

Review of: "Animation and YouTube as Alternative and Counterhegemonic Digital Public Sphere in Zimbabwe"

Robert Phillips¹

¹ Ball State University

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This article presents a case study of a series of YouTube videos created before the 2013 elections in Zimbabwe. It is well organized and makes good use of the pertinent literature.

My suggestions/comments:

For readers not familiar with Zimbabwean politics, it would be useful to provide a few sentences explaining the two parties (ZANU PF and MDC) and outlining the major differences between the two. The same for the idea of “harmonized” elections.

Provide the links for the videos that have been examined in the paper.

Explain who made the videos and why. What is their agenda? Are they public figures? Anonymous?

On p. 3, the authors state that, “the world of the animation itself represents a category of the public sphere...” Can the authors clarify what this means? I would say that YouTube as a platform serves as an alternative public sphere, not necessarily the content being hosted.

On p. 5, the authors outline a strategy and then use a quote from Russell to explain what is happening with the strategy. Is the Russell quote referring to this exact situation? If not, it might be better to start by saying something like, “This is similar to Russell’s explanation of XYZ...”