

Abstract

News is a conversation that society carries with itself, about itself. People can access this conversation through stories produced and distributed by news organizations, but they also have the ability to join and contribute to the conversation themselves. It remains unclear how people actualize these potentials to engage with news.

The thesis investigates this issue by developing a conceptualization of engagement as three interrelated modes: *attention*, *address*, and *awareness*. These modes are studied empirically in a Danish context by applying a mixed methods design, which combines large-scale national surveys, media-specific market data, and semi-structured qualitative interviews.

Throughout the analyses and discussions, the thesis shows that Danes attend to news through old and new media (*attention*), but prefer to not discuss news at all or only in face-to-face situations with friends and family (*address*). At the same time, paying attention to news regularly across media and discussing news with others proves to be essential for sustaining an informed and critical opinion of issues in society (*awareness*).

Although opportunities to engage with news are in place, most Danes tend to follow the news at a distance without presenting themselves in public. News as a public conversation primarily takes places in private settings.