



NORTHWESTERN  
UNIVERSITY



blogs

political communication

polarization

# Web Use Project

digital inequality

cultural consumption

Web-use skills

digital divide

<http://www.webuse.org>



# Web Use Project



## Mapping the Political Blogosphere

Collaborators: Jason Gallo, Matt Kane, Sean Zehnder

Thanks to the *Northwestern Institute on Complex Systems* for its support

<http://www.webuse.org>

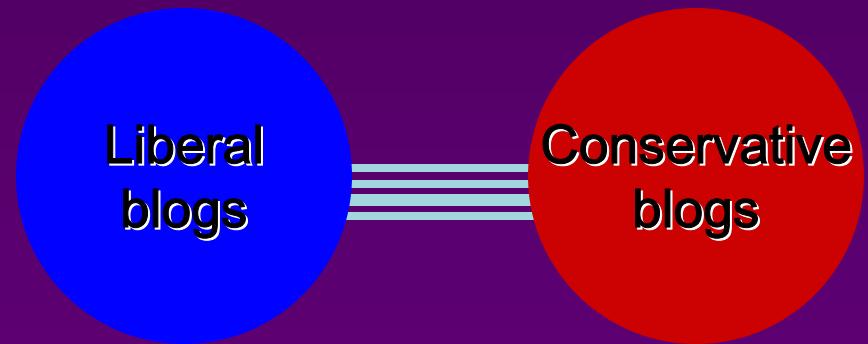
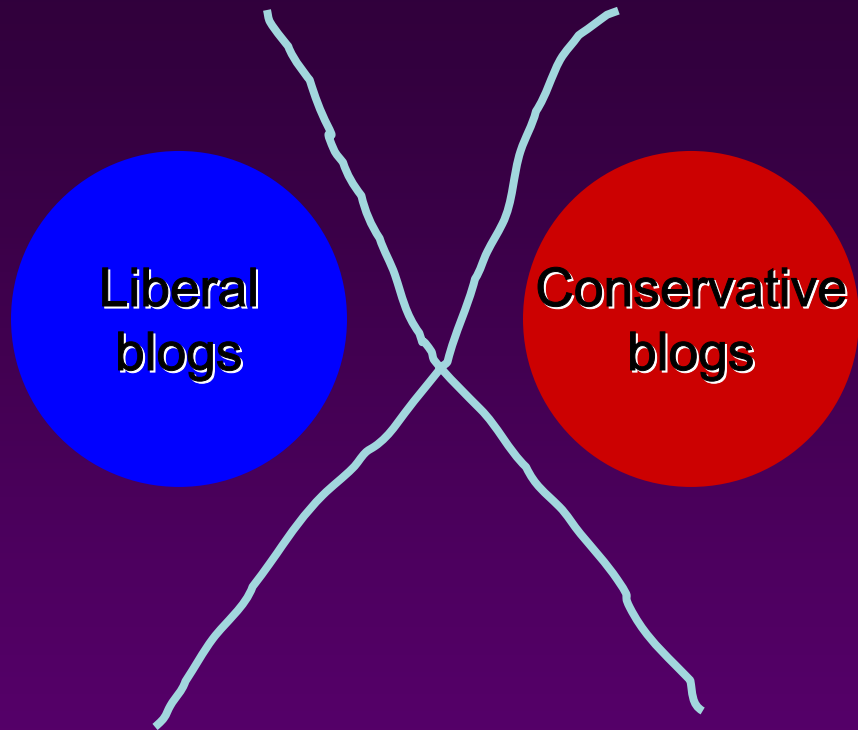
# Research Question

- Are information technologies leading to polarized political conversations?

“the most striking power provided by emerging technologies [is] *the growing power of consumers to filter what they see.*”

-- Cass Sunstein, *Republic.com*, 2001 (p.8.)

# Mapping the Political Blogosphere



# Data

Blogroll	421
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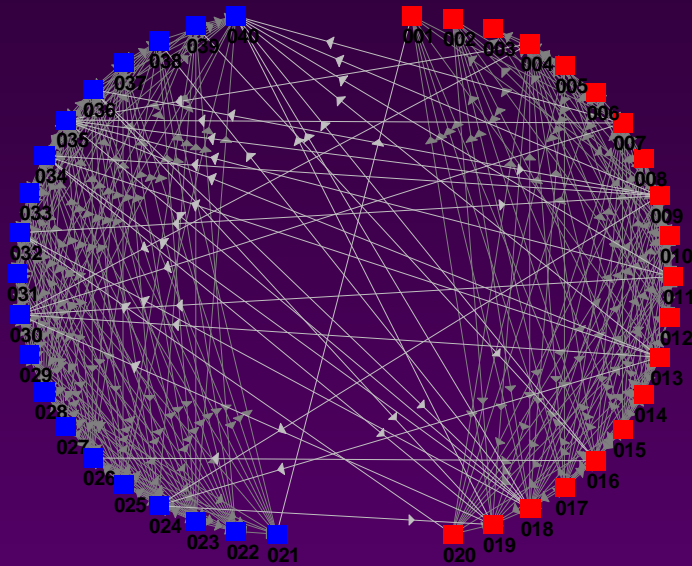
	Posts	Links in Posts
Total	13,329	2,609

# Need

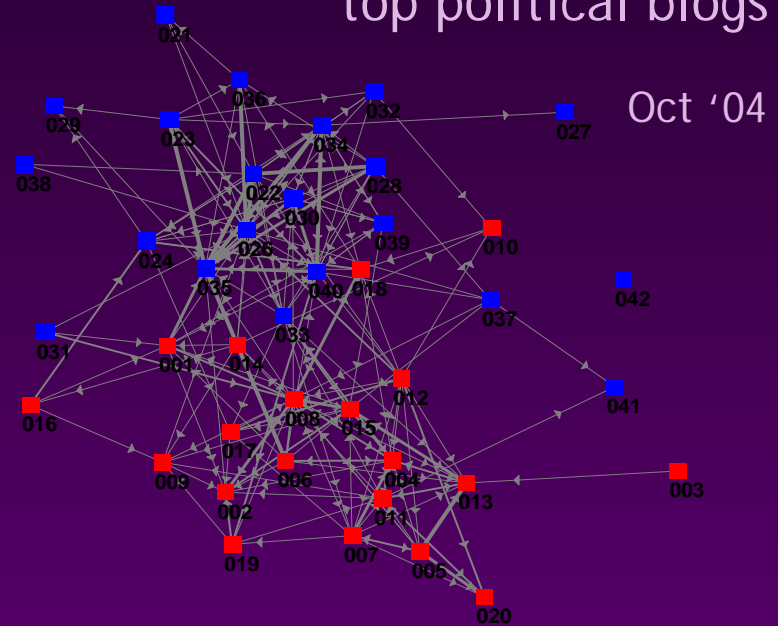
- Program to collect link data while distinguishing among types of links and analyzing context of links

# Mapping the Political Blogosphere

Blogroll links among  
40 top political blogs



Links among 42  
top political blogs



Oct '04

	Orientation			
	Conservative		Liberal	
Time	All Links	>1 Links	All Links	>1 Links
June '04	-0.77	-0.90	-0.78	-0.78
October '04	-0.56	-0.65	-0.61	-0.68
March '05	-0.63	-0.77	-0.52	-0.70