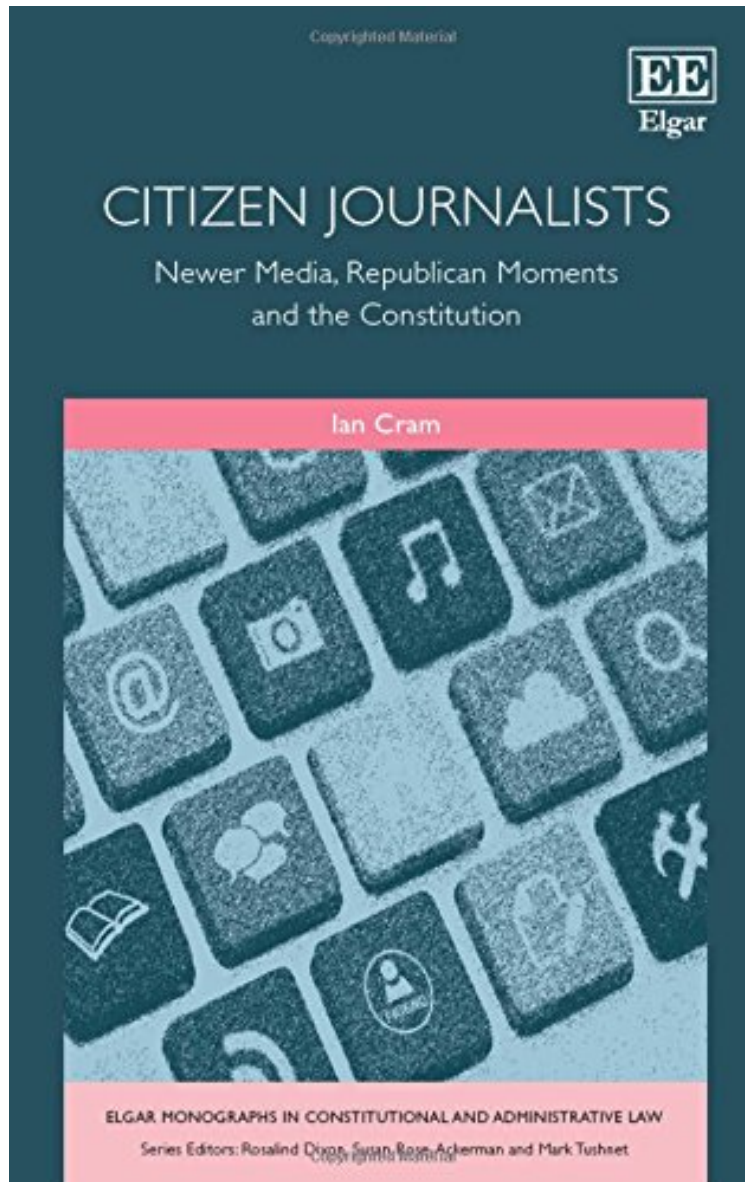


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# Citizen Journalists: Newer Media, Republican Moments and the Constitution (Elgar Monographs in Constitutional and Administrative Law series)

