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Spaces and Places of News Consumption

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Published in:
The Sage Handbook of Digital Journalism

Publication date:
2016

Document Version
Accepted author manuscript, peer reviewed version

Link to publication from Aalborg University

Citation for published version (APA):
Peters, C. (2016). Spaces and Places of News Consumption. In T. Witschge, C. W. Anderson, D. Domingo, & A. Hermida (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Digital Journalism* (pp. 354-369). SAGE Publications.

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SPACES AND PLACES OF NEWS CONSUMPTION

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Citation: Peters, C. (2016). Spaces and places of news consumption. In: Witschge, T., Anderson, C. W., Domingo, D., & Hermida, A. (Eds.). *The Sage Handbook of Digital Journalism*. London: Sage, 354-369.

Link:https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/The-SAGE-Handbook-of-Digital-Journalism/book244110

N.B. This is the authors' accepted manuscript of a chapter published in *The Sage Handbook of Digitla Journalism*. There may be differences between this version and the published version. You are advised to consult the publisher's version if you wish to cite from it.

24

Spaces and Places of News Consumption

Chris Peters

Introduction

Many of the success stories about the rise and power of digital media technologies in contemporary journalism bring to light how people's increasing ease to document the world around them in turn increases the possibilities to see certain places at certain crucial times. These developments have prominent implications for news production, and much of the literature on the digitalization of journalism focuses upon how new media technologies change established relationships and power dynamics between news organizations and audiences. This is especially the case when it comes to the rise of manifest game-changing innovations, such as blogs, user-generated content (UGC) hubs, crowdsourcing, Facebook, and Twitter, to name but a few, and many studies have helped broaden our understandings of how audiences – often in their role as citizens – increasingly find their way into news content (see Hermida and Thurman, 2008; Russell, 2011; Papacharissi and de Fatima Oliveria, 2012; Allan, 2013; Vis, 2013). In recent years increasing attention has been placed not just on the content people provide to news outlets but on the changing audience practices made possible by the digital 'revolution' of journalism. Scholars have issued similar versions of a provocative but persuasive claim that an audience or user 'turn' is necessary in digital journalism studies, with a corresponding plea for going beyond a basic focus on changing patterns of use to consider novel meanings and experiences people associate with journalism (see Madianou, 2009;

Bird, 2011; Loosen and Schmidt, 2012; Costera Meijer, 2013; Groot Kormelink and Costera Meijer, 2014; Heikkilä and Ahva, 2014; Picone, Courtois and Paulussen, 2014). This chapter aims to articulate the significance of this perspective for digital journalism studies, placing special attention on the role space plays in this equation. The central argument it advances is that thinking about news audiences requires thinking about the places of news consumption. It outlines the conceptual issues at play when thinking 'spatially' about the news in a digital era as well as highlighting practical areas for future research.

The continual reshaping of news audiences' consumption practices is a highly complex, uneven, and contingent process and if we want to understand much of what makes journalism meaningful for people, it is important to accentuate not only what they consume, how and when, but also where. Simply put, the places and spaces of news consumption matter, and matter significantly, for how people choose, interpret, and attend to the news. More broadly, we can say that changing spatiotemporal configurations of media use facilitated by technological development tend to change how information is communicated, and is oftentimes associated with significant sociocultural transformations (Meyrowitz, 1986; Silverstone, 1999). In this sense, it would not go too far to say that the modification and emergence of different spaces of consumption accompanying the rise of new media technologies changes what news *is* (Peters, 2012). This chapter outlines the gradual recognition of this in digital journalism studies (see Nyre, 2012; Schmitz Weiss, 2014; Peters, 2015), with an eye to highlighting pertinent research trajectories. It first explores how the everyday digital geographies of contemporary media, communication, and information flows intersect with the everywhere 'lived' geographies of individuals, and how this is changing as we move from an era of mass media consumption to digitalized media practices. It then outlines conceptual issues surrounding the spatial politics of news consumption, questions of geographic scale, mobile news use, and everyday life practices, employing insights from the 'spatial turn' in scholarship. Considering spatiotemporal transformations in everyday life provides a useful

starting point for thinking about the changing places in which news is available, and the remainder of the chapter explores some of the more prominent of these, namely the home, workplace, public, and virtual spaces. Through these various discussions, this chapter hopes to raise awareness in terms of: how the individualized practices of consumption relate to collective spaces of public communication; how the spaces of news production—consumption–distribution pertain to social issues; the development of technology and the formation of new rituals of news use; and the structuring of everyday life through certain habits, places, and patterns of media consumption.

