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Exploring changing news repertoires: Towards a typology

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Abstract

The past few decades of journalism studies have been characterized by a focus on change, from the transforming digital media ecology, to shifting usage patterns, transitioning business models, and other pressing developments. However, specifying such changes in relation to news audiences and engagement is challenging. This article aims to unfold the complexity of consumption to specify different processes of changing news use. Employing an abductive approach that augments existing literature with a study on the processes and catalysts of transformation, we develop a heuristic framework to explicate changing news repertoires. The framework establishes where change takes place, explores what qualities change has, examines what dynamic factors drive change, and ultimately elaborates a more precise vocabulary to identify different change processes. Further specifying and modeling the exploration and elaboration phases, the article details how deliberateness, permanence, and scale vary the intensity and direction of change, before developing a typology that systematizes different analytical characteristics of how news media become part of (emergence), exist within (maintenance), and are removed from (disappearance) an individual's media repertoire. The article provides a detailed, systematic, and innovative approach to analyze news use, providing scholars with a comprehensive, actionable framework for qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods research to better understand what, exactly, repertoire change "is." In terms of applicability, the theoretical perspective developed alerts us to the fact that changing news use is often conceptualized by audiences in association with non-journalistic, contextual considerations, which are key to whether or not the potential for changing news use is actualized

Keywords

Abduction, change, digitalization, engagement, experience, news audiences, news use, repertoires

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Introduction

There is an impressive history of academic interest in the role of news in people's everyday life and the often converging reasons why this role may change. Scholars have explored changing news use in relation to a number of transformations including evolving more precise conceptualization and operationalization of "change" in relation to news use. It media landscapes and technological affordances (Graber, 1990), individual factors such as life stage transitions (Barnhurst and Wartella, 1991), and shifts in attitudes and engagement in public affairs (Valkenburg et al., 1999), themes which still hold significant sway in recent studies (e.g., Gil De Zuñiga and Diehl, 2019; Gómez-Zara' and Diakopoulos, 2020; Ytre-Arne, 2019). Moreover, changes to how people use and engage with news—and, indeed, what they consider "news" to be—is not just an academic concern articulated by scholars but a pressing condition caused by the exigencies of the news media industry itself (Peters and Carlson, 2019). It is no wonder then that technological advancement and innovation, as well as transformative public engagement and evaluation, occupy such prominent positions in contemporary journalism and news industry research (Nelson, 2018; Steensen et al., 2019). Building on the expanding "audience turn" in journalism studies, this article accordingly develops a heuristic framework and typology that facilitates furthermore expands and nuances the existing vocabulary of change to facilitate research into audiences' informational patterns, preferences, and contexts in a highly complex and constantly evolving media landscape.

Taking a step back to interrogate the concept of "change" in relation to news audience

research, as others have done with “practice” (Costera Meijer and Groot Kormelink, 2015), “use” (Picone, 2016), and “engagement” (Steensen et al., 2020), provides valuable consistency and clarity given the term’s frequency of use and its inherent ambiguity, often commonsensically applied. Despite important contributions to understanding change, be it use and experiences of different devices, platforms, or outlets to access news (Schröder, 2015), topical interest (Ytre-Arne and Moe, 2018), time spent (Thurman, 2018), age- and generation-related preferences (Westlund and Weibull, 2013), and related considerations cross-nationally (Newman et al., 2020), change is often black-boxed, despite its centrality for building theory about a research object in constant movement. To clarify change as a process, we develop a four-stage heuristic framework for its explication and study: (1) establishing whether a given case is indeed a change; (2) exploring the dimensions of the change in terms of scale, deliberateness, and permanence; (3) examining the dynamics at play in relation to typical factors behind change; and (4) elaborating the vocabulary around change and developing a typology to guide future inquiries. We anchor this framework in the concept of media repertoires (see Hasebrink and Hepp, 2017), given its emphasis on a process-oriented, holistic, and relational view of media use; a news repertoire can accordingly be broadly defined as the cross-media constellation of news and news-like items deployed for sensemaking around public affairs in the broader media ensemble, which change over time (see Peters and Schröder, 2018).

News audiences and change

Digital news audiences have been studied in depth for well-over a decade, through reports such as the “State of the News Media,” first appearing in 2004, “Reuters Digital News Report,” first appearing in 2012, as well as a number of influential mixed-method studies of sensemaking practices (e.g., Costera Meijer and Groot Kormelink, 2015; Couldry et al., 2007; Schröder and Steeg Larsen, 2010). The sense that journalism demands a more comprehensive understanding of audiences to sustain its democratic aspirations, to say nothing of financial wellbeing, has come to the analytical fore. Captivating both industry and scholars, in recent years multiple academics have made favorable declarations of an “audience turn” sweeping across journalism studies (e.g., Costera Meijer, 2016; Heikkila and Ahva, 2015; Picone, 2016).

Amidst this surge of attention, questions of changing news practices and preferences pertinent to scholarly inquiry are attended to (Costera Meijer and Groot Kormelink, 2015; Newman et al., 2020), albeit oftentimes implicitly, frequently subordinated to other interests such as participation (Kalogeropoulos et al., 2017), willingness-to-pay (Fletcher and Nielsen, 2017), civic engagement (Molyneux, 2019), evaluations of trust (Turcotte et al., 2015), sensory experience of devices (Groot Kormelink and Costera Meijer, 2019), and community-building (Swart et al., 2018), amongst others. While this growing attention to audiences enriches our understanding of news use, the depth of “temporal reflexivity” in much research is debatable, in terms of embracing “critical judgment about whether some phenomenon is indeed a break from what came before, a continuation of what has existed, or some middle-ground mutation” (Carlson and Lewis, 2019: 644). Yet there is little doubt that conceptualizing how news repertoires (re)form over time—and the diverse meanings people attach to them—requires such reflexivity, given the interrelation of divergent and uneven temporal processes alongside social, cultural, and political conditions, individual dispositions, and the spatial situations that influence everyday practice. Previous research clearly demonstrates this cross-temporal and intercontextual characteristic of change, whether we speak in terms of news preferences that are shaped and potentially inherited during childhood (Edgerly et al., 2018; Peters, 2012), media outlets and platforms emerging over generations or at different life stages (Antunovic et al., 2018; Westlund and Weibull, 2013), and many other processual influences on news preferences.

