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SATURATED AND SITUATED: EXPANDING THE MEANING OF MEDIA IN THE ROUTINES OF EVERYDAY LIFE

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Abstract:

Recently media scholars have made renewed calls for non-media-centric, non-representational and phenomenological approaches to media studies. This article responds to this context through an investigation of how media form part of the experiential, habitual, and unspoken dimensions of everyday routines. Drawing on examples from ethnographic research into digital media and domestic energy consumption, we explore the role of media in the making and experiencing of environments, centring on their salience to daily routines of transition in the home. While media content forms part of how people make their homes, attention to these routines brings into focus a notion of the 'media-saturated' household that goes beyond attention to media content in significant ways. This, we argue, has both theoretical and practical implications for how we situate and interpret media as part of everyday life.

Key words (8)

Digital media, everyday life, routines, media phenomenology, place, non-media-centric approach, home, video ethnography.

Biographical statements (25-50 words)

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Introduction

Recently media scholars have made renewed calls for non-media-centric and non-representational approaches to media studies (e.g. Couldry 2012, Moores 2012a, 2012b). In this article we respond to this through an approach to media in everyday life that draws on non-representational theory and phenomenological anthropology. We are concerned with how media are situated as part of the routine, habitual, tacit, normally unspoken sensitivities of everyday life in the home. This refers in part to how people use media content consciously to create the sensory and experiential environment of home. Yet our main focus is on how, through mundane and not usually spoken about routines of everyday living, media are engaged for affective and embodied ways of making the home 'feel right'. While such uses of and everyday innovations and interventions with media cannot be completely separated from media content, they go beyond the specificity of content in significant ways. Our argument is that through the ethnographic study of media beyond media content and as part of the sensory embodied and affective routines of everyday life we gain deeper understandings of the (potential) roles of media in change, intervention and the production of sustainability and wellbeing.

To demonstrate this we draw on findings from video ethnographies produced during the first stage of the interdisciplinary LEEDR project at Loughborough University (UK). Based on a sample of twenty owner-occupied UK households, our work focuses on how families consume energy and use digital media in their everyday lives. Theoretically we are concerned with developing a non-representational, ethnographically informed re-thinking of how media are situated in everyday life. However to contextualize our project, we note that our work has an applied objective

to inform the making of digital design interventions, by our Design colleagues, to help participants reduce their domestic energy consumption. Our video ethnography encounters develop in-depth collaborative investigations of how media are experienced in the home. To give a sense of this method and the insights it can produce we begin with an extended example from one of our research encounters.

When we asked Alan to tell us about his morning routine he had just performed his bedtime routine for us in detail. It was a moment in our collaborative video tour of his home when we rested, standing at the bathroom door while Alan talked. In his spoken account of his activity during those first stages in the day he did not mention media. Yet, as we continued to tour his home, video recording as we went, with the structure of his morning as he had described it in mind, we learned more. In fact, Alan wakes up to the music of his alarm clock; this, he noted, is probably the only time of the day that he would actually have music on himself, although his four children play music, sometimes on their iPods. Once down in the kitchen - the rest of his family will still be around having breakfast or getting ready for the day - Alan prepares his own breakfast, which he takes through to the dining room table and eats while reading his newspaper. When talking about meals downstairs we learned the family has a policy against watching TV at meal times or taking meals into the living room: all meals are eaten at the dining room table, next to the kitchen and connected to the lounge through an archway. Because Alan works nights he is at home in the morning, and spends part of this time doing odd housework jobs. Entering the conservatory he told us he has the radio on most mornings, to check the news and keep in touch with a local football team he follows, although he hardly ever uses his laptop – just for looking up information about football or to buy things on e-Bay. In this sense, we might not think of Alan as a very active user of digital

media. Yet as our tour continued we learned more about how media are implicated in the making of home and in making it 'feel right'.