From mass media consumption to digital media practices

For the past couple decades digital eyewitness accounts have increasingly become a substantial part of news coverage and recurrently recast how we expect to see and make sense of different places that appear in the news. Digital technologies bring the unfamiliar close to home in a networked age and make the distant tangible in ever-present ways (Castells, 2011). This shift is indeed remarkable, and much valuable research in digital journalism studies has focussed upon how new media technologies allow news organizations to marshal immediate, first-hand experience from – depending on analytic stress – amateurs, users, 'produsers' or citizens in different possible places (see Bruns, 2005; Domingo et al., 2008; Williams et al., 2011; Kristensen and Mortensen, 2013). While the academic focus on how new media technologies allow different spaces of news to be collected, distributed and seen has been in the ascendancy, the inverse of this relationship has received far less attention. How, exactly, do digital technologies help shape the spaces of news audiences? Put another way, the rise of digital technologies allow the voices, visuals, and visceral reactions of those live and 'on the scene' to be transmitted to advantage, but the existence of new media also fundamentally changes what those spaces are and how they are potentially experienced by those present (see Allan and Peters, 2015). Of course, it is not merely 'newsworthy' spaces which are affected by such presences, commonplace settings such as the home and restaurants are also transformed by the way we interact with new technologies to

consume media (the 'please turn off your cell phone' request at the cinema is but one of countless examples).

More broadly, we might say that one of the fundamental debates in media studies, which resonates and has popular appeal – from the alarmist (Postman, 1993; Putnam, 2000) to the celebratory (Shirky, 2008; Tapscott, 2008) – is about the disruptive potential of new media technologies on different (social) spaces and the ways changing media environments influence how information is communicated. Yet when we tend to think about the impact of such devices in terms of the journalism-audience relationship, the emphasis is generally placed on how the journalism industry is adapting, leveraging, and dealing with the potentialities of new media and the challenges these practices present vis-à-vis their audiences rather than the other way around (see Chung, 2007; Thurman, 2008; Peters, 2009; Anderson, 2011; Witschge, 2011; Lewis, 2012, Tandoc, 2014).[1] There is nothing wrong with this, of course, as how news outlets view (and measure) the audience is critical to the craft and the way journalism is produced. However, audiences' experiences – including their spatiotemporal, situational configurations of news use in new media environments – are underemphasized. To sum: there is a general consensus that digital technologies change how journalism can be consumed by audiences, which has dramatic impacts in terms of the economic, informational, storytelling and experiential realities of journalism (see also Peters and Broesma, 2013; Broersma and Peters, 2014). But there is a tendency to focus more on how journalism adapts to these possibilities rather than on how audiences act upon them, if they do so at all. The naming of academic disciplines is telling in this respect: the object of journalism studies is commonly journalism, while the uses people make of media and its associated phenomenology is often left for media or audience studies.

This points to the fact that that we currently risk ignoring much of what grounds the financial viability and democratic remit of journalism. Audiences' spatiotemporally-contextualized consumption practices have always been important but their miscellaneous character may seem

particularly remarkable in a digital era where the 'de-ritualization' of audiences' former habits is so palpable (Broersma and Peters, 2013). Something has surely changed and journalism is scrambling to adapt. That being said, while there are indeed notable differences between the era of mass media consumption and digitalized media, the seductive appeal of novel technological change should not be emphasized at the expense of a broader conceptual point this chapter raises, which relates to both eras with equal force. The point, quite simply, is that it is beneficial to think of the *interweaving relationships between spatiotemporal context, material affordances, and social norms if we want a rich understanding of the experiences of consuming news*.

Media use in general, and news use more specifically, is a relational practice, bringing humans in contact with nonhuman technologies that perform a fairly remarkable translation on our behalf; they take all the information the designer (journalists and editors) have decided we might want to know and they inscribe this information into a durable material package (a newspaper, radio program, television broadcast, and so on). As audiences, the materiality of news prescribes how we might possibly subscribe to consuming it (it is handy to listen to the radio in the car but less so to read a newspaper) and this is further associated with social norms that are formed around these practices (see Latour, 1988).[2] For instance, reading the newspaper at breakfast before dashing out to work may be fine with one's family but picking it up and reading it while your boss is trying to speak to you is likely not. So while much has transformed, the fundamental nature of news consumption as a social, spatiotemporal (i.e. situated) practice is still unchanged. A useful summary of this interrelation between the mass and digital eras is offered by Sheller (2015: 14, emphasis in original) who notes that in this respect, the recent rise of instantaneous, mobile news may not be as novel as we tend to think.

