In our book, Rhetoric in Civic Life, chapter nine talks about many different topics. One topic that stood out to me is public sphere. This stood out to me because it can relate to many things whether the same or different. People can form an opinion about a restaurant whether good or bad, then find others who opinions are the same and then come together and form a public sphere.

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A public sphere is defined in the book as, “a domain of our social life in which such a thing as public opinion can be formed” and that “is constituted in every conversation in which private persons come together to form a public” (Palczewski 268). Then it later says that a public sphere is not brought into being by a particular group of people, a location, or set of topics. But instead, it is constituted by the conversations of people as they discuss topics of general interest.

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 Public sphere has certain characteristics. The first characteristics is that it must be open in principle to all citizens. The next one addresses the matters of general interest and the last one is to be free from coercion. An example the book gives us is the February 2011 debate over the collective bargaining rights of unions of public employees in Wisconsin. In response to record state budget deficits. Then Governor Scott Walker proposed a “budget repair bill” to balance the budget. The rhetoric about the bill shows some examples of public sphere. Citizens talked about issues of common concerns: the budget deficit, the vitality of public unions, and others. These people came together because of the issue that needed to be addressed. Another example would be if the students here at Longwood came together to address the issues about recycling. How there is not enough advertising that Longwood has recycling besides the recycling cans outside of D-Hall and the Student Union. They would come together to address the issue. Kranzberg says that the internet can both restrict and empower the citizens that use it. The Arab Spring is an example of how modern media and in particular social media such as blogs, Facebook, and twitter have helped empower those who are under a dictating government. The internet itself is not a tool for social change but when used by individuals with very strong beliefs, it can be employees as a platform to reach the public sphere. The media is a very important role in informing us about what is happening nationally but also internationally.

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Heres a link for a better understanding!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PzTyNe4tP4