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Abstract
The different strategies explored by parents managing their children's digital practices, the associated challenges, and the conditions for a successful outcome are central in the literature on digital mediation within families. However, few studies consider the family context in its entirety, which is essential if we wish to capture the meanings, perceptions, and negotiations that are played out in the daily family routine. Based on an ethnographic survey on the place of screens in Swiss families' socialization processes, the paper shows, first, how paternal use undermines digital mediation within the family and, second, that this mediation is ultimately a maternal concern and responsibility. By interviewing all family members (including children) on their assessment of screen use by all family members (including parents), our research design provides access to the backstage of parental digital mediation. Our data shows that women confront fears and guilt in the face of social norms that a 'good' mother should regulate screens 'well' within her household. We conclude that parental digital mediation is embedded in a gendered social and relational context, where fathers and mothers do not adopt the same roles, the same duties, nor the same mental burden.

Keywords
digital family, screen uses, parental digital mediation, gender inequality, gendered roles, mom shaming, family socialization, parenthood

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Recently, parental digital mediation has become the subject of a significant body of scientific literature. The term describes all the 'interactions parents have with children related to children's use of media' (Fletcher and Blair, 2016: 240). Parents' mediation of their children's digital practices takes multiple forms, depending on their country of residence (Livingstone and Byrne, 2018), their socioeconomic status (Shin and Huh, 2011; Willett, 2015; Yuen et al., 2018), and even the type of 'values, beliefs, and imaginaries' (Livingstone and Blum-Ross, 2020: 11) that parents have constructed for themselves. They carry representations of what it is 'good' digital uses, reflecting a set of norms and modalities of use parents either impose or negotiate in the context of their educational practices. These interactions should be understood in different social and moral contexts.

In all cases, and regardless of the form of digital mediation implemented by parents regarding their children's digital uses, difficulties, tensions, anxiety, and ambivalence are consistently reported (Beyens and Beullens, 2017; Blum-Ross and Livingstone, 2018; Dupin, 2018). Some studies reveal the distress experienced by many parents who have grown tired of struggling to ensure that children and teenagers respect the established rules to engage in digital practices (Fontar et al., 2018; Havard Duclos and Pasquier, 2018). There is rich literature on the challenges parents face in supporting their children's digital experience, between a parental duty of protection and social expectations of connection (Buchanan et al., 2019; Dias and Brito, 2020; Willett, 2015). Consequently, socially accepted definitions of 'good parenting' correlate with the parents' ability to mediate digital practices successfully: 'The expectations placed on parents today, however, are particularly onerous as parents are expected to understand, assess, guide, monitor and regulate their children's online activities' (Page Jeffery, 2021: 202). The different strategies explored by parents managing their children's digital practices, the associated challenges, and the conditions for a successful outcome are central in the literature on digital mediation within families.

We believe that this notion of parental digital mediation overlooks two fundamental aspects of the reality of modern family life. Firstly, the focus on young people's screen use makes parents' digital own use, inherently present in the home and family relationships, invisible. Furthermore, the systematic inclusion of both parents in research invisibilizes gender roles within parental couples, in which fathers and mothers do not assume the same tasks and responsibilities. It is these two gaps that this article proposes to fill. Our research examines the use of digital screens in Swiss families by investigating all family members, parents and the children while providing equal consideration for each member's viewpoint and lived experience.

In the existing literature, children's voices are sometimes collected, but only vis-à-vis the rules and frameworks that parents have established (Kim and Davis, 2017; Nikken, 2006; Page Jeffery, 2021; Zaman et al., 2016.) Parental digital uses and what they produce within the family dynamic are rarely investigated, nor is the digital mediation negotiated between the parents based on their respective media uses. It is worth noting that negotiations between parents, insofar as we examine heterosexual couples, occur in a gendered context, that is, where fathers' and mothers' roles, duties, and responsibilities differ. For instance, we know that in Switzerland, where we conducted our investigations, the transition from couple life to parenthood changes the distribution of household

tasks and gives rise to an 'inequality to the detriment of women' (Le Goff and Girardin, 2016: 76). As they become mothers, women shoulder an increased workload, including, but not limited to, tasks associated with childcare, which are repetitive and unrewarding, offering little by way of gratification (Bianchi et al., 2000; Coltrane, 2000). In this context, parental digital mediation cannot be understood as gender-neutral either between individuals living as a couple or separated individuals who continue to form a parental couple and assume distinct roles (Cadolle, 2001).