> Newspapers are crucial to understanding the development of what we now call 'mobile interfaces' (such as smartphones). […] we should not forget the cultural histories of newspapers being read during 'in-between' times of transit […] The newspaper broadsheet (and especially tabloid) was itself a mobile object designed to be carried

> through the streets and read on trains, platforms, or subway cars, not simply in isolation, but *in a connected social space*. […] Thus there is a double relation within the interface between the more interior-oriented relation between the reader and the information they are accessing, which can occur in various locations and during travel, and the more exterior-oriented relation between reader-equipped-with-mobile-object and a surrounding social space in which they interact both with the body and with the physical and social space.

Sheller's argument points to a need for specificity in outlining change, especially when it comes to how audiences make sense of the changing devices and affordances through which news can be obtained. She insightfully argues that a key distinction for audiences between the era of analogue newspapers and online and mobile news practices is primarily in terms of how space-time is perceived and felt: 'ambient flows of news re-situate how we understand where we are, who we are connected with, and what our present moment actually is. The now-ness of news, in other words, offers a new sense of the present' (2015: 24).

News organizations have tried to respond to such changes by marketing their benefits; buzzwords like interactivity, participation, personalization, push notifications and so on speak to outlets trying to manage the spatiotemporal flexibility and uncertainty beget by new media technologies by translating them into something they hope audiences will perceive to advantage – a greater say and presence in, and immediacy of, the news. Such observations point to the challenges of studying news audiences and possible shifts in a digital era, for we need to account for, among other considerations: the spatiotemporal contexts of consumption; engagement with the information itself ('decoding', in Hall's [1980] classic sense); the emotional experience of involvement from engaging with the text (Peters, 2011; 2013); and the feelings and preferences more broadly associated with media devices (Madianou and Miller, 2013). By way of summary, we might identify a few prominent differences that help conceptualize the changing audience and alert us to some sensitizing concerns as we shift from mass media consumption to digital media practices:

1. Audiences are increasingly viewed by advertisers and media developers not as a mass aggregate but as individualized targets whose preferences can be calculated (Turow, 2012).

2. The media industry and academic attention also increasingly shifts from a 'mass communication' to 'participation' paradigm to conceptualize audiences (Livingstone, 2013).

3. News outlets correspondingly begin to emphasize a technological discourse that focuses on audience or user interaction rather than citizen engagement and being part of an informed collective (Peters and Witschge, 2015).

4. Former relatively stable and somewhat predictable patterns of news consumption, highly contingent upon distribution strategies that anchored the possibilities for news use both spatially and temporally, become fragmented and harder to predict (see also Napoli, 2011).

5. Loyalty to individual outlets or a single device is challenged; multi-platform news consumption increasingly becomes the norm (Purcell et al., 2010).

6. News rituals transform, in unpredictable ways. The very idea of an audience and what they value constantly shifts and is highly contextual.

These changes can be further contextualized based on the established literature on news audiences but what this section has hopefully illustrated is that understanding the significance of the spaces and places of news audiences, as we move from an era of mass media to digital consumption practices, requires buttressing by other theoretical concepts and methodological approaches as well (see also the chapters in this handbook by Ahva and Heikkelä, Barnes, Costera Meijer, Schrøder, Siapera, and Witschge).

Conceptualizing the spaces of news audiences

When it comes to the spaces of news audiences it is worthwhile first mentioning that the digital era is an age partially defined by the 'time-space compression' brought about by technological change. Harvey (1989: 240) notes that we are now living through 'processes that so revolutionize

the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves'. In terms of news audiences, this points to how a sped-up age may cause people to rethink how and where they want to experience and get a handle on information, how they then interpret it in conjunction with the medium through which it is transmitted, and what values and worth they place on these different opportunities in the course of their everyday life. Space and time accordingly must be thought of together, on equal analytic footing, as part of what defines the 'situation' of news use. This runs against the grain of academic inquiry, where space has been 'treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical. Time, on the other hand was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic' (Foucault, 1980: 70). Journalism studies is not immune from this tendency and it is prudent to note from the outset that a conceptual overview based on a literature review of 'the spaces of news audiences', literally interpreted, would be quite short. However, we can certainly 'read' spatial thinking into many accounts that have looked into the changing practices of digital news audiences and reinterpret them in this light. But the point remains, 'if we want to understand much of what *makes media use meaningful for people*, it is important to *accentuate not only its everydayness, but its everywhereness as well*' (Peters, 2015: 1, emphasis in original).

