

APPENDIX: PROJECTS, STUDIES AND METHODS

This appendix provides an overview of the different projects and studies that I draw on in this book. As mentioned earlier, the book originates from an intersection of several research projects I have been involved in. In the different chapters, I provide some information about methods and data, and I reference related publications. Here, I list the relevant projects and studies, and provide more methodological details or cross-references, as well as outlining how the studies are relevant to the analyses in the book. All informant names in the book are pseudonyms.

MEDIA, CULTURE AND PUBLIC CONNECTION

The research project *Media, Culture and Public Connection* (MeCIn, 2015–2021), led by Hallvard Moe and funded by the Research Council of Norway, was a broad study of cross-media use and public connection in Norway. I was responsible for leading qualitative data collection carried out by a team of researchers and assistants. This took the form of two rounds of in-depth interviews intercepted by a media diary, with 50 informants mirroring the Norwegian population, conducted in the fall of 2016.

We have published extensively from the project, including discussions of the research design and methodology that will not be repeated here (see for instance Moe et al., 2019a; Moe & Ytre-Arne, 2021; Ytre-Arne & Moe, 2018). Of particular relevance to this book projects are two articles on ambivalent smartphone use (Ytre-Arne et al., 2020) and changing media use (Ytre-Arne, 2019). In the latter I introduce a conceptual framework for destabilization and reorientation in media repertoires, which I apply in this book in analysis of new empirical data (see below) analyzed in Chapters 3 and 4.

In the book, the MeCIn qualitative study otherwise constitutes a background for the methodological and conceptual discussions on everyday media use and public connection in everyday life. I draw on insights from the MeCIn research process in Chapter 2, in my discussion of day-in-the-life interviews in

the age of smartphones. The study has also partially inspired interview protocols used in other studies. There is no new analysis of the empirical materials from the project in this book.

INTRUSIVE MEDIA, AMBIVALENT USERS, AND DIGITAL DETOX

Intrusive media, ambivalent users, and digital detox (Digitox) led by Trine Syvertsen is an ongoing project on digital disconnection, funded by the Research Council of Norway (grant nr 287563). The project investigates and theorizes dilemmas regarding digital media overload, studying norms and policies, users and industry, with many different studies. I have been responsible for some of the studies of media users, and in the book I draw on two of these:

Study: Digital Media in the Newborn Period

This study was planned as one of several qualitative studies interviewing and observing users in precarious situations – situations in which something important was at stake and digital media could be perceived to infringe. The project also includes similar studies of artists and knowledge workers pursuing focused creativity (Karlsen & Ytre-Arne, 2021) and tourists seeking nature experiences in remote locations (Syvertsen, 2022). A sub-study on new parents was considered particularly relevant to understand the role of digital media in what is perceived as a vulnerable and particularly meaningful time in life. Originally, the intention was to combine interviews with parents with observations in maternity wards, and interviews with professionals providing advice to new parents.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, observations in maternity wards or other health care facilities were not possible, and interviews with professionals were difficult to arrange. Two background interviews – with a representative for a midwife association and an organization working with mental health amongst new parents – were conducted right before the pandemic, but are not included in the sample. Instead, the study became an interview study focusing on new mothers, with eight in-depth interviews. The informants were Norwegian women from early 20s to late 30s, most around 30 years of age, with different education levels and family circumstances, including first- and second-time mothers.

I conducted all interviews on Zoom in the summer and fall of 2020, building on an interview protocol developed partly for this purpose and partly in conjunction with the other studies in the Digitox project. The interview guide was used with flexibility, but all interviews touched upon everyday life and media use at the time of the interview, follow-up questions on changes from before and since having the baby, retrospective questions on digital media use in the maternity ward immediately after birth, when returning home with the new-born, and through family leave. Towards the end of the interviews, we discussed the informants' views on digital media in family life and in society in general.

These interviews constitute the primary empirical material for Chapter 3 in this book, on media use in life transitions. The material has so far not been published in other contexts.

Study: Media Use in Early Pandemic Lockdown

When the first national pandemic lockdown was announced in Norway in March and April 2020, the Digitox project initiated a study of changing media use. We chose a qualitative approach to capture reflections and experiences, and selected the format of a written questionnaire so that people could answer when it suited them.

The questionnaire went through intense development and testing, and was published on March 24th, twelve days after the national lockdown was announced. We distributed links to an online form in social media, on project websites and in personal networks, soliciting replies from anyone who wished to participate, and inviting people to spread the questionnaire further. In total, we received 552 replies between March 24th and April 3rd, after which active recruitment of respondents ceased. We monitored replies as they came in, and tried to secure demographic variety by recruiting amongst groups that were underrepresented initially, for instance spreading the questionnaire to young people. Nevertheless, the sample is skewed towards more women than men, more middle class than working class occupations, and more middle-aged respondents.

The questionnaire asked for some background information on age, gender, occupation and living situation. Next, it contained five qualitative questions to be answered in respondents' own words, one on how everyday life had changed, three on media use including news, entertainment and communication with others, and a final question where respondents could tell us anything they found important. The question on communication with others read:

Communication with others: How do you communicate with people you do not live with? Tell us if you use your phone, social media or digital technologies differently than usual. How do you experience such contact as compared to communication face-to-face?

Immediately after closing the survey, I conducted a thematic analysis of replies to this question, before expanding into a broader analysis of the whole material, conducted in collaboration with colleagues.

In this book, the questionnaire material is utilized in Chapter 4 to discuss changing media repertoires in early lockdown. Other publications include an article on doomscrolling and news avoidance (Ytre-Arne & Moe, 2021b), building on analysis of a different question focused on news and information. Another article on media repertoires will be published in Norwegian, providing a different analysis to the one in this book, focused more on changing compositions of repertoires and on strategies and rationales explaining these.

MEDIA USE IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

Media Use in Crisis Situations (MUCS) is a research project funded by the Research Council of Norway (grant number 314578) for the period of 2021–2025, for which I am project leader. The project analyses media use in large-scale societal crisis situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis, with an interest in how these are encountered in the media as well as in everyday life. Many of the perspectives and arguments developed in this book, particularly in Chapters 1 and 4, are part of the conceptual framework and analytical work of the MUCS project.

Study: News Use During the Coronavirus Pandemic

In 2020, the University of Bergen funded what would become a pilot study to the MUCS project, an interview study on news use during the first year of the coronavirus pandemic. This pilot project was conducted in collaboration with psychology professor Bjørn Sætrevik and his project on risk perceptions regarding the pandemic, and in collaboration with the Digitox project to follow up on the early lockdown study of changing media use. Most respondents to the Digitox questionnaire had consented to be contacted again at a later

date for follow-up, and we primarily recruited informants amongst these. Media scholar John Magnus Ragnhildson Dahl was hired as a researcher to conduct the interviews.

A sample of 12 people participated in in-depth interviews in late fall 2020. The informant group was mixed in terms of gender, age, occupations and in terms of how people had been affected by the pandemic. Interviews were conducted on digital platforms and lasted for 1–2 hours. The interview protocol included questions on what life was like at the moment, on media use an ordinary day (with extensive follow-up), and on reflections on the pandemic situation and changing news interests since first hearing of COVID-19, and up to the point of the interview. The protocol also delved deeper into people's perceptions of risk during the pandemic, and experiences of news avoidance and information overload.

In this book, the interviews are analyzed in Chapters 2 and 4, the first focused on day-in-the-life segments, and the second on perceptions of the pandemic. Two other publications drawing on the interviews are in process: a journal article draft on preoccupations with infection rates, and a book chapter on how people used news media for locally relevant and trustworthy information.