Although many studies on 'parental mediation' report and analyze the mothers' voices primarily, in the existing literature, parenting is often investigated without regard to gender (Balleys, 2021). Other studies examine the struggles of mothers contending with the challenges of daily screen time management within the household, which provides little indication of the parental negotiation modalities and practices at play or paternal practices (Fletcher and Blair, 2014; Teichert, 2020).

This article aims to situate parental digital mediation within the social and relational context of the family unit. To achieve this goal, we will examine how all family members perceive digital practices, including children. We will move the focus away from child-centered uses and extend it to parents to understand parental digital mediation in its broader familial context. We will also study how fathers and mothers manage digital mediation differently and provide a glimpse of its negotiation modalities behind the scenes.

Primary and secondary socialization processes and screens uses

Our proposal is grounded in Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's 1967 book 'The Social Construction of Reality', which describes how individuals become full members of society at each life stage. The authors offer a conceptual perspective on the collective construction of social meanings in different groups of individuals (family, couples, friends, professional teams). The daily work of constructing common meanings is depicted according to a double perspective that is particularly valuable for this investigation: individuals are seen as socialized and socializing beings.

What the authors describe as the dialectic relationship between a socially acting individual and his or her socially constraining environment provides a heuristically stimulating intellectual framework for studying and describing the dynamics at work in contemporary families. As stated on page 154, infants have no choice but to identify with their parents and adopt whichever social reality they are willing to offer: 'In primary socialization, there is no problem of identification. There is no choice of significant others. Society presents the candidate for socialization with a predefined set of significant others, whom he must accept as such with no possibility of opting for another arrangement. Hic Rhodus, hic Salta. One must make do with the parents that fate has regaled one with'. Regardless of what the child thinks, this applies to all spheres of family life, including screens, 'It is the adults who set the rules of the game' (Berger and Luckmann, 1967: 154).

The child's ability to redefine the primary world he or she has inherited increases as he or she grows and interacts with other identity referents and social worlds. As children

develop into teenagers, these primary agents are partly 'replaced' by other identity models—such as friends or peers—that act as identity agents and self-recognition mediators (Balleys, 2015). In this, we echo the insights of other studies that examine parent-child negotiations during the onset of adolescence, when children begin to question parental self-patterns (Baudat et al., 2022). In other words, that moment when the child becomes reflexive and even critical of the way their parents' name and assign meaning to the world. The second aspect of interest in a constructivist approach to socialization is parental and marital dynamics, which are also the result of a socialization process. Indeed, as Peter Berger explains in an article published the same year and co-authored with Hansfried Kellner, 'Marriage and the Construction of Reality', the creation of a partnership and then a parental relationship is a powerful instrument of secondary socialization, in the sense that this relationship implies a 're-construction of the world' (Berger and Kellner, 1964: 6) which takes place in daily spousal conversations. The authors argue that 'in our contemporary society (. . .), each family constitutes a segregated sub-world, with its controls and its own closed conversation' (Berger and Kellner, 1967: 4). Accordingly, our study aimed to access this 'sub-world' constituted by familial, parental, and marital discourse, that is, how a system of values, references, and behaviors on the role of screens within the home is created and shared.

This conceptual framing helps situate the words of our research participants in terms of the socializing function of conversation. The framing of a 'we', whether familial, fraternal, marital, or parental, often embodied in the phrase 'at home', was at the heart of our analysis, notably when opposed to one or more 'others'.

Who is talking of what, on whose behalf?

Throughout 2019, we met 15 families from French-speaking Switzerland and conducted 40 in-depth interviews with all the members of these family units, separating children and parents temporally and spatially. We met 26 children aged 10 to 18 and 24 parents from various cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Five households were single-parent families (four mothers and one father), and we interviewed six couples in total, while four others opted for individual interviews.

To understand what role connected devices play within various families, we looked at the equipment and how it was used: what devices are available in the household, how, where, and by whom are they used, and under what rules? In addition to testimonies relating to the environment and media and digital use modalities, we recorded and analyzed how family members perceived the different practices described. Our coding and analysis design systematically noted the 'language that draws the line, separating things into categories' (Becker, 1998: 392). These distinctions are significant in conversations about digital practices within family units. They allow each member to position themselves differently: as a mother or a father, family member, son, or teenager.

