

Preface

An understanding of social capital (interpersonal relationships) and a rethinking of what is “public” are indispensable aspects of contemporary risk-response strategies. In particular, the ongoing development of computer media (e.g., social media) is necessitating major changes in how social capital is considered. This book aims to elucidate the problems and possibilities of creating order in contemporary society, especially from the viewpoint of structurally transforming what is considered “public.” This goal is accomplished via the aggressive incorporation of the novel methods of computational social science—interdisciplinary techniques that include simulations, big-data analyses, etc.

Together with this reinvestigation and reconfiguration of the concepts “social capital” and “public,” we use the term “inter-media society” to specify today’s media environment, where there are mutual, overlapping effects between social media and pre-existing media. The “inter-media society” thus involves interactions and integration of face-to-face communications, mass media, and social media. We examine how such activities will impact and change social communications—that is, how “social capital” is viewed, and how its “public nature” is manifested. This book claims itself to be a forerunner of a new kind of “academism.”

Computational social science constitutes the methodology of the analyses presented in this book. This science comprises “the innovative methodological tools being developed and applied by leading researchers in this new field, and [it] shows how academics and the private sector are using many of these tools to solve problems in social science and public policy.”¹ This novel integrative method is a focus within academia, worldwide. We employ computational social science and other methods for analysis and the creation of logical models using data that have

¹Alvarez, R.M. (ed.), *Computational Social Science: Discovery and Prediction*, Cambridge University Press 2016.

accumulated over many, long years—data from a variety of social awareness surveys, press and print media data, big data from social media, and more. Further development involves linking the results with progressive social theory, to enable more comprehensive and innovative arguments and discussions.

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Reconstruction of the Public Sphere in the Socially
Mediated Age

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2017, VIII, 200 p. 79 illus., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-981-10-6137-0