

# ***Destined to Change: Shifting Roles of Film and TV Stars in Shaping Canadian Mass Perception Amidst New Media Dominance***

Wenrui Chen<sup>1,a,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Sociology, University of British Columbia, University Endowment Land, Vancouver, Canada*

*a. chenwenrui20020223@163.com*

*\*corresponding author*

**Abstract:** The transformative impact of new media and multiple media platforms on Canada's communication landscape has redefined how film and television stars shape and influence the mass population's thinking and behavior, in contrast to the traditional media era. This research explores these changes by examining the interplay between celebrity influence, media consumption, and societal dynamics. The mediatization theory serves as a theoretical framework to understand the relationship between media and society, particularly in the context of Canada. The study focuses on the shifting roles of film and television stars within this dynamic media landscape, and highlighting their evolving influence on public perceptions and behaviors. Qualitative content analysis, grounded in mediatization theory and guided by a comparative lens, has been employed as the research methodology. This method allows for a meticulous examination of diverse media sources, encompassing traditional and new media platforms, to unveil the multifaceted ways celebrities shape mass population thinking and behavior. The advent of new media platforms has facilitated direct and interactive communication between stars and their audiences, fostering personalized engagement and dismantling hierarchical barriers. The influence of film and television stars extends beyond entertainment, interacting with Canadian cultural narratives and societal issues. As celebrities leverage new media platforms to champion social causes, they contribute to reshaping cultural norms and values. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of media influence in the digital age, showcasing the sophisticated bond between media, celebrities, and societal evolution within the Canadian narrative.

**Keywords:** new media platforms, celebrity influence, mediatization theory, Canadian media landscape

## **1. Introduction**

In the communication and media landscape, the rapid evolution of new and multiple media platforms has brought about transformative shifts in how individuals perceive and interact with the world around them. This wave of technological advancement in Canada has significantly altered how film and television stars wield their influence over the mass population's thinking and behaviour, drawing

stark comparisons to the traditional media era. The manifestation and proliferation of new media technologies have ushered in a new media consumption era that profoundly converts the relationship between media and its audience. Many digital platforms, such as social media, streaming services, and online news portals, have expanded the avenues through which film and television stars can engage with their audiences. This increased accessibility has enabled them to communicate directly, foster connections, and impact individuals' perceptions more intimately.

Consequently, the interplay between traditional media's longstanding influence and new media's dynamic reach prompts interesting questions about how these shifts redefine societal perspectives. This transformational phase in media consumption is accompanied by a mediatization process that intertwines media with everyday life and society. The theoretical framework of mediatization propounded posits that media reflect societal changes and actively contribute to forming cultural norms and values [1]. Within the context of Canada, scholars represented by Chambers have elucidated the profound impact of mediatization on the contemporary media landscape [2], illustrating how film and television stars' messages and personas are interwoven with the collective consciousness of the Canadian population. The lens of political expression and participation, as Ray perused [3], yield an angle to understand the evolving relationship between media, celebrities, and the masses. The influence of social media on political discourse has transcended borders and permeated the Canadian context. The heightened interactivity and immediacy of new media platforms enable film and television stars to engage in political conversations, elevating their influence over public opinions and behavioural patterns. However, as scholars like Couldry and Hepp suggest [4], it is vital to consider the broader contexts and cultural traditions that underpin the transformation of media dynamics in Canada.

This research announces the connections between film and television stars, media platforms, and the mass population's thoughts and actions in Canada's evolving media landscape. In the way of comparing the contemporary era with the traditional media paradigm, the essay aims to uncover the novel ways in which media figures now shape and reshape societal narratives, norms, and behaviours. This study aspires to bolster our understanding of the profound transformations that have transpired and continue to unfold under the burgeoning influence of new media and multiple media platforms in Canada over a comprehensive examination of the literature and theoretical frameworks.

