THE POWER OF LIKES:
SOCIAL MEDIA LOGIC AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

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PART I: COVER CHAPTER (*KAPPE*)

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Acknowledgments

Writing a dissertation reminds me of two things: running a marathon and an ongoing conversation. Regarding the first, it takes a lot of time. It is exhausting. It takes a toll on your body and mind. And it is lonely. But you achieve the adrenaline rush and the joy during the trip, as well as at the end. I have never done a full marathon, but I have run several half-marathons, so I have a pretty good idea of how it feels to cross the finish line. Handing in the dissertation is a similarly exhausted rush of joy. But this research project has also been like a long, ongoing conversation. During these years, I have interacted with many fun and insightful people. Their insights, discussions and arguments brought me here, and now, I would like to express my gratitude to them.

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Summary

Political communication on social media is the topic of this dissertation. The Internet and social media platforms have provided participants in the public sphere with new ways to connect, communicate and distribute information. This study examines how and why the three main actor groups within political communication – political actors, media actors and citizens – connect and interact on social media during the electoral process in Norway in 2013. This hybrid media landscape is characterized by political actors who can bypass media as gatekeepers and communicate directly with voters on their own Facebook pages. Simultaneously, social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are important traffic drivers for mass media, as well as convenient ways for political journalists to reach readers and political sources.

Nevertheless, as I argue in this dissertation, the new mechanisms for attention, visibility and popularity on social media platforms is not sufficiently articulated or understood in the existing research literature. This dissertation suggests that the emerging theories of social media logic can help us understand how political communication occur in networked publics. Central in my arguments is a critical understanding of social media logic and affordances offered by communication technologies. Affordances are here understood as the action possibilities that communication technologies allow for, such as liking, sharing or measuring the response of an item. Based on the empirical findings from the articles in Part II, as well as the theoretical discussion in this cover chapter, I have developed the *conceptual framework for political communication on social media*, which allows us to analyse how political communication occurs on social media platforms. The conceptual framework consists of five high-level affordances: Publishing, visibility, networking, connectivity, and segmentation. I argue that these affordances are the building blocks of the social media logic in political communication.

Lastly, this dissertation outlines the implications of the social media logic for the three key actor groups in this study. I argue that one of the main consequences of the social media logic is media actors' weakening role as gatekeepers of information, potential turning media actors into curators of information.

Sammendrag

Politisk kommunikasjon i sosiale medier er temaet for denne avhandling. Internett og sosiale medier har gitt deltakerne i offentligheten nye måter å komme i kontakt med hverandre på. Denne avhandlingen undersøker hvordan og hvorfor de tre hovedaktørene innenfor politisk kommunikasjon – politiske aktører, medier og borgere – kommuniserer og er interaktive i sosiale medier under den norske valgkamp i 2013. Det hybride medielandskapet er både preget av at politiske aktører kan kommunisere direkte med velgere på deres egne Facebook-sider og dermed unngå mediene som portvakter, samtidig som sosiale medier leverer inntektsbringende trafikk for redaksjonelle medier. Sosiale medier har også blitt nyttige verktøyer for politiske journalister som skal komme i kontakt med lesere og politiske kilder.

Denne avhandlingen adresserer et tydelig kunnskapshull i forskningsfeltet – hva gjør at bestemte aktører og politisk innhold får oppmerksomhet, synlighet og popularitet i sosiale medier? Basert på funnene i de empiriske artiklene i Part II av avhandlingen, i tillegg til de teoretiske diskusjonene i denne kappen, har jeg utviklet et konseptuelt rammeverk som lar oss analysere og forstå hvordan politisk kommunikasjon foregår i sosiale medier. Gjennom *det konseptuelle rammeverket for politisk kommunikasjon i sosiale medier* utforsker jeg hvorvidt vi kan snakke om en sosial media-logikk og hva den innebærer i en politiske kommunikasjon-kontekst. Sentralt i min argumentasjon er en kritisk forståelse av sosial media-logikken og handlingsmulighetene (*affordances*) som ligger i kommunikasjonsteknologier. Kommunikasjonsteknologiene åpner for visse handlingsmuligheter, som å dele, like eller måle responsen til et innlegg. Dette konseptuelle rammeverket består av fem høy-nivå handlingsmuligheter: Publisering, synlighet, nettverksbygging, deltakelse og segmentering. Jeg hevder at disse handlingsmulighetene utgjøre de viktigste bestanddelene i sosial media-logikken.

Avslutningsvis skisserer denne avhandlingen hvilke implikasjoner sosial media-logikken har for de tre hovedaktørene. Jeg vil hevde at en av de viktigste konsekvensene av sosial media-logikken er medienes svekkede rolle som portvakter. Medienes rolle kan potensielt endre seg til å bli kuratorer av informasjon.

Preface

This dissertation consists of two parts: part I, called the 'cover chapter' (*kappe* in Norwegian), and part II, the individual articles. This way of organising an article-based dissertation is standard at the University of Oslo, but for readers not familiar with it, I would like to give an explanatory note.

Part I introduces the research context, the theoretical discussion and the methods employed in more detail than is allowed by the articles. The cover chapter is intended to pull together the most important findings from the articles but also represent a contribution in and of itself, in this case through the proposed 'conceptual framework for political communication on social media', which is based on both the theoretical discussion and the findings from the individual articles.

Part II consists of five individual articles that are either published or submitted for publication. Common to all of them is political communication in social media, with a focus on either political actors, media actors or citizens. Since this research field is characterised by rapid changes, the article format allowed me to speed up the publication process of my research. A summary of the articles end part I, on pages 84-88. In the cover chapter, I refer to the articles according to their number (i.e., 'article 1'). The list of articles is found in the table of contents.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the main topic of this dissertation: political communication on social media among key actor groups in Norway. The chapter outlines the main research questions and the ways in which these research questions will be addressed in the following pages. First, I outline the point of departure for the dissertation within the research field of political communication, communication technology and social media research. Next, I address some gaps and shortcomings in the existing research literature. Finally, I present the research questions and the structure of the dissertation.

What we see engage people is when we are able to give 'behind the scenes' access: images, videos and infographics—things that are easy to understand and share. That creates engagement and we try to do it as often as possible.

—The Labour Party
(Article 2)

The incentive to create content that would encourage digital engagement through likes and shares—thus enhancing visibility as well—was particularly strong for political actors during the 2013 election campaign. If enough fans and followers shared a politician's post, the party would reach more people than a news article in a major online newspaper, thus bypass media and reach voters directly on social media (article 2). This new mechanism for attention, visibility and popularity on social media platforms –what I here call social media logic – is recognized but it is neither sufficiently articulated nor understood by political actors, the media or the research community alike. In this dissertation I propose a conceptual framework which allows us to analyse and make sense of how political communication occurs on social media platforms.

The point of departure for this dissertation is therefore to examine political communication on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter during an electoral process. The interplay between the three key actors in the political communication process—political actors, media actors and citizens—is my starting point. A central motivation driving this research project is a compelling challenge described by danah boyd: "Understanding the properties, affordances, and dynamics common to networked publics provides a valuable framework for working out the logic of social practices" (boyd, 2010:1). In the empirical articles I examined how these three actor groups use social media during the electoral process in Norway. The Internet and social media platforms have provided participants in the public sphere with new ways to contact and interact with each other (Benkler, 2006; Enli & Moe, 2013). As my studies demonstrate, digital and mobile communication technologies challenge traditional understandings of how political communication and the public sphere function – through new mechanisms for gaining attention, visibility and, potentially, influence.

This dissertation does not argue that social media replace edited mass media, rather coexist and interplay with existing media outlets. The interplay between older, analogue and newer digital and mobile media has been called a "hybrid media system" (Chadwick, 2013), and this dissertation[1] examines how political actors, media actors, and citizens produce, distribute and consume political information in such an environment. The hybridisation of the media system is a process wherein older and newer media logics interact, compete, and coevolve, creating both integration and fragmentation between different media formats. Media logics[2] can be understood as the inherent communication norms and practices of a particular medium (Altheide & Snow, 1979), and scholars have typically used it to describe the function and formats of mass media. I will return to the term later to argue that the

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[1] While working on my dissertation, I have been a member of the research project Social Media and Agenda Setting in Election Campaigns (SAC), a comparative research project focusing on social media
[2] Media logic is often compared and contrasted with political logic (e.g., Esser, 2013), whereby the latter is described according to three dimensions: politics, policy and polity. It is outside the scope of this dissertation to address political logic, but future research could profitably delve into an examination of political logic in relation to social media and news media logics.

changing dynamics between *mass media[3]* and *social media* are highly relevant to how people inform themselves about the world, which issues are given salience, how we make decisions, and, consequently, how democracy functions.

Based on the empirical findings in the articles in Part II, as well as the theoretical discussion in this cover chapter, I have developed a conceptual framework through which one is able to analyse and examine how political communication occurs on social media platforms. The social media logic[4] has already been identified by researchers (Van Dijck & Poell, 2013; Klinger & Svensson, 2014), and I critically examine this logic in a political communication context. Central to the proposed framework is a critical understanding of social media logic, and of the affordances of communication technologies such as social media platforms. Here I understand affordances to be the action possibilities (Gibson, 1979) that communication technologies allow for (liking or sharing an item on Facebook, for example). Through this framework, I explore whether we can talk about a social media logic and what it means in a political communication context. The interplay between actors and communication technology is central in my approach. Based on my empirical findings and the existing research literature, I outline what this new logic consists of. By developing this innovative framework, I connect affordances and social media logic to political communication, a set of theoretical terms not frequently combined in this manner before, but as I will argue in the following chapter, this is a productive approach to study political communication in digital environments. This framework relies upon five high-level affordances, which are described as abstract communication outcomes of technology (Bucher & Helmond, 2016), and I argue these affordances are the building blocks of the social media logic in political communication: Publishing, visibility, networking, connectivity, and segmentation. To my knowledge, the emerging theoretical field of social media logic has not been empirically applied to political communication in this fashion before. By using the conceptual framework, I argue that we can get a more insightful understanding of

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[3] I will alternate between using mass media, editorial media, traditional media and news media as terms when I address tv, radio, newspapers and news sites, based on the need for specification. I am aware of the long discussion about the mass media term, but that will not be discussed further here.
[4] Also called networked media logic by Klinger & Svensson (2014). In chapter 3, I discuss the similarities and differences between the terms social media logic and network media logic.

how social media impact political communication, more nuanced than if we apply the normalization versus equalization approach commonly used in political communication research. I will return to this discussion later in this chapter.

This dissertation, then, aims to (1) present an understanding of the current situation surrounding digital political communication in general and in a Norwegian context; (2) outline how political communication might be analysed through an affordance approach; (3) propose a conceptual framework for political communication on social media that explores how and why political actors, media actors and citizens adapt to the social media logic, and which implications it creates; and (4) suggest new methodological approaches to the study of actors' behaviour in the interplay between editorial media and social media.

1.1. The research questions

This study has one main research question and three sub-questions that provide the overall focus. The main research question (RQ1) is addressed in part 1 of this cover chapter (*kappe*) by combining insights from the following theoretical discussion and the empirical articles in Part Two:

- **RQ1: What characterises social media logic? How and why are Norwegian political actors, media actors and citizens adapting to the social media logic?**

The sub-questions are mainly addressed in part II of this dissertation, in the empirical articles. The core of the dissertation is organised around the five empirical cases, which address important issues in relation to political communication on social media. Because most of the articles address more than one key actor, the sub-questions are addressed in several articles, respectively RQ2 (political actors**)** is addressed in all five articles, RQ3 (media actors) is mainly addressed in articles 3 and 4, and RQ4 (citizens) is addressed in articles 4 and 5. Each article address specific research questions which are further explained on page 59. The sub-questions are:

- **RQ2 (Political actors): How and why are political actors using social media?**
- **RQ3 (Media actors): How and why are political journalists using social media?**
- **RQ4 (Citizens): How and why are citizens using social media for political purposes?**

By asking how and why, the research questions become both descriptive and analytical. The *how* questions mainly relate to the actors' strategy, while the *why* questions pertain to the actors' motivation. Since many aspects of digital political communication are not yet covered in the research literature, descriptive studies remain necessary. In addition to describing the 'landscape', though, this research project offers analytical interpretations of developments within digital political communication. In order to understand how different actors relate and adopt to social media logic, I have taken a comparative view, exploring several contrasting aspects in the articles such as the following:

Contrasting aspects relating to actors
Minor vs. major parties (articles 1 and 2)
Social vs. traditional media (articles 3 and 4)
Political journalists vs. political commentators (article 3)
Contrasting aspects relating to behaviour
Adoption vs. use (article 1)
Strategy vs. practice (article 2)
Participation vs. response (article 5)

Table 1. Contrasting aspects related to actors and behaviour in the empirical articles.

In order to answer how different actor groups use social media, the empirical articles address questions such as: Are minor parties using social media differently compared to larger, more resourceful parties? What are the advantages of using social media versus traditional media in order to set the agenda? Are political journalists using social media in different ways and for other purposes than political commentators?

In order to understand differences in behaviour, the articles ask: Are there differences between political actors' adoption of social media versus active use? How does political actors' social media practice compare to their strategy? How are citizens interacting with politicians on social media and what kind of response do they receive? The purpose of many of the studies was to examine whether and why there are differences between what actors (particularly political and media actors) say they will do, and what they actually do.

In the following sections, I will contextualise this project within the research field and point out gaps and shortcomings in the existing literature.

1.2. Background

This dissertation's three key actor groups – political actors, media actors and citizens - are frequently identified as the main actors in the political communication process (Aardal et al., 2004; McNair, 2012; Strömbäck, 2009). Here, I understand *political actors* as political parties, individual politicians, political candidates, and political party staff. NGOs, ministries, companies, activists, PR agencies, and so forth are also important actors in the political communication process, but due to my scope here, which is mainly confined to elections and election campaigns, the present study relies upon a more limited, traditional understanding of political actors. Among the three key groups, political actors occupy the most central position in my empirical cases, thanks to their pivotal position during election campaigns, as they attempt to influence both media coverage and the voters themselves. I define *media actors* as media companies and related staff, including journalists, photographers, commentators and editors. Media organisations, freelancers and bloggers are also media actors, but, in this context, I am mainly interested in media actors from the mass media (newspapers, television and radio). Lastly, *citizens,* as individual members of society and in groups also participate in the political communication process. In a representative democracy, they have crucial roles to play in the nomination of candidates (if they are party members, in the Norwegian case) and in the election of representatives to parliament. Convincing the citizenry of one's viability and winning its trust is crucial for both political and media actors; in turn, citizens are often interested in promoting

their own issues onto the political and media actors' agendas. My empirical studies explore the interactions among these three actor groups in the digital political communication process.

Political communication can be defined as '[a]ll communication between social actors on political matters—interpersonal and mediated' (Negrine & Stanyer 2007:1; for similar definitions, see also Ihlen, Skogerbø, & Allern, 2015:11–13; McLeod, Kosicki & McLeod, 2002:217; Norris, 2001:1). Also relevant to my own studies is the summary of political communication as 'the communicative interplay among political actors, media actors, and citizens' (Strömbäck, 2009:31, my translation). In other words, communicative interplay does not take place in a vacuum but often implicates a range of institutions, organisations and interest groups. To draw attention to the strategic aspect of political communication, which is likewise central to my empirical cases, I also include this characterisation of political communication as 'communication undertaken by politicians and other political actors for the purpose of achieving specific objects' (McNair, 2012:4; see also Skirbekk, 2015). Winning elections is the most obvious goal of all political actors, so political communication during election campaigns is naturally used to mobilise supporters and convince undecided voters. Central to those actors involved in this process is to attract attention, particularly across various media environments, thus setting the agenda and influencing public opinion (Skogerbø & Karlsen, 2014). In order to do so, political actors must attract media attention, and increasingly, social media attention as well. As Bucher notes, 'one of the core functions of the media pertains to that of making something or someone visible' (Bucher, 2012:1164).

For many decades, coverage in the mass media has represented the main means of reaching large audiences in Western societies (Strömbäck, 2009; Esser, 2013). Media visibility is the first step to influence and, ultimately, power, at least in the sense of 'the ability to define a situation' (Altheide, 2013:224).[5] Today, attracting attention in

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[5] Additionally, communication-related power in liberal democracies is thought of as relational power—that is, the capability to influence other actors, including individuals, organisations and institutions, in the political process (Strömbäck, 2009:49). Castells presents a similar notion of communicative, relational power: 'power in the network society is communication power' (Castells, 2009:53). It is common to differentiate among three types of power: (1) decision-making power, (2) agenda-setting power and (3) thought power (Petterson, 1991; Strömbäck, 2009:50, my translation; see also Steven Lukes, 1974/2005). The present project is particularly focused on the latter two notions of

the mass media is not enough, and actors who want to thoroughly penetrate the electorate must master the social media environment as well. The public spaces that develop in and through hybrid media systems consisting of mass media and social media will here be understood as 'networked publics'—that is, publics that are restructured by networked technologies (Benkler, 2006; boyd, 2014). Networked publics are simultaneously the space constructed through networked technologies and the imagined collective that emerges as a result of the intersection of people, technology and practice (boyd, 2010). They can also be described as 'communication spheres defined intrinsically by shared interest in certain topics and extrinsically by networked media technologies' (Mairaider & Schlögel, 2014:688). Here, the interplay among actors and that between actors and technology are both crucial. Of course, the notion of networked publics is built upon the large and uneven notion of the 'public sphere', perhaps best described as a place where people come to express and listen to others' opinions, as well as proposals for alternative actions (Benkler, 2006:181). The public sphere is closely connected with the thinking of German sociologist Jürgen Habermas, who defines it as a 'network for communicating information and points of view . . . the streams of communication are, in the process, filtered and synthesized in such a way that they coalesce into bundles of topically specified public opinions' (Habermas, 1997:360). This communication process commonly takes place on forums, stages and arenas as performances or presentations, either face-to-face or to larger audiences, according to Rasmussen (2014).