In this respect, a number of recent studies have tried to make the significance of news audience change, or degrees thereof, more visible, even when it is not always immediately apparent to audience members themselves. As LaRose (2010) and Peil and Spaviero (2017) note, habits tend to become automated and stabilized over time; in that respect, perhaps the most significant challenge for news audience research is to “make strange the familiar” in everyday life contexts (see Highmore, 2002). Such complexities in uncovering changing habits are further complicated by the fact that the interpretative schemas and affinities that people draw upon when choosing news and informational alternatives are often “deep orientations” they find hard to articulate themselves (Nærland, 2018), much less connect to broader motivations behind civic engagement (Ytre-Arne and Moe, 2018). Further complicating this multifaceted and seemingly abstract

picture are the realities of emergent platform societies, and the associated (often black-boxed) algorithmic influence on news repertoires formation and deformation processes (Plantin et al., 2018; Sandvig, 2013; Taneja et al., 2018), which may have a significant impact on specificizing the sources of news consumption (Trilling et al., 2017). And, of course, many of the proven drivers behind short- or long-term changing news use, from political campaigns (Boczkowski and Mitchelstien, 2013), to social (Ahva and Heikkila, 2015) and affective influences (Papacharissi, 2015); shifting technological affordances (Dimmick et al., 2011); and many others overlap and are nearly impossible to disentangle. In this regard, the layered, textured environments in which news repertoires are enacted must account for social histories, human interaction, and technological extension in the broadest sense (Peters, 2015).

Recent years have seen scholars productively tackling this complexity head on, with one constructive line being the gradual increase in scholarly attention devoted to deepening the conceptual treatment of change and time in journalism studies (see Bødker and Sonnevend, 2018). While much of this literature concerns itself with questions of news production, some treatments attend to news audiences. Keightley and Downey (2018: 100), for instance, call the “zones of intermediacy” central to news audiences’ sensemaking practices: “the experiential arenas in which temporal meaning is produced at the juncture of times—embodied, social, cultural, historical, and technological.” As such, emergent news practices—in the conceptual terms of this article, changing news repertoires—are best grasped by considering how parallel but non-synchronous time- scales intersect, from slower structural processes such as a general interest in public affairs or the positioning of a given outlet, to faster ones such as the emergence of a new media device, or the seemingly immediate emotional response to a news story (Peters and Schröder, 2018). Groot Kormelink and Costera Meijer (2019) echo these sentiments by problematizing the idea that time spent equates to interest of engagement, arguing for an experiential approach to elucidate time and news use. By explicating time, these emergent studies make the case that changing news audience practices are relational, embedded, and intersectional. Extending this line of argumentation, this article explicates audiences’ emic perceptions of news repertoire change with a social structuration perspective in mind, alert to long-term cultural and institutional continuities, meso-level social variables and discontinuities, the immediate media environment of the audience, as well as individual orientations and identities. Such an approach offers a systematic, decelerating, stabilizing, “temporally reflexive” (Carlson and Lewis, 2019) corrective to impressions of a rapid, near-incomprehensible evolving media landscape in which news audiences exist, refocusing inquiries to investigate how potentially more transitory, digitally diverse publics perceive journalism’s ongoing sensemaking role, relevance, and impact (Peters and Carlson, 2019).

Methodology

Repertoires are generally investigated at the level of the individual and then aggregated to discover wider patterns of change. The framework developed below adopts an emic rather than aggregative perspective of the individual, providing a phenomenological entry point for understanding news consumption as it relates to the broader media ecology and communicative figurations, that is, cross-media communication practices that operate at the meso-level of families, organizations, communities, and so forth (Hasebrink and Hepp, 2017). A fairly direct approach to investigating individuals’ changing news use would be to ask them directly (i.e., when did you start using X or using X more) and then try to trace back why it happened. While our study allowed for this possibility, its design addressed potential shortcomings of such an approach, namely, recollection bias on the part of the participant unless the change is quite significant and fairly recent, as well as being analytically prone to the “black boxing” of change on the part of the researcher. Our approach used visual prompts and a relational, non-media centric approach to account for the former, while the specificity of the coding actively addressed the latter by targeting a vast set of linguistic markers that could be associated with realized or potential changes. Moreover, to overcome limitations based on trying to conceptualize something as vast as change on the basis of a single study, we employed an abductive approach to generate our heuristic framework, which “rests on the cultivation of anomalous and surprising empirical findings against a background of multiple existing sociological theories and through systematic methodological analysis” (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012: 169).