Of course this is challenging as 'it is often much more difficult for researchers to identify, define, and study situational definitions than it is for the average citizen to navigate them' (Meyrowitz, 1986: 24). In this regard, a fruitful starting point might be outlining how the 'spatial turn' in scholarship helps us to better appreciate the complexity and resonance of space and place.[3] Thrift (2003: 85) notes that,

> As with terms like 'society' and 'nature', space is not a commonsense external background to human and social action. Rather, it is the outcome of a series of highly problematic temporary settlements that divide and connect things up into different kinds of collectives which are slowly provided with the means which render them durable and sustainable.

Building on the definition above, the influential formulation of Henri Lefebvre is also worth mentioning for the purposes of beginning to 'think spatially'. Lefebrve (1991: 38–9) notes three concepts key to grasping space, which attempt to encapsulate the intersection of its physical, mental, and social aspects. In simplified terms, these are:

1. *Spatial practice*: The routines, movement, and surroundings as individuals go about everyday life within a society and orient themselves within it.
2. *Representations of space*: The conception and planning of space by planners, engineers, technocrats, and so forth.
3. *Representational spaces*: Our thoughts and ideas of spaces, their associated images, imaginaries, and symbols.

Lefebvre's rather astute point is that to adequately understand space, we must always consider the interrelation of these three aspects over time.

Similarly, I would argue, to appreciate the significance of media for communicative practices (including news consumption), it is necessary to consider the multifaceted aspects of space. For instance, a systematic understanding of how a technological development – say the internet – impacts journalism demands assessing not only its impact on how the news is collected and disseminated in a planned manner (representations of space), but also how it changes audiences' everyday patterns of consumption and situational orientation to news use (spatial practice), and how it alters the possible ways we imagine different locales, regions, and ambient spheres (representational space). Indeed, the insights of Lefebvre and other spatial theorists mesh well with some of the observations from the foundational work of Roger Silverstone (1994; 1999) that helped establish media studies as an academic field. He notes,

> The frameworks from within which we watch and listen, muse and remember, are defined in part by where we are in the world, and where we think we are, and sometimes too, of course, by where we might wish to be. The spaces of media engagement, the

> spaces of media experience, are both real and symbolic. They are dependent on location, and on the routines that define our positions in time and space (Silverstone, 1999: 86).

Likewise, David Morley's (1986) pioneering work on the familial functions of television in the household is a highly spatialized account of experience. Yet despite these and other notable works than emphasize the significance of space for media audiences/consumers, bridging insights from (human) geography and media/communication studies is still relatively undeveloped from a conceptual standpoint (Adams and Jansson, 2012).[4]

The challenge then is how best to apply this sort of 'spatial thinking' to contemporary, digitalized news consumption. One starting point is to pose questions that embrace its complexity and which reject from the outset conceptualizing the spaces of news audiences as steady locations in which 'action', such as news consumption, occurs or passes through. The spaces of news consumption are much more than that: they are political, combine a multiplicity of geographic scales, are both mobile and facilitate a sense of mobility, and help shape everyday life experiences.

Politics and space

As is perhaps clear from above, the idea behind much spatial thinking is not politically neutral. A significant underlying basis of the established literature points the fact that 'We must be insistently aware of how space can be made to hide consequences from us, how relations of power and discipline are inscribed into the apparently innocent spatiality of social life, how human geographies become filled with politics and ideology' (Soja, 1989: 6). More generally, we could say this is the 'why it matters' aspect of advocating for an attention to space. If we accept that spaces are socially-constructed, and lived in, then almost by definition they will be political. This is at the heart of Smith's (2008) work on the uneven development seen under capitalism – political decisions do not just have certain geographic outcomes, geographies help political desires and decisions to be sustained. Seen in this light, ghettos and gentrified neighbourhoods are not unfortunate accidents, they are spatially-ordered ways of living that distinguish between groups

and access to resources. Similarly, ways of viewing the world resonate with these politicized spatial aspects.