Digital tools such as websites, Internet forums, blogs and social networks are thought to increase the new participatory politics by significantly lowering the threshold for participating and likewise transforming the speed and scope of communication (Ausserhof & Mairaider, 2013; Castells, 2011; Jungherr, 2014; Enli & Skogerbø, 2013). Scholars have argued that whereas the broadcasting structure of mass media hinders dialogue and discussion, the Internet provides space for interaction among large segments of society, including citizens, interest groups, social movements, political parties, candidates, the press and governmental bodies (Jankowski et al., 2007). In what follows, however, I will problematize this notion.

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power, which are more subtle, even invisible expressions of power that are nonetheless quite influential.

1.3. New technology, new politics?

A fascination with new communication technology in politics is not new (Rasmussen, 2007); the telegraph, newspapers, radio, television and, more recently, Internet have all impacted political communication and the public sphere, though not consistently across time and place. Historically, the introduction of a new communication technology has granted adaptive politicians an electoral advantage: American President Franklin D. Roosevelt mastered broadcast radio in the 1930s and 1940s to reach voters through his 'fireside chats'; John F. Kennedy excelled at televised candidate debates; Bill Clinton exploited the talk show in the 1990s (Enli, 2015:109). Barack Obama, in turn, has been hailed for his ability to use social media to mobilise volunteers and voters and propel online fundraising in the 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns (Kreiss, 2012). In Norway, Carl I. Hagen, leader of the Progress Party, was one of the first politicians to take strategic advantage of the televised debates of the 1980s (Allern, 2011; Karlsen, 2015; Rasmussen, 2016). Digital platforms were embraced early by staffers in the Norwegian Labour Party, who developed MyLabourParty, a social network inspired by Barack Obama's 2008 online campaign, to mobilise the party organisation (Lüders et al., 2014; Karlsen, 2012). The history of communication technology is driven by developers' visions of its societal promise and risks (Marvin, 1988:233), and this remained so with regard to the Internet. Many communication technology theorists hoped the Internet's interactive and participatory aspects would solve many of the societal and political problems facing the West in the 1990s and 2000s, including low voter turnout, fewer party members and the transformation of mass parties into elite parties at the expense of the legitimacy of the political establishment (Negroponte, 1996; Rheingold, 2000). The period from the early 1990s to early 2010s was also characterised by eroding trust in mass media and the increasing fragmentation of the media landscape, weakening business models, and competition from technology companies in Silicon Valley (Nielsen & Kuhn, 2014). Many of these trends are also present in Scandinavia, including Norway, which, as elsewhere in Europe, saw voter turnout plunge after the 1960s, particularly in local elections (Aardal & Bergh, 2015). Given this backdrop, it is unsurprising that hopes regarding the ways in which the Internet and social media might improve politics and

elevate the public debate have been high (Bimber & Davis, 2003; Lilleker & Vedel, 2013).

Ever since the Internet became mainstream in Western democracies, scholars have wondered whether it would revolutionise politics there or not. Because relatively few empirical studies involved the Internet in those early years, and those that did addressed the new technology's *potential*, not its actual usage, a dichotomous *either/or* perspective prevailed, to the detriment of more nuanced readings. This perspective continues to impact research about the Internet and political communication today, and it remains as problematic as ever. In the next section, I will explain why a polarized view hampers our ability to unpack this relationship.

Early on, then, many claimed that the Internet would revolutionise politics by allowing for more participation and deliberation in the electoral process (Rheingold, 1993; Corrado & Firestone, 1996). One side anticipated that the Internet (and, later, social media) would change politics fundamentally; this is the so-called revolution or equalisation hypothesis (Bimber, 1998; Rheingold, 1993). These scholars argued that digital communication technologies would enhance interaction and communication between politicians and citizens, boost political participation, allow for new actors to enter the political sphere and otherwise transform electoral politics. Thanks to digital technology's lower costs, new distribution possibilities and participatory cultural underpinnings, the equalisation thesis attracted many followers (Ward & Gibson, 2009).

Another side argued that 'politics as usual' would continue to prevail even after the emergence of online politics; this is the so-called normalisation hypothesis (Margolis & Resnick, 2000; Bellamy & Raab, 1999; Hindman, 2009). These scholars concluded that elite actors would still dominate politics and 'normalise' Internet tools to their advantage: 'Far from revolutionizing the conduct of politics and civic affairs in the real world, we found the Internet tends to reflect and reinforce the patterns of behavior of that world' (Margolis and Resnick, 2000:vii). They also argued that forces such as commercialisation, fragmentation and regulation would 'tame' the once anarchic Internet (Ward & Gibson, 2009) and in turn empower a small and elite body of political and media actors at everyone else's expense (Hindman, 2009).

The equalisation versus normalisation dichotomy is still relied upon today as an analytic lens in political communication research (Wright, 2011), to the field's detriment. This polarised dichotomy arises from grand and complex terms such as 'revolution' and 'normality' that are often applied without operational definitions. Revolution has been defined as a massive and sudden regime change (Davis, 2009), but this interpretation neglects those subtler changes that nevertheless have a substantial impact on politics and the public sphere in the long run (as was the case with, for example, the industrial revolution). Likewise, normalisation and 'ordinary politics' fall somehow short and is rather short-sighted, as can be seen here: 'cyberspace has not become the locus of a new politics that spills out of the computer screen and revitalizes citizenship and democracy. If anything ordinary politics and commercial activity, in all their complexity and vitality, have invaded and captured cyberspace. Virtual reality has grown to resemble the real world' (Margolis & Resnick, 2000:2). I argue that our understanding of "ordinary politics" needs to reflect that constant change and evolution of the communication environment is part of the "ordinariness" of politics.

The empirical studies in this dissertation provide evidence of both hypotheses, starting with normalisation. In Norway, the largest and most resourceful political parties and party leaders gain demonstrably more followers and fans in social media (articles 1 and 2), and incumbent political actors are cited more frequently in the mainstream media via social media than are political actors in the opposition (article 3). Resources, political position and legacy media are still important, which also supports a normalisation perspective. The persistent relevance of institutions, regulations and the larger national context also argue for a political communication 'evolution', not revolution.

On the other hand, my empirical studies also found evidence of how younger political actors (both incumbent and from the opposition) are able to use social media to attract attention from the mainstream media (articles 1 and 3), as well as how new political actors (the Greens, in the Norwegian context) conducted a successful social media campaign to push above the 4 percent threshold and secure a seat in Parliament during the 2013 election (article 2). I have documented how citizens and political actors are

increasingly connecting to each other through social networks such as Facebook, thus bypassing the mass media as a mediator of political communication. All of this supports an equalisation hypothesis whereby digital communication tools afford new actors both power and influence.

Ultimately, however, my empirical studies demonstrate that neither 'politics as usual' nor 'equalisation' are accurate descriptors for the influence new communication technology has had on political communication. Instead, it appears that we should look beyond the 'cyber optimist' versus 'cyber pessimist' dichotomy when unpacking technology's impact on society and explore the middle ground or those 'third places' (Wright, 2011: 2015) in and among those apparent poles, as several researchers have recommended before me (Chadwick, 2013; Farrell, 2012; Larsson & Svensson, 2014; Wright, 2012). The incremental changes that derive from new communication technology might crop up anywhere, in fact, and this dissertation attempts to show that social media logic is one of those third places, and one to which I will return later in this chapter. By systematically examining the interplay among the aforementioned three main actors in the context of the format and function of communication technology, I have begun to colonise this third place under the rubric of what has been called 'Web 1.5' (Jackson & Lilleker, 2009), the 'ebb and flow thesis' (Lilleker et al., 2011) or 'hybrid media' (Chadwick, 2013). This litany points to the fact that innovation and adaptation vary across time, party systems and media systems, as well as between parties, and that one thing is clear: in the wake of the Internet, 'politics as usual' will not suffice.

1.4. Media logic

In order to explore this third place, I will revisit theories about media logic in light of the increasingly complex communication environment associated with social media platforms. Media logic has been used as a means of explaining the media's influence on other institutions and actors in society, especially within politics. Politics is one of those social institutions that are most closely aligned with the evolution of media forms, and accordingly, media logic has clearly informed political styles, cases, issues and even outcomes (Altheide & Snow, 1979). Mass media, and particularly television,

has been the main motivator of the development of media logic, given its ability to promulgate a 'commanding discourse that guides the organization of public space' (Van Dijck & Poell, 2013)[6].

Media logic can be defined as 'a set of principles or common sense rationality cultivated in and by media institutions that penetrates every public domain and dominates its organizing structure' (Altheide & Snow, 1979:11). Altheide later defined media logic as

> [t]he assumptions and processes for constructing messages within a particular medium. This includes rhythm, grammar, and format. Format, while a feature of media logic, is singularly important because it refers to the rules or 'codes' for defining, selecting, organizing, presenting, and recognizing information as one thing rather than another (e.g., 'the evening news' and not a 'situation comedy', or a 'parody of news'). This logic—or the rationale, emphasis, and orientation promoted by media production, processes, and messages—tends to be evocative, encapsulated, highly thematic, familiar to audiences, and easy to use. (Altheide, 2004:4)

Here, then, the news media's format, rhythm and grammar, as well as its production process and overall rationale, is the basis of an evolving notion of media logic. This vagueness has also been heavily criticized (Lundby, 2009: 117), but also used to explain the strong influence of media logic. Thorbjørnsrud, Figenschou and Ihlen argue that the news logic's powerful impact on other social institutions resides in 'the diffuse, porous and informal character of the logic of news that makes it so seemingly easy to adopt' (2014:19).

Kent Asp argues that in order to understand media logic, or what he calls 'news media logic', we need to look at the two forces driving it: the emergence of independent and powerful media institutions and the increased media dependency of societal actors

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[6] Media's effects on the public and power relations has been studied since the first political communication studies (Kaid, 2008; Lazarfeld, Berelsnon & Gaudet, 1948; Negrine & Stanyer, 2007)

and institutions (Asp, 2014)[7]. The power of mediated communication is also conveyed in the meta-process of the 'mediatization of politics', which itself acknowledges that the mass media have become increasingly influential in society (Mazzoleni & Schultz, 1999; Schulz, 2004; Strömbäck, 2008). In short, the media have become the most important source of information about matters outside of people's everyday environments. The resulting dynamic of mediatisation has been defined as 'a process in which individuals, politicians and social institutions tend to adapt to various constraints imposed by the media' (Asp, 2014:256), or as 'the process whereby society to an increasing degree is submitted to, or becomes dependent on, the media and their logic' (Hjarvard, 2008:113). For many years, the mainstream media have impacted how different actors and institutions communicate to gain attention and influence in a mediatised society such as Norway's (Thorbjørnsrud, Figenschou & Ihlen, 2014).

What has changed with the introduction of social media platforms is that they inhabit a different though overlapping logic than mass media—one often called social media logic or network media logic. Social media logic is closely connected to the affordances of social media platforms, which, I argue, introduce substantial changes in the ways in which political communication are produced, consumed, selected, distributed, understood and measured. These new digital mechanisms are challenging our traditional understanding of media logic, but just as the relationship between politics and media is characterised by 'dynamic interactions and complex interdependencies along various levels and dimensions' (Strömbäck & Esser, 2009:220), social media logic and mass media logic are also intertwined (article 5). This dissertation attempts to show that these complex interdependencies have led to new means of gaining attention, visibility and influence among key societal actors.

Based on previous research and developments within digital political communication, my hypothesis is that social media affords a specific set of formats, rules or codes for information—in other words, a logic. By studying how the three key actors relate and

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[7]Mass media's social and political influence is commonly related to four aspects: media as the fourth estate, media's impact on audiences, media's power to construct reality, and media's role as gatekeeper (see Aalberg & Elvestad, 2012: 95).

adapt to the format and functions of communication technology, I will begin to describe this social media logic and its impact on the actors' power relations.

1.5. The dissertation's structure

The dissertation is organised as follows:

Part I consists of the cover chapter (*kappe*)

Chapter 1 outlines the point of departure for the dissertation within the research field of political communication and introduces the research questions.

Chapter 2 introduces the national context in which the empirical studies are situated, focusing on technology adoption and new media use, as well as the media and political systems.

Chapter 3 discusses the main theoretical concepts utilised in the dissertation: affordances and social media logic. Based on the theoretical discussion and on empirical findings from the article, I propose my conceptual framework for political communication on social media.

Chapter 4 describes the methods this research project is based on. I address current methodological problems within the field of digital political communication and propose arguments for a mixed method approach, followed by my ethical considerations.

Chapter 5 draws the different elements of the dissertation together in final conclusion and discusses the broader implications of the conceptual framework for political communication on social media related to the three actor groups. Lastly, it proposes suggestions for future research within political communication, data driven journalism and networked publics.

Part II includes the five empirical articles.

Chapter 2. The Norwegian context

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the national context in which my empirical studies are situated. Here, I will outline how Norway's technological landscape, political system and media system impacts the ways in which political communication occurs on social media.

Context matters, and in what follows I will argue that even though political actors, media actors and citizens in different countries use the same communication tools or platforms with the same affordances, existing differences in political systems, culture, media structure and judicial systems set premises for how it all works out. Anstead and Chadwick concur: 'technology can reshape institutions, but institutions will mediate eventual outcomes' (Anstead & Chadwick, 2009:56). Norway is a small country with 5,1 million people, a multiparty parliamentary system, and an extensive digital media landscape, meaning that regulations, norms and culture as a whole will all impact the ability of digital platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to facilitate political communication. Existing research into digital political communication reveals an Anglo-America perspective and tends to be based on countries with a presidential or two-party political system (Lijphard, 1984) and a liberal media system (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). To date, there is little systematic research on how the political communication process takes place among political actors, media actors and citizens on digital platforms in Norway (see Kalsnes & Larsson, 2015, for an overview), and this dissertation addresses that gap.

The Norwegian context is interesting both because of the country's ready adaptation to communication technology and because it is *different* from the typical Anglo-American setting for these studies. This is important, as Benkler observes: 'the Internet's effect on the public sphere is different in different societies, depending on what salient structuring components of the existing public sphere its introduction perturbs' (Benkler, 2006:180). Two particular aspects of society are especially relevant when considering digital political communication in Norway: (1) technology adoption and new media use, and (2) the media system and the political system.

2.1. Technology adoption and new media use

The pace of adoption and use of communication technologies in the Nordic countries is among the highest in the world.[8] Ninety-six percent of the Norwegian population had Internet access in 2014, and 88 percent of the population used the Internet on a daily basis (MediaNorway, 2015), so we can legitimately expect many of the main actors in this research project to be avid Internet users. Norwegians are also among the most eager social media users in the world, particularly of Facebook, which is used daily by 62 percent of the population (and 92 percent of those between fifteen and twenty-nine years old).[9] Twitter is used by 8 percent of the population on a daily basis but joins Facebook as the most relevant social media platform for political communication in my studies. Snapchat (25 percent daily use) and Instagram (20 percent daily use) are more popular platforms than Twitter but were barely used for political purposes in 2013. Extensive social media use impacts the citizenry's news habits in Norway; as evident from the table below, the Internet has surpassed all other media channels over the past few years, and daily consumption of printed newspapers in particular is dropping in Norway, as it is in other European countries (Reuters Institute, 2015).

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[8] Eurostat 2013: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Internet_use_statistics_-_individuals.
[9] According to Kampanje (http://kampanje.com/archive/2014/06/snapchat-gjor-et-kjempebyks/) and Medienorge (http://medienorge.uib.no/files/publikasjoner/Mediearet-2013-2014-WEB.pdf: p. 22).
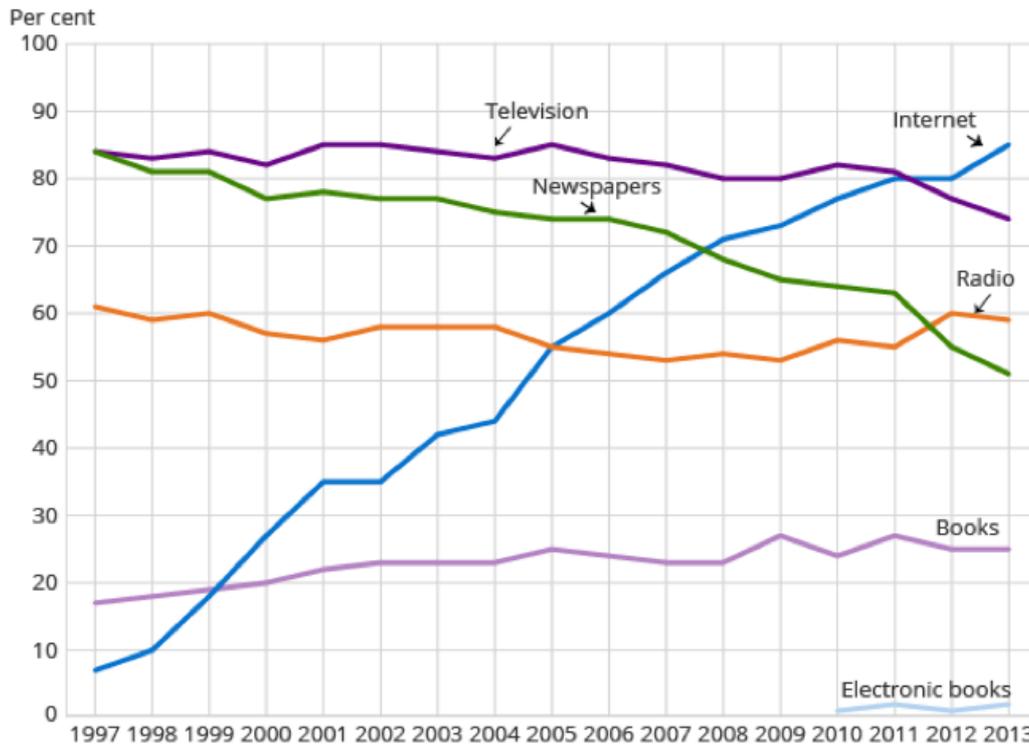
Figure 1. Percent who used different media on an average day, aged 9-79 year, from year 1997-2013. Source: Statistics Norway[10]

While the 'digital divide' (in relation to *access* to the Internet) was a concern in the early years of Internet use in Norwegian politics (Saglie & Vabo, 2005), that divide is now related to people's relative success in *using* the technology (Enjolras et al., 2013). The divide is between those who have large social networks, and thus the ability to spread information and mobilise for causes, and those who have fewer online connections. While 74 percent of the Norwegian population turns on the TV daily, it is used most extensively by those older than forty-five, whereas those younger than forty-five spend more time on the Internet. Nevertheless, television and regional news media were considered to be the most important information sources during the 2013 election (Karlsen & Aalberg, 2015:123; see also Skogerbø & Krumsvik, 2014).

