

School of Media
& Public Affairs

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

THREE ISSUES FACING NEWS & SCHOLARSHIP: TIME, METHODS, AND DISTANCE

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TODAY



- Breaking News & Journalistic Authority
- Methods for doing ethnographic work
- Interventions for future research and some of the biggest trends in the “real world”

MEDIA SOCIOLOGY

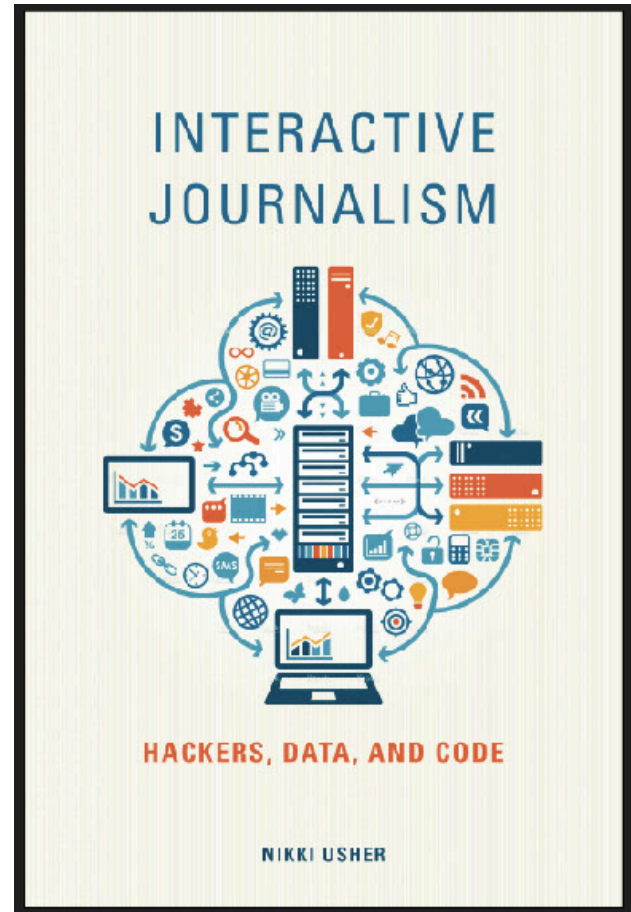


“The sociology of knowledge must first of all concern itself with what people 'know' as 'reality' in their everyday, non- or pre-theoretical lives. In other words, common-sense 'knowledge' rather than 'ideas' must be the central focus for the sociology of knowledge. It is precisely this 'knowledge' that constitutes the fabric of meanings without which no society could exist. The sociology of knowledge, therefore, must concern itself with the social construction of reality.” – (Berger & Luckman, 1966)

MAKING NEWS AT THE NEW YORK TIMES



INTERACTIVE JOURNALISM: HACKERS, DATA, AND CODE



For-profit digital news startup manifestos as metajournalistic discourse

Matt Carlson and Nikki Usher

For-profit digital news entrepreneurs have taken the industry by storm. This article examines 10 startups, how they introduce themselves, the discourse they use, or interpretive change—or is not. In short, the manifestos say...

Article

Goodbye to the news: how out-of-work journalists assess enduring news values and the new media landscape

Nikki Usher
University of Southern California

AL JAZEERA ENGLISH ONLINE
Understanding Web metrics and news production when a quantified audience is not a commodified audience

Nikki Usher



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Article

Ignored, uninterested, and the blame game: How *The New York Times*, *Marketplace*, and *TheStreet* distanced themselves from preventing the 2007–2009 financial crisis