During our interviews, we systematically analyzed the referents mentioned by participants according to the methodological processes described by Liebes and Katz (1990) in 'The Export of Meaning'. This method pays close attention to enunciative referencing modes (to whom and from whom is the speaker speaking) and helps uncover identity affiliations (what identity references indicate a 'belonging to'): 'We

classified each statement, first of all, by referent, employing the pronoun—the object to whom the referential statement refers—in order to determine which part of reality is triggered by the program. Secondly, we classified each statement by whether it is simply an interpretive utterance or whether a moral evaluation is involved (. . .)' (Liebes and Katz, 1990: 105).

For example, when a mother who is speaking of herself says: 'I am not at all in favour of video games, not at all', she does more than state her lack of enthusiasm for a cultural practice; she is making a statement of her identity: 'I am not' (Balleys, 2017; Tschannen, 2010).

In a nutshell, this method provided access to 10 categories of discourse, each of which was coded and analyzed:

1. Mothers discuss their children's practices
2. Fathers discuss their children's practices
3. Mothers discuss the father's practices
4. Fathers discuss the mother's practices
5. Children discuss their mother's (and stepmother's) practices
6. Children discuss their father's (and stepfather's) practices
7. Children discuss their siblings' practices
8. Mothers discuss their practices
9. Fathers discuss their practices
10. Children discuss their practices

We established two sets of interview guidelines, one for the children and the other for parents, with specific common questions, such as 'Who is the most connected family member?' Each interview began with a map of the family home, or homes in the case of separated parents, drawn by the interviewee(s). The interviewee(s) was/were then asked to place small, plasticized symbols representing different digital devices (phones, TV sets, computers, game consoles) in various home areas. This map served as a starting point for our interviews. Children and parents could choose to be interviewed alone or in pairs (as a couple or with a sibling).

Digital mediation as the mother's burden: worry, duty, and fear

Our interviews with the children allowed us to understand how parental roles are distributed by considering to whom the children referred when discussing the daily management of screen time within the family. In all 15 families we spoke with, the children describe their mother as in charge of day-to-day screen time regulation. The establishment of rules and the responsibility for enforcing them are also within the mother's purview. Maternal duties also include telling children when and where to put aside their devices, confiscating and hiding them, or punishing a disobedient child by taking their phone away. When we ask Charlotte (age 11) to explain the rules governing screen time at home, she only mentions her mother:

Charlotte:	'30 minutes on weekends. 30 minutes on Saturday and 30 minutes on Sunday'.
Interviewer:	'OK'.
Charlotte:	'And the same goes for Mathilde and Clotilde'.
Interviewer:	'It's the same rule'.
Charlotte:	'Yeah, but sometimes we grab our phones when Mom isn't looking'.[1]

When Charlotte explains where various media devices are kept in the home and the access the three daughters are afforded, she references only her mother. As she draws a map of the house and places various images representing connected devices, Charlotte describes the age-based modalities of use implemented for her and her sisters. Mathilde, the eldest, is 13 and owns a phone that she is allowed to use in her room, although her mother regularly asks to reclaim it: 'Yes, but when Mom asks her for it, she has to hand it over'. Charlotte also has a phone, but she is not allowed to use it in her room, and it must remain in the 'screen hiding place', a closet in the apartment's entrance hall, which their mother closely guards: 'There is a TV here, and there we have a closet where Mom keeps all that kind of stuff'. The younger daughter Clotilde, who is nine, owns a DS handheld game console that is kept 'in mom's room'. Her choice of words is particularly striking in this instance as Charlotte describes her parents' bedroom as 'mom's room' when she discusses her access to connected devices. Moreover, the three daughters only talk about their mother when describing screen time permissions and restrictions, and the mother-daughter conflicts 'with Mom' that arise:

Interviewer:	'And have you ever had arguments with other family members over screen time?'
Charlotte:	'Yes, of course! Like when Mom tells me to stop, and I say "no" and "blah blah blah", and that kind of stuff . . . or with Clotilde, sometimes we both want to use the tablet, or like when she nicks a screen and, of course, I tell on her!'