Simultaneously, Facebook has become a more important arena for news distribution in Norway, and for some of the largest news sites, Facebook sometimes drives almost

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50 percent of the traffic.[11] Readers like, share and comment on news articles on
Twitter and Facebook, strengthening a new dynamic between the traditional editorial
media and social media that is also known as the hybrid media system (Chadwick,
2013). The largest news sites in Norway, including VG, NRK, TV2 and Aftenposten,
have, since 2012 or 2013, employed specialised social media managers or journalists
to work on reader involvement and social journalism.[12] But important to remember,
social media and particularly Facebook is first and foremost a means of personal
connection. Most typical use of Facebook by Norwegian users is to keep updated on
their friends (70 percent), birthday greetings (67 percent) and commenting on friends'
pictures and updates (37 percent), while sharing news stories were done by eight
percent of Norwegian Facebook users (Enjolras et al., 2013:48).
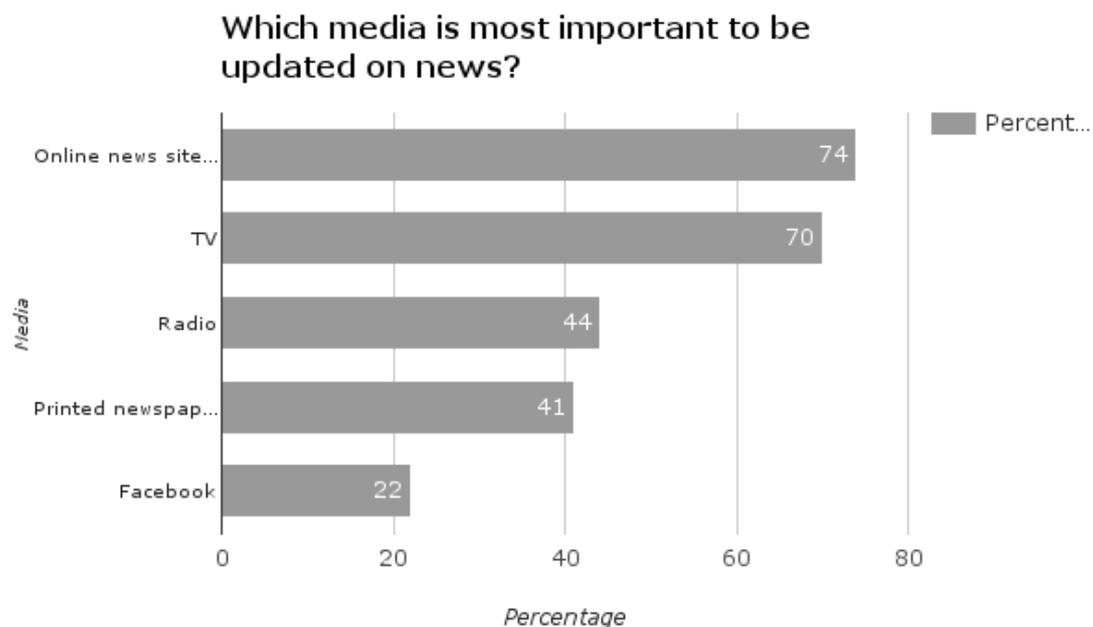
Figure 2. Most important media for news updates 2013. Population: Those above 15
years with Internet access. Source: TNS Gallup (Social Media Tracker, 2013, quoted
in MediaNorway, 2014)

Though Facebook is used mainly for personal reasons, 22 percent of Norwegian

Facebook users say that they discuss politics on Facebook, while only 4 percent use

[11] See the article 'Styres av algoritmene' [Governed by the algorithm],
http://www.klassekampen.no/article/20150522/ARTICLE/150529935.
[12] See the article 'VG ansetter sosiale medier-sjef' [VG employs social media manager],
http://kampanje.com/archive/2012/06/vg-ansetter-sosiale-medier-sjef/.

Twitter for this purpose (Enjolras et al., 2013:119–120). In terms of my research questions, these statistics indicate that new media habits and patterns are developing in Norway, primarily driven by the increased use of the Internet and smartphones, while printed newspapers have become less important to Norwegians. We should expect that the three main actors in this study are influenced by these changing media habits as well.

2.3. Media system and political system

Norway's media and political systems are aligned with the democratic corporatist model, according to Hallin and Manchini's comparison of media systems in Western democracies (2004). This model is characterised by a 'historical coexistence of commercial media and media tied to organized social and political groups, and by a relatively active but legally limited role of the state' (Hallin & Mancini, 2004:11). In the case of Norway, the media system reveals a weak degree of political parallelism, a strongly developed mass circulation press, advanced journalistic professionalism and an active welfare state with interventions in the media sector (Strömbäck & Aalberg, 2008:93). The Norwegian media has always had a central role in political communication, as demonstrated by this table detailing the media's role from a historical perspective (Østbye & Aalberg, 2008:95).

Period	Role of the media	Period characteristics
Phase I: 1945-57	Channel	A loyal party press and the breakthrough of radio.
Phase II: 1961-96	Arena	A loyal party press under pressure and the advent of television.
Phase III: 1973-89	Actor	Dissolution of the party press and the beginning of the television era. Increased journalistic professionalization with focus on independence.
Phase IV: 1993-2013	Director	Television dominates. Increased focus on subjective journalism. Media intervenes in and direct the political debate. Alternative public arenas are marginalized.

Table 2. The four phases in the relationship between media and politics in Norway (Østbye & Aalberg, 2008). The beginning and end of these phases are related to years when national elections took place[13].

Research has shown that there is a high level of informality between journalists and politicians in Norway, including actual friendships, lunch meetings, and access to personal details such as mobile contact information, in comparison to, for example, their Swedish counterparts, who maintain a stronger distinction between the professional and the personal (van Aelst & Aalberg, 2011). One explanation for this is that Sweden features more use of spokespeople to mediate the relations between journalists and MPs. Access to political actors (or lack thereof) can impact social media use in a political context and is highly relevant to my research questions.

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[13] Table 2 can be criticized for being too one-dimensional and static, indicating that news media develop linearly from one phase to the next. News media can take many roles at the same time, for example both as channel and as actor. The model is thus a simplification of the development, but still, I argue that it gives us some insight into the major historic developments in the relationship between media and politics in Norway.

Norway's political system is a consensus-based parliamentary democracy with multi-party, proportional electoral systems where voters choose between party ballots. The time leading up to and following Norway's elections in 2013 and 2011 is the historic and national context for my case studies. In addition, one article addresses both Norwegian and Swedish politicians' use of social media (article 1). When the 2013 election campaign started, Norway was governed by a coalition consisting of the Labour Party (Ap), the Centre Party (Sp) and the Socialist Left (SV).[14] This 'Red-Green' coalition had governed Norway for eight years, but after the election, the two largest opposition parties, the Conservative Party (H) and the Progress Party (FrP), took over the government, supported by the Christian Democrats (KrF) and the Liberal Party (V). For the first time in history, that is, a right-wing populist party entered the governmental offices in Norway.

Election campaigns in Norway are party centred as opposed to candidate centred (Strömbäck & Aalberg, 2008:93), as well as centralised and nationwide (Karlsen, 2011b), all of which set certain premises for how parties and candidates are able to use social media. Elections are held every four years at fixed dates and alternate between parliamentary and local/county ballots. In 2013, the principal year of inquiry for my empirical cases, seven parties were represented in Stortinget (the parliament) before the election. After the election on September 9, 2013, another party was added: the Green Party. Political parties in Norway are financed by party members and groups (either organisations or private individuals), but the main source of financing is the Norwegian state, based on the party's membership numbers (NOU 2004:25, p. 38–39). Televised political advertising is banned in Norway, but political campaign videos are frequently uploaded to YouTube, allowing parties to skirt the ban and reach voters on their social media platforms (this is further discussed in article 2).

In 2013, all political parties in the Norwegian parliament were represented on digital platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube. The majority (58 percent) of Norwegian parliamentarians (MPs and ministers) had a Facebook profile in 2013 (article 2), and 26 percent of them had a Facebook page in 2013 (a 'page' is a more professional and advanced tool than a 'profile'). In the same year, 57 percent of MPs

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[14] Norwegian abbreviations in parentheses.

and ministers had a Twitter profile (article 1). It is therefore becoming fairly common for political actors to establish profiles on social media services, and this dissertation examines how they utilise these profiles for political communication purposes.

This, then, is the national, digital and political context for my empirical studies. In the next chapter, I will outline the theoretical landscape of this dissertation, mainly in relation to social media affordances and social media logic.

Chapter 3. Theoretical discussion

This chapter connects the theoretical terms 'affordances' and 'social media logic' to political communication. First, I outline the theoretical landscape which describes the interplay between communication technology and user behaviour, beginning with the specificities of social media technologies and their affordances. Next, I argue that the main affordances provided by social media platforms also represent the 'building blocks' of the social media logic. Lastly, I propose the conceptual framework for political communication on social media based on this theoretical discussion.

The increased use of social media among political actors, media actors and citizens is not yet well understood by communication researchers. To remedy this, we must first understand communication technology and its properties. Just as architecture shapes how people interact with their physical environments, the structures of social media technologies shape how people engage with these digital environments (boyd, 2010). I will begin with the central communication technology for this dissertation: social media platforms.

3.1. What is social media?

Social media eludes easy definition, thanks to the fact that its platforms, services and user practices change continually. At one time, it was much more common to talk about online communities (Preece, 2001) or social network sites (SNS) (boyd & Ellison, 2007), but social media is the more frequently used term today. I understand social media to refer to those communication platforms on or through which users can create and share content and connect with each other via, for example, lists of friends, followers, fans or circles (boyd & Ellison, 2007; O'Reilly, 2007). Similarly, Kaplan and Haenlein refer to social media as 'Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content' (2010:62). In relation to earlier media technology, the interactive aspects of social media are qualitatively new—that is, *many* can now discuss and share with *many* simultaneously. Because users can create and share their own content in these social networks, social media also blurs the line between producer and consumer of content (Gustafsson & Höglund, 2011; Bruns,

2007). As such, these services function both as media for publishing and as networks for social relations (Enjolras et al., 2013).

Digital communication platforms such as social media (for example, Facebook, Twitter or blogs) are characterised by their ability to be storable, searchable, sharable, scalable, replicable and persistent (see boyd, 2014:11; Papacharissi & Gibson, 2011:76). In addition, and particularly relevant in this context, interactivity has been described as *the* defining characteristic of the Internet (Jensen, 2002:184). More specifically, interactivity in digital media represents the ability to either contribute to content or create one's own nonlinear path through information (McMillian, 2002). Spiro Kiousis describes interactivity as 'the degree to which a communication technology can create a mediated environment in which participants can communicate (one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many) both synchronously and asynchronously and participate in reciprocal message exchanges' (Kisousis, 2002:379).

The interactive aspect of digital political communication is what differentiates it from traditional modes of communication, commonly divided into personal and mass communication (Aalberg & Elvestad, 2012:10). Personal communication is person-to-person, whereas mass communication is one (or a few) broadcasting to a large audience. Digital and social media, on the other hand, allow both open and closed mass communication (i.e., broadcasting to a huge, global audience), group communication (i.e., members of a Facebook group), interpersonal communication (i.e., chatting person to person), as well as non-verbal and image-based communication (i.e., through social media affordances such as emoticons, likes, shares, retweets and video uploads).

Here, I am interested in the possibilities for political interaction afforded by social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter through comments, likes, shares, @mention, retweets and favourites. I am interested in not only the digital discourses offered in text, images, videos or similar content published on social media but also the metadata offered via likes, shares and retweets. I will now look more closely at the central affordances of the most used social media platforms in political

communication: Facebook and Twitter, beginning with an exposition of the affordance concept as originally outlined by J. J. Gibson.

3.2. Social media's affordances

Communication technologies such as social media platforms provide users with affordances, in the form of possibilities as well as limits. The concept was introduced by J. J. Gibson and initially utilised within ecological psychology studies (Gibson, 1979:127); it has since made its way to other research fields, including design as well as media and communication studies. Initially, Gibson described affordances as the action possibilities which a given environment presents to an animal: 'An affordance is neither an objective property nor a subjective property; or it is both if you like . . . (It) points both ways, to the environment and to the observer' (Gibson, 1979:129). While Gibson was describing objects in nature, affordance applies equally to other objects, including the digital artefacts or products of communication technology, and Gibson himself saw the concept as applicable to the artificial environment humans have created (Bloomfield, Latham, Vurdubakis, 2010). D. A. Norman took up Gibson's line of thought and theorised what he called 'perceived affordances' (Norman, 1999) because some things, such as computer screens, mainly allow for perceived, not tangible, affordances. He writes, 'affordances specify the range of possible activities, but affordances are of little use if they are not visible to the users' (Norman, 1999:41). Bucher and Helmond recently suggested five types of affordance: relational, perceived, technology, social and communicative (Bucher & Helmond, 2016), and in general, I will engage with the concept according to its relational and perceived aspects.

Here, I frame technological affordances as the action possibilities inherent in technological artefacts that enable or restrict certain types of communication acts, such as commenting or sharing an article. I also differentiate among affordances based upon level of abstraction along the lines described by Bucher and Helmond (2016) as 'low-level' and 'high-level' affordance. While the former describes more concrete features, the latter describes the more abstract communication outcome of technology, or 'the kinds of dynamics and conditions enabled by technical devices,

platforms and media' (2016:12). Bucher and Helmond observe that low-level affordances are typically located in the materiality of the medium—for example, specific features, buttons, screens and platforms (such as the 'like' button on Facebook). Likewise, boyd observes that higher-level affordances are conditioned by the 'properties of bits', which in turn introduce new opportunities for interaction and communication (boyd, 2011:39, cited by Bucher & Helmond, 2016:13).

I find the affordance to be a very useful concept in a political communication context, especially when addressing three specific aspects: the interplay between technology (the artefact) and human behaviour (the user); the notion of technological determinism; and the importance of context. The first aspect is expanded upon in this quote by Gibson: 'An affordance cuts across the dichotomy of subjective-objective and helps us to understand its inadequacy. It is equally a fact of the environment and a fact of behavior. It is both physical and psychical, yet neither. An affordance points both ways, to the environment and the observer' (Gibson, 1986; 129). Here, I understand the 'environment' as the communication technology in a specific context and the 'observer' as the user—political actors, media actors or citizens. Social media, in turn, have affordances that allow for specific types of communication (for example, real-time updates on Twitter) and that restrict communication (for example, the 140 character limit on Twitter).

To expand upon how technological artefacts and users' adoption of them both restrict and enable communication, I will present two examples from Facebook and Twitter. Facebook's 'like' button was introduced in 2009 as a way to express sympathy, support or thumbs up for an item (text, image, or video, for example). A dislike button does still not exist, but in 2016, Facebook expanded this functionality with five additional reaction emojis: 'love', 'haha', 'wow', 'sad' and 'angry' (Stinson, 2016). By only allowing a like button for seven years, Facebook made an explicit choice to restrict the affordances of the platform. Some have argued that this design decision was intended to avoid the negative impact of a dislike button on the user experience or to please advertisers (Heath, 2016). Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's CEO, states: 'We didn't want to just build a Dislike button because we don't want to turn Facebook into a forum where people are voting up or down on people's posts. That doesn't seem like the kind of community we want to create. You don't want to go

through the process of sharing some moment that's important to you in your day and then have someone down vote it. That isn't what we're here to build in the world' (Speed, 2015).