Specifically, we augment the growing literature on news audiences by drawing upon empirical material from a study on young adults and news, part of a larger project investigating changing news

repertoires in Denmark. Probing the uses of traditional journalistic media as well as a variety of popular culture and social media sources, this particular fieldwork developed a mixed-method approach merging Q-sort methodology, think-aloud protocols, and semi-structured interviews to study 24 Danes, aged 18–24, in sessions lasting 90–120 min (see Appendix 1)¹. All recordings were transcribed and coded in NVivo, where all process-related verbs (i.e., started, began, stopped, etc.), expressions (i.e., have considered reading, started becoming interested, etc.), and conditional statements (i.e., might use, could be interesting, etc.) were identified and coded over multiple rounds of analysis in an effort to specify change. In an inductive approach common to researching news audience, this material would form the entire corpus of our empirical analysis and foundation of the associated framework, with previous studies serving primarily for comparison. An abductive approach, by contrast, analyzes in concert with previous literature to help push analysis forward when findings seem anomalous (e.g., a person’s stated motivation for being informed about public affairs seems in stark contrast with their media use), surprising (e.g., a clear misalignment between political sentiments and preferred media outlets), or are implicit or partial in the empirical fieldwork (e.g., orientations or affective language about informational preferences and practices not necessarily borne out in participants’ recollections or observed behaviors.) In this way, an abductive approach provides a more systematic basis for the construction of a robust analytical framework, anchoring its construction across relevant literatures, which rely on a host of methods. Merging our findings with related studies to connect relevant research strands led to the formulation of 31 categories of change. These categories were then further contextualized in an abductive process to develop a heuristic framework that unearthed complexity, while remaining unpretentious in terms of claiming a predictive model (Thomas, 2010).

Changing news repertoire: A heuristic framework

This framework provides an analytical departure point and route towards discovery, exploration, and clarification of what takes place when audiences’ habits, routines, experiences, and meanings around news change (see Figure 1). The distinctions, stages, and prisms it develops can be operationalized for guiding qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods research designs, crafting fieldwork materials, collecting empirical data, or approaching analysis. Four iterative analytical stages are identified, aiming to facilitate future change-oriented audience research and add increasing analytic complexity:

Establish – is this a news repertoire change, and if so, is it internally or externally oriented (or both)?

Explore – what is the scale of change, is it deliberate, and how stable is it over time?

Examine – what is driving and moderating the change?

Elaborate – within a broader typology of different change processes, which type is this and why is it happening?

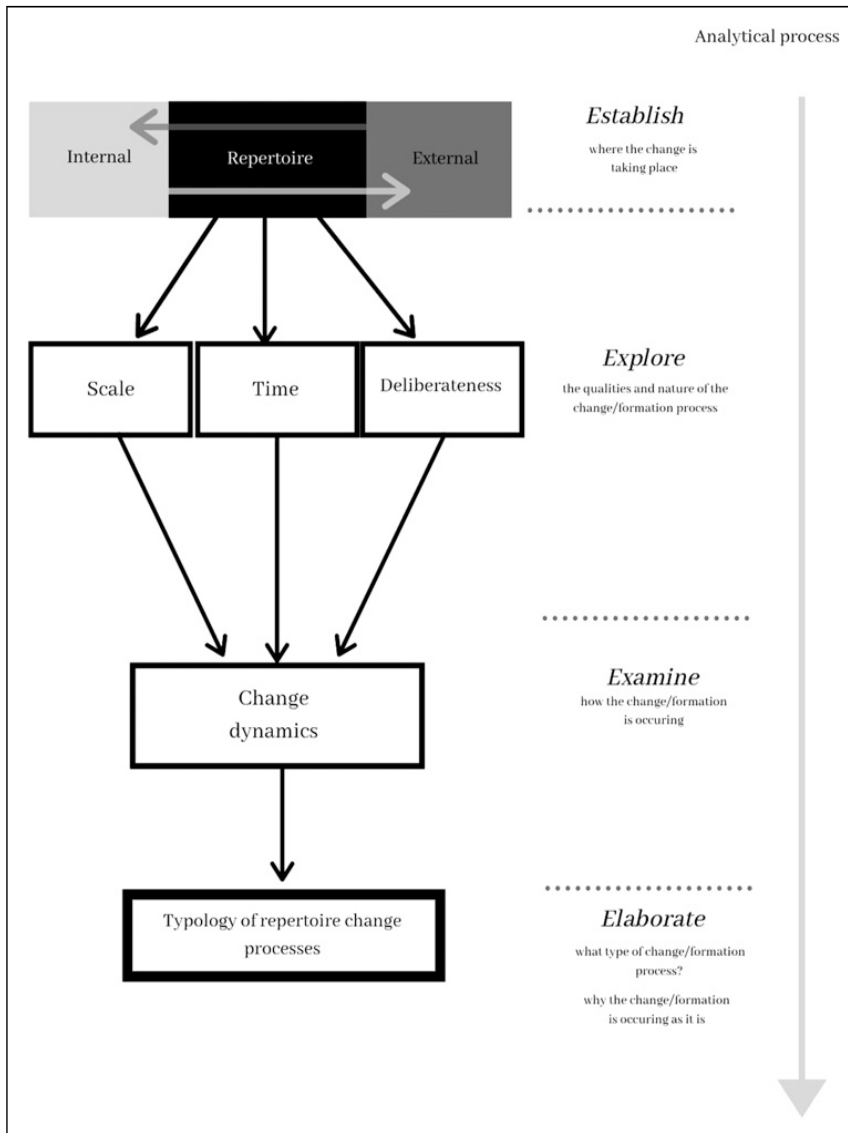
Stages two and four offer additional figures to facilitate potential empirical operationalization, as they represent areas of empirical inquiry that tend to be most germane to news audience research.

Establish

In fieldwork, research participants discuss change in a variety of ways, for example, in relation to a change in attitude, life situation, daily routine, chance encounter with a novel media item, and so forth². In this regard, there is a distinction between establishing whether change takes place within the broader confines of the media ecology, in general, or the (news) repertoire under investigation, in particular. For example, a participant might express a diminished or increased use of Facebook, which would constitute a repertoire change in practice and is fairly unambiguous. However, a participant could also express an individual change in their personal evaluation of Facebook that has not been acted upon. Finally, a participant might describe an external change, saying that Facebook has become more widely used by peers but indicate this has not changed their use. These slightly different articulations, especially the latter two, may at some point revert, transition towards, or translate into practice—a repertoire change.