Several teenagers in our study mention conflict with their mothers when discussing parental regulation of their screen time. 'My mother says: "put it down!"' Julie, aged 17, explains, recounting how she answers messages in the sitting room while watching television. 'My mother's always telling me that we're on our screens all the time and stuff'. When asked about conflicts over screen use, the youths we interviewed named the mother as the person in charge of limiting and regulating their screen use and the one responsible for the conflicts generated by this duty. Adrian, who is 16, explains that conflicts are frequent 'with mom': 'she says that I spend way too much time on my phone and if I spent more time studying I'd be better, stuff like that. When she wants to say I could spend more time doing something else, she always uses this argument'.

As expressed in the frequent use of the qualitative 'too much', perceived excessive use is also very present in the discourse of the mothers interviewed. The term 'too much' is expressed as a personal point of view and used in the first person singular: 'For me, it's too much. It's too much time spent on it', Sandrine tells us, for instance. 'I say it's a poisoned gift'. She decided to confiscate the phone of her son Nathan (aged 13) for an

entire week because he wouldn't stop using it during a cinema outing, despite repeated injunctions from her to turn it off: 'He was being so tiresome during the film, and I was telling him, "Turn it off, turn your phone off!" so I confiscated it until next Sunday'. Both parents were being interviewed together in this case. Yann, the father, was only then informed about the duration of the punishment: 'I had no idea she had confiscated it for an entire week. I thought she'd taken it away for the night, not for the week'. He was doubtful about her ability to maintain the punishment for such a long time. Sandrine echoed his skepticism: 'I am strict and lenient at the same time. I take it away, and then I give it back, sometimes only a day later'. Indeed, all questions relating to the supervision of their three children's screen use are addressed by Sandrine: 'They know that I don't want them to watch that'; 'Emilie also uses it occasionally, let's say (. . .) when she can find it, which is why I've hidden it so well she'll never be able to find it'.

In the course of the interviews, the father begins to answer a question about screen regulation, but very quickly, the mother will step in and offer her account, as seen in this exchange with Paul and Ana:

Paul:	'Yes, and another thing we do sometimes, is hide them'.
Ana (interrupting):	'Yeah, I hide them. But only when I'm not at home, unless I forget, but when I'm not at home, they are pretty independent and are sometimes left alone, well, for part of the day when I am at work. So, when I leave for work, I take them and hide them, and then I return them to their usual spot when I get back'.

The mother will systematically take charge when describing the rules governing children's screen use, speaking in the first person singular, whereas the father remains in a secondary role, most of the time adopting a position of passive support:

Audrey:	'Now it seems important to me, at some point, to bring her back to reality and to say: "Listen, for three hours, you'll have to do without." That's the way it is. And I also believe that she needs to be reminded that she's only 13 and that I'm her mother, and I still have authority over it. Sure, it is her device, she paid for it with money she got for her birthday, but I pay for her subscription plan, and at one point, I went on Sunrise[2] and I said to her: "I will cancel your subscription if you don't give me your phone right now. Just do it, because I am one click away from cutting it off, you'll lose your phone, all your contacts". So that was all a bit . . . well, you get it'.
Alexandre:	'It got really heated! It was really euh. . .'

We understand from these narratives and how they present themselves that the mothers take on the daily role and responsibility of regulating their children's screen use. It is part of their duty as mothers. Several mothers find this daily toil trying, describing it as 'exhausting', regardless of the rules implemented to regulate their offspring's digital practices. The mental and domestic load carried by mothers is closely associated with another: the responsibility of worrying about the harmful effects that screens have on the

development of their children. The mothers in our study constantly report concerns about their children's digital uses, the content they are exposed to, the kind of games they play, or the amount of time they spend using screens. 'I don't like it when he sleeps with his device turned on and next to his bed', Stéphanie tells us when we ask the couple where their son Edgar's (aged 12) phone is kept at night. The fears experienced by mothers are many. Video games, for example, are considered capable of making children violent, as seen in this interview excerpt conducted with Matteo (aged 12):

Interviewer: 'Do you believe screens or the internet are dangerous?'
Matteo: 'I don't know. My mom says she doesn't want us to play war games because sometimes you read in the papers that someone brought guns to school and shot everyone'.

The mothers we interviewed felt and passed on to their kids the fear that connected devices can directly impact children's brains. While the question asked concerns both parents, Charlotte quickly mentions her mother, Audrey:

Interviewer: 'What do your parents think of the way you use media devices, and by that, I mean a tablet or . . . your phone?'
Charlotte: 'Well, they're not that keen, and it's true we're not in a great mood afterwards, and Mom says it makes us tired and in fact (. . .) it scrambles our brains and that kind of thing, so I try not to spend too much time in front of a screen because it fries my brain cells, but I'd happily spend much more time on my device because basically I really like it!'