All of the bedrooms have a TV. Each of the four children (two adults and two school age, who share a room) has a laptop computer or notebook, although Alan's daughter's is broken. The boys have their own Xbox and PlayStations in their rooms. The TV in the living room has a Virgin Media box and DVD Home Theatre with surround system. In exploring the meanings of these media, our work with Alan showed us how media have become part of a family approach and routine activity. This has partly been created through Alan's material interventions, which have been designed to make the electricity sockets that the media technologies are plugged into easily accessible. One of the first things Alan showed us when we arrived was how he had set up the TV in the living room so that it and all the related equipment could be switched off using a single switch. He pointed out that this would be done every night before he got home, using a wooden stick that reaches to the switch, which is behind the TV. Yet there is an important experiential dimension to this routine since, as Alan described it, for his adult daughter who lives at home: 'because it's electricity … she's got a little thing on her mind, where it's got to be off, otherwise you don't feel at ease'. It is relevant to note that in this household switching off was discussed specifically with regard to media use. Alan also told us how in his son's room the TV used to be left on standby because he couldn't quite reach the plug, until Alan inserted an extension lead so all the media devices could be turned off at the plug socket via the now accessible adaptor. He emphasized this again when we toured the son's room, going down to the floor under the desk where cables for the TV, Wii, Xbox and laptop are kept to show us the plugs, describing and actually performing for us how:

… the plug comes from the plug point to that extension lead, and everything

he uses is [plugged] in there, so basically if he wants something on, he'll sort

of just, he'll press that one or press that one or press that one [he demonstrates

this], so basically … he can turn everything off there, whereas the telly used to

go from there [up on the table] down into that corner … it was like on standby.

These practical re-workings of the home thus create the material context through which routine ways of switching on and off media technologies and content, and the temporalities that these actions operate in relation to, become part of how everyday life is lived. They thus become constituents of the experiential context of the processes through which media are used and through which their presence is 'felt'.

Alan's example demonstrates particularly well how in order to feel, as he put it, 'at ease' in one's home certain things need to be done with media which do not directly relate to media content. Although in Alan's household the project of switching off media devices to save energy was particularly central, it was not uncommon for the participants in our research to tour their homes at bed time ensuring that media are switched 'off' and, if possible, not on standby. Although there were differences depending on media devices, members of half of the participating households had similar switching off routines.

Re-focusing media phenomenology through everyday life routines

In media studies the treatment of media as part of the routines of everyday life has been notably developed through a focus on domestication and appropriation. For

example, concerning questions related to broadcast programming, David Morley has pointed out how media 'do not simply have effects on the home, but have rather to be analyzed in terms of how they come to be embedded within pre-existing domestic routines' (2000: 86) as well as integral to the 'spatial geography' of the home (2000: 90). Work in this area by Couldry and Tim Markham has drawn on Paddy Scannell's media phenomenology to acknowledge how 'particularly broad- cast media, are important in the phenomenology of everyday experience' (2008: 5). Analyzing participant-generated media use diaries, they reviewed Scannell's 'account of how media bind us daily into a national space of attention' to show variations in how people 'do, or do not, understand their media use to connect them to a world of public issues beyond the private' (Couldry and Markham 2008: 19). Moores likewise has sought to refocus approaches to media in everyday life through a concept of movement, developed in the work of geographer Tuan who, in a description that resonates strongly with our own work, writes how domestic objects are 'points along a complex path of movement that is followed day after day. … As a result of habitual use the path … acquires a density of meaning. … The path and the pauses along it constitute a … place' (Tuan 1977: 180-2, cited in Moores 2012a: 30). Moores suggests we might subsequently 'understand routine uses of broadcasting as place-constituting activities', considering how 'the media spaces or environments made available by radio and television may, over time, come to feel thoroughly familiar too' (2012a: 32). Our concerns overlap with Morley's, Couldry and Markham's (and by association Scannell's) and Moores's through our interest in how media are part of everyday temporalities, materialities and routine. Yet, we note how each of these studies makes central the question of how the content of broadcast media enter our routines, private worlds and routes through familiar localities such as the home. In

this article we seek to advance the study of media in everyday life by going beyond asking how broadcasting and other content are implicated in routines, our relationship with a public sphere, and place-making. We focus on how those forms of engagement with, and everyday (participant produced) interventions through, media technologies in which media content seems inconsequential, become 'necessary' to accomplishing habitual everyday routes and routines in the home.