¹ The empirical analysis and comparison of the repertoires using factor analysis is the focus of Peters et al. (2021).

² As noted in the abstract, the model and typology developed in the “explore” the “elaborate” phases of its heuristic framework demand more extensive explication than the “establish” and “examine” phases.



When probing questions about change, it is thus important to determine if what participants describe constitutes an actual change of their individual repertoire or something else, which may relate to but—importantly—does not constitute a repertoire change. Most types of changes that participants mention can be roughly categorized as either pertaining to themselves (individual/internal), such as a mindset, value or perception; or to the media landscape (ecological/external), such as a new media, changed affordance, or public sentiment.

Internal changes relate to the personal and individual propensities that are relevant for news use. Building on Nærland’s (2018) notion of “deep orientations,” which includes a person’s dispositions—interpretative resources, values, motivations, affinities, and sensibilities in the Bourdieusian sense—internal changes are important for understanding news repertoire change because they indicate possible future and emerging repertoire changes and help explain the composition of the current repertoire. While the distinctions between: (a) changes that are externally perceived in the environment; (b) internal changes that pertain to individual propensities such as mindset, values or perceptions; and (c) actualized repertoire changes are not clear-cut (hence the arrows in the figure above), they do not share the same locus and temporality and therefore should not be conflated. Thus, it is both possible and valuable to pinpoint what are only, at least for the moment, internal changes. For example, Louise (22) explained she would like to engage more with news content that has a societal angle than she already does as a result of starting law school. “I

think in relation to law studies that criminal stories and financial crime and those sorts of things are quite interesting. Every time there is something like that I am very inclined to – that’s something I want to read.” This is not an actual repertoire change— yet—but a growing orientation. Internal changes may be linked to existing media practices and are in and of themselves interesting for further investigation, as they make observable what news audience studies associated with behavioral theory term an attitude formation that precedes a potential change, perhaps even leading to a change in habit (LaRose, 2010). Internal changes, and deep orientations, can be found by examining participants’ aspirations for change—the expectant, pursued, or hoped for—for example, increasing the consumption of serious news or “reverse domestication” practices like decreasing the consumption of “trash TV” (Karlsen and Syvertsen, 2016). Camilla (23), for example, said she expects not only a different financial situation but also a different daily rhythm, different job prospects, and different needs for being informed once she completes her studies. “I might want to work as an educator. Then you also have to do a lot more research in non-fictional literature so that will probably jump this way [towards greater importance within her repertoire]. And documentaries. Plus, there are some magazines about psychology and teaching.” She already has a quite clear expectation of her future media use connected to general expectations of the future she expects and is progressing towards. As such, a person’s orientation helps shape media practices, both current and future.

External changes articulate perceived changes in the surrounding media environment or sociopolitical landscape. When research participants recount and talk about changes in news repertoires, these may be transposed observations, rather than actual changes within the repertoire of the individual themselves. For instance, Nadja (23) describes how Instagram and Facebook have become “so big now,” noting that social media platforms develop “all these new features all the time, and suddenly you can share this third thing or drop to the right and then there is news somewhere else, so it changes. Suddenly you can get news on Facebook where before it was more pictures of people and private messages.” As shown by work drawing on domestication theory to explain technological adoption (Hartmann, 2013), or studies drawing on theories of monitorial citizenship to explore civic engagement (Ytre-Arne and Moe, 2018), news audiences have to re-position themselves in relation to external developments, be they the perceived affordances of a platform, growing popularity for a specific outlet, or increased awareness of an issue in society. In such cases, externally perceived changes may point to actual or future repertoire changes, or to hidden work that maintains the repertoire when a window for change opens up. An important caveat and key conceptual recognition at this stage, we would argue, is to embrace a “non-journalism- centric” perspective (Swart et al., 2017), in an effort to map and understand the relationship between changes in the wider media repertoire, which includes diverse cultural uses of media, and the individual news repertoire. Both are key to sensemaking practices around public affairs, which often utilizes news-like information sources in complementary fashion with traditional journalistic sources.

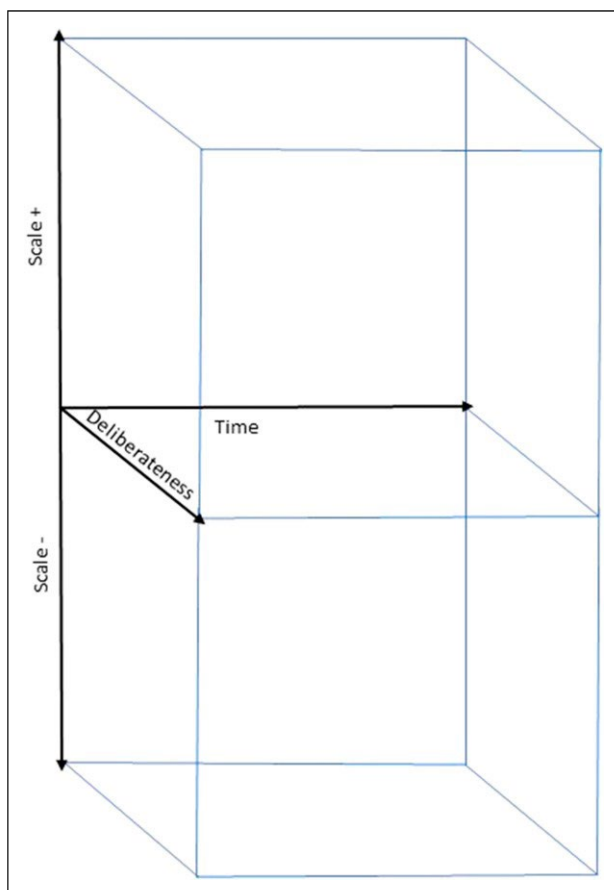


Figure 2. Variables for changing news repertoires.