Her daughter's answers reveal several interesting elements about the adverse effects Audrey perceives. Firstly, the time spent on screens changes children's behavior and makes them tired; this effect is immediate. Secondly, screen time 'scrambles their brains' by 'frying their brain cells'; a more long-term effect. Charlotte is caught in this ambivalence between the fears she has made her own through the many risks her mother mentions and the preferences she has developed for multiple screen uses. Arguments relating to health risks can also be used as leverage to bring a child to accept to limit their screen time, as seen in this exchange between Ana and Paul:

Ana: 'For example, with Pietro, we can strike a nerve. He is overly sensitive to what happens to his brain and its development (*laughter*). We can really push that argument because he is quite sensitive to it'.
Paul: 'The wavelengths and all'.
Ana: 'Yes, the wavelengths (*laughter*). Even when his handheld console is off, he'll say "Mom come and take it away because I'm afraid" (*laughter*)'.

Though in this excerpt, Ana starts by using the parental 'we' to suggest a common strategy of 'striking a nerve' to get Pietro to give up his phone before he goes to sleep, she then clarifies that it is she who is being called on by her son to take his device away. Why is that? Two keys to understanding the dual role of mothers in mediating the use of

screens by young people can be found in our results: daily regulation and concerns. Pietro considers that his mother is in charge of enforcing evening screen-time rules, primarily because she works part-time and spends more time at home. Consequently, she is responsible for most logistical tasks related to the children's schedules, including screen use. Secondly, Paul's lesser involvement correlates with the fact that he is a high-level user of digital screens, particularly in the evenings, which annoys Ana: 'I get frustrated because Paul is often . . . he enjoys playing his games. And sometimes in bed, I'm reading a book, and he's there with his thing (*mimes using a tablet*), and it really aggravates me (*laughter*), I don't know, I just can't stand it'. Digital parental mediation, which is primarily the responsibility of the mothers in our sample, is at odds with fathers' uses in the home, as we will discuss in the next section.

Digital mediation undermined by paternal practices

In our study, the 'most connected' family member is the father, sometimes on a par with his children. Regardless of who answers the question, including the father, fathers are referred to as the most intensive digital users. For example, Olivier and Sébastien refer to themselves as 'geeks' during the interviews conducted without their wives. However, they are aware that their wives had been interviewed before them. For example, Olivier immediately adopted a defensive attitude during our exchange, his first sentence being: 'So, you landed in the right family because I'm a super geek, you've been told, haven't you?' Indeed, during their interviews, Olivier's wife and two children told us that their husband and father was very connected to screens, only in different terms. When Caroline, his wife, spoke of Olivier's digital practices, she told us that he uses his iPhone 'intensively' and is 'an extreme addict'. She does not like it when he looks at his phone while watching TV as a couple or as a family. This reproach often features in the answers given by mothers. Olivier's digital practices make it hard for Caroline to regulate their children's screen use: 'But my husband is really addicted, so it's difficult to fight with someone who likes them (screens) so much'. Like other fathers in our study, Olivier is a fan of video games. For their son Matteo, who is 12, he buys games rated PEGI 16, and even 18, to his wife's great dismay. Their daughter Julie, aged 17, talks of her father Olivier as not being Caroline's ally in her digital mediation efforts: 'My father doesn't really discuss it because he's also really into it'. Olivier prefers to refer to himself as a 'geek', whereas his wife Caroline prefers the qualifier 'addict', which does not signify the same thing. Olivier emphasizes his fondness for new technologies as a legitimate interest, whereas his wife chooses a depreciatory term with a far more negative connotation.

In the family of Yann and Sandrine, Yann is the only one to use a smartphone at mealtimes. The couple's interview reveals that Sandrine has a rule about not using phones at the table, but Yann does not always respect it:

Interviewer: 'And do you use your phones at the dinner table?'
Sandrine: 'No!' *Then backtracks, pointing towards Yann*: 'Well, he does, occasionally, but. . .'
Yann: 'It depends. Sometimes I'm expecting a call, so I keep it in my pocket'.

Sandrine: 'Otherwise, no, I am totally against phones at the dinner table'.