To some extent routine uses of media to make the home 'feel right' do involve using music, radio or TV to create the right 'atmosphere'. Existing work shows how radio can create part of the 'texture' (Tacchi 1998) and affect of everyday life (Tacchi 2009), how music is used to create a sense of self and home (Pink 2004, 2012b), and reveals 'the imaginative consequences of experiencing temporal "elsewheres" when listening to the music of previous periods or dead performers' (Keightly 2012, referring to Pickering 2012). However as Jo Tacchi emphasizes for radio, the affective dimensions of people's engagements with media do not only relate to its content. Her concern in studying the 'consumption of radio sound is not so much with its form or syntax but rather how it is used and its affective qualities' (Tacchi 2009: 174). Tacchi argues radio is part of and helps maintain the everyday routines in which people's affective wellbeing is invested (2009: 181). While the affective dimensions of engagement with media content were in some ways inextricable from the everyday routine media uses of our participants, it is similarly clear that their experience of media went beyond this. Our encounter with Alan and his home reveals how affect and embodied sensations associated with switching 'off' media technologies and content can be an equally important part of how we make our homes 'feel right' through temporally distributed routine activities. Indeed it is because contemporary lives and homes are, as some would put it, 'media-saturated' that switching 'off'

media technologies, plugging devices in to charge or leaving them to go onto standby on a timer has become embedded in and is constitutive of routines in new ways. Situating media in everyday routines as such also calls for an approach that attends to the relationship of media to other elements of everyday life. In the next section we discuss this in relation to developments in non-media-centric approaches to media.

Advancing the de-centring of media

Media anthropologists have a long tradition of researching media beyond content (e.g. see Bird 2010: 85), with adjoining disciplines, notably media and cultural studies, moving from an interest in individual media texts (Hall 1980), via contexts of reception, including in the home (e.g. Morley 1986, Lull 1990, Gillespie 1995, Gauntlett and Hill 1999), to a broader conception of (converging) 'mediascapes' in everyday life (Alasuutari 1999, see also Berry et al. 2010). Recently the argument for a 'non-media-centric' approach to media studies has been advanced through interdisciplinary engagement with theories of practice and ritual (Couldry 2012) and non-representational theory (Moores 2012a). While the relevance of situating media in everyday life as non-media-centric is more embedded in media anthropology (e.g. Ginsburg et al 2002, Askew and Wilk 2002, Tacchi 2009, Bräuchler and Postill 2010), where media are often researched as part of other phenomena, media scholars are also advancing this theme. Couldry refers to his (2012) approach to media as 'not media-centric', stressing that: 'I do not assume media are the most important things in people's lives: a problem with media studies is that it often seems to assume this. Instead my approach is grounded in the analysis of everyday action and habit'

(Couldry 2012: x). Moores likewise identifies with a 'non-media-centric approach' (2012a: 11) stating that he 'attempts to understand everyday media uses by considering them alongside many other social practices today, rather than as isolated activities' (2012a: x). In a contemporary context of theoretical scholarship these moves are highly pertinent to everyday life studies. Couldry's practice focus coincides with a commitment to practice theory in the sociology of consumption (see Warde 2005, Halkier et al 2011), and media anthropology (Postill 2010). Moores's focus on phenomenology links with 'non-representational' approaches in anthropology and human geography (e.g. Ingold 2000, 2011, Lorimer 2005, Thrift 2008). Yet, what seems missing from these developments is equal attention to developing new approaches to actually researching media in everyday life.