Nikki Usher
George Washington University, USA

Article

Open source and journalism: toward new frameworks for imagining news innovation

Seth C Lewis
University of Minnesota, USA

Nikki Usher
George Washington University, USA

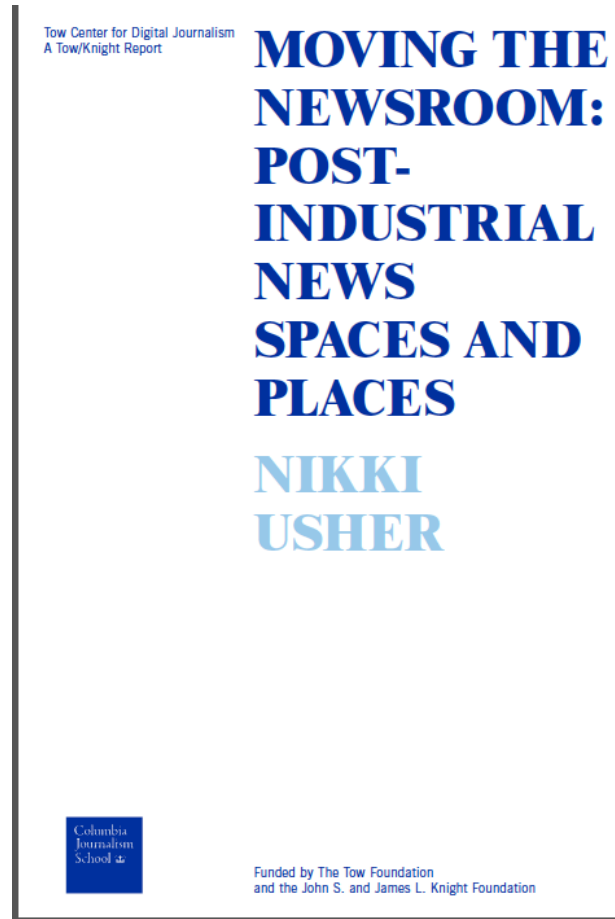
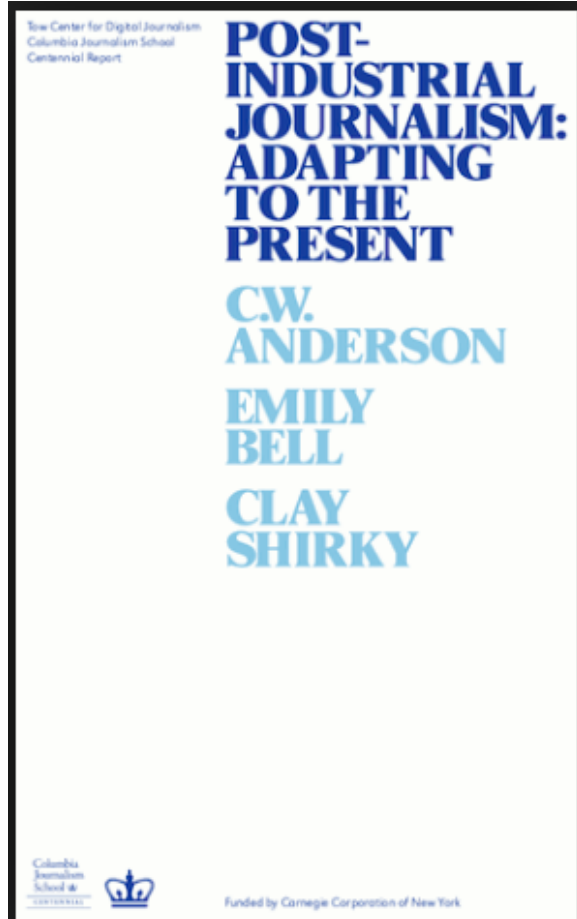


