#twitterrevolution: destabilizing the world, 140 characters at a time
@dennis baron

English colloquium
March 21
4:00-6:00 pm
Jubilee Lecture Theatre
University of Sussex
The written word was revolutionary even in the days of scriptoria.
The mimeograph machine offered a cheap, untraceable way for revolutionaries to get out their message.

Teachers also found it useful for duplicating tests and assignments.
The revolutionary, destabilizing potential of technology has always been apparent.

From the outset, books posed significant dangers to established power.

The index of prohibited books was begun under Pope Paul IV in 1559 and finally discontinued in 1966 under Pope Paul VI.
Red light video cams record cars at intersections, zoom in on license plate numbers, and automatically generate a traffic ticket for violations.
Even at Oxford, Big Brother is watching
This 1875 ad for a Remington typewriter stresses the transformative power of the machine.

The text being typed is from Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*: (IV, iii: 218-19):

“There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune…”

Brutus’s words are quoted to signal an economic revolution, not a political one.
There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood leads on to fortune. But the fortune is not that of revolutionaries during the Roman Spring, but of modern business entrepreneurs.
follow us
What if Rosa Luxemburg had 20,000 Facebook friends?

What if Che Guevara had a Blackberry in Bolivia?

What if Rosa Luxemburg had 20,000 Facebook friends?
How many clicks does it take to topple a régime?
North Koreans may only use the country’s Red Star intranet, which links to approved sites and this Facebook-like message board.
Tweet level orange: Leigh Bryan’s tweet got him and Emily Bunting banned from the United States:

Although Bryan deleted his Twitter account, the Sun was able to recover the deleted tweets.
from the denial of entry form:

“Mr. BRYAN confirmed ... that he was coming to the United States to dig up the grave of Marilyn Monroe. Also on his tweeter account Mr. BRYAN posted that he was coming to destroy America.”
From the DHS terror word watchlist

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An innocuous tweet with 13 words—57%—taken from the DHS terror word watch list:

Agent: film screening a disaster. New organization, closure would aid plot. Send edits to cloud, target social media to help explain delays.

Agent: film screening a disaster. New organization, closure would aid plot. Send edits to cloud, target social media to help explain delays.
DARPA’s Total Information Awareness program goal:

To imagine, develop, apply, integrate, demonstrate, and transition information technologies, components, and prototype, closed-loop information systems that will counter asymmetric threats by achieving total information awareness useful for preemption, national security warning, and national security decision making. . . .

The eye scans the globe for evidence of terrorist planning and is focused on the part of the world that was the source of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.
U.S. defense contractor Raytheon has developed a program called RIOT:

it crunches social media data to locate where users have been, where they are now, and where they might be going.

It can track bad actors, and it can track you.

RIOT stands for Rapid Information Overlay Technology
The *Guardian* reports that, with RIOT,

“the same social networks that helped propel the Arab Spring revolutions can be transformed into a ‘Google for spies’ and tapped as a means of monitoring and control.”

Locations of a Raytheon employee based on social media site check-ins.
The need for information crosses all borders.
Revolutionaries beware:

The AT&T U-Verse Terms of Service agreement holds the company harmless for any death or bodily injury “arising out of or related to your use of or inability to use the Services.”
Welcome to the digital revolution. Click here to accept our terms of service.

END-USER AGREEMENT

#TwitterRevolution 2.0

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#twitterrevolution is currently down for unplanned maintenance.

We expect to be back in about an hour. Thanks for your patience.