As this example shows, technological affordances are initially expressions of human considerations and decisions, but those in charge are seldom able to predict all of the different uses of communication technologies. One example from Twitter (released in 2006) will illustrate this point. Hashtags expressed as the # or pound sign were not part of the original Twitter design, but in 2007, early in Twitter's existence, there was no convention for 'group talk' on Twitter. The hashtag was suggested as a way to accommodate group conversations around a topic (Cooper, 2013). Even though Twitter did not initially design or even adopt the pound sign, the practice was picked up among Twitter users and eventually became a very central affordance of Twitter (Scott, 2015). Likewise, the extension of Facebook's like button was purportedly developed as a response to user feedback but it also provides marketers with more detailed consumer data and hence opportunities for targeted advertising (Gerlitz & Helmond, 2013).

Secondly, the affordance concept allows for a different take on the notion of technological determinism that is frequently found in technology studies and popular literature (Kelly, 2010). Technological determinism is often understood as 'the idea that technology develops as the sole result of an internal dynamic, and then, unmediated by any other influence, molds society to fit its patterns' (Winner, 1980: 122). In this view, technology is a driving force in society with agency regarding the development of social structure and cultural values (Smith & Marx, 1994) [15]. This maxim has been heavily criticized, particularly for not taking into account how society molds technology to fit its purposes through users' adoption and agency. Here, again, the concept of the affordance splits the difference by stressing the interplay between users and artefacts, however complex it may be, given that, in Melvin Kranzenberg's words, 'technology is neither good nor bad, nor is it neutral'

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[15] Torstein Veblen is coined as one of the proponents of this thinking. Historian Charles Beard said that "Technology marches in seven-league boots from one ruthless, revolutionary conquest to another, tearing down old factories and industries, flinging up new processes with terrifying rapidity" (Bovarik, 2011;7).

(Kranzberg, 1986; 545). As I have discussed earlier, developers of communication technologies are seldom unaware of either users' or marketers' or investors' feedback. Yet technologies reflect inherent values and morals, even political qualities, that both inform and emerge from their impact upon their contexts (Winner, 1980). Because things and technologies are created by humans, Winner argues that they represent specific expressions of power and authority. For example, share buttons are available to all Facebook users, but sharing a political article can have different meanings in different contexts.

This brings us to the third aspect of affordances: the context. It should be noted that a communication technology can provide multiple affordances, but not all affordances will be utilised with the same results in different national, legal or cultural contexts. The affordance concept, then, helps to explain 'why, in some cases, people use the same technology differently, and why, in other cases, people put the same technology to similar uses and change their communication and work practices in equivalent ways' (Treem & Leonardi, 2012; 5). In what follows, I will attempt to account for this dissertation's context—Norway's multiparty parliamentary system, party-centred political campaigning, highly digitised media system and extensive usage of the Internet and digital communication technology. The political, cultural and legal circumstances in which technology is embedded set some premises, as mentioned in chapter 2, and two legal examples will illustrate this in the case of Norway. In Norway, political advertising on television is banned[16], forcing political parties to rely upon social media to broadcast and spread political videos (article 2). Similarly, privacy regulations[17] set clear limits on the type of individual data political parties can collect and systematise, then potentially exploit during election campaigns. The type of microtargeting techniques used in American politics—for example, consumer data combined with social media and voter registration data to create detailed voter profiles (Kreiss, 2012; Stroemer-Gally, 2015; Issenberg, 2012)—are harder to develop and apply in a Norwegian context for legal reasons. Instead, then, the two

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[16] Political tv commercials are banned in Norway, but it is legal to run political marketing on websites, outdoor, in newspapers, on the radio, etc. The European Court of Human Rights found in 2008 that the Norwegian ban on political tv campaigns constituted a breach against freedom of speech, regulated in Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. TV Vest and Rogaland Pensioner Party brough the case to court. https://www.nrk.no/norge/strengt-regulert-politisk-reklame-1.6518754

[17] Regulated by the Privacy Data Act (Personopplysningsloven) from 2000 https://lovdata.no/dokument/NL/lov/2000-04-14-31

largest and most resourceful parties, the Labour Party and the Conservative Party, profile and target neighbourhoods, not individuals, based on collected data (Kapital, 2015).

While I recognise the importance of context to any understanding of communication technologies' affordances, I differ somewhat with Gibson's argument about the environment. Gibson argues that affordances of the environment are permanent, that they exist independently of the animal's perception and intentions: 'affordances are opportunities for action that exist in the environment and do not depend on the animal's mind. Moreover, being opportunities for action, they do not cause behavior, but simply make it possible' (Gibson, cited by Withagen et al., 2012; 250). Based on my material, I will argue that affordances in communication technologies are equally influenced by the user's mind—that is, one's intentions, comprehension and knowledge all set parameters for how and to what purpose communication technology is used (see, for example, articles 2 and 3). The affordances of communication technology therefore are not permanent but instead have different meanings and consequences in different places and different times.

3.3. Facebook and Twitter's affordances

Facebook is the world's most popular social network, with over 1.2 billion users worldwide in 2013, the main year of my studies, and Twitter had 232 million users in the same year.[18] Twitter is often called a microblog service given its 140 character limit, while Facebook allows almost limitless space for updates (63.206 characters, to be exact).[19] This difference in affordance sets clear premises for political communication, obviously, but the two services have some distinct similarities as well, in terms of the low-level or functional affordances they offer to users and advertisers. Specifically, we can identify five similar functions on Facebook and Twitter, primarily related to technical infrastructure, interaction design and terminology:

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[18] Facebook data from 2013 is available at
http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2014/feb/04/facebook-in-numbers-statistics. Twitter data from 2013 is available at http://www.businessinsider.com/twitter-user-base-compared-to-other-apps-and-online-companies-2013-11.
[19] See http://mashable.com/2012/01/04/facebook-character-limit/#rrugaaJEkZkD.

Broadcasting is here understood as publishing texts, images, videos and other content to a network of followers or fans via Facebook and Twitter. It represents an attractive opportunity to gain attention and frame one's message without being edited by traditional gatekeepers such as news media. *Distribution* is here understood as sharing Facebook posts or retweeting on Twitter. It is a central aspect of the so-called 'viral' spread of content to huge groups of users both within and outside the user's network. For political actors, 'going viral' is the ultimate goal of any attempt to distribute. *Interaction* is here understood as the possibilities for dialogue and comments on Facebook and Twitter. While interaction on Facebook takes place in a so-called threaded comment section, it can be hard to manage an overview of a dialogue on Twitter, which happens when users refer to each other via mentions using the @ symbol or so-called hashtags. *Acknowledging* is here understood as those times when a user likes or favorites something. These symbols introduce ambiguity, however, as exemplified by the user who clicks favorite on a tweet in order to bookmark it without necessarily liking it. Retweets and shares can be understood as acknowledging, but individual users might understand their functionality differently. *Measuring* is here understood as the capacity to analyse and record or gauge the performance of different online activities, such as how many users liked a Facebook post or retweeted a tweet. Analytics is built into all of the features on these two platforms, so human behaviour on them can be measured and monetised to a much greater degree that was possible on earlier communication platforms or channels.

This outline of Facebook and Twitter's functions (or functional affordances) is used in several of my articles to frame the analyses of the empirical material. Below, I will go a step further and examine how social media's affordances relate to the theory of social media logic.

3.4. Social media logic

Researchers have recently started to argue that a new mechanism is in play in the interaction between social media platforms, the mass media, users and social institutions. The affordances of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter

are creating new dynamics in information production, selection, distribution and consumption that researchers find to be governed by, alternatively, a *social media logic* (Djick & Poell, 2013), *network media logic* (Klinger & Svensson, 2014), *platform logic* (Bucher, 2012) or *web logic* (Deuze, 2007). Here, I favour the first term, mainly to underline the connection to social media platforms. This logic consists of an inherent communication norm in tandem with the practices of a particular medium, which, as mentioned, are determined by affordances. The possibilities and constraints of these affordances, in other words, could be understood as the 'building blocks' of a social media logic.

Common to theories of social media logic is the argument that it at once overlaps and competes with the media or news media logic. As discussed in chapter 1, media logic refers to the format, rules or 'codes' for defining, selecting, organising, presenting and recognising information as one thing rather than another (Altheide & Snow, 1979). Media logic is often used to explain how news is selected, interpreted, and constructed (Esser, 2013:160; Lundby, 2014:28; Klinger & Svensson, 2016:24). Likewise, social media logic (Van Dijck & Poell, 2013) and network media logic (Klinger & Svensson, 2014) are models that frame the ways in which the mechanisms of the social media platform impact social interactions and information selection among its users. Scholars have begun to unpack these models—Klinger and Svensson examine how media *production, distribution* and *usage* are changed as a consequence of network media logic, and Van Dijck and Poell explore aspects of social media logics including *programmability, popularity, connectivity* and *datafication* (all of which are high-level affordances; see discussion on page 37).[20] Like news media logic, social media logic engages with the specific 'norms, principles, and practices through which these platforms process information, news, and communication, and more generally, how they channel social traffic strategies, mechanisms, and economies—underpinning its dynamics' (Van Dijck & Poell, 2013:5). Klinger and Svensson argue that 'social media platforms are characterized by a different, though overlapping, logic from that of traditional mass media, with regard to the inherent

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[20] Additional descriptions of social media's high-level affordances are done by boyd (2011, 46), who identifies four main affordances of social network sites as networked publics, and they are: persistence, replicability, scalability, searchability. Similarly, Treem &Leonardi (2012) identify visibility, editability, persistence, and association as social media's affordances in organizational communication processes.

communication norms and practices related to media production and usage', and they label this 'network media logic' (2014:5). Lastly, both models incorporate human behaviour and technological affordances as central elements, and my empirical studies confirmed this (see articles 2 and 3).

It is also necessary to ask how social media logic is different from news media logic in relation to the key actors in the digital political communication process. Social media logic, after all, adds significant new elements to news media logic, particularly when it comes to analytics and measurement. Social media platforms digitise everything, which allows for tracking to an unprecedented extent. Social media's computer coding also impacts interactions among users, content, advertisers and other platforms, though this code is hidden (Langlois & Elmer, 2013) in what is often called a 'black box' (Gillespie, 2014), particularly with regard to central algorithms (Bucher, 2012; Van Dijck, 2013). These sets of mathematical instructions for solving problems are used to sort information and enable users to find the most relevant information. Search functionality like this is arguably the defining feature of Internet platforms, as most successfully executed and monetized by Google, then later by Facebook, Amazon and Netflix, for example (Van Dijck, 2012). In order to protect their business models and increase profits based on user data, however, companies like Google and Facebook hide the powerful algorithms that run their services.[21] While human beings—editors, journalists, photographers—were the main gatekeepers in a mass media–dominated society, algorithms and analytics have become crucial gatekeepers of relevant and popular content on the Internet, including in political communication. Facebook, for example, uses algorithms to sort and present users with relevant information and commercials in its news stream or recommend potential friends, to mention but a few algorithmic utilities.[22] In order to achieve popularity, attract attention and otherwise guarantee visibility on social media, it is crucial for actors to generate likes, shares and comments. In this political communication context, both

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[21] Critical social media studies are a growing field. While I am fully aware of the problems related to commercial aspects of social media services, including privacy, surveillance, the privatisation of the public sphere, and so on, they are beyond my scope here. For a good overview of this research area, see Langlois & Elmer, 2013; Van Dijck, 2013; Bucher, 2012.

[22] Facebook algorithm for the news feed is called EdgeRank, and it is constantly tweaked and changed in order to increase use, interaction and relevance, thus business profits, see http://sproutsocial.com/insights/facebook-news-feed-algorithm-guide/

codes (or algorithms) and users' interaction with the content set premises for what content receive visibility on social media platforms.

Social media logic and network media logic are mainly conceptual, theoretical concepts that have been developed based on existing literature but not tested empirically as such. Neither of these theories has a strong focus on political communication either, though Klinger and Svensson briefly discuss some related implications of network media logic for political communication (2014:1252). Here, then, I will apply the theory of social media logic to the Scandinavian political context, so as to examine the interplay between the three key actors identified earlier. Based on the definition by Van Dijck and Poell (2013), I understand social media logic to be a particular set of strategies and a mechanism, or 'the process, principles, and practices through which these *platforms* process information, news, and communication, and more generally, how they channel social traffic' (2013:5, my emphasis). But in order to take into account an affordance perspective, I will expand this definition to include the interplay between the technology (the platforms) and the users (political actors, media actors and citizens), because this impacts the algorithm and the performance of the platform.

3.5. Conceptual framework for political communication on social media

Based on the preceding theoretical discussion of social media's affordances and social media logic, I will now propose a framework for political communication on social media. I developed it based on the empirical data from the articles, coupled with my theoretical discussion of affordances and social media logic here in the cover chapter. The framework addresses the main research question (RQ1) raised in chapter 1, thus I examine what the social media logic consists of and how different actors relate to it. This conceptual framework is my proposition for the "third way" approach, between the normalization vs. equalization polarization. Building on the work by Bucher and Helmond (2016), I differentiate between three different levels of affordances – high, medium and low-level affordances. In the section about Facebook and Twitter's affordances (page 41-42), I discussed the low and medium-level affordances (Functions and Purposes). Here, I will mainly discuss the high-level

affordances, which I have identified as *publishing, visibility, networking, connectivity* and *segmentation*. Read vertically from the left, the table goes from the abstract to the concrete, from societal implications to practical functions. Horizontally, the table reflects different action possibilities afforded by the communication technology. I argue that social media's affordances are the "building blocks" of the social media logic, and thus, these affordances should be included when examining the social media logic in political communication[23]. The conceptual framework examines how the social media logic have practical implications for political communication among the three key actor groups in the Norwegian context.

High-level affordances	Medium-level affordances	Low-level affordances	
Implications	**Purposes**	**Functions**	
		Facebook	**Twitter**
Publishing	Broadcasting	Post	Tweet
Visibility	Distribution	Share	Retweet
Connectivity	Interaction	Comments (private message/chat)	Mention, @reply (direct message)
Networking	Acknowledgment	Like	Favorite
Segmentation	Measuring	Facebook Insights	Twitter Analytics[24]

Table 3. Conceptual framework for political communication on social media. An affordance approach to outline Facebook and Twitter's social media logic through Function, Purpose and Implication.

In the next section I will outline which implications the five high-level affordances have in the Norwegian political communication context.

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[23] This conceptual framework is a further development of the outline of social media logic in article 5.
[24] https://analytics.twitter.com

3.5.1. Publishing

Here, I define Publishing as the possibility to produce, publish and broadcast different types of content online through social media platforms. While the mass media were once the main producers of content in the traditional political communication process, all participants in a *digital* political communication process can now produce content through their profiles on social platforms and websites.[25] For Scandinavian political actors, it has become the new norm to have a presence on the most popular social media platforms, as evident from articles 1 and 2 (see also Filiminov, Russman & Svensson, 2016). This presence—what Klinger and Svensson call the 'logic of production' (2014:6) and Bruns labels 'produsage' (2008)—allows political actors and others, including the citizenry, to circumvent gatekeepers in the mass media by publishing on their own sites and profiles. My articles demonstrate that political and media actors are both very aware of how different content types achieve different effects in social media as well. Political actors explained in article 2 that content that is easy to understand and share invited more engagement than more complicated or involved material. Based on their social media experience with party profiles, Norwegian communication directors in the political parties have a clear impression of what encourages engagement, such as 'behind the scenes' images, as well as infographics. Research has already shown that a certain character or quality of one's content will be more likely to go viral, including, unsurprisingly, emotional messages, either positive or negative, that stir or arouse enthusiasm or indignation (Berger & Milkman, 2010). Also appealing is content that is useful or informative (Milkman & Berger, 2014), image building (Aalen, 2015:142), curiosity triggering (Lai & Farbrot, 2013) and humorous, as we found in our study of people using Twitter during televised election debates (article 4). Media actors are also aware of this, and some journalists use humour as a strategy for create engagement on Twitter; others target content according to their insight into their audiences (article 3). Article 2 also concludes that Norwegian political actors are deliberately framing stories on Facebook for their advantage (see also Larsson, 2015).

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[25] Historically, the mass media are not the only senders of communications; political parties, NGOs, companies and citizens themselves, for example, have been able to produce opinion pieces, letters to the editor, flyers, brochures, posters, and so on. Nevertheless, the Internet and social media platforms have made it much easier for everyone to produce and distribute content.

Political actors are also aware that Norwegian political journalists and commentators turn to social media platforms to mine for both sources and quotes, explore the political zeitgeist, and seek feedback on their own work (articles 3 and 2). Some of the political actors we interviewed were quick to insist that they used social media to 'rub in' their take on a situation, both before and after the related story ran in the editorial media (article 2). It is also clear that attention and engagement on social media can create attention in the traditional media, and this goes the other way—news articles are among the most shared content on social media (Lee & Ma, 2012). Thus we see that social media is not 'taking over' mass media but rather forging a more complex bond; this was also clear in the study about televised election debates and Twitter (article 4). Citizens use social media such as Twitter to respond to televised election debates, not necessarily to impact the agenda but to comment on the mediated event. This new dynamic is forcing the other participants in the digital political communication process to adapt and is a compelling example of how the interplay between older and newer media logics is reshaping the power relations among political actors, the media and the public.

3.5.2. Visibility

Here, I define Visibility as the opportunity to get content shared, retweeted and distributed through social media platforms. Visibility in social media is crucial, and it is closely connected to one's level of activity there. To stay in the news feed on any social media platform, political actors, media actors and citizens are perpetually encouraged, via the platform's given algorithm, to interact and otherwise participate. As documented in article 5, all of the Norwegian parties and their leaders were present on Facebook with profiles, and some appeared on Twitter, Instagram and YouTube as well. There is clearly a bandwagon effect or 'fear of not boarding with everyone else' (Deželan et al., 2014), but Norwegian political actors have also accepted the obvious need to be active on social media in order to create visibility and attention (article 2). Political journalists and commentators in Norway have also been early and active adopters of social media (Rogstad, 2013), though their level of activity varies according to their professional role (journalist vs. commentator, for

example). Political journalists believe that the busier they are on social media, the more responses and tips they get (article 3).

