

# Rotating News Field: A Study of News Reversal and Public Opinion Effect in the Context of New Media

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## Abstract

"Reverse news" is a new phenomenon in the news space in the new media era. The gradual presentation of news facts leads to a reversal of public opinion attitudes, which seriously affects the public's news perception and hurts the credibility of the mass media. "News reversal" incidents are numerous, and it is impossible to avoid the fueling of new online media. News producers in the new media era have affected the authenticity of news because of their one-sided pursuit of timeliness. At the same time, the public's self-discourse empowerment has contributed to the multiple presentation of news facts and intensified the spread of news "reversal". Faced with this situation, the public needs to adjust their previous news reading experience. It is necessary to maintain the news reading strategy of "let the news fly for a while" to adapt to the information chaos of "reverse news" flying all over the sky, and to face it optimistically. The "organic movement" of the news media in anticipation of the final presentation of all the truth of the news.

## Keywords

News Reversal; Public Opinion Effect; Newspapers and Periodicals.

## 1. Introduction

organic movement describes the changes in news production and dissemination in the context of new media, and an unavoidable phenomenon is the emerging "reverse news". Looking around the current news media field, the number of news reversal incidents is increasing day by day, which causes the public to feel "at a loss" in the process of news reading and acceptance, and the public opinion effect associated with the news reversal will cause a new round of reversal of public opinion. In this way, the public in the whole society is increasingly "dizzy", as if they are in a "revolving news field"[1], and people's "habits" of perception, judgment and action after reading the news have also changed: if we say that before. There is a "subcutaneous injection" type of overall acceptance of people's reading news, so now they need to maintain "news vigilance" at all times, and need to wait for the truth to be gradually revealed before they can stand in this "revolving news field", and can fully and objectively understand and judge the media. reported news events. Faced with this kind of social phenomenon, we need to carefully sort out the social impact of news reversals, dig out the logic of the frequent occurrence of reversal news, and try to put forward strategies for the public to read news in the era of reversal news.

## 2. "Reversal and Then Reversal, News is Like Nonsense": Reversing the Public's News Perception in the News Era

In the era of new media, with the explosive growth of news information, reversal news also emerges one after another. The public reads information in a hurry, expresses opinions, and keeps reversing with the facts of the news. " and so on. In the news field where the facts are reversing and the truth is flying, some scholars angrily pointed out: "Reversal and reversal,

news is like nonsense" [2]. In this way, how to recognize "reversal news" "The phenomenon, and what kind of perception will the reversal of the phenomenon of news flying will bring to the public are all issues worth exploring.

### 2.1. Case Presentation of Reversal News

From a diachronic point of view, news reversals are not unique in history, but the term "reversal news" in contemporary people's mouths refers specifically to new phenomena that appear in the public opinion space in the new media era, and it refers not only to news facts The reversal of truth also refers to the reversal of public attitudes based on news facts. Of course, with regard to "reversal news", there are also different sayings in society such as "news reversal drama" and "reversal news", but they generally have the same meaning. For example, some scholars believe that: "News reversal dramas are those news phenomena that follow social hotspots, mark news hot words and then attract widespread attention, but are later proved to be inconsistent with the main body of the facts or the whole picture, or even diametrically opposed to the facts [3]." Another scholar explained it this way: "Reversal news, also known as news oolong event, refers to the change of initially reported news in the opposite direction. The stance reversed sharply and showed a completely opposite attitude [4]." It can be seen that no matter "reversal news", "reversal news" or "news reversal drama", various statements are the gradual presentation of the truth of the news and public opinion. The sudden change in attitude was observed in combination with the dual dimensions of news reporting and social influence. The author will analyze the "reversal news" with the help of some representative news reversal events that occurred in 2015-2018.

