

Red Media, Blue Media, and Purple Media: News Repertoires in the Colorful Media Landscape

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This study extends past research on news repertoires by examining how individuals combine news exposure across an array of media platforms and content. Results from a national survey reveal 6 distinct news repertoires. While some respondents have clear ideologically driven repertoires, others have repertoires that are best described as medium-centric. A closer look at socio-demographic factors and participation levels among the 6 news repertoires are also explored. Results shed light on the democratic implications of the high-choice media landscape and research on news exposure and effects.

Media choice. It's arguably the most defining characteristic of the current media environment. Gone are the days of only a few broadcast television channels, radio stations, and print news outlets. Today's media users make their selection choices amid hundreds of television channels, smart phone technologies, and virtually unlimited news options available online. The availability of so many media options, however, has raised concerns about the democratic implications of living in such a high-choice media environment. Chief among these is the worry that increased media choice enables some to easily avoid news content all together (Mindich, 2005; Prior, 2007). The fragmented-nature of news exposure (Webster, 2005) also underscores the tendency for audiences to gravitate toward sources that reinforce their ideological viewpoints and are of lower quality (Bennett, 2003; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009). To shed more light on the validity of these concerns, the current study explores two overarching questions: What does news exposure look like in the age of media choice? How do different news audiences make use of the news media environment in different ways?

This study takes a news repertoire approach by identifying the distinct ways that media users combine news use across a wide array of media platforms and content (Hasebrink & Popp, 2006; Taneja, Webster, Malthouse, & Ksiazek, 2012; Yuan, 2011). In taking this approach the focus is less about exposure to a single news

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source, and more about the subset of news sources that people consume in tandem. After all, no one person can consume all the media options available to him or her. As such, a repertoire approach provides a window into the decision-making strategies of audiences who are faced with increased media options (Heeter, 1985).

This study extends research on news repertoires by drawing attention to the mixing of “old” and “new” media (Jenkins, 2006). The emergence of ideologically driven news and the blurring of news and entertainment are considered alongside more traditional sources of print, television, radio, and internet news. Data from a national survey of U.S. adults is used to identify the ways that audiences consume news. Results indicate the existence of six distinct news repertoires, reflecting the wide array of news options available to audiences. While some respondents have clear ideologically based repertoires that span multiple media platforms, others have news repertoires that function at a medium level. Interestingly, results reveal a repertoire in which respondents consume both conservative *and* liberal news. A closer look at socio-demographic factors and participation levels among the news repertoires indicate the six repertoires are distinct audience groups that engage in participatory activities at significantly different rates. Ultimately, this study sheds light on the ways news audiences navigate the high-choice media landscape and the democratic implications of news repertoires.

Literature Review

The Colorful Media Landscape

The modern news consumer navigates a complex environment of options. Cable news exists alongside broadcast news. Newspapers exist in print and on the Internet. Blogs and podcasts represent a completely new type of news product. In *Convergence Culture* Henry Jenkins (2006) aptly describes these changes saying, “contemporary media is being shaped by several contradictory and concurrent trends: at the same moment that cyberspace displaces some traditional information and cultural gatekeepers, there is also an unprecedented concentration of power within old media” (p. 223). News audiences exist in a world where old media meets new—old media creating a new media presence and new media packaging news in completely different ways. Somewhere in this media windstorm audiences make news selection decisions.

If the low-choice media environment was characterized by a more consistent approach to news presentation and style (Baym, 2010), then the high-choice media environment is characterized by diversity. In particular, two emerging news trends reflect this diversity: ideologically driven news and the blurring of news and entertainment.

Many scholars point to the emergence of multiple cable news channels as a tipping point in ideological news (Williams & Delli Carpini, 2012). The interplay of

ownership influence, pressure to fill a large news hole, and increased competition have resulted in news content that shies away from traditional notions of neutrality and objectivity (Baym, 2010; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). For example, *FoxNews'* coverage of the United States invasion of Iraq in 2003, displayed significantly more support for the Bush Administration than did *ABC*, *CBS*, *CNN*, or *NBC* (Aday, Livingston, & Hebert, 2005). Adding to this ideological news trend is the Internet and its many blogs and online news sites. Baum and Groeling (2008) found that *FoxNews.com* and *FreeRepublic.com* were more likely to feature pro-Republican stories, while *DailyKos.com* was more likely to feature pro-Democratic stories. Today's news audience now selects from a news menu that includes a steady offering of ideological commentary.

The media environment has also seen the rise of hybrid media, or media that blurs the line between news and entertainment. Falling under this general trend are three types of media: soft news, daytime and late-night talk shows, and news satire. Soft news programs, like *The Today Show* and *60 Minutes*, reflect a ratings-driven approach to news by featuring stories that are more sensational and lack policy-related information (Patterson, 2000). Daytime and late-night talk shows are also vehicles for public affairs information. They regularly feature jokes and commentary about news, and interviews with public officials and celebrities that touch on political issues. News satire programs are a more complex approach by infusing current events information with humor and critique (Baym, 2010). *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* are popular sources of news satire, especially during political elections (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2010). Taken together, hybrid media fall somewhere on a continuum anchored by traditional notions of journalism on one end, and fictional entertainment on the other.