## 2. Literature Review

The rapid and pervasive proliferation of new media and multiple media platforms has fundamentally reframed Canada's contemporary landscape of communication and media. The transformative phenomenon has revolutionized how individuals engage with information, entertainment, and each other. This literature review gazes on the nuanced evolution of the influence wielded by film and television stars in the context of these changes, mainly focusing on the shifts witnessed in the mass population's thinking and behaviour and how these changes compare to the dynamics of the traditional media era.

The mediatization theory provides an illuminating theoretical framework for understanding the complex intersection between media and society [1]. In this digital age, media are no longer reflections of societal shifts but active agents arranging cultural norms, values, and behaviours. This foundational perspective enforces the critical role that media, including film and television, play in mediating and styling public perceptions. In the time Canada navigates the surge of new media's popularity, this theoretical perspective becomes particularly relevant in comprehending the ways film and television stars impact the thoughts and actions of the mass population. One of the distinctive features of the contemporary media landscape is the symbiotic relationship between film and television stars and new media platforms. Chambers highlights this transformation in Canadian television [2], underscoring how the evolving relationship between celebrities and new media

platforms has expanded the reach of their influence. The digital era has empowered these stars with unprecedented access to their audiences, equipping them to engage directly with fans and followers. The traditional barriers that once separated celebrities from their admirers have dissolved, allowing for a more personalized and interactive form of influence. Such shift is emblematic of the changing nature of media power, as the boundaries between creators, content, and consumers blur.

Lacroix emphasizes the impact of globalization on the Canadian film market and give insight how cultural policies and national film industries intersect with the dominance of the American film industry [5]. This intersection exemplifies the involvement of traditional and new media platforms and their impact on Canadian identity. The cultural narratives woven by film and television stars extend beyond entertainment, shaping perceptions of nationhood, values, and shared experiences. It becomes even more pronounced in the era of new media, where the interconnectivity of platforms steps up the resonance of cultural narratives across diverse segments of the population. Gasher, O'Donnell, and Warriner propel to this exploration by furnishing a methodological lens along which the mediascape can be dissected and understood [6]. Their emphasis on the significance of analyzing media narratives and messages in the context of newspaper analysis opens up the dynamic interaction between traditional and new media. The analytical approach is especially pertinent in Canada, where a diverse media ecosystem offers an array of narratives that influence public perceptions and behaviours. Their methodology features the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in comprehending the multifaceted impact of new media on the population's thinking and behaviour.

Shade's edited volume, "Mediascapes: New Patterns in Canadian Communication" [7], extends this exploration to encompass the broader landscape of Canadian media consumption. The approach embraces the diverse manifestations of media molds and examines how various channels configure individuals' attitudes and beliefs. The volume aptly demonstrates that media consumption exists over passive engagement; it is a dynamic process that actively patterns the cultural fabric of Canadian society. This concept holds particular significance in the context of the present research, as it elucidates how film and television stars operating within this complex landscape advance to building public perceptions. Marwick and Lewis illuminate an emerging dimension of influence in the digital era [8]: media manipulation and disinformation. The prevalence of disinformation online poses a unique challenge, blurring the lines between entertainment, political discourse, and fact. Film and television stars, due to their broad reach and impact, are not exempt from this phenomenon. Their social media posts, endorsements, and comments can inadvertently propagate misinformation or influence public discourse. That dynamic underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary media landscape, including its potential pitfalls and challenges.

The conjunction between media influence and societal dynamics overpasses mere entertainment. Ray noted that film and television stars engage with social and political issues on social media [3], expanding their influence beyond artistic realms. Social media platforms serve as arenas for political expression and discourse, capacitating these celebrities to craft public opinions and behaviours on various issues. Such expansion of influence intensifies the connection between media content, celebrities, and societal dynamics, requiring reevaluating the mechanisms across which influence is wielded. Smith promotes this discourse by exploring the evolving media environment and its implications for media power and effects [9]. The development of new media platforms has fundamentally revamped how media content reaches audiences, challenging traditional notions of media power. Film and television stars, previously confined to the limited outlets of traditional media, now have a broader canvas to contour public perceptions. The mechanisms of influence are no longer linear; they are characterized by interactivity, immediacy, and diversity. As a result, the dynamics with which these celebrities shape and influence the mass population's thinking have undergone a profound transformation.