### 2.2. Reversing the Public Perception of News

Since the birth of modern newspapers, reading news has become a daily habit of people. People perceive the whole world by reading news, and thus produce an impression of the human world. In the era of newspapers and periodicals, people understand the world through reading and perception of text and picture news information. After the emergence of audio-visual media such as radio and television, the objects of reading are not only limited to text, but have expanded to text, pictures, images, and audio. , video and other ways to perceive the world. In the era of new media, the production and dissemination of news information integrates and uses various forms of expression such as text, pictures, sound, light, and electricity to display news content in an all-round way. It gives the audience a fusion experience of hearing, vision and touch when receiving news [5]. Of course, these are visual perceptions of the audience . With the evolution of media, people are more and more influenced by news dissemination, and they spend more and more time on online media and various mobile media. Quality texts, news reading behaviors and habits on TV screens have undergone revolutionary changes. As a new communication phenomenon, interactive and participatory news reading in the context of new media has attracted more and more attention from the society, especially with the continuous emergence of reversal news, the interaction between media and society directly affects the public's perception of news. In the same news event, one or more significant changes in media reports and public opinion have become a common daily phenomenon in human life. In the face of this increasing number of reversal news, the public is increasingly dazzled and confused. Of course, in the reversal news, it is not the specific news details that really attract people's attention, but the jaw-dropping dramatic reversal and the reversal of public opinion attitudes along with the gradual presentation of the news details. Public participation, like Lippmann's phantom public, is accompanied by the successive disclosure of news information, and the direction of public criticism is also swaying. Take the "Chengdu female driver's beating incident" that happened on May 3, 2015 as an example. After the video of the incident was posted on the Internet, the public first expressed their shock at the male driver Zhang's attack, and the criticism of public opinion pointed to the male driver. Zhang Mou. However, when the

video of Zhang's dash cam was released by the media, the female driver Lu's behavior such as leaving the car to Zhang was exposed, causing the news to suddenly reverse, and the attitude of public opinion immediately swayed emotionally to the opposite direction with the reversal of the news. , the public opinion turned to condemn the female driver Lu for driving too unruly and dangerously. Victims who begin to be sympathized instantly become spurned, and perpetrators who are attacked immediately become sympathized [6]. According to the reversal of news facts, public opinion also has a 180-degree reversal of emotional attitudes. Similarly, when the media reported that the patient's right kidney was lost due to the hospital's operation, they "reproached the hospital for being irresponsible", and then learned that the media deliberately wrote the right kidney's "shrinking" as "missing", and public opinion also "rebuked the media for not reporting inaccurately." Responsibility"[7]; seeing the subway aunt scolding the cosplay girl in the online video, she "rebuked the aunt's bad attitude and lack of tolerance", and then learned that the video was made on purpose, and the public opinion "rebuked false production to attract attention"; seeing Li Yong The family photo in a foreign country "rebuked Li Yong and his wife for being foreign and unpatriotic", and then when they learned that Li Yong went abroad for treatment and died, public opinion "rebuked the previous news rumors". From this, we can see that although these news reversal events have different news themes, they all encountered the reversal of the truth of the news and triggered subversive public opinion reversals before and after.

### **3. The Worship of Speed and the Supremacy of Traffic: Changes in the Rules of the News Field in the Context of New Media**

Exploring the reasons for the phenomenon of "news reversal" cannot avoid the help of new online media. Even if there have been "news Rashomon" before, there is no doubt that new media has intensified the frequency of reversal news. First, the new media provides a relatively free and democratic platform for public discourse, so it is difficult to distinguish the authenticity from the mass production of various kinds of information. Investigation and research have been greatly reduced.

#### **3.1. The "Cult of Speed" in News Production**

In the context of new media, the media pay more and more attention to the timeliness of news reports. The so-called timeliness of news refers to the time limit for news reports to produce due social effects, that is to say, within what time frame will news achieve the effect of communication and generate value, so news people often pay great attention to "the first time". " report. Paying attention to the speed of news reporting and the timeliness of news reporting are important value standards for the public to choose news in modern society. Looking at the evolution of China's modern news reports, the continuous shortening of the reporting period also reflects people's requirements for news timeliness from one aspect. At the beginning of the birth of modern journalism, most of the news newspapers were in the form of monthly magazines. With the emergence of radio and television media, the timeliness of news has been improved. From one report every day, to news reports in the morning, noon and evening, to the new media The times, whether it is a news portal or a social media platform, has the condition of "reporting as it happens" in terms of reporting timeliness, which undoubtedly creates a pressure on the timeliness of news for traditional media such as newspapers, radio, and television. It can be said that the emergence of new online media has pushed the preference for speed of news reporting to the extreme, and the real-time reporting of rolling news has made many traditional media begin to seek "Internet +"-style media integration transformation. Looking around the current news media competition, it has transformed into a competition for the speed of news reporting. All kinds of media are eager to be quick in news reporting. Faced with the same news information, it seems that the first time the report can get a high degree of