Our video ethnography methodology approaches these questions through in-depth research encounters in the everyday life environments of which media is part. The experiential dimensions of the role of media in everyday life we seek to comprehend may to some extent be understood through participant after-the-event reporting in interviews or diary studies. Yet approaching media as part of something else and exploring that context in situ offers another entry point. To some extent this means doing research in the context of what Mark Deuze refers to as living 'in, rather than with, media', what he describes as leading a 'media life' (2011: 138, original italics). According to Deuze, media are increasingly ubiquitous and pervasive, accompanying and shaping our lives in ways that render them 'invisible'. Yet, we depart from this notion where Deuze argues that 'people do not recognize their media habits because they are a constitutive part of them' (2011: 138) (see also Kubitschko and Knapp 2012 for a critique of Deuze's 'media life'). In our opening example, when standing in his bedroom talking about his morning Alan did not tell us about

media uses. Yet when we toured his home, like other participants, he showed us ways of knowing and engaging with media that have led us to understand 'media-saturation' as happening within an empirically investigable array of social, sensory-embodied and material contexts. Thus, when taking this alternative starting point, which asked participants to focus on the daily routines they follow in order to ensure that their homes 'feel right' at pivotal moments in the day and night, participants were highly articulate and reflexive about their media uses. People 'know' how their lives are inextricable from media but their ways of knowing are often embodied and sensory rather than always linguistic. We learned how media are part of everyday routines, precisely because participants could tell *or* show us how. We argue that the relevance of understanding media from this perspective is two-fold: it enables us to comprehend the situatedness of media in everyday life in ways that acknowledge but go beyond the focus on its content; and by showing us how media are part of the ways that the routines of everyday life emerge and change, it indicates how media might enable sites for intervention.

Place, movement, perception: a framework for understanding everyday media

Theories of practice, place and movement are increasingly integrated in non-media-centric media studies, and form the basis of the Pink's existing work on everyday life (Pink 2012a). Within this context some media anthropologists (see Bräuchler and Postill, and contributors 2010), media scholars (Couldry 2010, 2012) and design scholars (e.g. Haines et al 2012) have begun to examine questions relating to everyday life through practice theory. Elizabeth Bird has shown how a practice

approach enables understandings of a contemporary context where 'existing conventions and practices are refracted through a mediated lens even if people are not consciously referencing the media' (Bird 2010: 86). Similarly, Toke H. Christensen and Inge Røpke use practice theory to 'show how ICTs have become integrated into a wide range of practices of everyday life and may thus contribute to the increasing "materialisation" of everyday practices' (2010: 234). Yet as other media anthropologists point out, practice theory tends to decontextualize (see Hobart 2010) and abstract (see Peterson 2010), and thus extracts activity from the flow of everyday life in which media practices are often dispersed (see also Pink and Leder Mackley submitted). Here we advance the question of how a non-media-centric media studies might develop theoretically and methodologically through further engagements with theoretical and practical techniques associated with non-representational approaches in anthropology and human geography.

We approach media in everyday life (here, in the home) through three related analytical prisms: environment/place; movement/practice; perception/sensory embodied experience. Each prism, which guides both the research process and the analysis of the materials, also represents a recent 'turn' in contemporary social theory. Here we explain the framework briefly to avoid undue repetition from existing works (see especially Pink 2009, 2012a, 2012b). Our attention to a theory of place understands 'place' from two perspectives, both of which depart from the association of place with locality, as well as from the idea that place is the 'occupation' of empty space, to see it as what the geographer Doreen Massey has termed a 'constellation of processes' (2005: 41). Here place, seen in an abstract sense as a way to comprehend the home as an environment, can be understood as representing the coming together of the multiple processes and movements of things that converge in ways that are

constantly shifting and changing, to constitute home. While homes do usually (and did in our sample) include the buildings we call a house, a house alone is not a home and thus does not singularly define home. Instead our interest is in how a series of tangible, intangible, material, human and other flows become, as Ingold (e.g. 2008) puts it, 'entangled' in the constitution of home as place. Yet, we are also concerned with the experiential dimensions of home as an environment, and to comprehend this we shift our interest from the abstract conceptualisation where human subjects and their agency does not necessarily take any priority, to consider how through human action we participate in processes of place-making. Turning again to Ingold, through the idea that place is made through the entanglement of the lines of movement of persons and things (see Ingold 2007, 2011), we can start to consider how as people move through the home as a place, encounter other persons and things, they become co-implicated with them as their trajectories become entangled. For instance, with an iPhone, the television sets that are switched on and off as people coincide with them, other humans, breakfast, the ironing, and more as they circulate around/through the home. As our analysis of routines below shows, approaching our research questions through the study of actual movement brings to the fore how these encounters both become routinized in the everyday making of home/place/environment and are moreover pivotal moments in this process (see also Pink and Leder Mackley submitted). Finally, we are interested in understanding the experiential dimensions of place and movement in terms of human perception, through a focus on the tacit and unspoken ways of knowing that are sensed, and not necessarily spoken (about). Again following Ingold (e.g. 2007) and the art historian Barbara Stafford (2010), we understand the activities of the participants whose routes and routines are discussed below as both habitual and learned, known in the body, while part of a process of on-

