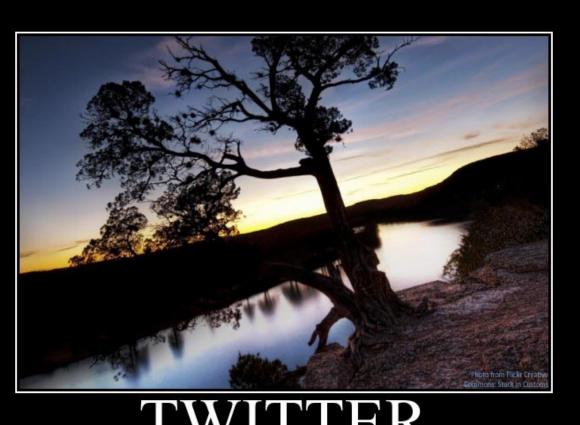
Does Twitter Matter?



A deep moving river of education and pop culture conversation goodness with amazing & generous people. Drink deep, my friends - So refreshing! - thedaringlibrarian.com

Twitter is not the Gutenberg Press. The 'Big Data' revolution is over-hyped. Nevertheless, Twitter is significant in a number of ways:

- For identifying trends.
- For rapid, near real-time dissemination of news.
- It has been used to track the progression of the flu and other infectious diseases.
- It has played a mobilizational role in the Arab Spring and other social movement activities.
- For on-the-ground reporting of news and events.
- It allows you to decentralize research; what Nigel Cameron calls *mutual curation* and others call *social* curation.

- For looking into the global <u>cocktail party</u> that is Twitter.
- Allows one to take the pulse of the community on almost any given topic.
- Twitter is the Big Data source.
- It constitutes a coordination and communication tool for post-disaster mobilizations.
- Twitter facilitates the rapid diffusion of ideas, rumors, opinion, sentiment, and news.
- For professionals and organizations alike, it facilitates networking, relationship-building, and exposure.
- Twitter is proving to be a powerful *dialogic* tool for initiating and engaging in conversations.
- Unlike other social media (e.g., Facebook), Twitter has a largely <u>open model</u>, allowing anyone to follow anyone else.
- Social chatter has become a powerful tool for
 - Hedge fund managers listen in on social media conversations in making their decisions.
 - Tracking and identifying terrorists and extremists.
- Facilitates the leveraging of what Granovetter (1973) calls weak ties.
- Can be a force for good (e.g., <u>Twestivals</u>).

In short, Twitter is not just for sharing pictures of your lunch. In addition to all the silliness, Twitter has come to be the world's premier message network. It These messages are used in a wide variety of settings and for a broad range of purposes. And researchers are able to listen in — a boon to anyone interested in messages, conversations, networks, information, mobilization, diffusion, or any number of social science phenomena.