attention, it can snatch more news audiences. What followed was the worship and follow-up of speed reports by various media. For example, in February 2016, the incident of "Shanghai women fleeing from rural areas in Jiangxi" was originally a topic that some self-media hyped up with the help of online articles, but many mainstream media followed up with reports without verifying the content, resulting in various passive situations [7]. Even so, in the era of new media, news production and dissemination work on media platforms often closely follows the dynamic development of social news and does not dare to lag behind. For the sake of timeliness of news, many journalists rely on the words and phrases that appear on the online social platform to write a news report without interviewing the news parties. For example, in July 2018, some entertainment media used self-media content to paste and stitch together to describe the incident of Ha Wen and Li Yong resigning from CCTV to settle in the United States. It was not until Ha Wen's Weibo in memory of Li Yong was released that it was proved that Ha Wen was just a Accompanying Li Yong to the United States for medical treatment [8]. It can be seen that the principle of news production originating from the worship of speed makes it easy for journalists to ignore the screening of the authenticity of information and blindly publish reports.

### **3.2. "Traffic First" in News Communication**

In the media competition under the influence of new media, news production advocates "speed", while news communication pursues "flow". For traditional media practitioners, they should not only care about "what is a hot post", but should break the casserole and ask, "why is a hot post". The news reversal has made the focus of public attention and discussion far beyond the event itself. What is more worth pointing out is that some news websites or journalists, in order to attract more social traffic attention, often report some explosive news events without confirmation. For example, the "right kidney missing" incident occurred in May 2016 [9]. On May 5th of that year, a media in Anhui reported that Liu Yongwei, a man from Suzhou, had undergone thoracic surgery at the Affiliated Hospital of Xuzhou Medical College, and his right kidney had disappeared mysteriously under the title "Where is my right kidney?" This explosive report quickly attracted the attention of the public. However, the next day, the Affiliated Hospital of Xuzhou Medical College proved that Liu Yongwei's "right kidney was not lost, but atrophied". It can be seen that the competition for news in the context of new media has led some journalists to pursue the "communication power" of news to overwhelm the pursuit of "authenticity" of news, thus burying the hidden danger of news reversal. In the era of new media, news reports without interviews and collages of fragments are increasing day by day. They often blur the facts of the news, and highlight a subjective imagination and emotional rendering, which will make the public use the news to read the news. One's own psychological preference enters the news situation of their own subjective speculation, which will lead to a "preconceived" news fact hypothesis, so as to stand in line emotionally, and stand on one side to criticize the other side. For example, on October 28, 2018, the unfortunate accident in which a bus collided with a private car fell from a bridge in Chongqing, resulting in many deaths. While the accident was still under investigation, it was discovered that the owner of the private car in the accident was a female driver, so there was overwhelming media criticism against the female driver. However, with the gradual enrichment and clarity of news facts, it was discovered that a dispute in the bus caused the bus to run the wrong way, which in turn led to a collision with the private car driven by the female driver. The facts are vastly different.

## **4. Discourse Democracy and Habits of Thinking: The Social Effects of the News Field in the New Media Context**

Another important reason for the frequent occurrence of news reversals is the commotion in the new media field. Looking back at the previous news and public opinion pattern, the right to

speak is basically in the hands of the news media, and how the reporters report will be accepted by the public. However, the new media has increased the discourse channels of public expression. Whether it is a news subject or the general public, they can speak out through WeChat, Weibo, forums and other self-media forms. This breaks through the monopoly of media discourse in the traditional media era [10]. The diverse expressions of news parties make news events have multiple truths. In the era of new media with multiple information channels, the media has more and more sources of information, and when these sources of information insist on their own opinions, events often become more complicated and confusing.