While it is clear that ideological news and the blurring of news and entertainment offer audiences more choice in how they consume news, what is more debated are the democratic cost of consuming such content.

Cause for Concern?

One concern is that ideological news makes it easier for people to consume only content that agrees with their political views. Iyengar and Hahn (2009) found that Republicans tend to choose *FoxNews* as their news source, while Democrats avoid it (also Morris, 2005; Stroud, 2011). In terms of talk radio, 70% of Rush Limbaugh radio listeners are conservative, while only 19% of liberal/moderate talk radio listeners are conservative (Cappella, Turow, & Jamieson, 1996). Similarly, Hindman's (2009) analysis of click-stream data found that only 2.6% of political Web site-to-Web site traffic crossed ideological lines. It seems that despite all the colorful options the news media landscape offers, some audiences only see "red media" or "blue media." Increased polarization and the era of contentious politics are often connected to this type of ideological-based selective exposure (Mutz, 2006).

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There is also concern that individuals are turning away from news altogether, or the news that they do select is too entertainment oriented. Markus Prior (2007) argues that people who prefer entertainment (over news) and have access to cable or Internet selectively avoid news—resulting in lower levels of political knowledge and participation. Others present evidence that the mixing of news and entertainment attenuate this argument, but concede that only a low level of basic knowledge is gained from these programs (Baek & Wojcieszak, 2009) and the learning that does take place primarily occurs among those with low education (Baum, 2003). The popularity of these hybrid-type programs coupled with declines in traditional forms of news have led some to caution that we are “amusing ourselves to death” (Postman, 1986).

The levels of news exposure (or lack thereof) among young people have also received much attention. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (2010) reported that only 23% of 18 to 29 year-olds regularly read a newspaper, compared to 55% of people 65-years or older. The same pattern holds for network evening news (14% vs. 42%). This trend prompted the argument that young people are “tuned out” (Mindich, 2005) and “fleeing” from news (Patterson, 2008). However, the overall trend may not be that young people are “tuned out,” but that they are “tuned in” to a different set of news content. This younger cohort gets its news from online sources and from new trends in television news content like *FoxNews*, *CNN*, and the *Daily Show* (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2010). Yet, with this change comes worry that young people are replacing traditional forms of news with lower quality ones (Bennett, 2003). And that declines in political knowledge and participation among this cohort is indicative of this news diet change (Putnam, 2000).

The overarching concern is not that these new types of news are inherently bad, but that the exclusive use of *only* ideologically driven news, or *only* media that mix news and entertainment is the cause for worry. More so than ever before, news users have the ability to sample from many different types of news. The average American spends 70 minutes per day consuming news content (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2010), likely pulling from a variety of sources to reach this time total. When media research highlights the link between being Republican and watching *FoxNews*, this is only part of the story. The other part involves the additional news sources Republicans pair (or don't pair) with *FoxNews*. To account for this, news exposure in the current study is conceptualized as a complex pattern of news use rather than a single media selection. This approach is grounded in past work on media repertoires, which argues that we can learn a lot about audiences by examining what combinations of media they choose over others.

News Repertoires

A repertoire approach to media exposure was first developed by Heeter (1985) to describe the channel-watching routines of television users. At the time, cable

subscribers were choosing from around 30 channels when making decisions. By analyzing the handful of channels that were most frequently used, Heeter and co-authors were able to sketch the portraits of different television audiences and their viewing styles (Heeter, D'Alessio, Greenberg, & McVoy, 1988). Since this pioneering effort, numerous other studies have elaborated on the concept of repertoires, each shedding light on media repertoires against a changing media backdrop.

One line of research has focused on repertoires within a single medium. Ferguson and Perse (1993) found that cable subscription, high levels of television exposure, and channel changing behavior related to a larger TV channel repertoire (i.e., more channels regularly watched). Additionally, older audiences and those with lower levels of education had smaller TV channel repertoires (Ferguson & Melkote, 1997). A similar approach has been applied to the patterns of Web sites people visit (Ferguson & Perse, 2000).

Another research stream examines repertoires across media. Reagan, Pinkleton, Chen, and Aaronson (1995) introduced the idea of “information repertoires”—the set of sources that an individual selects for a given topic. For example, they identified a “sports repertoire” consisting of older media (radio and newspaper use) and a “community news repertoire” that mixed old and new media (newspaper, television, radio, computer, cellular phone use). Hasebrink and Popp (2006) identified six “news repertoires” in the German media market by examining television, radio, and newspapers use; while Yuan (2011) examined these plus mobile and Internet use in her study of news repertoires in China. Within the United States, a 2008 study identified four audience segments, such as “traditionalists” who get their news primarily from television and “net-newsters” who rely on the Internet, by asking individuals to indicate their “main [medium] source of news.” Taneja et al. (2012) took a more holistic look at media use by identifying repertoires like “television viewing” (which combined news and entertainment use) and “media on mobile.”