### 3. Methodology

A meticulously crafted qualitative content analysis methodology is central to exploring the dynamic interplay between new media, celebrity influence, and modeling the mass population's thinking and behaviour in Canada. The methodological approach is chosen with the utmost care because it can unearth complicated layers of meaning, discern underlying patterns, and release the nuanced dynamics imprinted within the collected data. Anchored in the rich theoretical landscape of mediatization, media effects, and cultural globalization gleaned from the comprehensive literature review, this section digs into the methodology's journey, underlining its significance and trajectory.

At the heart of the research, design beats the pulse of a deliberate comparative lens. This lens is an invaluable tool for deciphering the transformation of celebrity influence across epochs—evaluating how film and television stars once structured perceptions and behaviours in traditional media and now in the sprawling domain of new media. This comparative approach necessitates meticulous curation and analysis of diverse media content across temporal boundaries. The approach demands a systematic dissection of interviews, articles, social media interactions, videos, and myriad artefacts, uncovering the layers of celebrity influence. It also embarks on a comprehensive data collection expedition that traverses historical archives and the digital realm of the present. Data collection involves a discerning selection of content from various media sources, encompassing traditional repositories like newspapers and magazines, entrenched media like television shows and films, and the expansive expanse of online platforms. By embracing this broad spectrum, the research aspires to capture celebrity influence's fluid ebb and flow, encapsulating both constancy and change.

With the curated data, the narrative flows into a multifaceted coding process of discernment, categorization, and interpretation. The meticulously structured coding framework derives its inspiration from the theoretical underpinnings amassed within the literature review. Concepts ingrained within mediatization, media power, cultural narratives, and the ever-evolving public responses guide coding architecture. Each piece of data is carefully woven into this framework, aligning with the designated codes and facilitating systematic comparison, cross-referencing, and eventual interpretation. As the layers of coded data unfold, themes dawn, shimmering with insights into the evolution of celebrity influence across dynamic media landscapes. Themes may encompass the democratization of influence, personalized engagement, symbiotic alignment with cultural narratives, and the delicate shifts within the public's responsive expressions. They collectively introduce the essence of the study—how film and television stars, now shaped by the ethos of new media, continually mould mass thinking and behaviour within the Canadian context.

The qualitative content analysis findings connect empirical discoveries to theoretical constructs cultivated during the literature review. That harmonious integration of raw data and theoretical concepts is poised to illuminate the dynamic between celebrity influence and the evolving terrain of media in Canada. Under the juxtaposing of appearance themes with foundational concepts within mediatization, media effects, and cultural globalization theories, this approach enriches the comprehension of the intricate dance between cultural icons and the ever-changing canvas of media dynamics. Ensuring methodological rigour is a cornerstone of this research endeavour. Rigour is fortified over the deliberate practice of triangulation—multiple researchers immersing themselves in the coding process, fostering rigorous validation and reliability of results. The research endeavours for transferability, painting vivid contextual descriptions that encapsulate the analyzed media content, endowing readers to grasp the findings' translatable essence. Reflexivity springs up as a guiding principle, acknowledging the mutual influence between researchers' perspectives and the interpretation of data, thereby enhancing the study's authenticity.

Ethical considerations form the bedrock of this research, underpinning the rights of copyright owners and safeguarding individual privacy, particularly within online content analysis. Adherence

to stringent protocols of deidentification safeguards the anonymity of celebrities and individuals embedded within public discourse, upholding the ethical integrity of the study. This methodology, comprehensively woven into the research's fabric, carries profound implications, permeating the methodology itself and cascading into the realms of results, discussion, and conclusions. The qualitative content analysis findings, adorned with emerging themes, stand as the foundational cornerstone for unravelling the profound metamorphosis that defines celebrity influence within Canada's expansive landscape of new media. These implications ripple across varied domains, illuminating the mediatization process, the multi-layered facets of media effects, the image of cultural globalization, and the dynamic evolution of celebrity's role. The journey of this methodology that connected with theory and real-world findings, steers the research towards a comprehensive understanding of the choreography between media, celebrity, and societal evolution within the Canadian narrative.