So what are we to make of this when it comes to the spaces of news audiences? For starters, we can think of the communities in which news is consumed. Community, like space, is not only a locative descriptor but also a political one. Banaji and Cammaerts' (2015) study of European youth notes that those from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, who see their locality or cultural space stigmatized in the news, are also generally more likely to have negative views of journalism, are less likely to consume it, and have less material interaction with news products in the spheres they pass through. Similarly, Dickens, Couldry and Fotopoulou's (2015) study of the practices and motivations of unpaid community reporters in the UK observes that dissatisfaction with local news coverage spurred many of them on to practice journalism, as a way to enhance positive experiences of their geographic situation through the materially-grounded practices of newsmaking. We might think of the role news consumption plays as part of a broader 'public connection' (see Couldry et al., 2007; Swart et al., 2016) and in this regard the constellation of media one consumes is contextualized in terms of the communal spaces it represents and the civic spaces it allows one to orient toward. This is the case whether we are speaking of the local, regional, national, or global level.

Scale and space

A related notion is the idea of scale, one of the more convoluted but ubiquitous concepts in human geography. Scale speaks to facets of size (such as administrative divisions, like counties or provinces), level (local, regional, national) and the relational qualities – both tangible and semiotic – between these (for example, urban versus rural). There is a socio-spatial emphasis embedded in the concept, as 'Scale is not necessarily a preordained hierarchical framework for ordering the world – local, regional, national and global. It is instead a contingent outcome of the tensions that exist between structural forces and the practices of human agents' (Marston, 2000: 220). In this

respect, the politics of space, mentioned in the previous section, align closely with questions of scale. However, in this chapter they have been kept separate as scale speaks to how differences in the association of human-spatial configurations and different levels are potentially experienced, and how they are oftentimes layered upon each other in moments that news is accessed and consumed. Adding to this, new media technologies tend to further create divisions which are inherently spatial. As Norris (2001) notes, differences exist on the level of a global digital divide (access in industrialized and developing countries), a social divide (between information rich and poor within nations), and democratic divide (those who use digital tools to engage civically versus those who do not).

There is a corresponding interest in scale in journalism studies, typically centred around globalization and how it changes the news production process. Cottle (2009) summarizes the dominant contrasting foci in this respect as a negative outlook which considers the cultural imperialism and global dominance of large (Western) multinational news outlets versus a more positive, democratic-networked viewpoint that looks at the spread of a global public sphere. Both of these emphases implicate an audience subject to scalar influences, whether to pessimistic or optimistic ends. We might build further on these observations if we start not only from the prospective of globalization, technological capacity, ownership of digital networks, and the effects these possibly have but from how audiences actualize and embody these divergent levels in practice. A consideration of scale points to a multiplicity of cotemporaneous spatial associations: there is the straightforward 'plottable' location where media use takes place and its accompanying socio-spatial characteristics; hierarchies and geographic echelons contained within the story itself; the varied spatial levels in the structures of communication; and a person's general orientation to the world. For instance, Jansson and Lindell (2015) stress that different macro and micro aspects of geographic scale may simultaneously orient people differently based on a complex spatial-communication nexus, such that 'the very same technological affordances that enable media users

to expand their views towards *cosmos* and the distant other (if they have any such ambitions) are the affordances that may tie people closer to the *hearth*' (2015: 83, emphasis in original). A consideration of scale accordingly points us to the assorted range of spatial considerations shaped by communication. The rise of mobile communication complicates this process even further.

Mobility and space

Wireless communication technology has spread 'around the planet faster than any previous communication technology to date' leading to, amongst other shifts: an emergence of mobile youth culture; a transformation of language by texting; a shift in socio-political mobilization, especially outside formal politics; and shifting practices and conceptualizations of time and space (Castells et al., 2004: 1–3). This rapid uptake in personal uses of mobile technology has been accompanied by a corresponding uptick in academic attention to the inchoate practices surrounding the introduction and integration of mobile phones. This has led to what some call the 'mobility turn' in scholarship, which focuses on 'both the large-scale movements of people, objects, capital and information across the world, as well as the more local processes of daily transportation, movement through public space and the travel of material things within everyday life' (Hannam et al., 2006: 1). While earlier studies tended to focus on fairly instrumental uses of mobile technology, more recent theorizing on mobilities has broadened focus to consider three related 'analytical prisms' to understand its use in everyday life, namely: 'environment/place; movement/practice; [and] perception/sensory embodied experience' (Pink and Leder Mackley, 2013: 683).