However, as the media landscape becomes more diverse, the underlying architecture of news repertoires can become more detailed. Past work has examined news repertoires through medium-level questions (e.g., television news use, newspaper news use). These approaches tell us little about the specific types of television or newspapers that audiences are turning to. As a result, past works may have diluted specific repertoires that function at the program or content level. To explore this possibility, a wider array of news content is accounted for, such as ideological-driven news and the mixing of news and entertainment, and differing organizing principles of news repertoires are considered.

Research Questions

Medium-Centric

The structure of a person’s news use may be anchored at the medium level. Hasebrink and Popp (2006) found a “television-only” news repertoire and a “print-

only" repertoire. For some audiences, the experience of reading a newspaper cannot be replicated with television or online news and they pattern their news use around a single medium. This can be expanded slightly to explore the ways audiences construct media patterns that combine media platforms (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2008; Yuan, 2011). A news repertoire may include exposure to different types of print news and Internet news, but not television news. That being said, these medium-centric news repertoires may be an artifact of the more general medium-level questions that past studies have used. It is unclear if medium-level patterns will still hold when accounting for more specific measures of news program and Web site exposure.

RQ₁: To what extent are news repertoires organized by medium?

Attribute Centric

Another possibility is that the internal architecture of news repertoires is built around content attributes. For some audiences, the news media environment consists of "red" and "blue" media that they selectively seek out and avoid (Iyengar & Hahn, 2009). A news repertoire structured around a conservative ideology could include a number of specific programs on the radio, television, print, and Internet. Additionally, it may be that some people gravitate exclusively toward media that mix news and entertainment. It has yet to be tested if the hybrid news-entertainment attribute is salient enough for people to pattern their news use around it.

RQ₂: To what extent are news repertoires organized by content attributes (e.g., ideological news, hybrid news-entertainment)?

Exploring Individual Differences

Individual differences play a role in the news decision-making process (Katz, Haas, & Gurevitch, 1973). Age is a common source of news differences. Older audiences are more avid users of print news, while younger generations gravitate toward digital news and sources that mix news and entertainment (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2010). Other research links females to the use of soft news (Baum, 2003) and males to programs that feature political humor (Coe et al., 2008). While linking individual differences and media exposure is a well-trodden path, it remains to be seen how these factors influence repertoires at the medium and attribute level.

RQ₃: To what extent do socio-demographic factors differ among news repertoires?

Implications for Participatory Behavior

The last research question explores the link between distinct news patterns and participatory behavior. A long line research has established the causal link between specific types of news exposure and political engagement (Putnam, 2000; Shah, Cho, Eveland, & Kwak, 2005). Newspaper exposure, for example, tends to spur higher levels of civic participation compared to television news (McLeod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999). Exposure to cable news and hybrid news-entertainment media is related to online participation among young adults (Baumgartner & Morris, 2010). What is lesser known is how specific repertoires relate to participatory behavior.

RQ4: To what extent do news repertoires exhibit different levels of participation?

Methods

Data

To explore these questions, data from YouGov/Polimetrix's *2008 Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project* (CCAP) are analyzed.¹ The 2008 project consisted of a multi-wave national online data collection that took place between December of 2007 and November of 2008. For the purpose of this study, only data from the March 2008 wave are used (with basic demographics from the baseline December wave). The March wave was selected due to its comprehensive battery of media use questions developed specifically by a team of researchers involved in the project. The March data were collected for 2 weeks beginning on March 21, 2008. YouGov/Polimetrix employed a sample matching procedure to assemble a representative set of responses. They first defined the target sample by constructing a stratified sampling frame from the 2005–2007 American Community Study. The target sample was defined and selected by stratifying age, race, gender, education, and state (with battleground states double sampled) using simple random sampling within strata, excluding non-registered voters. Next, YouGov/Polimetrix chose respondents based on a five-way cross-classification and invited them to complete the online survey. A participant "pool" was obtained by matching the approximately 48,000 completed responses to the target frame using a weighted Euclidean distances metric. With 48,000 people in the pool, there are, on average, between two and three possible matches from the pool for each of the 20,000 respondents in the target sample. Eventually, a "matched sample" of 20,000 responses was drawn from this pool. Due to missing cases on some combinations of characteristics, the matched sample was weighted to the sampling frame using propensity scores.² Sampling weights are used for all analyses.³ The final sample is deemed representative of registered voters ($N = 1191$).

Measures

News Use.

Respondents were asked to indicate how regularly they consumed 27 types of news/current events content across multiple media. Answers were given on a four-point scale from *never* to *regularly*. To aid respondents, most questions included multiple examples of applicable content (Table 1).

Twelve questions related to television exposure. Respondents indicated their exposure to network morning news (*The Today Show*), network evening news, local news, Sunday morning debate shows (*Meet the Press*), news magazines shows (*60 Minutes*), daytime talk shows (*The Oprah Winfrey Show*), late-night talk shows (*The Late Show with David Letterman*), news satire programs (*The Daily Show*), CNN, MSNBC, FoxNews, and news on PBS.