#### 4. Results

The exploration into the sophisticated interaction between the burgeoning popularity of new media and its manifold manifestations in Canada, and the shifting dynamics of influence wielded by film and television stars, has unearthed a trove of multifaceted changes. These changes have juxtaposed with the backdrop of the erstwhile traditional media era and formed the crux of this section. Analyzing deeper into the empirical findings generated by the rigorous qualitative content analysis method and anchored in the theoretical scaffolding erected during the comprehensive literature review, explaining a labyrinth of transformational dynamics that have redefined the contours of celebrity influence and its ripple effects across the societal canvas.

One of the most conspicuous outcomes of the study is the seismic shift in the archetypes that film and television stars embody. In the traditional media paradigm, these luminaries often appeared as enigmatic and larger-than-life figures, their personas seemingly distant from the lives of the ordinary populace. However, the advent of new media platforms that moulded by the underpinnings of mediatization theories, has orchestrated a paradigm shift. The once-impenetrable barriers separating stars from their fans have crumbled, then paving the way for a new breed of celebrities who embrace vulnerability and authenticity. In doing so, they present themselves as more relatable and accessible figures, while resonating with the broader cultural inclination towards genuine connection and dismantling hierarchical barriers in the digital age.

Another salient facet of the results points to a momentous transition in the wielded influence of film and television stars. The traditional media era primarily facilitated one-directional communication. That is stars positioned as distant entities adorning screens and magazine covers. Nevertheless, the new media epoch has ignited a radical transformation underpinned by active engagement between stars and their admirers on social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. This metamorphosis is emblematic of the broader democratization of information dissemination, wherein celebrities exercise influence via passive admiration and direct and interactive participation. The essence of influence has evolved from a unidirectional broadcast to a multidimensional dialogue underpinned by the theories of participatory culture and active audience engagement.

Entering further into the research findings, the connection between celebrity influence and pertinent societal issues materializes as a linchpin. In the traditional media, film, and television stars often adhered to meticulously curated scripts, alienating them from real-world events. In stark contrast, new media platforms serve as resonant ads to provide a megaphone for celebrities to align themselves with socio-political causes and more significant social movements. The intersection between stars, their social media personas, and pivotal issues foster a profound connection with the public, that evolving them into potent agents of change. This inter-correlation of star power and social



consciousness brings out the potential of media to facilitate meaningful cultural dialogues and galvanize collective action. Launching the results related to digital virality exposes a captivating narrative of raised influence. In the traditional media paradigm, celebrity impact was confined to broadcast realms with limiting its reach. The emergence of new media platforms making their propensity for content to achieve viral status. It has shattered these boundaries at the same time. Messages, endorsements, and narratives disseminated by film and television stars have the potential to transcend geographic and temporal limitations. The digital age has guided an era of viral celebrity, propelling stars to the forefront of configuring mass thought and behaviour on a global scale. Networked public and digital circulation theories are pivotal in understanding this phenomenon.

Investigating the nexus between celebrity influence and consumer behaviour put forwards a window into the rearranging of cultural narratives. Stars often wielded their influence to fuel consumerism and fostered aspirational patterns afterward in the traditional media era. The advent of new media, on the other hand, has witnessed a paradigm shift. Audiences now are empowered by social media and interactive platforms, gravitate towards stars whose values and personas align with their own. This transformation transcends mere consumer choices; it entails reconfiguring the narratives that build cultural norms and values within Canadian society. The findings affirm the profound conjunction between celebrity influence, consumer preferences, and their broader culture.

## 5. Discussion

The findings discovered in the preceding sections illuminate a nuanced transformation in how film and television stars frame and influence the thinking and behaviour of the Canadian population, particularly within the context of the burgeoning new media landscape. The section here synthesizes the empirical results with the theoretical frameworks explored in the literature review, providing a comprehensive understanding of the implications for Canada's cultural fabric, societal dynamics, and the mutual influence between media and its audience.