Visibility, then, is the reward for interaction on social media (Bucher, 2012:1174). Based on her reading of Foucault's notion of spectacle and surveillance, Taina Bucher argues that 'becoming visible, or being granted visibility, is a highly contested game of power in which the media play a crucial role' (Bucher, 2012:1165, see also Skogerbø & Karlsen, 2014). She describes the new conditions through which visibility is constructed by algorithms online, particularly on Facebook, and concludes that inactivity is a death knell there—the social media logic drives participants in the political communication process to be interactive and engaged in order to be visible on digital platforms. Sometimes this is both conscious and constructive; other times a political actor will become visible thanks to a scandal of some sort. One very typical source of 'news' is 'someone says something stupid on Facebook or Twitter' (article 2), which can create attention in both traditional and social media.

3.5.3. Networking

Here, I define Networking as the opportunity to add friends and followers as well as acknowledge each other through likes and favorites on social media platforms. The number of one's fans, followers or friends on social media is one indication of the popularity of an actor. Popular actors, of course, can potentially mobilise large number of followers, either for online activities such as sharing content or offline activities such as voter contact. Yet actors must be visible to people there first, because social media is a 'pull media', premised on people opting in (Nielsen & Vaccari, 2013:2335), as I point out in article 5. Politicians can build networks by adding friends to a private Facebook profile or adding followers through Twitter, but one's Facebook page requires that the initiative come from the user. Social media logic, then, also dictates that political actors buy promotions or run competitions on their Facebook pages, buying visibility through sponsored updates.

My empirical studies also demonstrated that political actors still depend on traditional media to reach a large audience with political news (article 2), even as they attempt to

bypass it on social media. Younger politicians in lower ranking positions with less access to mainstream media are, unsurprisingly, more active users of social media than more established actors (article 1). On the other side, social media demands a complicated balancing act for political journalists (articles 3 and 4). While it provides valuable tools and expands access to information and potential sources, it also blurs the line between professional and personal (this impacts journalists more than commentators). In order to create engaging content on social media, these journalists have developed different strategies to give the important impression of balance and objectivity. Commentators acquire both ideas and feedback from political actors and citizens using social media.

3. 5.4. Connectivity

Here, I define Connectivity as the opportunity to interact through comments, mentions and @replies on social media platforms. The empirical studies demonstrate that citizens are now readily connected to political actors on social media and especially Facebook. Article 5 demonstrates that people are more accustomed to following or 'friending' political actors than they were even just a few years ago, and they are more comfortable doing so in Norway than in, for example, Denmark, the UK or the US. We also saw an increasing tendency towards dialogue between voters and politicians, both on Twitter (Larsson & Ihlen, 2015; Enli & Skogerbø, 2013) and on Facebook (Article 5). Liking content on Facebook is the lowest common denominator for interaction between citizens and political actors. As mentioned above, people use Twitter as a political backchannel during televised political debates, not to set an alternative agenda, but to criticize and cheer on the mediated political debate.

3.5.5. Segmentation

Here, I define Segmentation as the opportunity to measure and analyze data from social media platforms and based on those data, segment information to specific groups or individuals. A fundamental part of the social media logic is the ability to measure and analyse human interactions, and this is particularly relevant to political communication. All of the political party representatives I interviewed tracked social

media analytics with varying degrees of sophistication (article 2) while trying to understand what their fans, friends and followers responded to. When certain types of content prompted a peak in engagement through likes and shares, political actors adapted by publishing more content of that type. Social media analytics also inform the process by which political parties buy online ads on Facebook to target specific demographics (often instead of ads in printed newspapers). The ability to reach a specific demographic group is very valuable to the political parties, as discussed in article 2. Users of social media and other communication technologies leave so many digital traces that an entire science, called big data, has arisen around those traces (boyd & Crawford, 2012). Those actors who most successfully draw insight from this data will have clear advantages over their peers (Tufekci, 2014).

Nevertheless, Norwegian political actors are not nearly as sophisticated in segmentation and targeting as American candidates (Issenberg, 2013), partly due to campaign financing, jurisdiction and the political culture, as discussed in chapter 3. For these reasons, microtargeting is not a typical feature of Norwegian political campaigns, though the two major parties, the Labour and Conservative Parties, run extensive door-knocking efforts.

The political and media actors I interviewed not only kept track of followers, fans, shares and website impression but also data regarding the timing of various social media gestures—when to publish and on which platform to achieve maximum effect. Just as a news rhythm and the immediacy of breaking news are crucial aspects of the traditional media logic (Brighton & Foy, 2007; Thorbjørnsrud, Figenschou & Ihlen, 2014), timeliness online is an essential part of the social media logic. Digital communication technologies enable people to communicate synchronously or asynchronously via different kinds of networking (one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many), and information about when people are online, and using which devices, is important. Political actors use social media before an event to promote it, as well as during and after the event to impact the editorial media's framing of it (article 2). Timeliness of content is one of the components of Facebook's algorithms that structure one's prospects for visibility (Bucher, 2012:1167): 'there is a higher probability of making it into the Top News the closer to real-time the story is published' (Bucher, 2012:1172). Likewise, Twitter has become an attractive back

channel for large political TV events in Norway (article 4), because it allows citizens, media actors and political actors the opportunity to interact and comment on these live occasions. Political actors also gauge feedback and reactions using social media to evaluate their political performances or arguments. Van Dijck and Poell contrast the 'liveness' of mass media and the 'real-timeness' of social media, the latter of which generates massive amounts of user data as something is happening (2013:10). Of course, timeliness in social media is a double-edged sword, in the sense that the social media logic also allows for 'persistence'—that is, the durability of online expressions and content (boyd, 2014:11). For example, tweets written by the Norwegian politician Solveig Horne in 2010 about homosexuality were scrutinised and criticised when she became a government minister in 2013.[26] Online political expressions, then, produce digital footsteps that remain visible behind political actors for the rest of their careers.

As I have demonstrated in this section, Norwegian political communication on digital platforms can be examined according to the five main affordances offered by the social media platforms under scrutiny here. In the next chapter, I will introduce the methods guiding this study and the empirical article, the methodological challenges I encountered and the strategies I used to solve them.

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[26] See the article 'Horne om voldtekter i 2011: Jentene har like mye ansvar'

[Horne on rapes in 2011: Girls have equal share of responsibility], http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/solberg-regjeringen/horne-om-voldtekter-i-2011-jentene-har-like-mye-ansvar/a/10152430/. Solveig Horne is Minister of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.

Chapter 4: Research strategy and methods

In this chapter I will introduce the methods guiding this study. I start out with a discussion of the 'computational turn' in political communication and social media studies, and what many argue is a quantitative domination in the field. I suggest that mixed methods can broaden the type of research questions we ask within digital political communication studies. I then provide an outline of the data collection and methodological approaches of the different case studies and conclude with an ethical discussion.

The Internet and social media represent both continuity and change for research on political communication—while institutions, legal frameworks and the general political culture remain important, there have been profound developments in methods of data collection and analysis (Jensen, 2012). Thus, the dynamic and evolving environment that characterises political interaction among networked publics presents many methodological possibilities to researchers. In this chapter, I discuss those possibilities (and challenges). In what follows, I define methods as 'the concrete instruments for collecting and analysing empirical data' (Jensen, 2012: 284).

4.1. The "computational turn" in political communication

The abundance of data from social media has allowed researchers to examine the practices, functions and affordances related to these platforms within a broad range of areas. The general trend in research has been towards quantitative, large-scale projects using automated processes to capture and analyse activities on social media platforms (Highfield & Leaver, 2014). This approach allows researchers to study extended online activity, the uses and evolution of social media platforms over time and across topics, and the populations that thrive there—it has been called the 'computational turn' in the social sciences and humanities (Berry, 2011). These kinds of studies have come to characterise the research field. Because the processes of collecting, organising, cleaning, and analysing this data can be more or less automated, it is now possible to vacuum up the digital footprints of individuals or entire groups, often

through APIs (automated programming interface), which are now highly efficient research tools (Lomborg & Bechman, 2014).

Despite an often overwhelming amount of data concerning online social and political behaviour, not all of it is registered. 'Lurkers'—that is, readers, observers or silent users—represent a group of users who might remain below researchers' radar, as their click-through activity is not made available through Facebook or Twitter's APIs (Lomborg & Bechman, 2014). While silent users may be the biggest user group on social media (Brandtzæg, 2012; Van Dijck, 2009), 'perhaps the only possible way of getting relevant data is to ask the lurkers themselves' (Lomborg & Bechman, 2014:259). Lurkers also represent an interesting example of 'data found vs. data made' (Jensen, 2012:288). Theoretically, on social media, all of the data is already there and the system or platform becomes one's 'method'. But user intentions or motivations are not necessarily discernible or available as data points and must be investigated through means other than quantitative data registration. Social media makes it easy to 'find' data, that is, but if the data does not allow us to ask the right questions, we must turn elsewhere to answer our research questions.

For the reasons mentioned above, several researchers have argued for the need to reconsider the methodological trends in digital political communication research that has marginalized qualitative methods (see Bennett & Iyengar, 2008; Karpf et al., 2015; Lomborg & Bechmann, 2014). A big data approach also has its clear limits and pitfalls, including a lack of transparency and unknown data quality (see boyd & Crawford, 2012; Larsson & Moe, 2012; Lomborg & Bechman, 2014). This call for more diversified methodological approaches inspired me in my own research project, which draws upon an approach that is both data-driven and theory-driven—I am interested in mapping the field but also applying and contributing to existing theories. As mentioned earlier, there is still field to map within digital political communication. The adoption of and adaptation to new communication technologies among the three key actor groups are not adequately addressed in the research literature generally, and especially in a Scandinavian context, and this was part of the motivation for writing articles 1, 4 and 5. Thus, part of this dissertation remains data driven. Still, the overall research project is also theory driven, in the sense that I engage with both established and new theories related to media and communication technology, such as news

media logic, social media logic and affordances. I preferred descriptive, quantitative methods for how and what questions, such as how often do political actors reply to users on their Facebook pages or which politicians are most quoted in printed newspapers based on their tweets. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, were more applicable to questions such as why is digital interactivity challenging for political actors or why are there differences in the social media practice of political journalists and commentators.

4.2. Applying mixed methods to big and small data

The type of insight one seeks about the research object(s) determines one's research methods. My interest in mapping the strategies, intentions and motivations behind online political behaviour through qualitative methods, combined with quantitative methods, evokes this observation of Robert K. Yin's: 'Most commonly, case studies are used to gain insight into causal processes, whereas surveys provide an indication of the prevalence of a phenomenon' (Yin, 2009, p. 175). In order to take full advantage of the abundance of data involved in digital communication, 'big' data should be combined with 'small' data, here understood as qualitative methods.

I understand mixed-methods research to be 'the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study' (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004:17). By applying mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative), I hope to draw upon the strengths of both approaches and minimise their weaknesses (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; see also Creswell, Clark & Garrett, 2008). For example, I combined interaction data gleaned from political actors' Facebook pages and semi-structured interviews (article 2) to compare major and minor political parties' interaction strategies and practices on social media during an election campaign. This made it possible to study the disparity between intention (expressed in the interviews) and practice (indicated in the usage data). Because the actors using political communication often have strategic ambitions, it is very important to analyse and interpret those intentions, as well as their effects.

Many scholars have argued that quantitative and qualitative methods are incommensurate (i.e. discussed by Grønmo, 2004) given the challenges related to combining and 'translating' findings from different methods through a process known as triangulation (Grønmo, 2004: 56). But if the researcher can remain open and experimental regarding both older and newer methods when researching new modes of communication, it is easier to avoid the 'rearview mirrorism' described by Marshall McLuhan—that is, the tendency to define new media and communication practices in terms of the old (McLuhan & Fiore, 1967).

4.3. The methodological structure

As I discussed in chapter 1, political communication on social media is a process or interplay among many interactive participants with (potentially) strategic intentions, the outcome of which is largely unpredictable. In order to study such a research object, some crucial methodological questions must be asked, says Udo Kelle:

> Any serious methodological consideration in the framework of any science should . . . regard the nature of the investigated phenomenon first, and thereafter address the question which method may be adequate to describe, explain or understand this phenomenon. (Kelle, 2001:2)

I have structured this dissertation around five empirical cases, and in what follows I will present the overarching methodological structure of the thesis in more detail. The table below is an overview of the studies and their applied methods:

Article	Topic	Research question	Data material	Method	Actor
Article 1. 'Of Course we Are on Facebook': Use and Non-Use of Social Media among Swedish and Norwegian Politicians	Social media adoption and use	RQ2 (political actors): How and why are political actors using social media?	Data from political actors' open Facebook pages and Twitter profiles	Activity index, combined with logistic regression analyses of individual and contextual data	Political actors
Article 2. The Social Media Paradox Explained: Comparing Political Parties' Facebook Strategy vs. Practice	Political online interactivity	RQ2 (political actors): How and why are political actors using social media?	Semi-structured interviews with communication directors and campaigners in political parties, as well as metadata from political Facebook pages	Semi-structured interviews combined with interaction analyses from political actors' Facebook pages, descriptive statistics	Political actors
Article 3. Intermedia Agenda Setting: Political Journalists' Source Hunting in Social Media	Agenda building through social media	RQ 3 (media actors): How and why are political journalists using social media? RQ2 (political actors): How and why are political actors using social media?	Semi-structured interviews with political journalists and commentators, as well as political Twitter references in printed newspapers	Semi-structured interviews, content analysis, descriptive statistics	Media actors, political actors
Article 4. Social Media as a Political Backchannel: Twitter Use during Televised Election Debates in Norway	Online debates	RQ4 (Citizens): How and why are citizens using social media? RQ 3 (media actors): How and why are political journalists using social media? RQ2 (political actors): How and why are political actors using social media?	Twitter messages on specific hashtags and user profiles and televised political debate	Longitudinal content analyses	Primarily citizens, secondarily political actors and media actors
Article 5. The Social Media Logic of Political Interaction: Exploring Citizens' and Politicians' Relationship on Facebook and Twitter	Online interaction and response	RQ4 (Citizens): How and why are citizens using social media? RQ2 (political actors): How and why are political actors using social media?	Survey data about citizens' interaction and response with political actors on social media	Online/web panel survey, descriptive statistics, logistic regression	Citizens and political actors

Table 4: Methodological approaches in the five empirical studies.

I am mainly interested in *how* and *why* questions in terms of the three main actor groups and their interactions and connections on digital channels. As mentioned in chapter 1, the purpose for many of the studies was to examine why there are differences between what actors (particularly political and media actors) say they will do and what they actually do. Common to several of the studies, then, is a comparative view of aspects such as adoption vs. use, strategy vs. practice, effort vs. response.

In order to improve the methodological quality of the empirical studies, I have taken several steps to address their validity, reliability and generalisability. I outline these approaches below.

4.4. Validity, reliability, generalisability

Here, I understand *validity* to be the appropriateness of the data material, tools and selected methods in relation to the study's research questions (Grønmo, 2004), or, as Muijs asks, 'Are we measuring what we want to measure?' (Muijs, 2004). In the next section, I will explain how I have operationalised the research questions into concrete, measureable and/or interpretable case studies. Correspondingly, then, I understand *reliability* to be one's degree of trust in one's data collection and analysis, and one's ability to replicate one's study (Østbye et al., 2007; Grønmo, 2004). I intend to ensure the reliability of this research project by being as transparent as possible and explaining in great detail how the data was collected and analysed. Because this research project uses mixed methods to address its research questions, it should be said that validity and reliability are understood differently with quantitative and qualitative methods, and their relevance is even disputed for the latter (Østbye et al., 2007:11). Thagaard (1998; cited by Grønmo, 2004) has suggested three alternative terms for qualitative methods (my translation):
- credibility instead of reliability
- confirmability instead of validation
- transferability instead of generalisation

Independently of which terms are used to create trust and credibility in the research project, if the validity and the reliability are high, it can be possible to achieve generalizability. *Generalisability* is here understood to signify whether a study's findings are universal or mainly pertain to a specific condition, context or time. Because my empirical studies took place in a specific geographic location (Norway), a specific time (2013), and a specific political and media context, it may be difficult to generalise their findings to other political contexts. Context, after all, is crucial in a (digital) political communication, whether related to a political system, political culture, media system or technology adaptation, as previous research demonstrates (Anstead & Chadwick, 2009; Lilleker et al., 2011). Still, I will argue that it is possible to generalise insights from the empirical cases into theoretical possibilities, as I will address in conclusion. Because the Nordic countries are so similar with regard to their political communication (see Kristensen & Blach-Ørsten, 2015; Nord, 2015; Strömbäck, Ørsten, Aalberg, 2008), the findings from this research project could, in general, be applicable to a larger Nordic setting as well, and potentially to other countries with similar characteristics.