The relevance of mobile technology for understanding the different places of news audiences is fairly evident. Mobile technology creates 'hybrid spaces' wherein the possibility of an 'always-on' connection means that different places are conceived not just in terms of the immediate surroundings but in terms of the potential social and informational connections enabled by the internet – which has the effect of 'enfolding remote contexts inside the present context' (de Souza e Silva, 2006: 262). The idea of mobilities points to the flow and movement of media use as a

central reconfiguring aspect of our spatial-social relationships. When it comes to digital journalism studies, more-and-more has been made of the potentiality and challenges of mobile devices for production and citizen-based content production; however, when audiences' uses of mobile technology are addressed, studies to date tend to focus more narrowly on perceived use (for a useful overview see Westlund, 2013). In this respect, it might be fair to say that up till now we are only scratching the surface of the complexity of mobile news consumption practices, typically relying on survey-based research that focuses more narrowly on how frequently mobiles are said to be used to access news, by what demographics, and how this correlates to usage of other media (see Mitchell and Rosenstiel, 2012). While such statistics give part of the picture they are limited to the extent they can help us understand the full significance of mobile media, not only in terms of movement but also when considered in conjunction with devices' geo-locational capacities. Goggin, Martin and Dwyer (2015: 44) perceptively note that the possibly of locative news,

> is surely a new way of marshalling, mediating, and making sense of place; evidenced in the new kinds of information created through projects of emplacement, and by the movement in and through places by objects, technologies, and users. Thus understood locative news research moves beyond the narrowly technological, to encompass the significant epistemological, phenomenological, and social implications of our mobile locational encounters.

In this regard, the increasingly mobile opportunities for news audiences potentially bring about different ways of acting, thinking, and conceptualizing communicative flows, affects, and spatial contexts in everyday life.

Everyday life and space

Discussions of everyday life often become tantamount to calendar-based observations of habit, what we do over-and-over again on a daily basis. While part of the equation, the idea of everyday life has greater resonance when we go beyond such a linear notion to also consider the values of 'everydayness' we associate with it. The concept itself, as Highmore (2002) notes, is centred on a

tension between boredom and mystery and how processes of rationalization take the exceptional and make it mundane over time. This paradox inherent in the concept allows us to think through a user-centred perspective on changes beget by new media, paralleling what Heinderyckx (2014) calls the 'digital enchantment' of technology. Speaking in general terms, there is something exciting, almost magical about digital technologies when we first encounter them. However, 'enchantment', Heinderyckx reminds, can also mean being under the spell of something. Technology vastly increases the pace and sheer scale of information available, which can tend to overwhelm and make us overlook that which does not immediately pertain. In other words, initial novelty gives way to strategies of control, which we create for ourselves or, potentially, are engineered into the technology (controlling our Facebook news feed, blocking certain Twitter followers, and so on). These realizations point to the necessity of listening to users' value-based assessments of digital media and how they construct social norms around their practices, if we wish to understand its impact and particularities.

In this regard, coming back to an earlier formulation, the material affordances of digital technology, the places and times we use them, and social norms surrounding practice all interact through a series of value-based, everyday processes which shape news audiences' experiences, preferences, and patterns of use. Much of the emphasis in the emerging area of digital journalism studies is on the latter when it comes to audiences, employing surveys that focus on digital technology as it pertains to people's perceived/declared daily and weekly news use. In the rare instance when space is considered alongside this (see Newman and Levy, 2014; Wolf and Schnauber, 2014) it is generally only as a possible correlate. Such studies are a valuable starting point but do tend toward descriptive accounts, can suffer from over-declaration, and may gloss over central contextual aspects of everyday digital use. Costera Meijer and Kormelink's (2014: 12) summary of 10 years of quantitative and qualitative-based studies of Dutch news audiences hints at this complexity, finding '16 user practices that differ in function, impact and rhythm: reading,

watching, viewing, listening, checking, snacking, monitoring, scanning, searching, clicking, linking, sharing, liking, recommending, commenting and voting'. Such distinctions alert us to the fact that a comprehensive look at the spaces of news audiences must be, almost by necessity, focused on the instabilities associated with the lived, material integration of digital media. Consistent with most 'new' technologies, we tend to experience them as most disruptive at the outset, before they gradually become habituated as expedient devices in our everyday lives.

