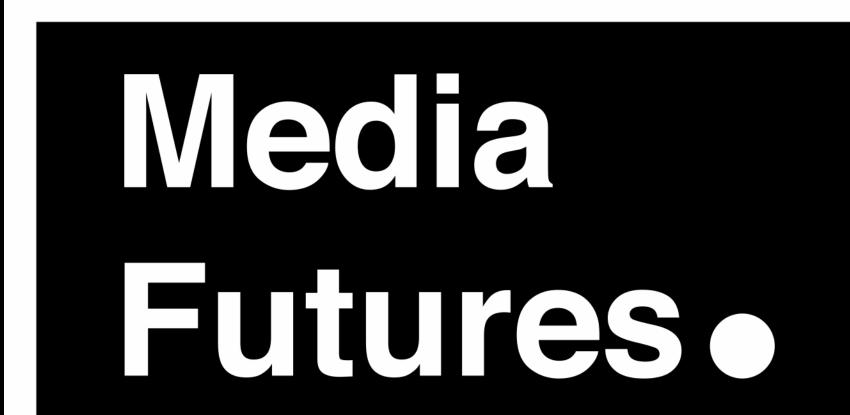
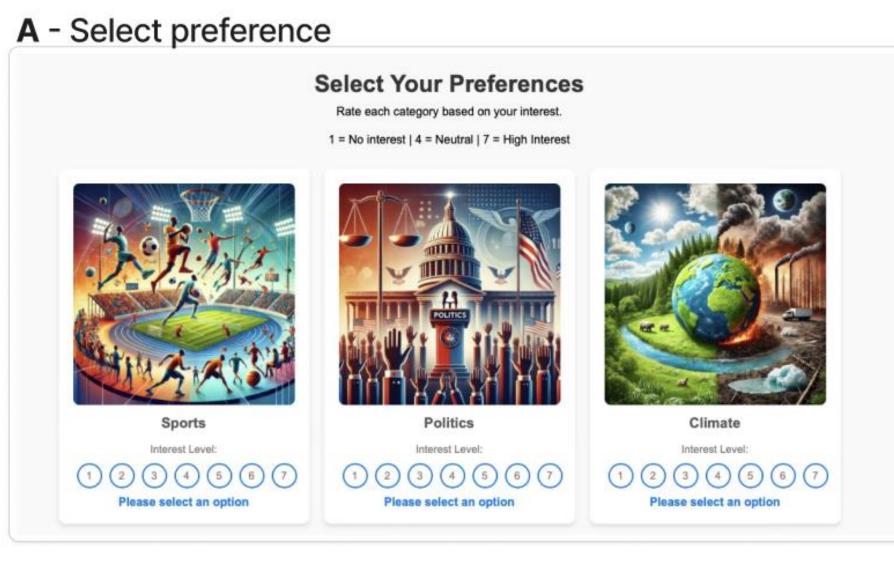
Using Large Language Models to 'Lighten the Mood': Satirically Reframing News Recommendations to Reduce News Avoidance

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Former Alabama head coach Nick Saban and Texas

Tech board of regents chairman Cody Campbell

Frump is interested in forming to examine the long list of issues facing college sports, a source briefed on

expected to be 'very engaged' with the commission

because he sees the current state of college sports

as an issue of national importance.

B - Make choice



Former Alabama coach Nick Saban and Texas Tech! regal regent, Cody Campbell, are set to co-chair

sports. Our source, clearly thrilled, says Trump is

ready to dive into this 'national issue' with the same

passion he reserves for Twitter feuds. Because who

needs healthcare reform when you've got college

C - Evaluate choice & satirical version



Trump's Next Great Adventure: College Sports Commission, Starring Nick Saban and Cody Campbell Former Alabama coach Nick Saban and Texas Tech's regal regent, Cody Campbell, are set to cochair Trump's latest hobby: a commission on college sports. Our source, clearly thrilled, says Trump is ready to dive into this 'national issue' with the same

sports to worry about?

You chose the satirical version of this article.

Abstract & Idea

News avoidance is on the rise: in 2022, 38% of people reported deliberately avoiding the news (Reuters Institute). This growing trend threatens democratic processes and undermines the informed foundation of citizenship.

Younger audiences in particular disengage because they feel news is overly negative, emotionally heavy, or repetitive, creating challenges not only for journalism but also for recommender systems.

Large language models now make it possible to automatically reframe news into a satirical style that preserves key information while making it feel more approachable. This project tests whether Al-generated satire can reduce avoidance, increase enjoyment, and maintain understanding, offering a way to reconnect disengaged audiences with important but often avoided topics.

Research questions

- 1. How does consuming news in a satirical format affect the user's sense of feeling informed compared to traditional news formats?
- 2. What prompting style performs best on humor when re-framing news articles to be more satirical?
- 3. To what extent can satirical news article summaries created by All help reduce the occurrence of news avoidance?
- 4. How does news consumption frequency influence the effectiveness of Al-generated satirical summaries in reducing the avoidance of news content?