#### **4.1. "Discourse Democracy" in the New Media Field**

In the era of new media, the right to use the media has moved downward. Everyone in the public has their own "microphone", and the new media has endowed with the general democratic right to discourse. Of course, discourse democracy also makes it difficult to confirm the truth of news. On the Internet platform, social media such as Weibo and WeChat have become an important source of information acquisition for traditional media. Various social media platforms are not only "the birthplace of inside information", but are increasingly becoming "competitors in reporting on emergencies" and "promoters of public opinion". With the rise of social media public opinion status such as Weibo and WeChat, illegitimate commercial interests have also penetrated into the corners of these public opinion platforms. The curiosity of online communication has also caused some video production teams to deliberately produce some "news". For example, on August 10, 2017, the video of "Auntie Angry at the Cosplay Girl in the Subway" became popular on the Internet, with more than 33 million views. The content of the video shows that the aunt angrily scolded the cosplay girl "who is wearing so little clothes, who is it for?" He also said that coser broke his granddaughter, and the cosplay girl remained polite and did not reply, and was praised by netizens. However, on the afternoon of August 14th, when the cosplay girl was interviewed by @Beijing time, she said that she was hired and paid for the filming at a cost of 900 yuan. The democratization of the right to use the media has led to many instances of such planning and topic-making. It is worth noting that although topic hype has become a social nuisance, some reporters and media still follow the trend and hype on a deaf ear.

#### **4.2. The "Habit of Thinking" in the New Media Field**

It is worth noting that it is not only the news reports themselves that influence public judgment and attitudes, but also the stereotypes and mindsets that exist in people's minds. Established thinking patterns and incomplete information often lead people to ride on an emotional "roller coaster" in a series of news reversals. In the public opinion field that lacks the spirit of independent thinking, the spread of symbols and labels will be adopted by many people. For example, in the incident of being beaten by a female driver in Chengdu in May 2015, people went from sympathizing with the beaten to rebuking the beaten. In October 2018, the Chongqing bus crashed into the bridge, due to media reports that the accident was caused by the bus avoiding a retrograde car. As a result, public opinion is directed at the female car driver. However, it was later learned that it was not the responsibility of the female driver of the car. Another example is the August 2017 incident where the aunt was angry at the cosplay girl in the subway, incorporating labels such as "old man" and "Chinese aunt". Internet public opinion is not unfamiliar with the "old man" and "Chinese aunt", and even derived "the old man has turned bad" stigmatization of such groups. Although the modern news audience is not the "rabble crowd" as the elites call it, the audience has self-cognitive rationality, but in the face of some news events that are far away or unfamiliar to us, the audience's mind still cannot get rid of the strong communication effect of "hypodermic injection". As some scholars put it: "In front of the TV set and newspapers turned on, we return to the state of innocent infants, our minds become a passive and unobstructed channel, an endless stream of intuitive images without the

transformation of the brain's thinking. Constantly bombarding our retinas directly." In the age of new media, where information spreads in an instant and is infinitely magnified, emotions such as anger, fear or hatred inherent in human beings sometimes prevent us from taking a serious look at the dynamics and complexity of events, thus giving up on A deeper understanding and understanding of news issues has led to an endless stream of public opinion reversals.

## 5. "Let the News Fly for a While" and the "Organic Movement": News Reading Strategies that Reverse the News Age

Through the above analysis, we can see that the frequent occurrence of reversal news not only has the incentives of "speed worship" and "flow first" in news production and dissemination in the context of new media, but also has the discourse democracy and habituation in the new media field. thinking, etc. In the face of reversal news, our first task is of course to ask news producers not to be disturbed by the two "curses" of "speed" and "flow", and always adhere to the news production and dissemination principles of "objective professionalism" and "seeking truth from facts". But at the same time, it should be noted that news facts themselves are dynamic and complex. Although the phenomenon of news reversal may be gradually reduced based on the conscious self-discipline of the media and external supervision and norms, it is far from impossible to completely avoid it. So, under this circumstance, how can the public improve their reading ability in the new media era with frequent reversal news, so as to deeply grasp the dynamics and complexity of news events?

