perfect conditions for exercising this idea, however media framed an involvement of online audiences more as a sensation, and included user-generated content quite sporadically. Therefore, arguments that in the age of digital media the power of newsmaking is shared among different actors that are not necessarily connected with news industry, are quite problematic. On the one hand, mobilisation of online users on social media can indeed influence the way certain issues are covered or direct journalists' attention to certain aspects. However, it requires a great number of participants. On the other, user-generated content is still very rarely utilised and serves as background to the news stories.

A compelling perspective to look at this problem is offered by Axel Bruns's (2012) idea of "produsage news" which conceptually is close to hybrid as well as bricoleur media. It implies that an advent of internet, and a growing popularity of social media as platforms for news creation among professional journalists as well as amateurs, generates an environment where a distinction between news producer and consumer blends, because digital technologies give a consumer opportunity to take an active part in news production. Bruns sees a produsage content as a continuously evolving process open to dissemination, discussion, commentary, comparison, and even curation on a side of regular online users. Although power over the news discourse still lies in the hands of established news outlets, recipients can recycle a news story adding new insights and meanings. A prominent example will be Davis's pink sneakers first framed in a mocking tone, gained a political signification due to users' comments on the amazon website, which drew media attention. Therefore, newsmaking processes in the age of hybrid media should not be conceived as occurring in any uniform nor standardised fashion, but rather dependant on multiple, varying factors that highly rely on specificity of a case.

CONLUSION

Celebrity politics indeed offer a problematic communication pattern for female politicians. As the case of Wendy Davis has shown, in the process of personalising news, media focus on feminine traits culturally associated with gender: Davis's coverage had more emotional weight, focused on personal matters neglecting substance of her legislative actions. This significantly contrast with a more factual and toned down framing of Rand Paul's filibuster. Nonetheless, that does not imply Davis's status as a politician was meaningfully diminished. The significance of her shoes which became a political symbol of women's rights, shows that in the case of celebrity politics meanings are nuanced, and it requires a closer analysis to conclude whether media discriminate against women and if so on what basis. Involvement of online audiences was crucial in changing the perception of Davis, bestowing on her more political weight as a feminist hero. A postfeminist perspective could shed some light on a complex position of women in politics, especially in the case of celebrity politics, deconstructing this multifaceted phenomenon. Thus, in the age of internet proliferation and in result produsage news, double standards can be challenged due to an increasing agenda of regular users in newsmaking processes. However, there are essential differences in Davis's coverage when compared to Paul's, and some aspects of it especially a disproportional coverage of the filibuster's substance, might be harming towards the female state Senator.

The analysis has also illustrated how important role medium plays in celebrity communication patterns. However, the results have demonstrated media's reluctance to utilise non-mainstream sources in news stories. The ways user-generated content was incorporated within the news stories to a great extent mirror findings from previous studies, showing that tweets serve as background to the story, offering additional testimonies. Tweets are selected and organised in a manner that fits to the mainstream coverage of the politicians: more dramatic in the case of Davis, while substantive for Paul. Yet, it is interesting how journalists negotiate incorporation of tweets within newsmaking traditions. On the one hand, user-generated content relatively alters from previous sourcing formats, it blends opinion with fact creating affective news, however media outlets try to "tame it", organising tweets so they either illustrate the point or resemble live coverage of the events, following classic pattern of narrative. It is also crucial to note that incorporation of user-generated content, especially tweets, reinforces the personalisation of news, utilising direct quotes from people involved in the events. Although this study takes a rather reserved attitude in saying that using sources from social media significantly reverse the power relations

in news discourse, it might become beneficial for journalists who find themselves having little time to find sources and check the facts themselves. Incorporating a tweet, coming e.g. from a politician's official account, generates impression of authenticity of news with a source being directly exposed to recipients of news. Furthermore, the study shows that celebrity politics and issues that come along with increasing personalisation of news, are not circumscribed only to the academic realm, but also journalists notice complexity of the phenomenon that has been influencing contemporary state of the politics. Thus, it appears as celebrity politics has gained recognition in the minds of public, not only theorists.

Last but not least, this thesis shows how mixed methods approach can help in exploratory research dealing with complex issues such as gender's significance in celebrity politics. The quantitative analysis established main framings, displaying threads of the most recurring issues in the media coverage which was later compared with the qualitative reading. Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, allowed to grasp nuances and aspects missed by the solely quantitative approach: most importantly the fact that the substance of the filibuster was given much more space in the case of Paul and feminist significance of the sneakers. In a growing presence of studies investigating gender representation in media that incorporate mainly quantitative, computer-driven content analysis, this thesis signals drawbacks of such method for crucial aspect would be neglected without closer reading. Furthermore, a case study format that evokes controversies among scholars (Stoecker, 1991), became quite effective in this study, for it enabled a detailed and comprehensive analysis which deconstructed a complex context of celebrity politics and how media as well as gender play out in this setting.

Future research

Celebrity politics is a growing phenomenon which needs more scholarly, especially empirical attention. Performing analysis on gender representation in media in the case of politicians might be quite problematic for it requires certain circumstances that are difficult to meet, such as similar background of political events, close time period, and etc. However, another important aspect of celebrity politics that might also shed some light on how gender plays out in this specific type of communication is fandom. Both Rand Paul and Wendy Davis show that politicians spark people's interest online - they follow officeholders on social media in a fashion resembling of fans: subscribing to their accounts, commenting on their actions, posting content on their profiles, and even exchanging messages. This type of communication: more immediate, personal and less official, considerably changes the way citizens form relations with politicians and participate in public life. Thus, while celebrity politics becomes more prevalent, it significantly transforms the way people perceive officeholders, and fandom might be a mode of interaction that needs more scholarly attention.

Limitations of the study

Some limitations arose from retrieving units of analysis. The television material is offered through *Lexis Nexis* in a transcript form that does not contain visuals which is important aspect in representing a celebrity. Furthermore, the print articles were not accessed in their original format, so assessing how user-generated content was incorporated within the layout was not possible, thus the analysis focused only on the online versions of the articles. Another important issue is that print and broadcast media publish their content online, which caused material from the same outlets being analysed multiple times. However, since broadcasting and print companies' news websites are also highly popular among Americans (Pew Research Center, 2013), investigating material in different mediums by the same news corporations is crucial to gain a view on how most recipients received information about the celebrity politicians through mainstream media.

Other important limitations are the additional differences between politicians apart from gender. The fact that Rand Paul was an established politician before the filibuster while Davis was an overnight sensation, the events took different paths (there was not a crowd of protesters in the US Senate as there was in the case of Davis), they are members of different parties, and finally both politicians spoke about totally different topics, might significantly influence the way the politicians were covered by mainstream media. Although additional categories were introduced to the coding scheme in order to diminish these differences such as whether the filibuster was performed for promotional reasons to asses if journalists saw the events as celebrity-marketing tactics or how many times the crowd was mentioned in the case of citizen participation, some of the aspects were inherent within specific events and politicians which simply could not be extricated. On a side note, efforts to find identical cases of female and male politicians are quite futile, for there are always some differences on a personal as well as professional level, that become meaningful in a way media frame a certain persona. However, it should not discourage researchers from carrying out academic investigations in that area. As this study has shown, there are recurring motives that surround an issue of politicians framing in media in respect to gender. Thus, a careful and considerate coding as well as reliance on previous work might come as a huge benefit to overcome challenges that this type of research faces.

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