going, continual and incremental learning, that like all everyday practices is sensitive to the contingencies of the environment and its affordances, and likely to involve innovation (see also Marchand 2010).

Researching media <u>in</u> everyday life: night and morning homes

During our collaborative video tours, we asked participants to talk and walk us through their routine activities last thing at night, first thing in the morning, and when leaving or returning home. We followed the paths people took and their practical activities as they moved through their homes at these times, including locking and unlocking, using lighting, and switching devices on or off. Because our research is concerned with energy consumption and digital media use in the home these re-enactments were developed as indirect routes to understanding how both media and energy are part of everyday routine, and thus seeks to decentre both. This builds on how energy researchers often access energy consumption indirectly by researching the practices that use energy (e.g. Gram-Hanssen 2008, 2011), and resonates with the idea of researching people's media use by researching the routes they take (e.g. Moores 2012a). Everyday life media practices however tend to be dispersed (cf. Christensen and Røpke 2010), our research has shown people listen to the radio and 'watch' television while doing the laundry, the ironing, the cooking, having dinner, waking up or falling asleep. They check their email when having a cup of tea (or on an iPhone during a video research encounter with the ethnographer). Therefore to access media uses we needed to seek them out by tracing the everyday routes and routines into which they were distributed.

As the fieldwork developed, two related themes emerged: first, that people's routes through the home emerged as purposeful and habitual; and second, how digital and other media accompanied, accommodated, structured or necessitated these everyday routines. We next examine ethnographically how media are situated in everyday bedtime and morning routines, exploring how media technologies form part of the way the home is on-goingly made, experienced and renewed.

Routes to bed: media and the making of the night home

In the example of Alan's home media uses and switching technologies off at the socket were mutually sustaining activities; they also however created the home as a particular environment in relation to media being on/off. Media remain part of the home even when their content is not active. Therefore we might see their embedding in routines as being related to their changing and differing statuses, as being 'off', 'on standby' or actively mediating content. We have found, amongst our sample, that while bedtime routines vary in detail, they in principle involve patterns of switching on and off that signify a transition making the home feel right at night.

For example, for one family the bedtime routine has two stages and shows us a range of ways media are used and go on/off. According to the parents, Laura and Paul, the children who are aged 3, 5 and 7, each listen to a CD played on the stereos in their bedrooms while they go to sleep (the eldest also has an Xbox and TV, and the middle child a TV although he almost never watches it). They told us the stereos switch off by themselves when the CD ends, going onto a form of standby. Each child listens to a different type of music, with the youngest listening to Disney and the

eldest preferring classical music. In this sense content is significant, yet rather than shaping the household routine, it is selected as a personalisation of it. The parents go downstairs to tidy the kitchen and do other odd jobs. Sometimes Laura does the ironing in the living room while watching TV. Otherwise they watch TV for a while, having a warm drink downstairs before going up to bed. Before bed they switch off the TV and the Sky box (unless they are recording something) at the socket, rather than leaving these on standby. Paul checks the kitchen and back door. He switches off lights as he goes; before they switch off the living room lights, they check the windows and door and go upstairs. They go into each child's room to check on them, and kiss them goodnight, before going into the bathroom. If the nights are long Paul will have put the landing light on earlier, otherwise he puts it on now for the children in case they get up in the night, and switches it off in the morning when they go out. They then go into their bedroom, usually by about 21.30-22.00. The lights go on, the TV is switched on and they get into bed. Paul later gets out to switch off the light and leaves the TV on the timer for 30 minutes. He usually turns it off before sleeping, but otherwise it will just go 'off' on the timer, onto standby as they go to sleep.

