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**DIGITAL  
DETOX**

The Politics of  
Disconnecting

Trine Syvertsen

# DIGITAL DETOX

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# DIGITAL DETOX: THE POLITICS OF DISCONNECTING

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Further praise for *Digital Detox*:

‘Trine Syvertsen has again fascinated us with a reflexive and nuanced discussion of our guilt-ridden and ambivalent engagement with digital media. Situating the phenomenon of digital detox in the much longer history of media resistance, and its roots in the perceived pervasiveness of digital personal and mobile media, Syvertsen discusses how “the problem” is framed, who is held responsible for solving it (spoiler: you!), what “solutions” are offered, and how these are received among digital media users. A must-read for anyone who has ever owned a smart-phone!’

– **Göran Bolin**, Professor, Södertörn University, Author of *Media Generations* and *Value and the Media: The Shaping of Culture in Media and Society*

‘Trine Syvertsen wisely considers the significance of both the societal and the individual dilemmas and influences. The author looks at the huge pressure on economic, political and culture-driven influences and, at a micro level, at the daily life anxieties and demands for detox periods, that can rely on ambivalence, self-determination and work. This tackles the need and struggle for an identity, often different from the mainstream digital culture, even with the most intimate persons as family and friends. Another aspect that that is very interesting is the reflection on the three Ps motivation for detox: Presence, Productivity and Privacy. Finally, I consider of extreme relevance the discussion on digital policies and on how they are driven to get us online at all time, without discussing how this might affect (negatively) our life.’

– **Maria José Brites**, Associate Professor at the Lusófona University of Porto (ULP) and Researcher at the Centre for Research in Applied Communication, Culture, and New Technologies (CICANT)

‘Syvertsen offers a valuable look at the social dimensions of digital detox, explaining why it is more than just a lifestyle trend or a tool for self-optimization. Her work confirms that we have much to learn about presence, productivity and privacy from media resisters who engage with devices and networks on their *own* terms.’

– **Jennifer Rauch**, Professor, Long Island University, Author of *Slow Media: Why Slow is Satisfying, Sustainable and Smart*

‘In this timely and critical analysis of the growing industry of digital detoxing, Trine Syvertsen provides a compelling, historically informed account of how the commercial and political push for 24/7-connectivity intertwines and clashes with personal strategies of resistance. Locating digital detox in broader trajectories for responsabilizing individuals in digital society, this book is a must-read for anyone interested in the everyday politics of digitalization and the digital battle for our attention.’

– **Stine Lomborg**, Associate Professor, University of Copenhagen, Author of *Social Media, Social Genres: Making Sense of the Ordinary*, Editor of *Ubiquitous Internet*

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Trine Syvertsen** is Professor of Media Studies at the University of Oslo. She has published extensively on topics of online media, television, media policy and media history in international journals. Syvertsen is author of several books including *Media Resistance: Dislike, Protest, Abstention* (Palgrave, 2017) and co-author of *The Media Welfare State* (University of Michigan Press, 2014). She is currently chairing a four-year research project on invasive media and digital detox (Digitox 2019–2023). Trine Syvertsen has held a range of academic leadership positions, serves on editorial boards, contributes to public debates and is an experienced public speaker.

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For over a decade, I have been interested in media resistance: how people express dislike for and ambivalence towards mass and digital media. I have talked to numerous people who have described their experiences, offered their views and inspired me to delve deeper into phenomena such as digital detox. Life as a media researcher is privileged – there is no shortage of fascinating topics – but none of my previous research interests has been met with a similar level of engagement. A heartfelt thanks to those who have shared their ideas in formal interviews and informal conversations.

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Trine Syvertsen, Oslo, August 2019.