Digital places of consumption – home, work, public and virtual spaces

For the remainder of this chapter, having outlined broad conceptual concerns, it might be productive to briefly highlight some tangible places of news audiences and key questions in terms of future research agendas. Cresswell's (2009: 1) description of the tripartite components of the more bounded notion of place is useful in this regard:

> Place is a meaningful site that combines location, locale, and sense of place. Location refers to an absolute point in space with a specific set of coordinates and measurable distances from other locations. Location refers to the 'where' of place. Locale refers to the material setting for social relations – the way a place looks. Locale includes the buildings, streets, parks, and other visible and tangible aspects of a place. Sense of place refers to the more nebulous meanings associated with a place: the feelings and emotions a place evokes.

The sheer ubiquity and personal proximity of new media devices increasingly means experiencing multiple places simultaneously and continuously and it is still unclear to what extent this impacts our perception and experience of information, the ways we communicate, the places we traverse in everyday lives, and the world in general. In this regard, four key places – the home, work, public and virtual spaces – are useful entry points to consider in digital journalism. Focusing on these places raises a host of pertinent questions such as: How do familiar places like work and the home change from the lived materiality of new technologies used to access news? What about more

abstract but supposedly social aggregates like communities or neighbourhoods (see Mersey, 2009)? Do these change alongside non-relational, 'non-places' (Augé, 1995) like airports, commuter transport, motorways, supermarkets, and shopping centres? Does the ubiquitous availability of journalism as we move about our environs change the meaning of news and/or our sense of place? Many intriguing questions remain to be raised pertaining to the complex integration of news media use for audiences – as both users and citizens, though not necessarily concurrently – within everyday and 'everywhere' life (Peters, 2015).

Typically, in social thought, the home and the workplace are treated as a near-binary opposition and there are indeed substantial differences. One is traditionally considered private, one is public. One is intimate, the other far more impersonal. The significance we make of these distinctions has been considered crucial to situational role expectations, practices and performances in everyday life (Goffman, 1959). However, the uses of electronic media are often accused of blurring these boundaries. Within such claims is sometimes the suggestion that this blurring means physical locations no longer matter, which seems a misguided overstatement that puts us in the precarious position of embracing an over-compensatory shift – moving from under-appreciating or ignoring the spaces of news consumption to rendering them virtual, relative and thus of equally little value. As Moores (2004) notes, just because boundaries have been opened up by electronic communication this does not necessarily mean we lose a sense of place; instead we might better consider digital media practices in terms of multiplying spaces and our sense of their interconnection. News audiences' practices create situations where media settings overlay physical locations. In this sense, shifting consumption patterns in the home and the workplace do share a few common analytic factors. For one, they are sites (along with public transit) that have been frequently associated with distribution and consumption patterns for legacy media. Second, up till recently, they have been considered relatively stable in terms of their configurations and patterns – put otherwise, media use in these places typically occurred in relatively predictable

spatiotemporal configurations although this constancy is changing. Third, options for media use in both have multiplied extensively, and these spheres now often overlap. Finally, these sites are often associated with social functions of news. We might think how we'd now update Jensen's (1995) study of television news, which found that it served contextual, often gendered uses within the household, led to familiar routines, served a connective function for the viewer in their various social roles, and gave a sense of diversionary pleasure.

Schrøder (2015) has recently looked at how such patterns are shifting in the digital age and how these social-situational habits and preferences may stabilize into 'worthwhile' news repertoires for audiences. Such studies usefully build on Silverstone's (1994: 3) deconstruction of the paradigm that abstracted 'the dynamics of media reception from the social environment in which it takes place', emphasizing the clear interrelation that daily media habits and routines play in helping order familiar spaces and providing a sense of continuity. This points to new patterns – new continuities, if you will – that are emerging for digital news audiences. Dimmick et al. (2011) have demonstrated that the romance and feelings of excitement initially associated with having mobile news technology may be slowly giving way to ambivalence and routine, finding that news consumption on mobiles tends to take place during the 'interstices' of everyday life. Often these occur in public spaces, and on-the-go (Westlund, 2008; Peters, 2012), which indicates the increasing possibilities for, but also complexity of, news audiences' consumption practices. Media use and availability are increasingly ubiquitous, an ever-present 'mediaspace' that encompasses 'both the kinds of spaces created by media, and the effects that existing spatial arrangements have on media forms as they materialize in everyday life. Like cyberspace, the kind of space defined by this concept is a curious, multidimensional one' (Couldry and McCarthy, 2004: 2).