In this household therefore we can see how the bedtime routines involve a series of habitual uses of media across the household. While media content is used to create elements of these environments, the fact of having the media 'on' as part of a routine activity was what came through as important rather than the desire to engage with media content for a specific active purpose. The children listened to the music while going to sleep and Laura did her ironing while the television was on downstairs. The TV is habitually switched on when Laura and Paul go to bed, yet, they pointed out that they don't necessarily go to bed at the same time every night. Therefore we would assume that the scheduling of bedtime does not necessarily match TV

programming. In fact, when Kerstin visited to discuss the video tour she was surprised to hear that a programme that tends to be on at bedtime is about police chases. Asked whether this did not unsettle them when trying to get to sleep, Laura and Paul explained that it is more about the noise of 'something being there' in the background than about engaging with the content. Media use is moreover embedded in what is a characteristic bed time routine of checking, switching off and switching on (usually) electric devices as media and other technologies, lighting, and water are habitually used by many of the participants as they move through their homes on their way to bed, making place as they move. These routes and routines enable people to transform their home from an evening to night environment in which they 'feel right' in part because the routine has been accomplished. Media thus play a role in this everydayness, and in making the night time home feel right.

Above we noted how, for this family, media are left playing while both parents and children fall asleep, likewise in another household (discussed in Pink and Leder Mackley 2012) where the participant left her television on a timer, to switch onto standby while she and her husband drifted off to sleep. In these examples media content is inevitably part of the 'atmosphere' or environment that it contributes to making at bedtime, in that participants have a choice of content. However they were not usually concerned to volunteer details about the content of the television, radio or music they listened to while 'drifting off'. Indeed the idea that the purpose of having this audio presence while going to sleep, and effectively becoming oblivious to it, in itself draws our analytical attention away from content and towards the routine dimension of the presence of these media at a particular moment in the daily routine.

In these households, even where switching off other media devices completely seemed important, the leaving of bedtime media to switch itself onto standby seemed

not to worry participants. Equally, above we noted how Alan associated the idea of everything being switched off with feeling 'at ease'. In fact in his home some technologies were 'on' all night – his phone charging, the radio alarm waiting to go off in the morning, and the wifi always being on. 'On' is not a fixed category when it comes to media technologies. Instead, the on/off-ness of media might be better thought of as being associated with a quality of the home feeling 'right', and this we suggest is produced at least in part by the routine ways in which switching on and off, timing, and checking are achieved. Indeed although people switch media off in habitual ways, the question of if devices are switched off/on standby or charging, is usually related to the contingencies of the particular environments of which they are part and what people need to do in order to make the home feel right (including the need to accomplish practical things like charging laptops and mobile phones).

Mediated mornings

Media also played an important role in the morning routines for the families in our sample. As the following examples show, here media create part of the environment, form part of the intersecting routes of different family members, and are effectively entangled in how the home is constituted, moved through and experienced.

For example, for Laura and Paul's family, the morning starts with the children invading the still darkened master bedroom. As Laura explains, the TV goes on first thing: 'They come into ours in the morning, and they're up really early, so we put the telly on for ten minutes, so everyone can wake up properly -… cos they're up at six'. Then Laura takes the children via the bathroom downstairs into the living room