### 5.1. Reading Strategy: "Let the News Fly for a While"

Reality is the life of news, which is determined by the rules and characteristics of the news field. In real life, we tend to treat media news as if it were the real world, but the facts reflected in the news media we rely on are not entirely true and reliable. While enjoying the convenience of fragmented and unscreened information flow, we are also accustomed to sharing our views at the first time. While enjoying the right to speak, it is easier to indulge in emotional and The eyeball effect and pleasure brought by extreme expression. Therefore, in the context of new media with increasingly frequent reversal news, it is very necessary for the public to maintain necessary vigilance against media reports when reading news and perceiving reality. As McLuhan points out: "Once we hand over our organs and nervous system to someone else to manipulate -- and these people want to rent our eyes, ears, and nerves for profit, we don't actually stay. What right?" This is related to the production mode of news meaning in the context of new media and the generation of readers' psychological mechanism for participating in news reading. In news events, the truth is often complicated, and if reporters are biased, the news tends to increase the possibility of reversal. Because in news events, news parties will naturally construct expressions that are beneficial to them, and when faced with pressure, some extreme expressions will guide and control the attention of the public on the Internet, which will lead to the manipulation of public opinion, thus intensifying the era of transformation. social conflict. In the face of reverse news, we should read the news more carefully and be a critical thinker. People get information by reading and listening to the news, and regard reading and listening to the news as their perception of society, but the news and the real world are not one. This can easily lead to biased belief in the media and to arrange one's life according to the news reports of the media. "I saw the news yesterday and felt that it was not that simple. Today, I saw that it really reversed. I don't know if it will continue to reverse in the future. It seems that I will have to let the news fly for a while before I can watch it..." The new media era has reversed. The crowding of news has seriously affected the public's perception of news, and people have to adjust their previous news reading experience to adapt to the news chaos in the reversal news era. As readers of information, we are confronted with news information that

floods in every day. The first thing we need to pay attention to is that we should not simply make value judgments based on news reports, but should "let the news fly for a while" advocated by netizens. Waiting for the truth to continue to emerge. "Let the news fly for a while" is not only what news audiences need, but also what journalists need. When the media is no longer in a hurry to "grab the news" at the expense of the confirmation of facts, and when the public is no longer in a hurry to "spit out the truth" because of only a few words of the truth, everyone will give time to wait for the truth of the news. The level of news and public opinion production and dissemination will certainly be significantly improved.

## 5.2. The Truth of the News: "The Organic Movement of the Press"

At the same time, it should be noted that the dissemination of news information in the new media field is immediate and interactive, and it is also fragmented and superimposed. According to Marx's elaboration of "the organic movement of newspapers and periodicals", we can understand that the truth in the news field does not appear overnight, but a process of dialogue and game of multiple overlapping and dynamic evolution, and the process of removing falsehood and reserving the truth. As Marx put it: "A journalist who reports with great fidelity the voices of the people he hears does not have to be ready to give an exhaustive account of all the details and to demonstrate all the causes and origins. What's more, it takes a lot of time and data to do so. A journalist can think of himself as only a small part of a complex organism in which he is free to choose certain functions for himself." "For example, a person may write more about the poverty of the people when he interacts with the people. another person, such as a historian, studies the history that caused it; a sentimental person describes the state of poverty itself; an economist studies what must be done to eradicate poverty, and , this general problem can also be solved from various aspects: on a local scale, on a national scale, etc. In this way, as long as the press moves organically, the whole truth will be revealed in its entirety. Initially, this whole truth is only It comes before us in the form of simultaneously developing viewpoints, which sometimes consciously and sometimes unintentionally reveal one aspect of the phenomenon. But in the final analysis, this work of the newspaper is only for one of its staff material, and let him form it into a unified whole. This is how newspapers work by division of labor —not one person doing all the work, but each member of this large group taking on a small piece of work— Step by step to find out all the facts." Therefore, we don't have to be too pessimistic when facing the endless reversal news, the news that is constantly being rolled out is true and the news that is constantly reversing will eventually "collage" all the truth of the news. . Of course, in the "free market" of news dissemination, the "self-correction of opinion" described by Milton is always long overdue, so we must maintain the news reading strategy of "let the news fly for a while", but also Facing the "organic movement" of the press with optimism, looking forward to the final presentation of all the truth in the news field.

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