Cyberspace and medispace are increasingly interlinked when it comes to news audiences and their practices; the information shared and broadcast by individuals, redistributed by news organizations, and reinterpreted by audiences is more than just user-generated content.

Contributory practices in virtual spheres recurrently recreate what different places are. For instance, the crowdmapping technology pioneered by Ushahidi allows audiences and news organizations to visualize often dangerous spaces in a virtually safe environment during newsworthy events. This is simultaneously refracted back to those nearby the scene itself, which possibly impacts behaviour and perception. This poignant example illustrates how virtual spaces overlay 'real' spaces and how such scalar influences impact those both present and absent. Similar themes are discussed by Papacharissi (2015: 36), who examines how new technologies not only shift news audiences experiences and sense of space, they also reproduce,

> geo-social, hybrid, and mediated environments [that] can be understood as elsewheres that presence alternative viewpoints, voices, and stories. For citizens, the liminal form of space is crucial, as it permits them to access content in transition and find their own place in the story, alongside journalists, who already possess an institutionally assigned place in the story.

Hermida (2010) touches on similar themes when he discusses the contributional qualities afforded to audiences-as-citizens on Twitter and the rise of ambient journalism. These related observations point to the complexity of speaking of the different places of news audiences, per se. While the idea of produsage may overstate the case dramatically, looking to how different (virtual and physical) places overlap – and the corresponding possibilities afforded by shifting temporal, spatial, and interactional qualities of new(s) media – is imperative if we wish to capture the diverse meanings, connections, structures and experiences that audiences create out of the mediated content they consume, engage with, and potentially augment.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined conceptual considerations around space, place and location that point to possibilities for richer accounts in digital journalism studies of news audiences' spatiotemporal, social, and materially-situated practices. In this sense, the meaning and practices of situated moments of news use, in any of the many places we can now 'get' news, are moulded by the

possibilities beget by digital technologies and structures, and bring multiple locations together at the tips of our fingers. Of course such thinking, which conceptualizes places as layered, textured environments created by social interaction, human intervention, and technological extension in the broadest sense, also posits some demanding questions:

- How does news use, as separate or distinct from other media use, fit into this broader equation?
- If news audiences are so evidently contextualized in terms of social, spatiotemporal and material conditions, how can we gain analytic purchase?

Even if we cannot answer these easily, with any luck regarding media use and lived media spaces as inextricably linked helps move digital journalism studies closer to a response. As Falkheimer and Jansson (2006: 9, emphasis in original) note,

> The implementation and appropriation of digital ICT networks blur the boundaries not only between geographical regions (households, cities, etc.), and between types of regions (local-global; private-public, etc.), but also between the dimensions that constitute regions themselves – such as material, symbolic and imaginary spaces. Accordingly, contemporary media studies must not only 'cope' with new spatial ambiguities. It is also *the discipline* that has as its very object of study the technological and cultural processes that *produce* spatial ambiguities.

Following this line of reasoning, advocating for the importance of the spaces of news audiences does not mean casting aside everything we know. Rather it points to increasing this as a key concern, especially if we want to understand the flow, material integration, and social significance of news and information consumption. In an increasingly complex mediascape, thinking 'spatiotemporally' helps us distinguish the unique from the routine, the extraordinary from the ordinary, and the significant from the mundane.

Acknowledgements

This chapter was written as part of the research project 'The New News Consumer: User-based Innovation to Meet Paradigmatic Change in News Use and Media Habits', funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and 10 leading news organizations. Details on the project – a collaboration between VU University Amsterdam and University of Groningen – can be found at: news-use.com.

Notes

1. These studies should nonetheless be commended for attending to audiences, which do not possess the standing in journalism studies they likely should, given their centrality for journalism's discursive claims, role perceptions, and financial preservation.

2. Exploration of the materiality of media devices and their interrelation with the spaces of news audiences is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, thinking through the association between humans and nonhuman artefacts, how these shape the immediate socio-spatial context, as well as the broader communicative culture could be fruitful.

3. Outlining the pivotal influences in human geography – the broader field much analysis in this chapter draws upon – goes far beyond its remit. A useful introduction is Hubbard and Kitchin (2010).

4. Adams and Jansson's (2012) conceptual framework is instructive in this regard, specifying four interrelated analytic trajectories for studying questions of 'communication geography', namely: 'representations' (places in communication), 'textures' (communication in places), 'connections' (spaces in communication) and 'structures' (communication in spaces).

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