*Ian Cram*

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Citizen Journalists: Newer Media, Republican Moments and the Constitution (Elgar Monographs in Constitutional and Administrative Law series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. THE PHENOMENON OF CITIZEN JOURNALISM EXPLORED BOTH LEGALLY CONSTITUTIONALLY By Phillip Taylor MBETHE PHENOMENON OF CITIZEN JOURNALISM EXPLORED BOTH LEGALLY CONSTITUTIONALLY An appreciation by Phillip Taylor MBE and Elizabeth Taylor of Richmond Green Chambers What a curious title for a book we thought when we read the introduction to Citizen Journalism where author Ian Cram explains his objective in studious detail! Any serious discussion of freedom of expression and news gathering/dissemination, he says needs to consider the available evidence about emerging trends in which news content is generated and disseminated. And that is exactly what he does here in this short and remarkable succinct piece of legal scholarship. The monograph begins with an introduction on Republican Moments, Machiavelli and Digital Communications which gives the reader a flavour of what is to come with the detail, the content and high style of writing Cram produces throughout Citizen Journalists. The author then warms to his theme exploring the following contemporary points, and intriguing chapter heads: A Digital Republic of Citizens; Against Civility? - Arguments for Protecting 'Bad Taste', Disrespectful and Anonymous Online Speakers; Beyond the Fourth Estate: Rethinking the Privileges of 'Journalists' in the Era of New Media; Google and the 'Unvirtuous' Juror? - A Comparative Constitutional Analysis of Some Digital Challenges to Fair Trials. Plenty of food for journalistic thought for all of us here! The conclusion covers the sceptical cyber-republican followed by a useful index. Leading academic, Eric Heinze, has commented that even more than the occasional and fleeting right to vote, he writes citizens' equal and peremptory prerogatives of expression within public discourse distinguish post-World War II democracies from all earlier and rival forms of government. And how far we have come since that time! Heinze goes on to offer his own point of view of citizen journalists worth repeating here that in fundamentally transforming public discourse, electronic media transform(s) the very conditions of political legitimacy. He concludes that Cram's thesis continues to innovate at the forefront of the free speech debates by exploring that historical shift in the way we speak, and therefore in the way we govern ourselves. In other words, we come back to the path which this form of expression is taking with the electronic media of the future. Edward Elgar is to be congratulated for publishing this thought-provoking and curiously informative work which sums up its core point as exploring what is the phenomenon of citizen journalism from both a legal and a constitutional perspective. Cram describes and evaluates emerging patterns of communication between a new and diverse set of speakers and their audiences. What Cram has produced here has been to build upon general political theory and balance how far the constitutional and legal frameworks of modern liberal states allow for a contestatory space (interesting phrase) which develops the scope for non-traditional speakers to participate in policy debates and to hold elites to account. A modern interpretation suggests that it leads to a bit of a free for all in the future for journalism where there are many fewer checks and balances today on what is produced (including the standard of quality and possible defamations, of course). We would give the final word to Cram for his chapter six conclusion presenting us with an interesting but ominous parting shot: at the present time then, it makes little sense to talk of there being institutional protection for new media in a way that secures a contestatory space via constitutional protection for the valuable tumult and discord that is produced by digital communicators. Do read Citizen Journalists if you are a lawyer or writer as these new types of hack could be a forerunner of some big changes in this modern method of communication as 21st century unfolds. just so long as freedom of expression is retained and not devalued.

'Even more than the occasional and fleeting right to vote, citizens' equal and peremptory prerogatives of expression within public discourse distinguish post-World War II democracies from all earlier and rival forms of government. In fundamentally transforming public discourse, electronic media transform the very conditions of political legitimacy. Ian Cram continues to innovate at the forefront of the free speech debates by exploring that historical shift in the way we speak, and therefore in the way we govern ourselves.' - Eric Heinze, Queen Mary, University of London, UK This monograph explores the phenomenon of 'citizen journalism' from a legal and constitutional perspective. It describes and evaluates emerging patterns of communication between a new and diverse set of speakers and their audiences. Drawing upon political theory, the book considers the extent to which the constitutional and legal frameworks of modern liberal states allow for a 'contestatory space' that advances the scope for non-traditional speakers to participate in policy debates and to hold elites to account. Topics covered include the regulation of offensive, abusive and anonymous speech, online defamation, compelled disclosure of 'journalists' sources, private online research by jurors and analysis of the application of pre-Web 2.0 laws to non-traditional media speakers and outlets. After surveying a range of criminal and civil law provisions that impair the communicative reach of non-mainstream speakers, the broad conclusion casts doubt upon the capacity of 'citizen journalists' to effect a significant shift towards republican self-rule. Offering an original analysis of the phenomenon of 'citizen journalism' with developments from a broad range of jurisdictions, this book is a valuable resource for students, academics, policymakers and law reform agencies in the

fields of constitutional law, human rights, media freedom, journalism and comparative media regulation.

'Even more than the occasional and fleeting right to vote, citizens' equal and peremptory prerogatives of expression within public discourse distinguish post-World War II democracies from all earlier and rival forms of government. In fundamentally transforming public discourse, electronic media transform the very conditions of political legitimacy. Ian Cram continues to innovate at the forefront of the free speech debates by exploring that historical shift in the way we speak, and therefore in the way we govern ourselves.' -- Eric Heinze, Queen Mary, University of London, UK  
About the Author Ian Cram, School of Law, University of Leeds, UK