Seven questions focused on online news use. Respondents rated their level of exposure to an online copy of a national newspaper (*nytimes.com*), local newspaper Web sites, online-only news magazines (*Slate*), conservative political blogs (*Instapundit*), liberal political blogs (*Daily Kos*), TV news Web sites (*cnn.com*), and Internet news aggregators (*Google News*).

Four questions about print media were asked. Respondents indicated exposure to a print copy of a national newspaper (*New York Times*) and local newspaper. They also indicated exposure—print or online—to news magazines (*Newsweek*), and news commentary magazines (*New Yorker*).

Four questions detailed news radio exposure. Exposure to progressive talk radio (Randi Rhodes), news on NPR (*Morning Edition*), conservative talk radio (Rush Limbaugh), and Christian radio/TV programs (*Focus on the Family*) were accounted for.

Individual Differences.

A continuous measure of age ($M = 48.02$ yrs., $SD = 16.13$), and dichotomous measures of gender (females = 48.1%) and race (white = 77.6%) were included. Education was measured by respondents' highest level of education, from *no high school degree* (1) to *post-graduate education* (6) ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.42$). A dichotomous measure was used to measure respondents' political party identifications (Republicans = 32.5%; Democrats/Independents = 67.5%). Perceptions of media bias was assessed by respondents' level of agreement with the statement, "Most news media coverage is biased against my views" on a scale from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (5) ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.08$).

Participatory Behaviors.

Three types of participation were measured: civic, offline political, and online political. Respondents indicated how regularly they engaged in different activities over the past month ranging from *Not at All* (1) to *Very Frequently* (7). Civic

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for News Exposure Items

| | Exposure Means |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Television | |
| Evening network news | 2.40 (1.09) |
| Local news | 2.88 (1.08) |
| Sunday debate shows | 2.15 (1.07) |
| News magazines shows | 2.28 (1.00) |
| Morning network news | 1.93 (1.05) |
| CNN news programs | 2.21 (1.09) |
| MSNBC news programs | 1.99 (1.05) |
| FoxNews programs | 2.19 (1.19) |
| PBS news | 2.08 (1.04) |
| Late-night talk shows | 2.01 (0.95) |
| Political satire programs | 1.99 (1.05) |
| Daytime talk shows | 1.68 (0.87) |
| Print | |
| National newspapers | 1.89 (0.96) |
| Local newspapers | 2.44 (1.15) |
| News magazines* | 2.21 (1.06) |
| News commentary magazines* | 1.84 (0.97) |
| Internet | |
| National newspaper Web sites | 2.44 (1.15) |
| Local newspaper Web sites | 2.59 (1.09) |
| Online-only news magazines | 1.76 (1.00) |
| Conservative blogs | 1.56 (0.91) |
| Liberal blogs | 1.48 (0.84) |
| News aggregators | 2.92 (1.09) |
| TV news Web sites | 2.78 (1.06) |
| Radio | |
| Conservative radio | 1.90 (1.14) |
| Progressive radio | 1.38 (0.74) |
| NPR radio | 1.79 (1.06) |
| Christian radio/television | 1.45 (0.83) |

Note. *Question specified print or online use.
Standard deviations reported in parentheses.

participation was measured by averaging the frequency of working on a community project, contributing money to a charitable organization, and doing volunteer work ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 1.51$, *Cronbach's alpha* = .70). Offline political participation was measured by averaging the frequency of contributing money to a political campaign, attending a political rally/speech, working for a political party/candidate, and displaying a campaign button/sticker ($M = 1.59$, $SD = 1.08$, *Cronbach's alpha* = .78). Online political participation was measured through frequency of forwarding a link to a political video, receiving a link to a political video, reading political comments, and watching political videos ($M = 2.90$, $SD = 1.73$, *Cronbach's alpha* = .82).

Results

Grouping News

The first step in identifying news patterns is to group media by the components that explain the largest amount of variance in news exposure. A Principal Components Analysis (PCA) using a promax (oblique) rotation was run on all 27 news items. A Parallel Analysis indicated that six components should be extracted from the PCA (95% confidence interval; across 1,000 generated datasets). Only items with a loading above .50 and no strong cross-loadings were retained within a component. Upon inspection, six items did not meet the minimum criteria (news magazine shows, news satire, *PBS* news, online national newspapers, news magazines, and news commentary magazines). These items were dropped and the PCA was run again, this time with 21 items.⁴