Explore

When a change in news repertoires occurs, many pressing questions relate to the motivation behind said development, its intensity, and potential durability. Such questions can be explored by aggregating three variables of change—scale, time, and deliberateness—into one cohesive illustration (see Figure 2). Moreover, the visualization draws focus beyond the extremes of the spectrums that, understandably, tend to excite re- searchers and news organizations alike, namely, highly visible changes that are great in scale, recent in origin, and deliberate in cause. Considering changes that are small in scale, old in origin, and unintentional in cause may provide valuable knowledge about typical modifications or minor adjustments in news repertoires, given that relative stability tends to characterize habitual patterns of consumption (Peil and Sparviero, 2017).

Scale signifies the size of the repertoire change in question. A large change can be the sudden disuse (Scale -, above) of an often-used media source, for instance, because of a discontinued subscription, or it may be the abrupt introduction or increase (Scale+, above) of a pattern of media use in the news repertoire, as studies indicate occurred for increased use of TV news during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (Nielsen et al., 2020). Quantitative (Newman, 2020), qualitative (Costera Meijer and Groot Kormelink, 2015) and digital (Boczkowski and Mitchelstein, 2013) approaches to study news use often try to get at such significant causes of change, its consequences, and intentionality. However it is notable that when directly asked whether their news repertoires had recently changed, most respondents in our study initially responded firmly in the negative, and, when prompted further, generally recalled changes as either minor or abstract and structural. For instance, when asked whether her media use had changed within the past 5 years, Tine (24) said: “No, I don’t think so. I mean... I do actually think that now with smartphones, news has actually become more accessible. [...] So I guess it has maybe become easier.” The evaluation, sorting, and plotting

of changes to news repertoire by scale makes apparent such changes, which risk being lost in unguided analysis and, given the relative stability of repertoires, may prove the better-populated category of repertoire change. As for operationalization, scale of change can be analyzed using longitudinal analyses in diachronic studies, although in the case of survey research the individual is typically not what is being traced but the sample in aggregate. Qualitative approaches more often adopt a synchronic approach, prompting participants to recollect experienced changes and represent former configurations, although such exercises are vulnerable to recollective inaccuracy. Our mixed-method study of youth news and informational repertoires (Peters et al., 2021) attempts to address this by using a longitudinal approach, with follow-up fieldwork with the same individuals allowing participants to self-construct and compare their repertoires at two points in time, making the intensity of change visible to them for reflection.

Time refers to the length of time a given practice has existed and, by association, the degree of permanence and stability of given elements within a news repertoire. The concept of change only makes sense in relation to time: without considering different temporalities, ranges, and perceptions, the analytical specificity of audiences' changing news practices is rendered invisible as well as meaningless (Keightley and Downey, 2018; Peters and Schröder, 2018). Similar to the spectrum of scale, one end of the spectrum of time more obviously grabs our eye—the new is intrinsically interesting. However, it is important to bear in mind that news repertoires are processual, emergent, and often gradual. Much news audience research stems from concerns about the dwindling size of news audiences and related business model (Fletcher and Nielsen, 2017) and democratic imperatives (Swart et al., 2017; Ytre-Arne and Moe, 2018). Given this aim, attention on minor adjustments and stability may provide researchers with temporally robust knowledge about journalism (Carlson and Lewis, 2019), emphasizing elements we most risk overlooking as they least resemble change. Figure 2 renders visible small changes, recognizing that time is not experienced with linear regularity and therefore requires placement within its highly individualized context, as Adams (1995: 5) notes: “Everyone, it seems, holds a very exclusive, personal meaning-cluster of time, a distinct but not fixed composition, one open to changes and linked to shifts in personal circumstances, emotional states, health, age and context.” Placing change, in a qualitative sense, thus becomes difficult as each media item and each repertoire change will rarely be recalled by participants within a comprehensive chronology relative to other media items. Rather, participants often recall individual changes to media repertoires in relation to events, which are not recollected within a strict timeline, unless captured by methods that facilitate this, such as the diary method (Moe and Ytre-Arne, 2020). For example, when asked whether his media use was different a month or so prior to the interview, Peter (20) responded in the negative, and reported it had not recently changed. However, when asked which media most recently caught his attention, Peter said: “I suppose the last thing has been Reddit. Because I spend so much time on transportation this past month. So I’ve been using Reddit a lot in that time. More than I normally would.” In synchronic qualitative research, this problem can be only partially, but satisfactorily, rectified by identifying a few phenomenologically linguistic significant variables of time, such as “now,” “recently,” “less recently,” or “long ago.” Diachronic approaches, especially those grounded in hard data (Webster, 2014) allow improved chronological accuracy in terms of temporal changes relative to each other.

Deliberateness relates to the intentionality or lack thereof behind a given change. Deliberate changes are more likely to draw our attention as they are far easier to capture empirically as study participants are aware of and able to identify and report them. However, media repertoires must to a large extent be conceptualized as habitual, embodied and mundane, making less deliberate and more gradual changes harder to detect (Groot Kormelink and Costera Meijer, 2019, see also Highmore 2002). News institutions work to raise awareness in ways meant to favorably impact the audience’s engagement in a number of ways, for instance, through scheduling, branding, and personalization (Nelson, 2018). However, the advent of social media and aggregators as news intermediaries complicates this, with algorithmic selection and targeting leading to a situation where news repertoires become more volatile and unpredictable, because the news media encountered are often not consciously or routinely chosen by the individual (Trilling et al., 2017) In such an ecology, deliberateness cannot be taken for granted. Furthermore, focusing on deliberate change may not reflect audiences’ own experiences as many participants, when asked directly, may not perceive anything has changed even if it has; by extension, at least some changes to repertoires lack deliberateness. Comparing her passive view of television’s informational value to more purposeful use of a computer to access news, Tine (24), for instance, reflects: “I’ve never really been much of a TV-type [for being informed about public

affairs]. It's mostly been using the computer. And you could say, with the TV of course you're – well, of course it'll just be running on the TV, whereas, if you're on your computer, you have to make a more conscious decision on what to access." Focusing on deliberate change can blind us to fluctuations in the large remainder of a repertoire, which is experienced as durable. Operationalizing deliberateness is accordingly more straightforward than scale or time as deliberateness, unlike the two prior variables, is always a subjective experience and must be evaluated as such.