The discussion commences by reflecting on mediatization, a foundational lens with which to analyze the shifts in celebrity influence. The theory of media as agents of social and cultural change grants a powerful perspective to examine the transformation of film and television stars into influential entities within the Canadian populace [1]. The mediatization process reflects the inextricable entanglement of media and society where new media platforms foster a symbiotic relationship between celebrities and their followers. The results align closely with Hjarvard's proposition that is underscoring how new media's ascent has propelled celebrities to the forefront of public discourse, affecting thinking and behaviour more dynamically than in the traditional media era. Next, it is shown that the multiplicity of engagement channels available to film and television stars, which is a facet that reverberates with Canada's cultural diversity and demographic richness. The findings reflect how stars leverage various new media platforms to communicate directly with their audience and transcending the one-way communication paradigm of traditional media. This evolution resonates with the conceptualization of "networked publics" proposed by Marwick and Lewis [8], highlighting modern media engagement's interconnectivity and interactivity. The diversified channels of influence are in harmony with Canada's pluralistic landscape and augment the stars' capacity to influence mass population thinking via personalized connections.

The transformation in how film and television stars mould mass population thinking intersects with the Canadian cultural identity. The discussion shifts its gaze toward Lacroix's exploration of the dominance of the American film market and its implications for cultural globalization [5]. The research findings present a parallel narrative: Canadian celebrities that amplified by new media are remodelling how Canadians perceive themselves within the global cultural context. This shift in narrative aligns with Canada's quest for distinctiveness while navigating the pervasive influence of American media. After influencing local thinking across new media, celebrities foster a sense of

belonging and cultural pride that is able to counteract the homogenizing tendencies of global media. The discourse then pivots to the intersection of celebrity influence with social movements and public discourse, resounding with Canada's rich tradition of activism. The findings demonstrate that Canadian film and television stars utilize their influence to champion social causes in order to reflect the spirit of advocacy embedded within the Canadian social fabric. The alignment of celebrities with social issues echoes the themes raised by Dhoest and Van Bauwel [10], who advocate for a multidimensional approach to popular culture analysis. As stars channel their influence into addressing societal concerns, they resound with a populace that values activism and holds media-driven discourse in high regard.

The convergence of digital media and the Canadian socio-cultural landscape is a recurring motif in the discussion. The amplification of celebrity influence over new media channels mirrors the digital interconnectedness of Canada's diverse population. The discussion draws from Johnson's examination of the impact of new media on traditional mass media to emphasize the duality between the traditional and the new [11]. That profound changes in celebrity influence mirror the shifting media landscape, reflecting not only technological advancements but also the evolving thinking patterns of the population.

## 6. Conclusions

Under this era of escalating new media and multiple media platforms, the transformation in the influence wielded by film and television stars upon the mass population's thinking and behaviour in Canada becomes undeniably evident. As wrapping up this exploration, it is clear that the evolving media consumption landscape has fundamentally reshaped the dynamics between celebrities and their audiences. By drawing upon the comprehensive analysis conducted in this study, it is able to underscore the critical insights from the literature review, methodological approach, results, and the subsequent discussion.

The conclusion reiterates the seismic shifts within the media landscape that emphasizing the ascendance of new and multiple media platforms in Canada. This transformation is a testament to the dynamic nature of media, patterning and being constructed by the ever-evolving societal context. The literature review brought forth the concept of mediatization [1], elucidating the symbiotic relationship between media and society. As new media platforms deepen the voices of film and television stars who actively mediate the thinking patterns and behaviours of the mass population in turn. Building upon the results obtained through qualitative content analysis, this research explained the delicate ways film and television stars exert influence in the contemporary Canadian landscape. This departure from the conventional one-way communication of the traditional media era reflects the inter-correlation of social media and interactive platforms. The discussion outlined how stars now harness the power of networked publics [8], creating personalized interactions that resonate with the diverse Canadian audience. This multifaceted approach to influence marks a paradigm shift, rendering the celebrity-audience relationship more participatory and collaborative.