The final PCA was a six-component solution explaining over 62% of the total variance in news exposure (Table 2).⁵ The first component, "liberal news and analysis," includes liberal blogs, progressive radio, online-only news magazines, and *NPR*. The underlying component is a liberal voice that stretches across media platforms (Internet, radio) and online media forms (blogs, magazines). The second component is more defined in its platform reach. It includes an array of broadcast offerings—morning network news, evening national news, local news, daytime talk shows, and late-night talk shows. Not only does this factor lump together broadcast sources of hard news with softer hybrid media, but it distinguishes broadcast from cable news. By doing so we can rule out, even at this early stage, the possibility of a news repertoire organized solely along hybrid news-entertainment lines. Component 3, "conservative news," includes conservative radio, *FoxNews*, conservative blogs, and Christian radio/TV. Ideological voice (this time conservative) erodes medium-level groupings. Component 4 is a specific style of television news, "television news commentary," that includes Sunday morning debate shows, *CNN*, and *MSNBC*. The last two components encompass clear medium-level groupings. The "online news" component includes news aggregators, television news Web sites, and local

Table 2
Groupings of News Exposure

| Component Variables | Variance % Loadings |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Liberal News and Analysis | 22.11 |
| Liberal blogs | .85 |
| Progressive radio | .76 |
| Online news magazines | .74 |
| NPR | .65 |
| Broadcast TV | 12.26 |
| Daytime talk shows | .81 |
| Network morning news | .74 |
| Local news | .70 |
| Evening network news | .63 |
| Late-night talk shows | .61 |
| Conservative News | 10.51 |
| Conservative radio | .85 |
| FoxNews | .73 |
| Conservative blogs | .68 |
| Christian radio/TV | .65 |
| TV News Commentary | 6.56 |
| CNN | .83 |
| MSNBC | .79 |
| Sunday debate shows | .52 |
| Online News | 5.92 |
| Online news aggregators | .84 |
| TV news Web sites | .71 |
| Local NP Web sites | .60 |
| Print News | 5.47 |
| Local NP | .85 |
| National NP | .72 |

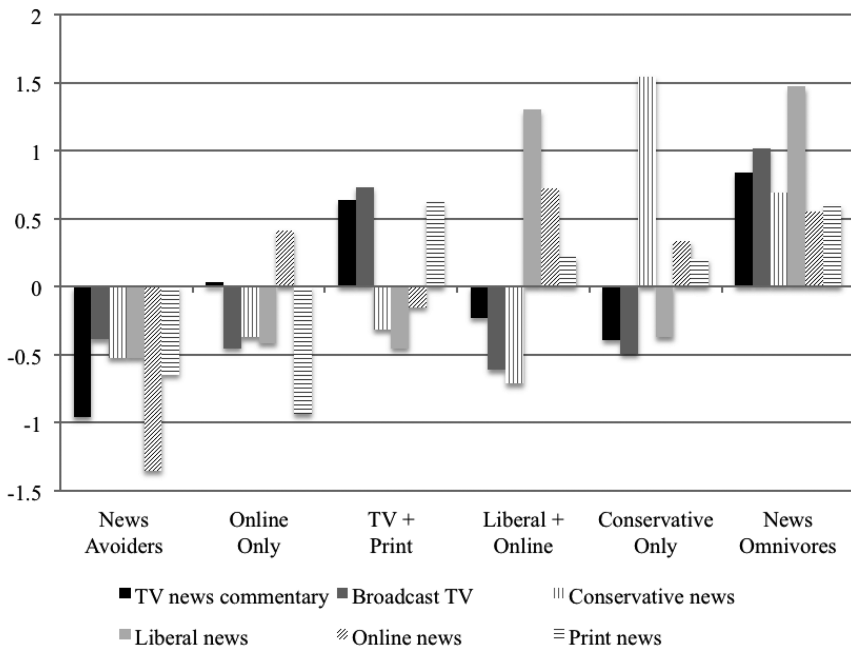
news Web sites. The final component, “print news,” includes national and local newspapers.

Clustering News

The next step in identifying news repertoires is to examine how the above components cluster together (Hasebrink & Popp, 2006). A cluster analysis was performed on the six components in the PCA using a two-step method to determine the number of clusters. First, Ward’s method was used to identify a jump in cluster coefficients, singling the number of clusters. Second, k-mean clustering was used to specify a cluster-number solution. Accordingly, a 6-cluster solution was selected. Figure 1 presents the group means of the component scores for each of the six clusters. Negative scores indicate low use, while positive scores indicate high use for that component.

The first cluster, *news avoiders*, is characterized by low overall news use (18% of respondents). Individuals in this cluster report low use of all components of news,

Figure 1
News Repertoires Based on Cluster Analysis



Note: Means reported are z-standardized component scores.

particularly online news. It appears that this cluster uses the high-choice media environment to flee from news, echoing the arguments of Prior (2007) and others (Mindich, 2005; Patterson, 2008). The second cluster resembles the first, save one key distinction. This cluster uses the Internet as its sole source of news. The second cluster has an *online only* repertoire (17.8% of respondents). Three types of news use characterize the third cluster: broadcast news, television news commentary, and print news. Individuals in this cluster have a *television + print* news repertoire (24.4% of respondents) and it is the most populated repertoire.