where, avoiding the harshness of the ceiling light, she turns on the wall lights and switches on the TV, using lighting and media to create a particular feel to the room. She moves around the downstairs part of the house, interweaving a set of tasks: in between sorting the children's breakfast, she often unloads the washing machine and does her hair and make-up with utensils stored in one of the kitchen cupboards. Lights are switched on and blinds opened along the way. Although the children are more directly engaged with the TV, it is also part of her environment. While Laura goes upstairs to make everyone's beds, open the bedroom windows and get dressed, the children typically move between TV and playroom, and the oldest makes his way upstairs to play with the Xbox. Sometimes he plays as soon as he gets up. The Xbox is one thing they are learning to switch off when leaving the house in the morning. Lights are another. Laura explained: 'Now I'll say to [the oldest], right, before you get your shoes on, go upstairs and make sure everything's turned off. And then he'll come down and say it is - when it's not'. The affective dimension of media being on or off is important here. Paul evoked the feeling of having got into the car about to drive the children to school only to realize that his oldest son had left on his bedroom light with the Xbox playing. These, he explained are powerful devices to leave playing by themselves all day and consuming energy. But by the time everyone was in the car ready to go it was too late to go back, leaving him no option but to leave it 'on'.

In another household, media also form part of both the way the home is made and 'feels', and what people habitually do in the morning. By the time Kath gets up her daughters, Anna (10) and Sonia (7), will usually be pottering in their lit rooms or downstairs in front of the television; they are 'early birds, always have been'. While Stuart tends to check e-mails on his iPhone first thing, Kath finds her way through

semi-darkness to the toilet and, still in her pyjamas, 'stumbles through the dark' downstairs into the kitchen. The kettle and radio go on in close succession, unless a DJ who she dislikes is substituting for one she likes – here content combines with the experience of having the radio on to make the home 'feel right'. While the kettle is boiling, Kath empties the dishwasher to take out the breakfast dishes and starts making breakfast - cereal, juice, a pot of coffee. Using the lights underneath the kitchen units, she prepares the girls' and Stuart's lunch boxes. By now, Anna has usually moved to the dining room for piano practice while Sonia is 'sort of around', maybe joining Kath with a book in the kitchen.

While going to bed creates one set of transitions, getting up creates another, unsurprisingly with switching on media being more important. Participants quite confidently told us what would happen in the mornings and the ways that media were part of their routines and movements from room to room. Yet while media content and interactivity are mentioned – watching the news, a particular DJ being on, using the iPad or an interactive game – the activities are nevertheless routine, and interwoven with a series of other routine actions/tasks and routes of movement around the home. As these examples show, the ways people use media in the morning follows their routes through their homes as TVs go off in one room to then go on in another (see also Pink and Leder Mackley submitted), people move from one device in one room to another in a different room or take mobile media with them.

Saturated and situated: towards a new understanding of media in everyday life

There were differences between the routines of the families in our sample, for instance depending on children's ages and family members' working patterns. However the detailed examples above are typical of the kinds of activities and rhythms we identified as being part of the way participants' morning and evening routines were made and accomplished. They also indicate (if not being fully representative of) how media are implicated as part of the individual activities, socialites, technological configurations and materiality of the homes of our participants. We now highlight a set of more general observations that are both informed by our theoretical frame of place-movement-perception, and focus on our practical question about how and where media are embedded in everyday routines.

Media, in these homes, were usually inseparable from the activities through which people made their homes feel right (or sought to do so). For example, for the families in our sample 'active' evening time typically ended in the living room and usually in front of the TV, often seen as a relaxing time, a chance to catch up with the News but also intersecting with other activities. Here, especially for week-day routines, the TV being on is part of the way the sensory feeling of place is made as the family congregates in or passes through the living room, and is often combined with other routine activities, such as having a drink or snack, ironing, getting ready for bed, texting, checking e-mails, or using the family iPad. Thus we see how different media technologies (and forms of content) are woven together with practical activity around digital and material routines and needs.