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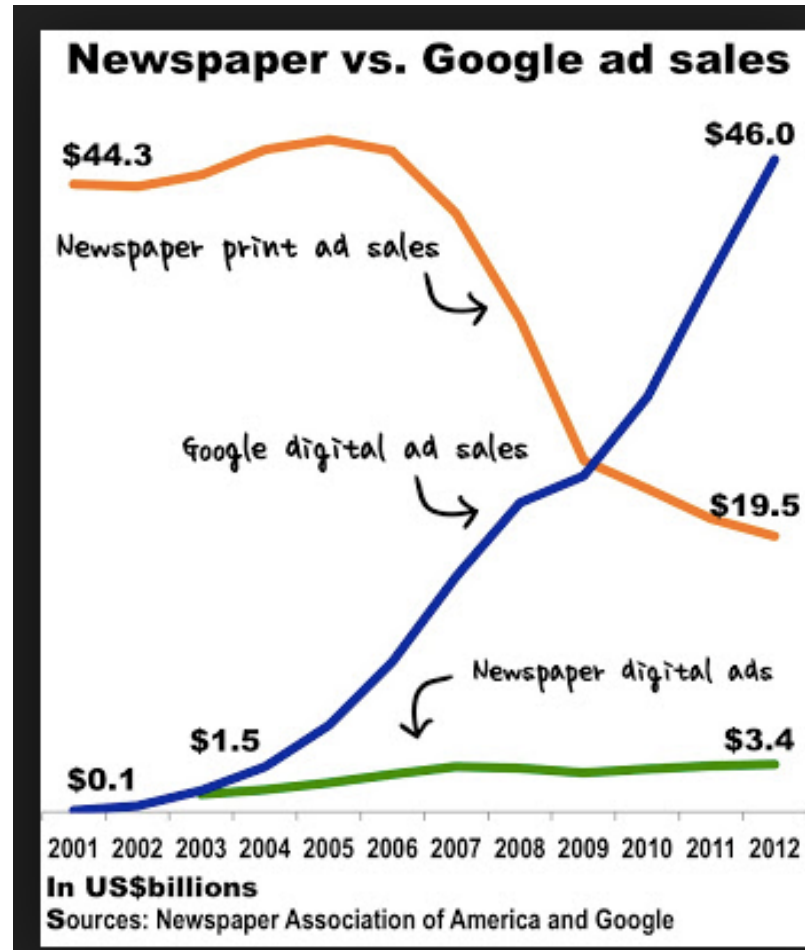
MOVING THE NEWSROOM: POST-INDUSTRIAL NEWS SPACES AND PLACES



METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPERS



- *The Miami Herald* -- 400 K to 150K in 10 years
- *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* -- \$70 to \$2.50
- *Des Moines Register* – 99 counties to 5
- *The Seattle Times* – 2 Breaking News Pulitzers, but Seattle PI disappears







Newsroom moves and the newspaper crisis evaluated: space, place, and cultural meaning

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Media, Culture & Society

1–17

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Abstract

Across the United States, newspapers are physically relocating their headquarters to smaller spaces, often away from the centers of downtown. This is the latest manifestation of the newspaper crisis manifest through a tangible and visible public manner. This article investigates these newsroom moves through a discussion of space, looking at why these moves matter by examining their impact on how journalists do their work and journalists' sense of cultural meaning. The article relies on a two-part field study of *The Miami Herald* for data. The article finds that physical newsroom moves are perceived to impact coverage, that objects inside the newsroom can also be symbols of newsroom decline and invigoration, and that saying goodbye to a building gives journalists the sense they may perhaps be losing their institutional relevance.





This all leads to questions about what the stresses and strains are on the metropolitan newsroom....

TIME





**BREAKING NEWS PRODUCTION
PROCESSES IN US
METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPERS,
TIME, AND JOURNALISTIC
AUTHORITY IN THE ERA OF THE
“NEWSPAPER CRISIS”**



TIME HAS ALWAYS BEEN A BIG PART OF JOURNALISM



- Competition
- Professional identity ("The Scoop")
 - "Stopwatch Culture" (Schlesinger, 1978)
- Economic Survival
- Innovation



- Time pressure has accelerated for everyone, but especially for newspapers
- Temporal patterns have changed
- What's the effect on form, content, practices
- How does this respond sociocultural concerns?
Questions about journalistic authority?
- What's this ultimately mean for political discourse?