Examine

Dynamics of change can be conceptualized in terms of the drivers that initiate change and moderators that shape how change unfolds. These dynamics tend to encompass motivations, orientations, and resources (Nærland 2018), as well as opportunities and access (Schröder and Steeg Larsen, 2010), which have been found to influence media practices. Among more prominent known drivers that can initiate formation changes are: (1) political drivers, such as changing news consumption up to an election (Boczkowski and Mitchelstien, 2013), (2) affective factors, such as emotional responses to news events spurring use or non-use (Papacharissi, 2015); (3) technological factors, such as changing affordances of news consumption (Gómez-Zara' and Diakopoulos, 2020), (4) institutional factors, such as news organizations' changing engagement strategies (Nelson, 2018), (5) social factors, such as peer influences (Ahva and Heikkila, 2015), (6) economic factors, such as pricing schemes of paid news consumption (Fletcher and Nielsen, 2017), (7) spatiotemporal factors, such as consuming news during a commute (Dimmick et al., 2011); and (8) life stage factors, the most well-known being starting to consume news as part of transitioning to adulthood (Barnhurst and Wartella, 1991). While this list is neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive, in aggregate it informs an overview of the various drivers that can help initiate change at the level of news repertoires.

Although the described factors are typically understood as separate drivers of change, upon closer inspection, they often overlap in various ways, and over time play different roles in the moderation of change. For example, Camilla (23) explained throughout her interview how prominent a role Instagram plays in her life. However, she was initially reluctant to get it: "It was something I didn't want at all but I had to get it in secondary school to obtain news and then my friends told me that it's a really good way to connect. And then okay, you give it a try. And sure enough." When she moved away from home, an old routine of watching TV2's Godmorgen Danmark [breakfast news] with her mother on a flow-basis transformed to streaming online and following TV2 and other news providers on Instagram. "It's 100% the easiest way. You just go in and follow them on Facebook or Instagram and then when I check it informs me of something." In this regard, it is helpful conceptually to note that change drivers and moderators can intersect, with the latter being more about factors that mold changes in process. Some of the more obvious moderators are those that present barriers, for example, fee-based news consumption (Swart et al., 2017); reinforcing tendencies, such as positive social feedback from peers (Peters et al., 2021); or enabling conditions that make a particular type of consumption more attractive or available (Schröder and Steeg Larsen, 2010).

Elaborate

This final stage of our heuristic framework develops a typology, which elaborates and extends the vocabulary typically subsumed under the categorical notion of change. While by no means an exhaustive overview, the systematic discussion of types of formation processes provides a robust theoretical footing for specifying in depth, and across a larger scope, what happens when repertoires are changing, ultimately providing insights into audiences' changing relationship to news and journalism over time. Moreover, such a typology shows the complexity of repertoire changes in that it replaces the enchantingly simple term "change" with a number of more accurate and precise terms. While there are many ways to visualize such an overview, rather than proposing a classification system, which imposes a totality of sorts (Bowker and Star, 2000), this typology offers a perspective that does not claim finality or closedness but rather invites ongoing investigation. As such, one empirical example can sometimes be understood in connection to more than one of the typology's formation processes but each will make for different analysis, which will ultimately enhance understanding of what exactly happens in formation processes.

The typology in Figure 3 proposes three overarching categories of change or formation processes: emergence, in which items enter the repertoire; disappearance, in which items leave; and maintenance, in which items are sustained. Maintenance is included in the study of change because formation processes are

continuously ongoing despite the repertoire itself often appearing relatively stable, especially to research participants themselves. Some changes are not observable from their early onset and, moreover, some take time to manifest, as various drivers maintain the status quo. However, the seeds of change can flourish later on and go unnoticed if not purposefully interrogated by the researcher. Victor (24), for example, mentioned “liking” Vice News on Facebook in elementary school, resulting in Facebook’s algorithms “suddenly” curating content to him years later, when he reached Vice’s target age demographic (young adult). In this way, repertoires are shadowed by digital infrastructures (Sandvig, 2013), gradually molding and shaping its base, which may in turn shape the repertoire in (un)expected ways. This points to the temporal complexity of formation processes and the value of mapping such practices with precise terminology to gain a better understanding of effects that are built up over longer timeframes.

Processes of emergence. There are at least four distinct yet potentially overlapping types of emergence processes. Most obvious is the “abrupt acquisition” of a media device, platform, news item, genre, or combination of such elements. These differ from “gradual acquisition,” where the media item is phased in, becoming “stickier” over time. Gradual acquisition is especially interesting in terms of change dynamics and the work of maintenance and solidification taking place as a media or news items transforms from new and volatile to “stable.” This challenges observations about the disruptive nature of technologies in the new media ecology, as they become habituated devices in everyday life (Hartmann, 2013). Of course, the processual qualities of formation processes are often hard to pin down analytically as evidenced by the next type of emergence process, the “re-appearance” of a media item that had once disappeared but returns. This type also connects to a disappearance process, illustrating the overlapping nature of this typology. Moreover, the re-entry into the repertoire can be paradoxical and raises a two-fold question: Why did it disappear in the first place, since it obviously had some value? And what made it re-enter? For instance, social media present a paradox to Jakob (22), who deletes his Facebook and Instagram accounts, only to re-download and re-activate them. Jakob finds his social media use “terrifying” and worries about the “image of the world” they provide him with, findings which reflect recent work on media resistance and “digital detox” (Syvertsen and Enli, 2020). However, as he explains, “I am a very knowledge-thirsty person, and it’s not everything you read that has to be something that you need to know. Something might be nice to know if you want to discuss with someone.” When active on Facebook, Jakob shares and discusses news with others, which allows him to potentially “change their minds” about topics important to him such as climate change, vegetarianism, and refugees.