The fourth cluster is characterized by high liberal news and online news use. For these people television news holds little value. They seek out news with a liberal voice (via the Internet and radio) and also general online news. This cluster has a *liberal + online* repertoire (12.2% of respondents). Conversely, the fifth cluster is characterized by the high use of conservative media. Individuals in this cluster are interested in news with a conservative voice and seek it out across TV, radio, and the Internet. They exemplify a news repertoire that is structured around ideological attributes, not medium. This cluster has a *conservative only* repertoire (15.6% of respondents). The final cluster is characterized by diverse news use. This cluster samples from both liberal and conservative news, as well as broadcast, television commentary, print, and online news. It appears that this repertoire has a wider lens for what they are willing to consume. They have a *news omnivore* repertoire (12.1%).

Taken together, the cluster analysis indicates the varied ways that news users pattern their exposure. In regards to the first two research questions, there is evidence of both medium-centric news repertoires (clusters 2 and 3) as well as attribute-centric. For some, the colorful news landscape provides the opportunity to consume specific types of ideological news (clusters 4 and 5). For others, the high-choice media environment is used to seek out an array of news media, styles, and ideological voices (cluster 6). The next section extends this line of inquiry by examining the socio-demographic makeup of each repertoire.

Descriptive Analysis

To address the third research question the six repertoires are examined in terms of the socio-demographic makeup of its members. Separate logistic regressions estimate membership in each repertoire. The models contain variables for age, gender, race, education, political party identification, and perceived news bias.

Results indicate that the news repertoires are comprised of different sets of individuals (Table 3). The *news avoider* repertoire, for example, is related to race (non-White), lower education, and political party identification (Republican). The odds of a *news avoider* being Republican are 2.47 times larger than the odds for Democrats/Independents. For the *online only* repertoire, which resembles the news-avoiding repertoire in several aspects, a completely different pattern emerges. This repertoire is made up of younger respondents and males. None of the socio-demographic

Table 3
Logistic Regression Predicting Repertoire Membership

| | News Avoiders | TV + Print | Online Only | Liberal + Online | Conserv. Only | News Omnivores |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | B (OR) | B (OR) | B (OR) | B (OR) | B (OR) | B (OR) |
| Age | -.00 (1.00) | .04*** (1.04) | -.05*** (0.95) | -.02** (0.98) | .04*** (1.04) | -.00 (1.00) |
| Gender (F) | -.11 (1.12) | .73*** (2.08) | -.53* (0.59) | -.55* (0.58) | -.52* (0.59) | .25 (1.28) |
| Race (W) | -.94*** (0.39) | .65** (1.92) | -.02 (0.98) | .60* (1.83) | .92* (2.52) | -.88*** (0.41) |
| Education | -.38*** (0.68) | -.02 (0.99) | -.08 (0.92) | .38*** (1.46) | .07 (1.07) | .07 (1.08) |
| Party ID (R) | .90*** (2.47) | -.68** (0.51) | -.04 (0.96) | -2.74*** (0.07) | 1.74*** (5.68) | -.86* (0.42) |
| Media Bias | .03 (1.04) | -.35*** (0.71) | -.15 (0.86) | .05 (1.03) | .79*** (2.21) | -.08 (0.92) |
| Cox & Snell R ² | .07 | .12 | .11 | .13 | .24 | .05 |
| χ ² | 50.95*** | 93.85*** | 80.97*** | 98.73*** | 200.5*** | 33.76*** |

N = 753

Note. Logistic regression betas are reported, odds ratios in parenthesis.

factors that are significant for *news avoiders* are true for the *online only* repertoire. The *television + print* repertoire is related to being older, female, White, identifying as Democrat/Independent, and low levels of perceived media bias. Interestingly, the odds of having this repertoire and being female are twice as high compared to the odds for males.

Member differences continue with the ideologically flavored repertoires. The *liberal + online* repertoire is related to being younger and male—two factors that were also true of the *online only* repertoire. But the similarities stop there. The *liberal + online* repertoire is also associated with race (White), higher education, and partisanship (Democrat/Independent). The *conservative only* repertoire is related to older age, being male, White, Republican, and high media bias. Specifically, the odds of having a *conservative only* repertoire and of being Republican are 5.68 times larger than the odds for Democrats and Independents. Among those high in perceived media bias, the odds are 2.35 times larger than those with lower levels. Lastly, the *news omnivore* repertoire is related to race (non-White) and identifying as a Democrat or Independent. What is particularly interesting about this repertoire is its distinctiveness from the two ideological news repertoires. Although there is

Table 4
Participation Among News Repertoires

| | News Avoiders | TV + Print | Online Only | Liberal + Online | Conserv. Only | News Omnivores |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Civic participation | 1.92 ^a (0.11) | 2.44 ^{bc} (0.09) | 2.03 ^{ab} (0.11) | 2.88 ^{cde} (0.13) | 2.93 ^{df} (0.11) | 2.99 ^{ef} (0.13) |
| Offline pol. participation | 1.25 ^{ab} (0.07) | 1.42 ^{acd} (0.06) | 1.33 ^{bc} (0.08) | 1.92 ^e (0.09) | 1.68 ^{de} (0.08) | 2.44 (0.09) |
| Online pol. participation | 1.63 (0.11) | 2.51 ^a (0.09) | 2.41 ^a (0.11) | 4.17 ^b (0.13) | 3.46 ^c (0.11) | 3.89 ^{bc} (0.13) |

Note. Means sharing a letter superscript do NOT differ significantly (row-wise), Sidak $p \leq .05$. Standard errors reported in parentheses.

overlap in the type of news consumed, there are clear differences in the socio-demographic makeup of the repertoire. This may underscore larger differences in how individuals with omnivore repertoires approach news use. For example, they may score higher on the personality trait of open-mindedness or take greater pleasure in consuming multiple viewpoints on an issue.