Regarding the level of analysis for my research project, the overarching research question (RQ1) is on a macro level, while the three sub-questions (RQ2, RQ3, and RQ4) are on a meso level. I am interested in groups—media actors, political actors and citizens—not individuals per se. I conduct individual interviews with selected representatives of the media and political actor groups, but it is the aggregated views that were useful to me. Likewise, my survey regarding citizens' interactions with politicians on social media privileged aggregated points of view as well, in order to expose tendencies and trends. Because the group was the unit of analysis for my research project, the sub-research questions were addressed to a meso (group) level and the overarching research question (RQ1) was addressed to a macro level: the networked publics. I am aware of the risk of a false comparison between levels, but in order to say something meaningful about networked publics, I had to build upon insights derived from participants or groups within these publics. Thus, I argue that digital strategies and practices among the participants help us build insights into how

the networked publics function, and therefore I use insights from the sub-questions to address the main research question.

In the next section, I will present some of the methodological challenges I encountered in the empirical studies as I sought to ensure methodological quality through my data access and data collection.[27]

4.5. Data access

While this research project was always focused on social media and political communication, the actors and research objects, and even the research questions, changed and developed during the research process. Data access and interview access to informants both turned out to be somewhat challenging, and while I ended up with Norwegian representatives of the three main actor groups, I initially considered including Swedish political and media actors. I was interested in comparing two 'most similar systems' in relation to the use of social media in political communication, but interview access to Swedish political journalists, and particularly communication directors in the Swedish political parties, turned out to be harder than I expected. When I was not able to obtain an interview with the main governing party at that time, the Conservative Party (*Moderaterna*), after several attempts over six months, I had to scale down my cross-country comparison and instead concentrate on aspects within one national context. The challenge of gaining access to elite sources (Figenshou, 2010) in Sweden as opposed to my home country of Norway can possibly be explained by my professional network, which helped in securing responses to queries. Nevertheless, access to sources (Østebye, 2007:114) became a deciding factor in my final research design.

4.6. Data collection

While access to sources was crucial for the qualitative parts of this study, access to social media data was essential to its more quantitative aspects. Two issues in particular concerned me in relation to the data quality and appropriate tools. Social

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[27] Regarding data analysis, more detailed descriptions appear in the individual articles.

media services such as Twitter have presented many opportunities for research on their political uses. By collecting data from Twitter's API,[28] it is also possible to accumulate metadata about users, their networks, and their interactions with content, among other things. Nevertheless, a lack of transparency about the data's quality is an issue; in general, for example, the exact size of the population of data objects is unclear when one collects data on specific hashtags, words or user accounts (González-Bailón et al., 2012). Because only few services, such as Gnip and Datasift, have access to Twitter's so-called streaming API or 'firehose'—a massive, real-time Twitter stream[29]—it is more common for analytical services to offer access to the 'water hose', referring to Twitter's search API with its limited data access. The search API delivers only a limited amount of data, while the streaming API delivers more data, and especially more real-time data, than the search API.[30] As Jean Burgess points out about Twitter's two main APIs, 'it is impossible for us to say with any certainty that we are capturing a complete archive or even a "representative" sample (whatever "representative" might mean in a data-driven, textualist paradigm)'. Two questions thus arise: What is the universe of data objects at Twitter and can we trust the quality of the data?

For the two articles in which I analysed Twitter data (1 and 4), I used two different services: yourTwapperKeeper (an open-source service) and Meltwater Buzz (a commercial service).[31] In order to test the data quality these services provided, I compared the results from a hashtag search in 2013. As is evident from this table, I received mixed results on my tests at four random points in time before the 2013 election:

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[28] Application programming interface, which provides structured access to communication data in standardised formats (Burgess & Bruns, 2012).

[29] 'The Twitter Firehose', http://apivoice.com/2012/07/12/the-twitter-firehose/.

[30] 'Guide to the Twitter API—Part 3 of 3: An Overview of Twitter's Streaming API', https://blog.gnip.com/tag/gardenhose/.

[31] I used Meltwater Buzz in 2011 for Twitter data collection, then changed to yourTwapperKeeper in 2013 and 2014. In 2013, interestingly, Meltwater Buzz apparently had access to the Twitter firehose, according to the article titled 'Three Things to Know about Social Listening', http://www.meltwater.com/blog/3-things-to-know-about-social-listening/.

#nrkvalg:
Cross-checking the dataset

Date	YourTwapperKeeper	Meltwater Buzz
12.08	3324	8000
13. - 20.08	10754	7000
15. - 27.08	11386	15765
05. - 15.09	23707	31450

Table 5. Comparison of data collection on #nrkvalg (the election hashtag for the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation [NRK] in 2013) using yourTwapperKeeper and Meltwater Buzz.

Only exclusive services will get access to the whole population of Twitter data, while services that are based on Twitter's search API see only a smaller share (Bruns & Liang, 2012). This begs the following difficult question: When only a smaller share of data is available through Twitter's search API, are Twitter studies in smaller countries with smaller Twitter populations impacted differently from studies in countries with larger Twitter populations? While I have not been able to detect any systemic unevenness in my Twitter data, I do not have a perfect representation of the universe. Meltwater Buzz, for example, cited technical glitches to explain a lower data quantity at one of the time points in relation to the results delivered by YourTwapperKeeper (personal correspondence with Meltwater Buzz). My test clearly indicated that data quality varied unpredictably between these two services, and it is very hard to get a clear understanding of the total population, or N. Even though this test did not change the way I used digital services for Twitter data collection, it helped me to understand some of the weaknesses of using Twitter's search API.

For the Facebook data, I was interested in measuring how often the page owner on public pages for political parties or party leaders replied or was otherwise interactive in the comments section, but it was hard to find open-source services that measured this form of interaction. By developing an application in cooperation with programmers from the University of Oslo (which I will explain in further detail in the next section, as well as in article 2), my colleagues and I gained access to a service that helped us capture, collect and measure interaction quantitatively. Many academics prefer to do research on Twitter rather than Facebook because of the easier data access with the former and lack of suitable data collection tools for the latter. But

because Facebook is more popular all over the world, including Norway, it was important for me to account for it, and I found the means to do so.

In the next section, I will discuss in further detail the methodological choices made in the case studies and the methodological contributions.

4.7. Methodological choices in the articles

I structured the dissertation around five empirical case studies whose purpose is to answer and explore the dissertation's main research questions from different perspectives.

Article 1: 'Of Course We Are on Facebook': Use and Non-Use of Social Media among Swedish and Norwegian Politicians

In this article, Anders Olof Larsson and I wanted to examine the adoption and active use of social media among Norwegian and Swedish politicians. The purpose was to provide a structural overview of the social media practices of politicians in Norway and Sweden, and we employed novel methodologies for data collection and statistical analyses. We looked at the activity level, as well as whether and which individual demographic and contextual variables could explain the political actors' social media activity. The methodological approach in the article was threefold: First, we identified and counted all of the politicians with (public) profiles on Facebook and Twitter. Second, we created an 'activity index' based on the time span of each political actor's media profiles (number of days) divided by number of updates. We collected and downloaded data from Twitter via Twitter's API. For Facebook, we had to manually count the number of posts by each political actor and note the creation date of the page. At the time of data collection (May 2013), we could not identify any open-source tools that performed the tasks we needed. We decided to include only Facebook *pages* in the analyses, due to their public nature, and exclude private Facebook profiles. Facebook pages had the additional advantage of offering users more advanced affordances, such as demographic insight into their followers. Third, we developed two dependent variables with which to gauge whether demographic or

contextual circumstances impacted the political actors' activity, since previous research had suggested this possibility (Vergeer, Hermans & Cunha, 2012). Our individual variables were age, gender, incumbency and key position; our contextual variables were ideology, vote percentage and size of constituency.

The main methodological contribution of this study was the analytic framework we developed, which lent itself to different political systems and cultures as well.

Article 2: The Social Media Paradox Explained: Comparing Political Parties' Facebook Strategy vs. Practice

Here, I set out to compare (expressed) strategy to actual online performance of both minor and major political parties in Norway on Facebook. I was particularly interested in measuring level of interactivity on Facebook, which was mentioned by several parties and in the research literature as a crucial vehicle in election campaigns. I conducted semi-structured interviews with communication and campaign strategists in the parties and consequently chose to focus on the level of interactivity or responsiveness on the Facebook pages of both the parties and the party leader. In cooperation with programmers at the University Center for Information Technology (UiO), my colleague Anders Olof Larsson and myself, we developed an application that made it possible to measure the number of interactions on open, public Facebook pages. At the time of data collection (fall 2013), it was not at all clear that any open-source services used within academic research could provide this type of feature. By uploading data from selected Facebook pages, such as that of former prime minister Jens Stoltenberg, we were able to discern and measure the number of times that a Facebook page owner participated in the comments section. By combining my interview results with my Facebook interaction data, I was able to assess the disparity between strategy and practice, as well as provide some explanation for it. The *main methodological contribution* of this study was its interaction measurement within the Facebook application, coupled with its combination of interviews with social media data.

Article 3. Intermedia Agenda Setting: Political Journalists' Source Hunting in Social Media

This article focuses on agenda building and intermedia agenda setting through social media by looking at how political journalists interact with and use information subsidies (i.e. press releases or talking points) from political actors in social media, particularly Twitter. Once again, I combined semi-structured interviews with social media data to gain insight into how agenda building takes place in a hybrid media system. This time, the sourced social media data were collected via the media archive Retriever, and I mainly measured how often politicians' tweets were quoted in the largest printed newspapers in Norway over a nine-month period. My interviews, in turn, allowed me to detect sweeping tendencies in political journalists' and commentators' social media use, particularly related to sourcing, information gathering, distribution and network building. The *main methodological contribution* of this study is twofold. I developed an analytical framework to describe journalists' social media use and combined interviews and political Twitter data to produce new insights into the sourcing practices of political journalists and commentators.

Article 4: Social Media as a Political Backchannel: Twitter Use during Televised Election Debates in Norway

Here, the initial focus was to compare the agenda of two televised election debates in relation to related debates that were taking place via selected Twitter hashtags and user accounts. The study sought to determine whether alternative agendas developed on Twitter during the televised debates. Twitter data was collected via the commercial service Meltwater Buzz, which used a meta search of several social media search engines. Through performing and comparing content analyses of the televised debates and tweets, my co-writers and myself found that users on Twitter did not develop an alternative agenda but instead used Twitter as a 'political backchannel' to comment on the televised political debate. In order to further delve into the content of the related tweets, we developed a multistep model IMSC (issue, meta, sentiment, close reading) to analyse the 'debate about the debate' taking place on Twitter. Through this qualitative close reading of tweets, we were able to discover how the Twitter

debates supplemented and contrasted with the debate taking place on television. The *main methodological contribution* of this study is its development of a multistep model which makes it possible to uncover different layers in the Twitter data, particularly related to what we call 'meta talk', as well as to structure the findings.

Article 5: The Social Media Logic of Political Interaction: Exploring Citizens' and Politicians' Relationship on Facebook and Twitter

The aim of this study was to examine the interactions that take place between citizens and political actors on Facebook and Twitter. By extending and operationalising the theoretical perspective of a 'social media logic', we analysed online interaction using data from a representative survey based on a sample of 1057 Norwegians. For this study, we developed an analytical framework based of what we called 'connective affordances' derived from the three main practices for connecting on Facebook and Twitter: acknowledging, redistributing and interacting. By applying two different set of variables, political interest and demographic characteristics (age, gender and education), and running a series of logistic regressions on the connective affordances we examined, we were able to analyse the socio-demographic characteristics of those citizens who appeared to interact the most with or get most response from political actors. The *main methodological contribution* of this study is the analytical framework and operationalisation of 'social media logic'. By mapping out the connective affordances which currently characterise Facebook and Twitter, we utilised our framework to investigate, characterise and measure different types of interactions on social media.

The last part of this methodological chapter concerns ethical considerations that I have dealt with in this research project.

4.8. Ethical considerations

In order to address my research questions, I faced several ethical challenges in my studies, in particular related to the two social media platforms, Facebook and Twitter. Due to rapidly changing technology and user behaviour, as well as ethical guidelines that are trying to keep up with technological developments, the ethics of digital

political communication studies are, to put it mildly, a complicated balancing act. One's ethical judgments must be based on the case at hand, as suggested by Aoir Ethics (2012), which sounds obvious but is in fact confusing, as I will explain further below. Here, I will address ethical issues related to changing technologies and user patterns, informed consent, and privacy and sensitive information. Conducting research on the Internet is different from conducting 'offline' research, and I have found different sources of guidance in various ethical guidelines for Internet research (Aoir, 2012; NESH 2014; Fossheim & Ingierd, 2015).

4.8.1. Changing technologies and user patterns

Over the years of this research project, several adjustments and new features have been launched on social media platforms, and new user practices have arisen as well. Towards the end my research period, for example, Twitter changed the 'favorite' feature to 'heart' (spelled out like Facebook's 'like'), with a retroactive application of the new label.[32] This meant that items users had once 'favorited' now became 'hearted', which had certain stronger connotations for many users, among them political journalists who tried to cultivate neutral online practices. Earlier, I mentioned that some users applied 'favorite' as a way to bookmark content, as well, and these labels too now became 'hearts'. In article 5, as mentioned, we looked into the details of social media's affordances, such as 'like'. But what does a 'like' *mean* to a user? And can a 'like' have different connotations in different contexts? In Norway, a politician from the Progress Party created headlines when he 'liked' certain racist content on Facebook.[33] According to that politician, he clicked 'like' merely to indicate that he had seen the post. For researchers, then, users' intentions when they interact with social media's affordances are not always obvious.

Another change in user behaviour that was apparent during the research project, though it did not directly influence my data collection, was the increasing use of Facebook pages as political debating spaces or networked publics. According to the

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[32] See the article 'Hearts on Twitter', https://blog.twitter.com/2015/hearts-on-twitter.
[33] See 'Frp-Leirstein liker dette: Møkkafolk fra et møkkaland', http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/frp/frp-leirstein-liker-dette-moekkafoelk-fra-et-moekkaland/a/10108242/.

Norwegian ethical guidelines, researchers can quote from comments in online newspapers without asking for consent (Elgesem, 2015:25; NESH, 2014:5), but what if the debate is taking place on a newspaper's Facebook page? NESH's online ethical guidelines are a bit unclear as to how to approach consent in cases like this, as well as in situations involving political actors' public Facebook pages. NESH advises researchers to evaluate the given user's understanding of the public or private character of the networked spaces. Do participants in a discussion on Prime Minister Erna Solberg's Facebook page, for example, actually understand that their conversation is open and available for everyone to see? And do they understand that everyone can see their names, or do they think that only their Facebook friends can see their participation in the political dialogue? Questions like these arose during my research project, but, as I mentioned, I did not collect individuals' comments on Facebook but rather the metadata related to the comments.

4.8.2. Informed consent

Informed consent is a fundamental principle in research involving people (NESH, 2014), and the basic approach for researchers in social sciences is to ask for consent from their research subjects. By informing the subject about the research project and its funding, researchers also allow individuals to drop out of the project. This was also my procedure in my empirical studies, where I interviewed respondents who were political journalists and commentators, as well as communication directors in political parties. Explaining the context of the interviews and the ways in which the material would be used was crucial to gaining the trust of and access to the interview subjects. When the articles were written, I contacted those I had interviewed to get their approval for the quotes I had used.

Running large-scale data analysis on social media such as Twitter presents its own ethical considerations. Here, gaining consent is much more complicated because of the scale of the effort. If the data material is 50,000 tweets related to a political event such as an election debate on TV, it is technically challenging to inform every individual participating in a discussion related to a specific hashtag. Because Twitter is open by default and a hashtag (for example, #debatten) is related to a specific event

such as a TV program, conversations on specific hashtag should be understood to be even more open and public than a conversation between two individuals on Twitter (Moe & Larsson, 2012; Elgesem, 2015). I was primarily interested in aggregated and anonymous data from Facebook and Twitter, such as metadata (that is, number of comments) or activity indicators on Facebook and Twitter (that is, how often politicians updated their Facebook pages). By focusing mainly on these kinds of social media data and not on individuals' data, I avoided certain challenging ethical situations. Nevertheless, research on citizens' comments on political Facebook pages remains fraught, and I hope future studies will make the effort to get personal consent and study in closer detail how this kind of political communication is developing.

4.8.3. Anonymity and sensitive information

All of my respondents could choose whether they wanted to be identified or remain anonymous in my studies, and with one exception, all agreed to be identified. Nevertheless, I chose not to name my respondents in the articles but instead identify them by their media affiliation or party affiliation, because their meso-level alignments were more relevant than their actual identities. I included the names in the appendix of this cover chapter. Also, my interviews with political strategists about campaign-related issues ahead of the election generated information of a somewhat sensitive or private nature. I was always clear with the interview subjects that nothing they told me in interviews would be published before the election. I also made sure that the taped interview material was stored on a safe and protected computer.

This chapter has reviewed the different methods and methodological approaches that are needed to tackle both how and why questions in relation to political communication on social media. In addition, research on digital political communication raises a plethora of ethical questions, some of which I addressed here as well. In the next section, I will look more closely at the implications of a social media logic for the three key actor groups in Norway.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

This chapter discusses the wider implications of the conceptual framework I developed for political communication on social media. The dissertation has addressed the communication mechanism that actors simultaneously relate to and mould in networked publics. Here, I outline the implications of social media logic for the three key actor groups in this study. I argue that one of the main consequences of social media logic is a weakened role for media actors as gatekeepers of information, to the extent that they even become curators of information instead. Lastly, I propose suggestions for future research.

