Franklin D. Roosevelt won the 1932 president election, serving three consecutive terms. In the 1932’s Roosevelt’s campaign was managed from the back or a railroad car, newsprint and radio, and most Americans had little knowledge of the president’s disability (wheelchair bound from childhood polio) due to the controlled information distribution channels. Political tacticians often comment that, had the battle between Roosevelt & Hoover been staged in modern media, Roosevelt would not have been considered for candidacy.

Media distribution channels have drastically changed over the last half century and have radically evolved over the last five years. These shifts are considerably shaping the 2008 presidential election. Web 2.0 technologies have the potential to breakdown multiple barriers of communication and protection that previously existed between a candidate and the public. Our examination will focus on how each candidate is utilizing this new platform. In addition, we will consider the use of third party generated content, sponsored viral marketing, and other emerging trends in the 2008 presidential election and beyond.

Questions:

1) What are the traditional information distribution channels for campaigning prior to the internet?
2) Compare and contrast Obama and McCain’s online strategy for the 2008 campaign
3) How are 3rd parties/lobbyists/individuals using the web to influence the campaign?
4) What are the wins/losses from increasing influence on campaigns via the internet?
5) What do you think the role of the internet will be in future elections?

Readings:

1. How Obama Really Did It – Social Technology Helped Bring Him To The Brink Of The Presidency by David Talbot
2. John McCain Is Way Behind Online – by Catherine Holahan:  
   http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/jun2008/tc20080626_575590.htm?chan=technology _technology+index+page_top+stories
3. The internet and the 2008 election – Pew/Internet by Aaron Smith and Lee Rainie
4. A New iPhone App Will Help Make You A More Informed Voter:  

Please Visit:

5. Obama’s Website: http://www.barackobama.com/index.php
6. McCain’s Website: http://www.johnmccain.com/
7. Conservative Political blog: http://www.redstate.com/