Methods

Two online experiments (N = 89; N = 151).

Dataset: 90 articles across 9 categories (sports, politics, climate, finance, tech, etc.).

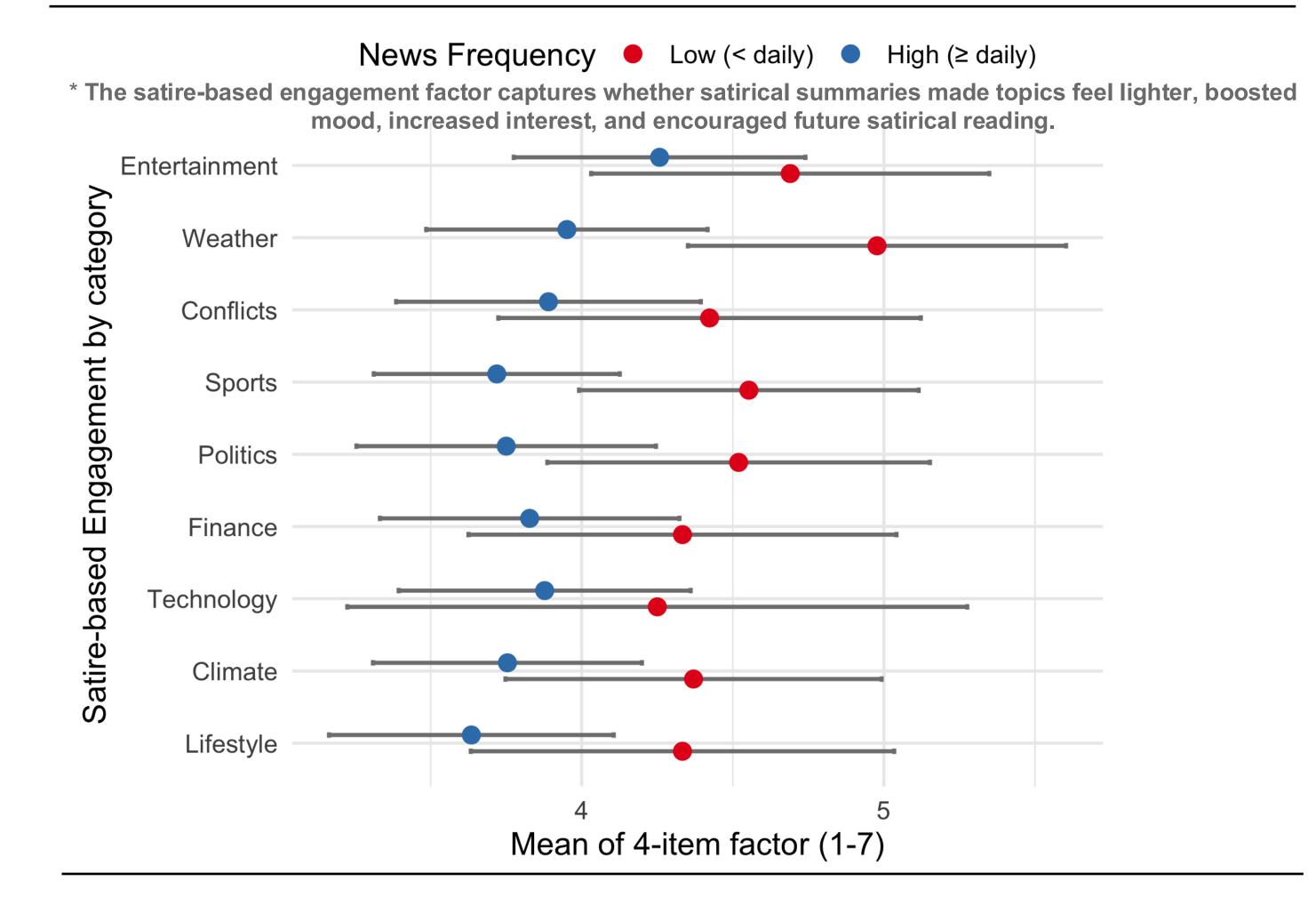
Study 1 assessed the performance of three distinct prompting styles:

- A: Gentle satire
- B: Bold satire
- **C:** Free satire (Selected for study 2 based on reported performance)

Each article summary was reframed using GPT-4.

Participants rated article summaries on perceived fun, enjoyment, understanding, quality & shareability

Study 2 was a choosing experiment to evaluate user preference when having to choose between an original and reframed article summary.



Conclusion & Results

- Satirical reframing works: Makes avoided topics more approachable and engaging across the news spectrum.
- Overall, 1 in 3 article summaries chosen was reframed to be more satirical
- Humor results modest, but impact clear: Participants still felt informed and rated content as high quality.
- Low-frequency readers picked satire 43% vs 31% for daily readers: Showing satires potential in reconnecting disengaged audiences with critical information.
- Best for avoided topics: Lowered emotional barriers and sparked curiosity in less-preferred categories.
- Promise for news recommender systems: Al-driven satire has the potential to balance information with entertainment and reduce news avoidance.

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