IMMEDIACY AT PRESENT



- “The Hamster Wheel,” “Mouse Monkeys” (García Avilés, 2005)
- Immediacy as a professional value (Deuze, 2008)
 - ‘aura of instantaneity and immediatism, as news stresses the novelty of information as its defining principle’
- Immediacy & Transparency (Karlsson, 2010; 2011)
- Immediacy and News Quality (Lewis and Cushion, 2009; Karlsson, 2011, 2012; Saltzis, 2012)

OVERALL ASSAULT TO JOURNALISTIC AUTHORITY



- blogs
- participatory journalism
- Polarization
- media mistakes
- legal challenges
- networked technology challenges
- Sources
- Singer (2005), Carlson (2007), Robinson (2011), Bruns (2008)

THINKING ABOUT JOURNALISTIC AUTHORITY



- Discursive, Relational (Zelizer, 1992), Legitimated
- “The right to be listened to” (Carlson, 2016)
- Professional project (Abbott, 1988)



RELATE TIME TO AUTHORITY



- Also emerges through temporal authority
- Each medium—cable, broadcast, radio, newspaper has a different claim
- Usually about tech and time, not about authority and time
- Biggest change is analytics, real time feedback
- The newspaper's role in a city's news ecology?

**PROCESSES CHANGE TO
INCREMENTAL NEWS**



**TRAFFIC
COMPETITION
AUDIENCES**

Temporal Patterns = Survival



THE BOAT FIRE-MIAMI HERALD



SEATTLE: THREE PITBULLS ON THE LOOSE



THE TODAY FILE

Your guide to the latest news from around the Northwest

[HOME](#)[THE BLOTTER](#)[TRAFFIC & TRANSIT](#)

June 16, 2013 at 3:51 PM

Police shoot charging pit bull

Posted by [Lynn Thompson](#)

Police responding to a disturbance in Lake City Sunday morning shot and wounded a pit bull, according to Police. The dog was taken to a local veterinary hospital. It's condition is unknown.

Police received a call about an intoxicated man at God's Little Acre, a day center for homeless people in the 12000 block of 33rd Avenue Northeast. While several officers were dealing with the uncooperative man, a pit bull charged two officers. One officer shot the dog twice, in the chest and shoulder.

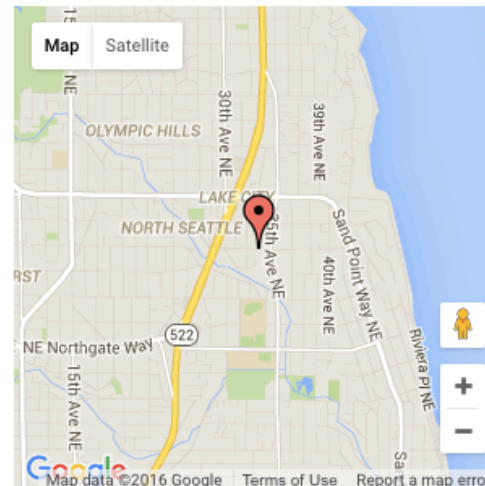
The dog ran off but was contained nearby until Seattle Animal Control arrived. The two officers were not wounded. The intoxicated man was taken into custody and taken to detox, according to police spokeswoman Renee Witt.

Share:



Recommend 2

Print





**HOW BAD IS THE QUEST FOR
TRAFFIC? → BAD, but its
complicated**



PURSUING INCREMENTAL, BREAKING NEWS FOR TRAFFIC?



- “The only one thing we have with our content that is getting attention is breaking news.” -Advertising Executive
- “There is no question that breaking news drives traffic.” -Managing Editor
- “Why be first and fast? – for big breaking news the person who is first gets the most clicks.” --Reporter

IRRELEVANCE



- “Every hour after hour we have to have cycling after cycling...if there’s nothing there, that’s our brand.”
- “If you are looking for the hook and miss the hook people may not come back again ...they need to see the immediate, but if it is not immediate people forget and they just don’t pay attention.”