Repertoires and Participatory Behavior

The final research question explores the link between the repertoires and three types of participation: civic, offline political, and online political. A multivariate analysis (MANOVA) indicates that the six repertoires exhibit different levels across the three participatory behaviors (Wilks' Lambda = .70; $f(15, 3050.82) = 27.8$, $p \leq .001$; partial $\eta^2 = .11$). The strong omnibus model is supported by significant differences within each type of participation (Table 4).

The repertoires differ significantly in terms of civic participation ($f(5) = 17.24$, $p \leq .001$; partial $\eta^2 = .07$). The highest level of civic participation is reported among *news omnivores*, while *news avoiders* report the lowest. Post-hoc tests reveal several significant differences. The *online only* and *liberal + online* repertoires significantly differ in civic participation ($p \leq .001$). Even though both share the common element of online news use, they differ in what they pair it with. This distinction extends to civic participation differences with the *liberal + online* repertoire engaging in this type of behavior at a higher rate. Another comparison of interest is between the *news omnivore* repertoire and the *television + print* repertoire. Both repertoires have three elements of news use in common (broadcast, news commentary, print news), and yet *news omnivores* engage in civic participation at a significantly higher rate ($p \leq .01$).

There are also significant differences in levels of offline political participation ($f(5) = 29.23$, $p \leq .001$; partial $\eta^2 = .12$). The highest level of political participation

is again among *news omnivores*, with *news avoiders* at the low end. In fact *news omnivores* exhibit significantly higher levels of political participation compared to every other repertoire. They out-participate both of the ideological repertoires and the medium-focused repertoires. It appears that *news omnivores* have the awareness of political participation opportunities combined with the motivation and confidence—factors that the other repertoires may lack. This repertoire may exemplify the “virtuous cycle” between news use and participation.

Lastly, levels of online political participation differ among the repertoires ($f(5) = 71.13, p \leq .001$; partial $\eta^2 = .24$). Interestingly, a completely different order emerges for this type of participation, with the *liberal + online* repertoire reporting the highest level of participation. There is a significant difference between the *liberal + online* and the *online only* repertoires ($p \leq .001$). Even though both repertoires rely on the Internet for news, they don’t engage in online participation at the same rates. One possible explanation for this finding relates to the audience composition of the *liberal + online* repertoire. Recall from the logistic analysis, this repertoire skews young and educated—two factors that are related to acts of online political participation (Bimber, 2003; Dalton, 2008). This finding points toward the complex threads connecting audience characteristics, news repertoires, and potential effects.

Discussion

Understanding how audiences navigate the high-choice environment is important to understanding the changing role of media in producing knowledgeable and engaged citizens. This study adds to existing research by taking a more detailed look at patterns of news exposure among a sample of U.S. adults. At the most general level, results indicate that the complexities of the new media landscape yield equally complex media repertoires. We live in a convergence culture (Jenkins, 2006), with news users combining old and new media to form distinct news patterns.

In line with the findings of past research (Hasebrink & Popp, 2006; Yuan, 2011), access and familiarity with a given medium can translate into repertoires that are largely medium based. Results from this study reveal two medium-centric news repertoires. The *television + print* repertoire was the most popular, with individuals consuming news through both television and print media. It would be an oversimplification to view the *television + print* repertoire completely through a lens of old or traditional media use. This repertoire combines newspapers and network television exposure with several forms of hybrid news-entertainment content (soft news, late-night talk shows) and cable news (*MSNBC*, *CNN*). It simultaneously reflects the expanding news landscape with the inclusion of emerging television trends, while also denoting an avoidance of other trends—online news and other media that is ideologically driven. Fittingly, the second medium-centric repertoire was comprised of online news use. It is quite telling that the only repertoire organized around a single medium involves online media. This repertoire is a clear reflection of the shifting nature of news exposure and the decision-making strategies of audiences.

There is tremendous opportunity for moving the news exposure needle among this repertoire. Time will tell whether this repertoire gradually becomes more engaged with news, perhaps through emerging media platforms like mobile technology, or if they become more avoider-like in their habits.

