April 8, 2022

Folker Hanusch

Editor-in-Chief, *Journalism Studies*

To Dr. Hanusch and the Editors at Journalism Studies,

I’m writing submit our manuscript, entitled ‘Developing the ‘News Niche’ as an Audience-Level Indicator of Ideological Fragmentation,’ to *Journalism Studies.*

In this study we introduce an expanded definition of ‘niche’ news. Building on approaches to the study of audience fragmentation, we explicate the news niche as one’s position within the broad, system-level network of attention to news. This conceptualization is meaningful because it allows researchers to capture audience-level traits that influence one’s preference for ideological news. That is, one’s preference for partisan news is not just a personal decision, but it is also influenced by the choices of others within the same niche.

As a ‘proof of concept’ paper, we test our theory via an empirical tool with network analysis techniques. This contribution is important for the field, as attention to news and public affairs is increasingly determined by aggregators and social feeds, which group users by shared interests or motivations.

We move beyond the role of individual-level selection habits to incorporate audience- and system-level influences on one’s news ideology. Many of these conversations are already taking place in this journal. We hope you agree that the paper is a good fit for *Journalism Studies*, and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best wishes,

Dr. Trevor Diehl

Central Michigan University