COMPETITION



- "They [Editors] sent an email out about how we got the shooter up two minutes before and we beat everyone - and I guess that means something now."
- *Which medium in the city is most important to audiences and held in highest regard within the media's own internal hierarchies

OVERALL



- If there's no breaking news, no audiences, no authority
- If there's no clicks, it doesn't matter to the audience (therefore breaking news)
- Where does this leave us for political discourse if story quality declines



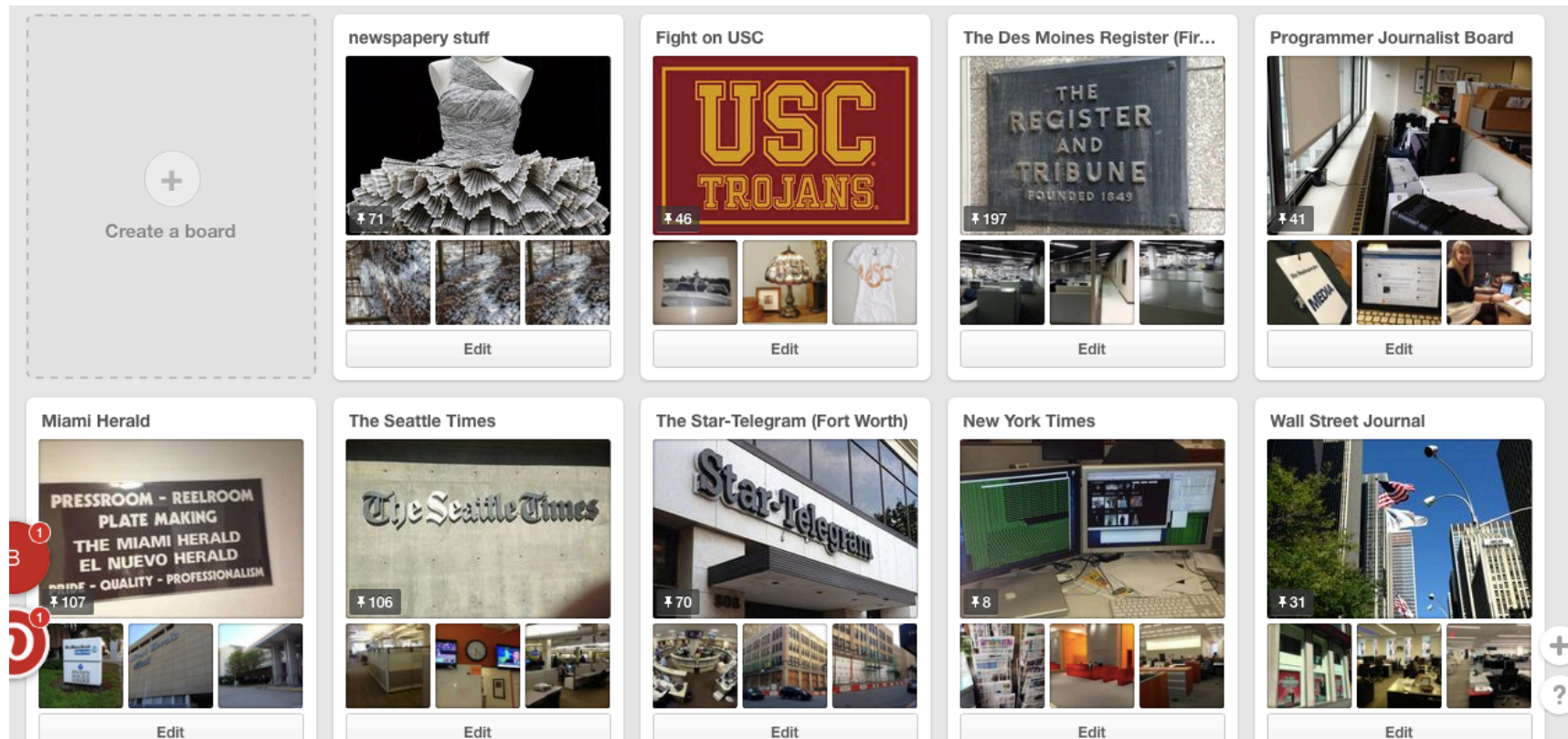
METHODS

METHODS



- Entry/Access
 - How to ask, what to consent, IRB
- Facilitating observation
 - Personal relationships
- **Collecting (varieties) of data**
 - New kinds of technology
- Jottings → notes → coding → vignettes
- Saturation & Time

PINTEREST FOR FIELDWORK RESEARCH



<http://towcenter.org/why-we-like-pinterest-for-fieldwork-research-by-nikki-usher-and-phil-howard/>



APPS

TIMEPAGE

CREATIVE CLOUD

MOLESKINE JOURNAL

BOOKS

PHOTO BOOKS



Your creative journey starts here

1 Draw

Draw on any page in the notebook using any tool of your choice, although black ink and markers tend to work best. Sketch your idea using broad strokes as opposed to shading.

2 Capture

Use the Moleskine, a Creative Cloud connected app to take a picture of your drawing. If you are satisfied with the image, after choosing the setting, tap on use image button.

3 Choose the settings