Figure 3. A typology of change processes.

“Substitution” occurs when a media item or outlet is replaced by another, either actively or passively, to maintain the fulfillment of a need or shift the importance or value of a fulfilled need. Among our participants, this was exemplified by Freja (20), who substituted Facebook for Reddit. Freja explained her discontent with how Facebook “changed their comment system,” something she found “a bit weird” and now avoids because “it seems like they are only willing to show some things. There are also a lot of strange people there now.” But being on an online forum is very important to her, as she uses them to discuss her chronic disease as well as handle difficult life challenges. Reddit gives her access to news content she cannot access from Denmark, and she also uses it for “stuff that makes me laugh a little or funny things. And support groups, which I am part of. It’s just a space where you can get it out. And people give out advice.” Freja emphasized the importance of Reddit’s comment system, particularly its transparency, and trust in the information it provides for her everyday life struggles, noting “it means a lot to me because you can see if something is true or not. There are always some people who go and fact check and sometimes who can go the right places that you can’t yourself access to check. And you can check the people and what they have said before on Reddit.”

Processes of maintenance. This category contains a number of types of formation processes that are often complex to identify, a challenge noted above when exploring the relative scale and deliberateness of repertoire change. News use is usually relatively stable at the level of repertoires but is nonetheless not static nor in a state of inertia (Peters and Schröder, 2018). On the contrary, beneath the surface of a stable repertoire are slowly moving processes doing hidden work that can potentially lead to emergences or disappearances. They can also function to maintain the repertoire’s composition as it is. Important in this regard are socio-technical dynamics, such as platform affordances, algorithms, and infrastructures (Pariser

2011; Taneja et al., 2018) as well as socio-cultural influences like social distinction associated with a particular news outlet (Hartley, 2018), although these are often invisible or unnoticed by audiences in everyday use. The first type of maintenance is “intensification,” the increasing of use of a media item in terms of frequency, duration, or perceived value. Such intensification can be thought of as emergence because there is growth in the repertoire, however, the crucial point is that intensifying an existing use helps further anchor and solidify a media item in the repertoire. “Translation” is similarly reminiscent of some forms of emergence and especially “substitution.” Translation refers to when a media item is translated into a new type of usage, for example, changing device, platform, or channel but maintaining the fulfillment of the same media need. It differs from substitution because in “translation,” the use of a media item is reconfigured to another channel, outlet, or device, for example, translating the use of morning news on live TV to streaming the morning news on a computer later during the day. More closely related to disappearances are “unrealized change” and “continuity in spite of change driver.” Unrealized change potentially divides into several sub-types and refers to when a change is wanted or expected but either never commences or quickly halts. For example, Victor (24) explained he “regrets” making a Facebook profile because it “stresses” him but says that there is “no way around it.” Now he uses Facebook for many things, including finding his current employment. He also follows a news media, Local Eyes, which he expresses dissatisfaction with because “they started only telling stories about gang shootings and stuff like that in Denmark. And all of a sudden, they have stories about Spain.” Nonetheless, Victor explained he still uses them, most recently when they covered a Swedish gang shooting in Denmark, a prominent case. “Continuity” refers to a lack of change despite the presence of a change driver that could reasonably be assumed to catalyze change, such as a negative experience or a moment of possible change (i.e., moving abroad, Christiansen, 2004). This type resembles “unrealized change” and may overlap but differs in that maintenance powers are stronger. Victor’s example above illustrates the infrastructural power of platforms (Plantin et al., 2018) and the work of maintenance that infrastructures do, from an emic perspective. The earlier example of Jakob demonstrates both a desire for change and an ongoing negative experience of his own use of social media for news, raising the question of what maintenance work is keeping and drawing him back into media habits he is not happy with.

Processes of disappearance. Mirroring processes of emergence, the most obvious type of disappearance is the “abrupt” removal of a media item, like deleting a social media account, or app, as in the previous example, or blocking a news provider on Facebook, as recent work on news avoidance and the variety of negative experiences associated with journalism tends to highlight (Aharoni et al., 2021). The next type of disappearance process is “gradual disappearance,” in which a media item is phased out, for example, by using it less-and-less frequently until it is removed from the repertoire, a form of habit change that may go unnoticed until pointed out to participants (LaRose, 2010), and which can sometimes be associated with feelings of guilt due to expectations of informed citizenship (Ytre-Arne and Moe, 2018). The last disappearance process is “discontinuity,” which is when a media item vanishes from the repertoire as a result of a passive act or lack of action, for example, failing to renew a subscription, or moving away from home where specific types of media could be accessed and failing to take appropriate actions to maintain a media item.