The research emphasized the broader implications of these transformations on the Canadian cultural identity. The findings illuminated the role of celebrities in shaping narratives that resonate with Canada's diverse populace, countering the influence of dominant American media [4]. It speaks to the essence of the Canadian identity that was defined by cultural plurality and a quest for distinctiveness. Through the process of influencing cultural narratives, celebrities contribute to reimagining Canada's place within the global media landscape and further reinforced through the socio-cultural dynamics uncovered with content analysis. Moreover, the discussion showcased the alignment between celebrities and social movements underpinned by the Canadian tradition of activism. The results show that film and television stars utilize their influence to advance social causes. It resonates with Canada's commitment to social justice and change. The influence of celebrities, as

activists and catalysts of public discourse, surfaces as a prominent theme while fostering an environment where mass population thinking becomes increasingly intertwined with the societal conversations spurred by these stars.

Synthesizing the facets uncovered in the preceding sections, it is reiterated that the transformational nature of the Canadian media landscape is driven by the convergence of digital media platforms, the proactive engagement of celebrities, and the proclivity of the Canadian populace to actively participate in media-driven discourse. The discussion heightens the alignment between theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence, demonstrating how celebrities could reframe societal dynamics, think patterns and behaviours through new media.

In the broader context, this study signals a trajectory toward a media landscape brimming with infinite possibilities. The research journey spans the literature review, methodology, results, and discussion, paints a portrait of Canada's dynamic, participatory, and engaged media culture. As media continually evolves, the conclusions drawn in this research provide a snapshot of the ongoing evolution within the Canadian media sphere, guided by the influences of new media platforms and the proactive engagement of celebrities.

## Acknowledgment

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the individuals and resources that have contributed to the completion of this research endeavor. Their support, guidance, and insights have been invaluable in shaping the trajectory of this study and enriching its depth.

I am indebted to the scholars and researchers whose seminal works have informed and enriched this study. The insights and perspectives shared in their writings have illuminated the complex correlation between media, celebrity influence, and societal dynamics in the Canadian context.

This research would not have been possible without the collective contributions of all those mentioned above. Their support has shaped the study into what it is today, and I am humbled by their influence on my academic growth.

## References

- [1] Hjarvard, S. (2008). *The mediatization of society: A theory of the media as agents of social and cultural change*. *Nordicom Review*, 29(2), 105–134.
- [2] Chambers, B. L. (2013). *Canadian Television Today*. University of Toronto Press.
- [3] Ray, L. (2013). *Social media, political expression, and political participation: Panel analysis of lagged and concurrent relationships*. *Journal of Communication*, 63(2), 612–634.
- [4] Couldry, N., & Hepp, A. (2013). *Conceptualizing mediatization: Contexts, traditions, arguments*. *Communication Theory*, 23(3), 151–202.
- [5] Lacroix, J. G. (2011). *Cultural globalization and the dominance of the American film market: Cultural policies, national film industries, and transnational film production in Canada*. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 36(1), 69–109.
- [6] Gasher, M., O'Donnell, S., & Warriner, D. (2007). *Making sense of the mediascape: A methodology for newspaper analysis*. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 32(4), 701–806.
- [7] Shade, L. R. (Ed.). (2012). *Mediascapes: New patterns in Canadian communication*. Nelson Education, 145–214.
- [8] Marwick, A., & Lewis, R. (2017). *Media manipulation and disinformation online*. *Data & Society Research Institut*
- [9] Smith, M. C. (2019). *Media effects, media power, and the changing media environment*. *Communication Theory*, 29(2), 121–214.
- [10] Dhoest, A., & Van Bauwel, S. (2018). *Intersectionality in popular culture: Why mainstream popular television needs to embrace a multidimensional approach*. *Critical Studies in Television*, 13(1), 62–78.
- [11] Johnson, C. (2009). *The impact of new media on traditional mainstream mass media*. *Media, Culture & Society*, 31(1), 53–73.