The preprocessing settings are specifically developed to detect the orientation of the page, correct perspective and alignment distortions. The app uses the special page markings to help process and optimize the image. The filters settings should be used to correct the images according to the lighting condition during the capturing or the technique or tool used for drawing. If you are not satisfied with the result as a JPG file before converting it to an SVG file change the settings.

4 Sync

Sync with Creative Cloud to store both files formats (JPG





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AGENDA FOR FUTURE WORK





**SHOULD ACADEMIC RESEARCH BE
EVALUATIVE, PROSCRIPTIVE, AND
DECONTEXTUALIZED FROM
LARGER THEORETICAL
IMPLICATIONS?**

PRACTICAL NEEDS & WHAT JOURNALISTS TALK ABOUT NEEDING TO KNOW



- Tools & skills
 - Data-gathering and use, programming, geolocation, video storytelling, social media)
- Tech cultural challenges & opportunities
 - Surveillance/security, harassment, automation, algorithms, trauma
- Workplace and organizational challenges
 - diversity/gender/ethnic mentorship, content management systems/knowledge management
- Audiences
 - commenting, user-generated content, verification, "engagement"
- Business models
 - Ad-blocking/ads, platforms, foundation-supported news
- New developments
 - Rise of podcasts, chat apps, annotation/bookmarking, personalization

WHAT JOURNALISTS AREN'T TALKING ENOUGH ABOUT



- User Experience/Design
- News Preferences
- Big-data driven decision-making
- Scaling experimentation & enabling cross-industry innovation
- Other business models besides advertising and subscription
- News forms
- Transparency and accountability in newswork to the public