The main objective of this dissertation has been to examine the ways in which political communication takes place on digital social platforms during an election campaign in a Scandinavian context, with a specific focus on Norway. As mentioned in the introduction, a central motivation driving this research project is danah boyd's call to arms: 'Understanding the properties, affordances, and dynamics common to networked publics provides a valuable framework for working out the logic of social practices' (boyd, 2010:1). By applying an affordance approach to understanding the political communication process among key actor groups, this dissertation aims to outline new mechanisms for interaction in a hybrid media system such as Norway's. One of its main arguments is that social media logic impacts political communication by affording new mechanisms for visibility and influence. In this cover chapter, I examined social media logic by studying the affordances of social media platforms, and by examining the strategic communication and interplay among three key groups, political actors, media actors, and citizens, on social media platforms. This dissertation argues that social media logic represents a new mechanism for gaining attention, visibility and potentially influence in our digital world. Here, I will conclude by connecting the three actor groups with the conceptual framework for political communication on social media. Building on the previously discussed framework (Table 3, page 46), I classify the importance of the five high-level affordances in relation to the three key actor groups in the following section. Before I continue, I will remind the readers of the research questions. This dissertation started out by addressing one main research question and three sub-questions:

- RQ1: What characterises social media logic? How and why are Norwegian political actors, media actors and citizens adapting to social media logic?
- RQ2 (Political actors): How and why are political actors using social media?
- RQ3 (Media actors): How and why are political journalists using social media?
- RQ4 (Citizens): How and why are citizens using social media for political purposes?

The first research question sought to transcend the polarised normalisation versus equalisation hypothesis commonly structuring research about the Internet's impact on political communication and to place the emphasis on the affordances of social media platforms. Both the research literature and the mainstream media have expressed high expectations for how social media might impact political communication. In particular, the possibilities for enhanced or simply increased dialogue and for mobilising voters have been pointed to as means of increasing political interest, participation and trust (Negroponte, 1996; Shirky, 2008). This dissertation has demonstrated that the interactive potential of social media has not been fulfilled in quite this way, confirming previous research in this regard (Stromer-Galley, 2000, 2014; Lüders, Følstad & Waldal, 2014). This dissertation also resonates with literature in the field of communication technology history, which shows that optimism about technological change in the short run is usually unrealistic, but that, over time, new communication technology can change society, power and politics (Winston & Edelbach, 2000). In other words, changes are evolutionary rather than revolutionary, and new media continually mix and overlap with old media (Chadwick, 2013; Meyrowitz, 1985; Marvin, 1988), all of which makes the normalisation versus equalisation hypothesis problematic. Social media in Norwegian politics is both strengthening existing power relations and creating change. We have seen that the three largest parties have gained the most attention on social media, just as they do in traditional media (article 2; Larsson, 2015). Television also remains the most important information channel for Norwegian voters (NRK & MMI, 2013), and broadcasting of information is a more typical communication style among Norwegian politicians on social media than dialogue or other interaction with voters. On the other side, social media also makes it easier to mobilise and organise grassroots

engagement. In the 2013 election, the Norwegian Green Party ran a successful grassroots campaign and managed to secure a seat in the parliament as a result (Vestli, 2014).

Nevertheless, I will argue that the political communication research community loses sight of certain crucial developments if it remains mired in the normalisation versus equalisation debate. My proposed alternative is to focus on the interplay between actors and technology to understand how political communication arises and develops through the specific formats, rules or codes that social media platforms bring with them. As Carolyn Marvin observes, the history of newer media is 'less the evolution of technical efficiencies in communication than a series of arenas for negotiating issues crucial to the conduct of social life: among them, *who is inside and outside, who may speak, who may not, who has authority and may be believed*' (Carolyn Marvin, 1988:4, my emphasis). As in the case with social media platforms, in addition to analysing the new communication technologies in itself, it is also important to look at the changes in human behaviour and power relations that accompany unprecedented technological affordances. Even though change has not happened as quickly or as overwhelmingly as the optimists forecasted ten or fifteen years ago, social media are changing the political communication process in relation to how information is produced, distributed and consumed. This development, in turn, challenges the mass media's influence as a gatekeeper.[34] In what follows, I will discuss the implications of a social media logic for the three key actor groups in the Norwegian context.

The three sub-questions are mainly addressed in the empirical articles, and here I will connect the three actor groups with my conceptual framework for political communication on social media. Building on this framework (table 3), I classify the importance of the five high-level affordances—publishing, visibility, networking, connectivity and segmentation—in relation to the three key actor groups. This classification is a synthesis of the findings of the empirical articles. In order to

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[34] Mass media's role as gatekeepers or a 'regime of control' (Bruns, 2005:11) was described more than six decades ago by Kurt Lewin and David Manning White. McQuail defined this role as 'the process by which selections are made in media work, especially decisions whether or not to admit a particular news story to pass through the "gates" of a news medium into the news channels' (1994:213). Limited time (TV, radio) and space (printed newspapers), as well as assumptions about the audience profile of the media outlet, made it necessary to be highly selective about which news stories to run.

evaluate how the actors related to the respective affordances, I differentiate between three levels of importance: low, medium and high.

High-level affordances Implications					
Actors	Publishing	Visibility	Networking	Connectivity	Segmentation
Political actors	High	High	Low	Medium	Medium
Media actors	Medium	High	Medium	Low	High
Citizens	Low	Low	High	Medium	Low

Table 6. Implications of the social media logic in Norwegian political communication for the three actor groups - political actors, media actors and citizens.

5.1. Political actors

As the empirical articles have demonstrated, political actors value the ability to publish and create visibility directly. Bypassing editorial media and releasing political content to large networks of followers on social media is becoming an important marketing and mobilisation option for the parties. This visibility is created through activities such as likes, shares and frequent updates, and distribution in the form of shares and retweets is especially attractive to both political and media actor (as well as citizens, occasionally), both of whom hope to achieve viral effects. What political content will trigger likes, shares and comments is hard to anticipate, but emotional messages are usually a good start (Jonah Berger & Milkman, 2012). The challenge is to break the 'code' for social media logic. Networking through likes (Facebook) and favorites (Twitter) is less common among political actors, according to my data—just 28 percent of citizens had received likes from political actors, and those actors did not say much in the interviews about networking with citizens in this way. Connectivity through comments, on the other hand, was recognised as important, at least on a strategic level. Even though it can be challenging for political actors to be as

interactive on social media platforms as they say they are (article 2) or as citizens expect (article 5), smaller multiparty systems make this more likely than presidential systems such as the American system. A short distance between

those being governed and *those governing*, as well as a greater level of political trust might explain the greater interaction between political actors and citizens in Norway as compared to many other countries (article 5). This engagement demands that political actors both connect on and participate in the many online networks that exist, because the fragmented media situation makes it harder to reach a mass audience on one particular platform or channel. Thus, I have interpreted connectivity through interaction and comments to be of medium importance for political actors, while networking through likes is of low importance. Facebook allows for high degree of segmentation through analytics and measuring, and political actors are using it in order to target specific groups with ads (article 2). Nevertheless, privacy laws and limited resources (financial and human) makes segmentation less important for Norwegian political actors than for American political actors, for example, based on research findings from that context.

5.2. Media actors

In a hybrid media system such as Norway's, social media are becoming increasingly intertwined with editorial mass media (article 3). This does not mean that editorial mass media such as TV, radio, news sites and newspapers have diminished in importance for actors involved in political communication; instead, it indicates that social media services are now viable additional channels. Media actors also rely on social media for distribution, so visibility through distribution on social media is of high importance. Since media actors have their own publishing channels as well (either on paper, online, radio or television), publishing is of medium importance to media actors. Likewise, we see that political journalists use social media to tap into information and news from 'ordinary' users, as well as from influential and famous people (article 3), so networking through acknowledging other users is of medium importance for media actors. Connectivity through interaction and comments, on the other hand, is very demanding for media actors, and particularly political journalists (article 3), so connectivity is assigned low importance in this context.

Digital publishing possibilities online have made it easier to bypass the gatekeepers and attract attention through websites, blogs, social networks and video-sharing sites. Jane B. Singer calls it 'secondary gatekeeping' when users participate in sharing and making news content visible through social networking sites (Singer, 2014). These secondary gatekeepers, including political actors and citizens as well as media actors, influence which content gains visibility in a media environment that is strongly impacted by social shares on Facebook and Twitter. The media industry's faltering business model, due to a drop in print circulation and a loss of advertising markets to Facebook and Google is not making the situation any easier for media actors. Segmentation and analytics have always represented Facebook and Google's huge advantages, and increasingly, media actors must increasingly segmenting and personalising their media content as well.

5.3. Citizens

This study has demonstrated that social media platforms undercut the news media's role as gatekeepers[35] and allow political elites to communicate directly with citizens, and vice versa. We see a small but growing share of the Norwegian population following or friending politicians on social media and especially Facebook (article 5). Therefore, networking through the lowest common denominator (likes) is of high importance to citizens. This research project locates an increasing tendency to dialogue among voters and politicians on social media platforms, both on Facebook (article 5) and Twitter (Larsson & Ihlen, 2015; Enli & Skogerbø, 2013), indicating that social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter allow for more multidirectional communication or 'permanent exchange' to take place (Broesma & Graham, 2012; see also Skogerbø & Krumsvik, 2014). Connectivity through comments and interactions is increasing but remains relatively uncommon among

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[35] The gatekeeping paradigm has also been criticised for not taking into account increasing pressure from the growing numbers of PR professionals who offer ready-made material for time-pressed journalists (Allern, 1996). Gatewatching has thus been proposed as an alternative term to acknowledge the media's role in selecting which issues and sources get attention in society; journalists as gatewatchers are 'guides to the most relevant sources when approached by information seekers' (Bruns, 2005:4).

citizens (article 5); thus it is assigned medium importance. Most citizens use social media to connect with friends and family, and relatively few use it for political reasons or to produce content such as citizen journalism, based on my findings. Publishing, visibility and segmentation are thus seen to be of low importance to citizens. On the other hand, social media plays an increasingly important role in how news is both discovered and distributed, particularly among young readers in Norway (Medienorge, 2014). Historically, editors and journalists have developed, selected and produced the most important news stories, but increasingly we see that the most important stories are selected and decided by social media's algorithms and people's sharing on social media (Hindman, 2012).

5.4. Editorial media's role in transition

The changing dynamics between edited mass media and social media are highly relevant for how people get information about the world, which issues become salient, how we make decisions and, consequently, how democracy functions. Thus, the introduction of social media logic impacts digital communication power. As my studies have demonstrated, digital and mobile communication technologies challenge traditional understandings of how political communication, communication power and the public sphere function and afford new mechanisms for gaining attention, visibility and, potentially, influence. The Norwegian mass media have for the past few decades been so central to the political communication process that they have been called both 'actor' and 'director' in the relation between media and political actors in Norway, due to their agenda-setting power (Østbye & Aalberg, 2008; Allern, 2004). Strömbäck (2009) characterises agenda-setting power as *power to influence* rather than *power to decide* and argues that this invisible influence might be more powerful than explicit decision-making power. Based on the table presented on page 32, I propose a fifth phase in the relationship between media and politics in Norway:

Period	Role of the media	Period characteristics
Phase I: 1945-57	Channel	A loyal party press and the breakthrough of radio.
Phase II: 1961-96	Arena	A loyal party press under pressure and the advent of television.
Phase III: 1973-89	Director	Dissolution of the party press and the beginning of the television era. Increased journalistic professionalization with focus on independence.
Phase IV: 1993-2013	Actor	Television dominates. Increased focus on subjective journalism. Media intervenes in and direct the political debate. Alternative public arenas are marginalized.
Phase V: 2013 -	Curator	Television dominates still, but new digital media habits and social media platforms fragment media. In addition to producing journalism, editorial media is selecting and presenting content from different actors on social media.

Table 7. The five phases in the relationship between media and politics in Norway, based on and redeveloped from Østbye & Aalberg (2008). The beginning and ending of these phases are related to years in which national elections took place.

When political actors and citizens can reach out to huge audiences through their own channels or social media profiles and bypass editorial media, editorial media takes on a new role in networked publics. Based on this Norwegian study, we can expect that editorial media will increasingly operate as 'curators'—actors who produce journalism but also select, verify and present engaging content from different users. It might sound like a paradox, but while the mass media for many years have set the premises for the news media logic that individuals, institutions, organisations and

companies had to relate and adapt to, media actors must now relate and adapt to the social media logic, just like political actors and citizens.

In the following section I will focus on the dissertation's empirical, theoretical, and methodological contributions.

5.5. Empirical contributions

Through its articles, this dissertation offers a detailed understanding of the three main actors in the digital political communication process in Norway. Since the study of digital political communication is a relatively new research area, it is valuable to 'map the field' to figure out how different actors adopt and adapt to new communication technologies, as well as study their activity level, motivations and strategies. One contribution in particular I would like to underline is the insight gained by contrasting social media strategies with actual practices among political actors—this process allowed me to identify some major challenges related to political interactivity on Facebook. Additionally, insight into social media practice among political journalists and commentators related to open versus 'hidden' use, different roles and various sourcing efforts is also crucial to an understanding of how hybrid media systems and networked publics impact media actors' work. Lastly, citizens are gradually friending or following political actors in social media, particularly on Facebook, despite the fact that Facebook is mostly used for personal communication. Political Facebook pages have thus become networked publics for citizens and political actors—spaces that are outside of the mass media and traditional political party structures. While Facebook is the social media service preferred by citizens when contacting political actors, Twitter is utilised by citizens with high political interest as a political backchannel during, for example, televised political events, allowing citizens to evaluate, criticize and cheer on both media actors and political actors.

5.6. Theoretical contributions

The theoretical contribution of this dissertation is threefold. First, this dissertation connects the affordance approach to political communication research, which is not common within this research field. By differentiating between different levels of affordances, from more concrete features (low-levels) to more abstract communication outcomes (high-levels), the dissertation has demonstrated that the affordance approach is highly relevant when examining digital political communication, both from a user and a platform perspective. In chapter 3 I outlined why this approach can give fruitful theoretical and conceptual insights to the field. Secondly, the dissertation contributes with new insights into the emerging theories of social media logic and network media logic. This is a dynamic and exciting field, building on existing media and communication theories while also taking into account new technologies. This dissertation has suggested how the theory of social media logic can be operationalised and applied in empirical studies. My focus has been on political communication, but this way of operationalising social media logic can also be applied to other fields within the social sciences and humanities. Finally, I have developed and proposed a new conceptual framework to analyse and examine political communication on social media. The framework is developed inductively based on empirical findings from the articles, as well as theoretical discussion related to affordances and social media logic. By critically examining the affordance of the social media platforms, as well as key actor groups' user practices, the framework allows researchers to examines the new mechanism for information production, distribution, consumption and reaction. The dissertation also suggests how implications of the social media logic related to key actor groups can be examined. Even though the conceptual framework is based on two specific social media platforms, Facebook and Twitter, the different communication modes for low and high-level affordances can be updated and adjusted for future communication technologies.

5.7. Methodological contributions

This dissertation problematized the domination of the quantitative approach within the research field and suggested alternative approaches to studying digital political communication using mixed methods. Through the empirical studies, I explored different approaches to data collection on Facebook and Twitter while combining quantitative and qualitative methods to identify strategies, intentions and motivations among the actors. More specifically, each empirical study sought to contribute with some methodological feature. In article 1, we proposed a framework of demographic and political variables to identify differences in social media adoption and activity; in article 2, I suggested new ways to collect Facebook data; in article 3, I presented a framework to examine the interplay between social media sources in traditional media; in article 4, we used the IMSC model to analyse Twitter data in closer detail; and in article 5, we operationalised social media logic to study the connectivity between citizens and political actors. Even though this dissertation is set in Norway, a country of five million inhabitants that is characterised by a multiparty political system, a media system associated with the democratic corporative model, and high technology adoption and use among citizens, I will argue that this research offers insights into digital political communication research that is also valuable outside the Norwegian context. The interplay in hybrid media systems is not unique to Norway, as demonstrated by Chadwick (2013), who mainly analysed political communication in the UK and the US. In addition, social media logic or network media logic was developed without a specific national context in mind (Van Dijck & Poell, 2013; Klinger & Svensson, 2014). Nevertheless, differences in political culture, media use and regulatory setting, to mention a few, will nuance the findings presented here in a Norwegian and Scandinavian setting.

5.8. Suggestions for future studies

This research project sought to study how digital political communication among three main actor groups takes place in networked publics using empirical studies from Norway. As mentioned earlier, this is not an all-encompassing study covering all aspects of digital political communication. During this journey, in fact, I have

discovered additional gaps and shortcomings in the existing research literature that future studies could address, and I will introduce them here.

5.8.1. Data driven journalism

Sharing of editorial news media articles on social media represents an important distribution and promotion channel for editorial media, but how are the relevant statistics and data analysis impacting the newsroom? Are 'successful' viral stories encouraging journalists to produce more stories with the same characteristics, so as to drive traffic? Are analytics impacting news values, and, if so, what are the characteristics of those new priorities? How is personalisation based on user data impacting journalism? Similarly, how are data about readers and their reading behaviour impacting journalism? In other words, how is the hybrid media system impacting the content of journalism? Despite all of the potentials to increase traffic via social media, Silicon Valley companies are securing an increasingly larger share of advertising budgets. How are media actors handling the complicated balancing act towards social media companies?

5.8.2. Data driven politics

Just as media actors run analytics related to their stories and products, political parties and candidates track the statistics on their different platforms. How does data about users or followers' behaviour impact the message that political actors promote and base their campaigns on? Are political actors using social media to test the framing of their political messages? And do we see evidence that political actors in multiparty systems such as Norway's with a strong party focus during election campaigns run more opportunistic or populist campaigns because they are able to measure the most popular content? Are ideas from voters on social media systematised and used by political actors in policy development?