At bedtime switching 'off' the TV usually marked the beginning of routines involving other switch- and lock-related activities. There were different ways for media to be 'off' depending, for instance, on whether the TV was operated via remote control, turned off on the device or on the socket. Media boxes (Sky, Virgin Media,

BT Vision) sometimes remained on standby (signalled, for instance, by a change of light from green to orange) to avoid having to reboot or accidentally interfering with (other family members') scheduled recordings. While some participants switch off devices directly after use and turn off lights as they leave rooms, the evening routine provided a distinct moment to shut down anything that had been left on in anticipation of possible usage during the day, including games consoles, laptops and desktop computers. This contingent live-ness of devices also formed part of the unintended but 'felt' experiential sensory environment of the home during the day, for example by generating warmth (e.g. Laura and Paul's flatscreen TV), light, or sound (e.g. such as the electronic humming of games consoles). Where TVs, radios and video or computer games prominently featured in the audio-visual environment, the home tended to become less directly infused with media content at night. Yet in at least seven of our participating households people drift off to sleep to mediated sounds including radio, TV, iPods, mobile phones or stereo systems. These habitual routines often resulted in standby consumption during the night, but enabled participants to make home as place in another way by creating an experiential environment that felt right and meant an engagement with media content that went beyond its status as representation. Two participants commented on how content could get in the way of achieving the sought-after sensory, emotional or intellectual engagement. As such we can understand how the ongoingness of the media-saturated home is created as ways of engaging with media, which at different moments in the day are experienced and constituted differently, following the contingencies of what is needed to make the home 'feel right'.

As we have argued, place can be understood as being made at least in part through movement. Most families in our sample ended and started the day with

media, including with television, radio, mobile phones, tablets and Xboxes. It is significant to stress that these uses of media often shifted as they moved through their homes at these pivotal moments in the day. Both in relation to the more fixed technologies situated in particular areas of the home, and in uses of mobile media. These media engagements also helped to signal temporalities, for instance when participants used radio and TV as a time check in their morning routine. They also signalled the presence and activities of other people in the home, for instance, when parents are aware of their children's location and temporalities in relation to media uses in the home. As such, they function as embodied and emplaced tools to locate and navigate people, time and place.

Finally, while there is an ongoingness to the ways media are used in the home, morning and evening routines were moments for concluding practices, tidying up loose ends (as well as toys and dishes). They also involved preparing for future activities, for instance in charging routines for MP3 players, mobile phones, tablets, and lamps. Evening and morning routines were moments for planning ahead and facilitating nights or days. Media, as we have shown are an inevitable part of this.

Summing up: theoretical and practical implications

In this article we have argued for an approach to understanding media in everyday life that goes beyond media content and that is 'non-media-centric'. We propose that this approach has both theoretical implications for how we study media in everyday life and practical implications for applied research relating to change and intervention.

Our theoretical interest is in advancing the argument that our lives have become 'media saturated' in the sense that it is not simply media content that is embedded in the ways we experience the world and make place on an everyday basis. Rather we also make and experience place with media technologies by engaging their capacities to be on/off and as such helping create environments that 'feel right' in creative, diverse and innovative ways. If, as we suggest, this is part of what media are 'for' then it is something we need to account for in our understandings of how media participate, and can intervene in the living of everyday life. Theoretical inspiration drawn from phenomenological anthropology and spatial geography serves well the needs of an approach to media that seeks to move away from media centrism because it enables us precisely to attend to media as part of place, as embedded in movement and as experienced within the flow of everyday life. As we move and perceive we encounter media in our lives, embedded in materialities, socialities and routines. We come to know and feel with media - affectively and physically - in diverse way. Therefore to situate media in everyday life environments, and to interpret how everyday life is 'media saturated' we need to examine how media are implicated in the ways shifting everyday ecologies of home are constituted. This means focussing on the diverse ways in which media are embedded in practical activity as people move through the environments, of which they too are part, and how media are thus part of our experiential worlds, in ways that account for but go beyond content.

In different households media are embedded in bedtime and morning routines in different ways, media are on/off differently and people's attentiveness to and relationships with content vary. Yet media are often inseparable from such routines and the routes of movement around the home required to complete them. These routines and routes are not fixed and unchanging, or, unchangeable, they are part of

the on-going processes through which place is made. In this article we have considered them across a sample of households at one moment in time in order to advance our argument that they are important and relevant moments to study. However our continued focus will be on how changes happen in these routines, the places of media in them and how these are related to the way the home 'feels'. It is, we suggest, through a focus on these questions that we can better comprehend how media participate in change and how their potential for the production of collaborative interventions with participants might be harnessed in applied research.

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