SCHOLARLY INTERESTS



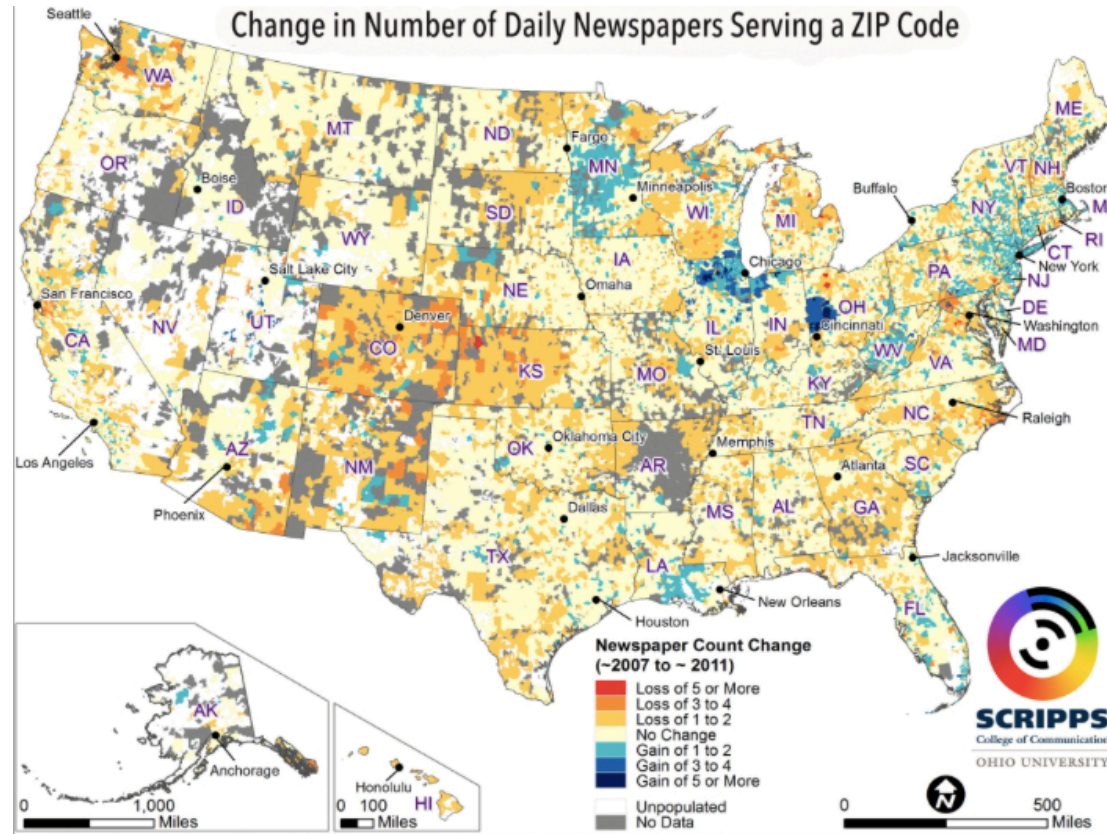
- Organizational Culture
 - Convergence (Web and print!?), social media, citizen journalism/content, analytics
 - How new X affects culture Y
 - Relationships of tools to people, ANT/STS
 - News routines (sourcing, gatekeeping, etc.)
- Professional changes
 - Boundaries, authority, new entrants (e.g. data, start-ups), self-perception
- Normative questions (Ethics/Values)
- Power structures
 - Sourcing, political communication, political economy
- (other) enduring sociological questions
 - Labor, information flows/networks, globalization, (time/space?)

THE EDGES OF SCHOLARSHIP



- Policy
 - Ownership and regulations
- Local News Conditions
 - News deserts, news ecosystems
- Tow Center, API, RISJ, Pew, GRCP, Engaging News Project





Daily Newspaper Counts from Alliance for Audited Media (AAM). ZIP Code Tabulation Area (ZCTA).

Mapping the Changing Local Media Ecosystem



Engaging Communities in Creating Local Solutions



ACADEMIC DISTANCE/ DIRECTIONS



- News preferences
- Cross-organization analysis
- User experience/impact of experiments
- Analytics (but specifically....)*
- Misinformation*
- Business models
- Trust/Impact of change on content*

POTENTIAL DEPARTURES FOR ACADEMICS



- Tools & skills
 - Data-gathering and use, programming, geolocation, video storytelling, social media)
- Tech cultural challenges & opportunities
 - Surveillance/security, harassment, automation, algorithms, trauma
- Workplace and organizational challenges
 - diversity/gender/ethnic mentorship, content management systems/knowledge management
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