Conclusion

Despite rich scholarly attention paid in recent years to the changing environments, conditions, and uses of news and journalism in everyday life, explication and clarification in order to study and make sense of what change specifically “is” in relation to news audiences is often addressed implicitly and commonsensically. This article has argued, in line with recent calls (Carlson and Lewis, 2019), that such “black boxing” is potentially problematic in terms of lacking “temporal reflexivity,” tending to privilege dramatic and visible changes at the expense of studying more gradual or opaque processes of changing news use. Accordingly, this article developed a heuristic framework to investigate changing news repertoires in a systematic manner, including a typology that extends our vocabulary of change to include 11 sub-types within three overarching processes of change, namely: emergence, maintenance, and disappearance. The heuristic framework we have proposed is not only empirically grounded in the current study but

abductively derived, synthesizing, and building upon the innovative findings of many recent studies to offer additional analytical value to (re)conceptualize, (re)examine, and (re)theorize what is stable about current audience practices, what specifically is changing, to what degree, and how these practices intersect and overlap. Simply put, we argue its complexity bears closer affinity to the different lived realities of repertoire change, and that the analytical phases we propose offer multiple avenues for future work to more precisely grasp different dimensions and degrees of these processes. Methodologically, it can be operationalized in numerous ways to capture diverse aspects of change, using qualitative, quantitative, or mix-method designs. Diary approaches (Moe and Ytre-Arne, 2020) and time use studies (Picone, 2016), for example, can fruitfully track repertoire changes over time, associated aspects of deliberateness, perceived drivers of change, and particularities of emergence, maintenance, or deletion. Automated tracking can reveal particularities of stability and scale of change (Van Damme et al., 2015), while elicitation techniques (Peters et al., 2021) and ethnographic approaches (Groot Kormelink and Costera Meijer, 2019) can help make tangible everyday practices and associated dynamics of change. Surveys too, while typically operating at the level of the aggregate rather than individual, could more actively question key considerations around deliberateness, drivers, moderators, and types articulated in this article to better specify and complexify change. In all these cases, using follow-up interviews can add valuable temporal nuance. In short, the proposed framework in this article is developed precisely to be operationalized to inform future inquiries using a variety of methodological approaches, without imposing totality, closedness, or simplicity. Rather, the framework remains open and flexible to be able to capture the empirical complexity of repertoire change, in which one type of formation or change does not exclude another. In fact, it is often the case that one or more types of change may, in fact, presuppose or necessitate another formation process. As such, particular types of formation overlap within larger, entangled processes. Thus, the typology invites scrutiny and contribution to enhance and extend current understandings of what exactly happens when news repertoires change over time.

Being alert to change and how it is probed analytically is essential in maturing the field as journalism studies comes of age—change is a central concern in need of further conceptual advancement (Peters and Carlson, 2019). Moreover, as we have demonstrated, the context in which repertoires take shape today is becoming increasingly complex, leaving both researchers and industry with the challenge of developing tools to empirically address the myriad ways that publics potentially form a relationship with news and journalism, in order to grasp and explain how and why that changes. This is not a benign concern, we hasten to add. Many pressing debates around political polarization, racism, xenophobia, populism and the like are predicated on questioning how and why people start to encounter and search out (fake) news and (ds)information that foments these beliefs—so it behooves us to clearly specify what these changes are and why they occur. In this respect, scholarly attention should be alert to the specificities of change and its dynamics, with this paper offering three key implications going forth. First, the recognition that changing news consumption takes place across parallel but non-synchronous intersecting cultural, social, technical, and political time scales. We posit that research on news audiences can fruitfully anchor a conception of change in the experiential arena of time (see Keightley and Downey, 2018; Peters and Schröder, 2018)—in the emic experiences of these intersecting, subjective time scales and their specific intersection in audiences' everyday lives. Changing news use is often conceptualized by news audiences in relation to subjective time scales. Second, major lifestage changes, such as moving away from home, starting a new job, or significantly changing a daily routine or rhythm, such as a commute, seem central to actualizing news repertoire changes but such disruptions do not work in isolation nor do they yield shaping power in and of themselves. Rather, such changes converge with many other driving and moderating factors, as described above, and time scales, as mentioned here, in producing specific outcomes. Finally, a central challenge for research on news audiences' changing usage patterns relates to the dimensions of time, scale, and deliberateness: Being able to capture changes that are slow, gradual, and perhaps unintentional or even unacknowledged requires additional methodological innovations.

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Appendix 1: Participants

Participant	Pseudonym	Gender	Location	Age	Occupational Status
P1	Rabia	Female	Provincial /Rural	21	Student, psychology
P2	Saafia	Female	Provincial /Rural	23	Working, pedagogical assistant
P3	Sif	Female	Provincial /Rural	22	Student, pedagogy
P4	Ayesha	Female	Capital	24	Student, engineer
PS	Simon	Male	Capital	23	Student, political science
P6	Tine	Female	Provincial /Rural	24	Student, teacher
P7	Peter	Male	Capital	20	Student, molecular biology
PS	Anna	Female	Capital	23	Student, sociology
P8	Leon	Male	Capital	23	Looking for work
PIO	Lotte	Female	Provincial /Rural	23	Student, business communication
P11	Nedim	Male	Capital	21	Working fulltime, guard
P12	Camilla	Female	Provincial /Rural	23	Student, pedagogy
P13	Louise	Female	Capital	22	Student, law
P14	Morten	Male	Capital	21	Student, engineering
P15	Freja	Female	Capital	20	Unemployed, chronically ill
P16	Laura	Female	Capital	21	Working, retail
P17	Martin	Male	Capital	23	Working, teaching assistant
P18	Mads	Male	Capital	24	Working fulltime, engineer
P19	Jakob	Male	Provincial /Rural	22	Unemployed
P20	Stefan	Male	Provincial /Rural	23	Student, lab technician
P21	Lærke	Female	Provincial /Rural	18	Unemployed
P22	Mark	Male	Provincial /Rural	23	Sales, electronics
P23	Victor	Male	Provincial /Rural	24	Working fulltime, postal service
P24	William	Male	Provincial /Rural	20	Sales, music products