Recent additions to the news landscape have enabled audiences to construct news experiences that are based around a specific type of news attribute. Approximately one-quarter of respondents had repertoires containing a single type of ideologically flavored news. Findings from the logistic analysis linked Democrats and Independents to the *liberal + online* repertoire, and Republicans to the *conservative only* repertoire. But this type of partisan selective exposure is not characteristic of all audiences who consume this type of news. Results also indicated the existence of a repertoire where respondents are exposure to both types of ideological news. While the *news omnivore* repertoire is small—12 percent of respondents—it is distinct from the other repertoires in terms of audience composition and participatory engagement. These news hounds take advantage of the ever-expanding news landscape by diversifying their news exposure. Ultimately, use of ideological news on its own is not the entire picture. Uncovering how audiences combine this exposure with other news options (or don't do this) provides a more complete depiction of news use in an age of ample choice. The news omnivore repertoire is a testament to this claim.

The implications of this study extend beyond the describing of news consumption. At the heart of this study's findings is how researchers conceptualize the relationship between audiences, news, and effects. The new media environment produces great possibilities for citizens to engage in new and complex ways (Dalton, 2008; Jenkins, 2006); while also prompting worry about fragmentation, polarization, and disengagement (Hindman, 2009; Mindich, 2005; Prior, 2007). As researchers continue to shed light on the validity of these concerns they need to consider how audiences combine media in ways that produce an effect—which can be greater than the sum of its individual parts. It's likely that those with a *conservative only* repertoire approach ideological media as a means to consume content that agrees with their viewpoints, while those with a *news omnivore* repertoire approach it as a means to effectively sample from multiple viewpoints. It's also likely that these approach differences will color the types of effects expected and observed from each. In light of the significant role that news exposure plays in theory and empirical model building, future research is encouraged to include news repertoires in this process.

There are several limitations that should be acknowledged in light of the findings presented. The data used in their study were collected during the 2008 presidential primary campaign. Much has been written about the uniqueness of the 2008 election (Kenski, Hardy, & Jamieson, 2010); thus the news patterns described here may be an artifact of this historical and noisy election context. Additionally, the measures included in this study dictated the scope of possible new patterns. Although the 27 media questions are an improvement over past studies (Hasebrink & Popp, 2006; Yuan, 2011), they are by no means a comprehensive list. The lack of findings surrounding hybrid news-entertainment media may be attributed to the use

of measures that focused exclusively on television. Also, newer media, like smart phones or digital tablets, were not specifically accounted for in this study. That being said, the inclusion of attribute-centric repertoires does ease some of these concerns. By moving the focus away from medium use and toward attributes that stretch across media, the results from this study have the potential to grow with the media environment. We might expect *news omnivores* to integrate news via mobile devices into their repertoire, or the *liberal + online* repertoire to adopt liberal news via mobile apps.

The current study lends itself as a jumping off point for future studies to include more news forms of emerging media and to more directly test the democratic implication of news repertoires. As the news landscape continues to expand in number and variety, the ways in which media users assemble their exposure experiences will be increasingly complex and important.

Acknowledgments

The author thanks the Wisconsin-Michigan research team that contributed to the 2008 Cooperative Campaign Analysis Project. The team was lead by Barry Burden, Erika Franklin Fowler, Ken Goldstein, Hernando Rojas, and Dhavan Shah, with Shah serving as the principal investigator.

Funding

Data used in the study was made possible by support from the following sources: the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholars in Health Policy Research Program at the University of Michigan, and the Hamel Faculty Fellowship, the Walter J. & Clara Charlotte Damm Fund of the Journal Foundation, the Graduate School, and the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the supporting sources or participating faculty.

Notes

¹The CCAP brings together researchers from various universities to collaborate in the design of a custom survey. Simon Jackman (Stanford) and Lynn Vavreck (ULCA) coordinated the 2008 CCAP. For more information see, <http://research.yougov.com/services/ccap/>

²For more information about sampling procedures and techniques, see Vaveck & Rivers (2008). The sampling weights are specifically used to account for the possibility that respondents who complete an online-based survey may differ from the general population. That being said, Gerber, Huber, Doherty, and Dowling (2011) found the weighted levels of political interest reported in the 2008 CCAP data to be similar to those found in the weighted 2008 ANES time-series survey. While an Internet-based survey of registered voters does come with

certain sampling limitations, the extensive battery of media use measures that the CCAP data affords far outweighs the sample constraints.

³All analyses presented in this study were also run with the sampling weights turned off. The same patterns of news repertoire results are found. The only exception is differences in the logistic regression analysis, where age, race, and gender play different roles without the weights. This makes sense as the sampling weights are specifically tied to demographic characteristics. Unweighted proportion of survey respondents in the six news clusters: *Avoiders* 17.6%; *online only* 13.8%; *TV + print* 26.7%; *liberal + online* 12.4%; *conservative only* 17.6%; *Omnivores* 12.8%.

⁴While dropping these items limits the veracity of infotainment measures retained in the analysis, in order to perform a cluster analysis on the components overlap needed to be kept to a minimum.

⁵The data produces a strong Kaiser-Meyer Olkin statistic of .80, and a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, indicating suitability for the component analysis.

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