5.8.3. The function of networked publics

There are many examples of debates that start as comment threads on Instagram or Facebook and then become huge news stories. Thus, users in social media can impact which topics are discussed, who participates in those discussions, how the debate is framed and the speed of the debate. What are the consequences of this influence for networked publics? What characterises well-functioning networked publics, as opposed to dysfunctional networked publics? What hinders people from deliberating in networked publics, and how are different demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, political interest and so forth impacting these perspectives?

Chapter 6. Summary of the articles

The purpose of this section is to give a short overview of each article, the main findings and contributions, as well as where they are published or submitted.

Article 1, which mainly addresses RQ 2:

"Of course we are on Facebook" – Use and non-use of social media among Swedish and Norwegian politicians

Published in European Journal of Communication, December 2014

This paper is a study of political actors and their everyday use of Facebook and Twitter, focusing on politicians elected to the national parliaments of Norway and Sweden. Findings indicate that politicians' daily social media use is rather low for both services. The median number of messages posted on Facebook is about one per day. Further analyses reveal that individual, demographic variables are stronger predictors of social media activity than party affiliation. Thus, we can argue that we see a "deideologiziation" of online activities among politicians, where not only left-wing ideologists draw advantages of digital services. The most active politicians could be labeled as "underdogs" as they are more likely to be younger, in opposition and out of the political limelight.

Original contribution: The paper makes use of novel methodologies for data collection and statistical analyses in order to provide an overarching, structural view of the day-to-day social media practices of Scandinavian politicians. The paper gives a valuable overview of the Scandinavian political social media "landscape" and contributes to the ongoing theoretical discussion about permanent campaigning. Based on our operationalization, permanent campaigns in Norway in Sweden are characterized by a fairly low level of daily social media activity, also during election campaign.

Article 2, which mainly addresses RQ 2:

The social media paradox explained: Comparing political parties' social media strategy vs. practice

Published in Social media + Society, May, 2016

Political parties' interaction strategy and practice on Facebook is the topic of this article. Political parties and individual politicians are increasingly using social media to bypass the media and communicate directly with voters through websites and particularly social services such as Facebook. This study examines the disparity between interaction strategy and online responsiveness in social media among major and minor political parties' during the 2013 national election in Norway. The study finds that political parties identify three clear disadvantages when communicating with voters online: online reputation risk, negative media attention and resource demands. Additionally, the authenticity requirement many parties adhere to is creating a "social media interaction deadlock" – increasing the disparity between the parties' expressed strategy and online performance.

Original contribution: This study uses a contrasting view to identify challenges in political actors' social media strategy and practice. This strategy made it possible to address "the social media paradox" - the disparity between how political parties talk about how to engage and interact with citizens through communication technology, while political actors mainly have used the technology to organize the election campaign more efficiently. Further, the study combines an innovative method to collect Facebook interaction data with interviews, adding insights into why interaction is complicated for political parties.

Article 3, which mainly addresses RQ2 and RQ3:

Intermedia agenda setting: Political journalists' source hunting in social media
Published in the book "News across media: Production, Distribution and Consumption. Eds. Jensen. J.L., Mortensen, M., Ørmen, J. (Routledge)

This study engages with a growing field of research related to journalists' adoption and usage of social media and how this impacts their sourcing practice. Specifically, this study examines political journalists' and commentators' social media usage, and how tweets by political sources influence the political news agenda. The examination is grounded in the theoretical framework of agenda building and intermedia agenda setting. The article demonstrates that agenda building from political sources on social media is more than "just" sourcing; getting a grasp of the political zeitgeist and then contacting sources through more mundane and private communication channels is the

most common utility of social media in political journalism in Norway. Sourcing is thus just the "tip of the iceberg" when it comes to the social media practice of political journalists and commentators. Social media practices in the newsroom are also related to reporters' understanding of their role and the objectivity norm. Political journalists use social media more actively in the preparation phase, while political commentators are comfortable using social media in the distribution and reaction phase as well. This article finds that tweets from younger, top politicians in position are most sourced in the six largest printed newspapers in Norway.

Original contribution: By combining interviews and Twitter references from politicians in media archives, the article offers insights into how social media is used for sourcing in mainstream media. Political commentators can more easily use social media during the whole journalistic product process, while political journalists are more limited due to the journalistic norms of objectivity. The study reveals that social media are used to more functions in the newsroom than existing social media sourcing studies indicate.

Article 4, which mainly addresses RQ2, RQ3, RQ4:

Social media as a political backchannel: Twitter use during televised election debates in Norway

Published in Aslib Journal of Information Management, 2014

The purpose of this paper is to explore how Twitter was used as a political backchannel and potential agenda setter during two televised political debates during the Norwegian election in 2011. The paper engages with current debates about social media's role in audience participation and traditional media's changing role as gatekeepers and agenda setter. The paper finds that the same topics are discussed on Twitter as on TV, but "the debate about the debate" or Meta talk tweets reveal a critical scrutiny of the agenda. The paper identifies a clear pattern of political fandom and media criticism in the "debate about the debate", indicating that Meta talk in social media can function as a critical public sphere, also in real time, which has not been identified in existing studies of Twitter and political TV shows.

Original contribution: The analysis is unique in the sense that the paper analyzes a smaller, national Twitter population in greater depth than what is common in larger Twitter studies related to political televised debates. The IMSC model (issue, meta,

sentiment, close reading) can be used in future Twitter studies to uncover layers in the data material and to structure the findings. This study demonstrates that social media such as Twitter does not represent an alternative agenda during real-time, televised political events. Nevertheless, Twitter functions as a political backchannel with extensive expressions for political fandom and media criticism, thus allowing for an alternative public space during political TV debates.

Article 5, which mainly addresses RQ2 and RQ4:

The social media logic of political interaction: Citizens' and politicians' relationship on Facebook and Twitter
Submitted to First Monday, December 2015

This study examines citizens' interactions with politicians in social media through a representative survey. The theoretical framework is based on social media logic, political interactions and social media affordances. The study finds that Facebook is a service where "ordinary" people engage in political interaction with political actors, while Twitter is mostly used by a smaller, more elitist group of the population for these purposes. Hence, the popularity of Facebook among Norwegians could be seen as allowing a new space for contact between citizens and political actors without mass media as a mediator.

Original contribution: The article argues for an operationalization of social media logic into three types of user practices on Facebook and Twitter called *Redistribution*, *Interacting* and *Acknowledging*. Through this operationalization, the study aims to contribute to an emerging theoretical field related to social media logic and interactions in networked publics. The study demonstrates that "liking" content on Facebook is the most common interaction between citizens and political actors, thus the lowest threshold for digital interaction. Surprisingly enough, we found that more citizens than political actors reported that they had received comments from politicians than they had contributed with themselves. Thus, these results could be an indication that the social media logic of engaging with content and users is taking hold among Norwegian political actors.

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PART II: THE ARTICLES

Appendix

List of interviews

Name	Affiliation	Dato of interview
Interviews		
Sigurd Aanes	The Conservative Party	20.02.2013
Gunnar Kongsrud	The Conservative Party	08.03.2013
Pia Gulbrandsen	The Labour Party	20.06.2013
Steinar Haugsvær	The Liberal Party	18.03.2013
Tone Foss Aspevoll	The Socialist Left Party	21.03.2013
Ole Berget	The Progress Party	21.02.2013
Background information		
Sindre Fossum Beyer	The Labour Party	22.04.2013
Mari Brenli	The Labour Party	22.04.2013
Reynir Jóhannesson	The Progress Party	24.05.2015
Interviews		
Marie Simonsen	Commentator, Dagbladet	04.12.2013
Anders Giæver	Commentator, VG	20.06.2013
Magnus Takvam	Commentator, NRK	12.11.2013
Sigrid Sollund	Journalist, NRK	06.11.2013
Mats Rønning	Journalist, NTB	26.11.2013
Tore Gjerstad	Journalist, Dagens Næringsliv	20.06.2013
Anonymous	Journalist, Nationen	28.08.2013
Ove Melling	Editor, Telemarksavisa	22.08.2013
Lajla Ellingsen	Journalist, Adressavisen	15.08.2013
Christina Pletten	Journalist, Bergens Tidende	08.11.2013
Hege Ulstein	Commentator, Dagsavisen	23.09.2013

Interview guide: political parties

(in Norwegian, as the interviews were conducted in Norwegian)

Intervjuguide politiske parti

Bakgrunn om menneskelige/tekniske ressurser:

- Hvor mange jobber med kommunikasjonsteknologi/strategi hos dere
- Hva slags bakgrunn/utdannelse har de
- Har dere ansatt nye personer for å ta seg av bestemte områder i forkant av valgkampen
- Hvor mange jobber med kommunikasjon (informasjon/presse/sosmed) i partiet
- Hvor mange jobber med IT/teknologi
- Hvor mye av partiets ressurser (i prosent) går med til disse to fagfeltene (kommunikasjon/teknologi)
- Hvilke politikere eller politiske partier er inspirasjonskilder for dere innen kommunikasjonsteknologi

Facebook

- Hva er den viktigste sosial media-plattformen for dere og hvorfor
- Hva bruker dere FB til i valgkampen
- Hva slags innhold legger dere ut på FB
- Hvem når dere ved å bruke FB
- Er måten dere bruker FB i valgkampen annerledes enn utenfor valgkampen
- Har dere mulighet til å koble FB-data om fans til andre data (eks. partimedlemmer)
- Hva bruker dere FB-innsikt til/Hva slags målinger gjør dere av deres FB-aktivitet
- Hvordan håndtere dere innspill fra publikum på FB (spørsmål, dialog, moderering/trolling, etc)
- Vil FB ha en annen funksjon i dette valget sammenlignet med valgene i 2011 og 2009
- Bruker dere FB-funksjoner (eks. FB connect) på andre av deres nettsteder/tjenester

Twitter

- Hva bruker dere Twitter til
- Er måten dere bruker Twitter i valgkampen annerledes enn utenfor valgkampen
- Hvem når dere ved å bruke Twitter
- Hvordan håndtere dere innspill fra publikum på Twitter (spørsmål, dialog, påstander etc)
- Hvor viktig er Twitter for dere som kommunikasjonskanal
- Gjør dere analyser av Twitterbruken/effekten
- Vil Twitter ha en annen funksjon i dette valget sammenlignet med valgene i 2011 og 2009

Youtube

- Hva bruker dere YouTube til
- Er måten dere bruker YouTube i valgkampen annerledes enn utenfor valgkampen
- Hvem når dere ved å bruke YouTube
- Gjør dere analyser av bruken/effekten av YouTube
- Hvor viktig er YouTube for dere i valgkampen

Blogger

- Hvor mange blogger i partiet
- Hvorfor blogger de
- Hvilke plattform/software bruke de
- Hva hensikt har det for politikerne/partiet å blogge
- Hvordan måler dere effekten

Sosiale medier vs. tradisjonelle medier (tv, radio, aviser/nettaviser)

- Hvordan bruker dere sosiale medier for å få oppmerksomhet i tradisjonelle medier
- Hva vil det si for dere å sette dagsorden
- Hva er mest effektivt for å sette dagsorden via sosiale medier (eksempel)
- Hva fungere sosiale medier dårlige til når det gjelder å sette dagsorden
- Hva er tradisjonelle medier fremdeles mest effektivt på

Mobil/App'er

- Hva slags app'er har dere
- Hva brukes de til
- Hvem har utviklet dem
- Er de native eller web app'er
- Hvordan bruker dere dataene fra app'en(e)
- Hvor mange har laste den/de ned
- Hvor viktige er app'ene i partiets kommunikasjon/mobiliseringsarbeid

Database (velgere):

- Hvilket datasystem har dere for å håndtere informasjon om medlemmer (open source eller proprietært)
- Hvem utvikler/vedlikeholder den (intern/eksterne folk)
- Hva slags informasjon har dere om medlemmer (tlf, epost, adresse, sosmed-profiler, etc)
- Hvordan er databasen knyttet opp mot resten av kommunikasjonskanelene (eks. ang. utsending av sms, nyhetsbrev, nettsider, sosmed etc)
- Hva slags utviklingsarbeid har dere gjort på databasen i forkant av valget
- Hva er viktig for dere med database; hva er helt sentralt å ha på plass, hva skulle dere ønske at dere hadde men som dere ikke har i dag

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- Hvor henter dere inspirasjon fra ang. utviklingen av partiets database
- Hvor stor andel av kostnadene går med til databasen
- De fem siste årene, hva har vært de største utfordringene rundt databasen

SMS

- Hva bruker dere sms til (type aksjoner
- Hva ønsker dere å oppnå ved å bruke sms
- Hvor mange mottar sms fra dere
- Hvor ofte sender dere ut sms'er
- Skiller sms seg fra de andre kommunikasjonskanalene og i så fall hvordan
- Hva slags effekt har dere sett at sms har hatt
- Hvordan vil dere bruke sms i valgkampen
- Hva er problemene ved bruken av sms (eks. kostnad, folk som melder seg av)
- Hvilket sms-system bruker dere (open source/proprietært)

Epost/nyhetsbrev

- Hvor mange eposter-adresser har dere i databasen
- Hvor mange av disse er medlemmer vs. Ikke-medlemmer
- Hva sender dere ut i nyhetsbrevet og hvor ofte sender dere ut nyhetsbrev
- Gjør dere A-B-testing (tester effekten av ulike titler/tekster, etc)
- Hvor effektivt er nyhetsbrev (statistikk, respons, etc)
- Hvordan vil dere bruke nyhetsbrev i valgkampen
- Hvem er inspirasjonskilde for dere ang. bruken av nyhetsbrev

Donasjoner

- Hva gjør dere for å samle inn penger
  - Online
  - Offline
- Hva har dere oppnådd så langt (i valgkampen/2013)
- Hvor viktig er det for dere å samle inn penger i valgkampen
- Hva slags eventuelle forhold (kulturelle, juridiske, prinsipielle, etc) mener du forhindrer folk fra å gi penger til politiske parti i Norge

Annonser

- Hvor annonserer dere for politikerne og partiets politikk (type medium)
Interview guide – political journalists and commentators

Interview guide: political journalists and commentators

(in Norwegian, as the interviews were conducted in Norwegian)

Intervju-guide for journalisters bruk av Twitter og Facebook som journalistiske kilder

- **Bruk**
  - Når starte du å bruke Twitter/Facebook
  - Hvor ofte sjekker du Tw/FB (daglig/ukentlig)
  - Hva slags enhet (mobil, maskin, nettbrett, etc) bruker du vanligvis for å sjekke Tw/FB
  - Hva bruker du Twitter og Facebook til i jobbsammenheng
    - Ideer
    - Spre egne saker
    - Finne kilder
    - Bygge nettverk
    - Info
    - Etc
  - Hva er du spesielt ute etter når du bruker Tw/FB i jobbsammenheng
  - Hvordan bruker du Twitter/Fb
    - Passiv (observerer og leser andres Tw/FB)
    - Aktiv (deler info, lenker, bilder, video)
      - Deler du meninger?
    - Deltar du i diskusjoner på Tw/FB
    - Hva slags innhold deler du primært
  - Hva ville du IKKE ha publiserte på FB/TW
  - Twitter: Gjør du noe for å systematisere informasjonsstrømmen (eks. Egne tema i Tweetdeck, hashtag, lister, etc)? Hvis ja, hva?
  - FB: Gjør du noe for å filterer/sortere info på FB?
  - Kan du gi eksempler på saker du har laget som har oppstått via Tw/FB?
  - Har bruken av Tw/FB endret seg over tid? Hvorfor

- **Nettverk**
  - Hvem følger du på Tw (med tanke på yrke/bakgrunn/relasjon)
    - Noen eksempler
  - Hvem er du venner med på FB (med tanke på yrke/bakgrunn/relasjon)
  - Hvorfor følger du akkurat disse
  - Hvem er du ikke venner med/følger på TW/FB
  - Har Tw/FB gjort det lettere å få tilgang til kilder
  - Er det andre sosiale media-verktøy/plattformer du bruker for å finne kilder til saker
  - Har du opplevd at noen har henvendt seg spesifikt til deg på Tw/FB for å pushe/tipse om en sak

- **Verifisering av info**
  - Hvordan sjekker du info du kommer over på Tw/FB
  - Har du tatt kontakt med noen på Tw/FB for å sjekke hvor de fikk infoen fra
  - Har du opplevd at info du har brukt fra Tw/FB i journalistisk sammenheng har vært ukorrekt
  - Hvor stort er problemet med ubekreftet info på Tw/FB for deg som journalist

- **Eventuelle endring av arbeidshverdagen**
  - Har Tw/FB (event. andre sosiale medier) endret arbeidshverdagen din? Hvis ja, hvordan?
    - Kilder
    - Tempo
    - Tidsbruk
    - Nettverk
    - etc
  - Hva er ulempene med Tw/FB i jobbsammenheng

- **Profesjonell vs. privatperson via sosiale medier**
  - Hvordan skiller du mellom deg som profesjonell journalist og privatperson på Tw/FB
  - Hva kan du ikke tillate deg å gjøre i sosiale medier fordi du er journalist
  - Har noe du har gjort/sagt som privatperson på Tw/FB fått konsekvenser for jobben
  - Har dere interne regler på jobben for hvordan dere skal håndtere journalistrollen i sosiale medier