This exception to the mother's rule is confirmed by their sons Nathan and Michael during their interview:

Interviewer: 'And are you allowed to keep your phones at the dinner table?'
Michael: 'No'.
Interviewer: 'So, no one has a phone at the dinner table?'
Michael: 'Yes'.
Nathan: 'Dad. Because he's all about "Do as I say, not as I do"'.

Children quickly pick up on paternal inconsistencies regarding mediation efforts that the mother ultimately drives. Some women use the sociological interview as an opportunity to confront their husbands. The interview allows them to broach the subject and address what they consider a family and marital problem, albeit lightheartedly, so that no one loses face (Goffman, 1959). Audrey and her three daughters reproach Alexandre for his digital practices, which he readily qualifies as 'excessive'.

Alexandre: 'No, it's true, sometimes I get up in the morning, and the first thing I do is check to see if I have messages!'

According to Audrey, Alexander's practices anger their daughters, who criticize him for being on his phone before even saying 'good morning'. Audrey teases him by calling him 'double screen' and regularly asking him: 'Are you on double or triple screen mode at the moment?' During the individual interview conducted with their daughter Mathilde, aged 13, she confirms that family conflicts over screen time mainly occur between Audrey and her girls and between Audrey and Alexandre because in both cases, Audrey feels that screens take up too much space in their family life:

Interviewer: 'Are there sometimes family conflicts over the use of. . .'
Mathilde: 'Oh yeah! It happens all the time because Mom doesn't like it when we're on our screens too much, so she asks us to stop and when she takes my phone from me, for example, I get angry, but I manage to suck it up, most of the time, and when I do get angry, I get angry alone in my room, but it has happened that I've gotten angry with her, so . . . but Mom nags Dad too, and we do too because Dad is nearly always on his phone. Other than that, there aren't that many conflicts, like bad fights, but often, Mom complains that we spend too much time on our phones, it's true(...)'
Interviewer: 'Do you agree with your mom that your dad spends too much time on his phone?'
Mathilde: 'Yeah, yeah, and sometimes I tell him, but . . . yeah, he spends way too much time on his phone. But he says it's for his work . . . so I don't know'.

Virginie also describes her husband, Sébastien, as a 'total geek', pointing out that this is 'the biggest contradiction' regarding her efforts to regulate the uses of their two daughters,

aged 10 and 14. While Virginie feels that at 8:30 p.m., 'You should be with the family, away from the screens', she admits that 'this is never the case because the TV is always on, Sébastien is constantly on his phone, so basically he is here, but he isn't'. Several mothers in our sample expressed the same problem of preserving some family time where no one uses a screen. They see themselves as the custodians of a family unit wherein every member is present and fully invested. In so doing, they continue to fulfill a role traditionally assigned to women, mothers and mothers-in-law, who are 'socially defined as being more responsible than men for running the household, instilling a happy family atmosphere, and ensuring the well-being of the child' (Bachmann et al., 2016: 73).

Mothers perceive the use of screens as a threat to family cohesion, and it is they who feel the need to guard against this threat: 'because we are sitting around the table, eating together, it's our family, and that's all there is to it' (Sandrine). Therefore, it is also a matter of protecting one's family against external demands to preserve being together 'here' and 'there' (Su, 2016).

Mothers in our study keenly defend an identity that is, if anything, the opposite of a 'geek' identity. 'It's not really my life', Virginie tells us, for instance, talking about her relationship with screens. Caroline describes herself as an occasional screen user, 'It's true, it's not really my thing'. Like the other mothers, she finds screens a waste of time. The answers provided by the other family members are consistent with this mode of self-representation, except when it comes to television. Several mothers are deeply attached to the television and enjoy watching it with their husbands and families. Television, or the act of getting together to watch a film or a series, is seen as less of a threat to family cohesion than individual screen uses.

From 'bad' screen use regulation to the 'bad mother' figure

The mothers in our study portray the good mother figure as a mother who can resist media devices, that is, successfully regulating her children's screen use. A particular rivalry can be observed in some of the statements. Ana, for example, tells us that her friends encourage her to buy a phone for her son so they can 'feel better' about having bought phones for their children. Séverine is highly critical of her husband's previous wife and mother to their three teenagers. What Séverine considers permissiveness and a lax attitude toward screen use provide her with numerous arguments on which to base a discourse against her husband's ex-wife, Sofia, whom she describes as an incompetent mother because she does not sufficiently supervise the use of screens in her home. It should be noted that Sofia has also remarried, but her new husband is absent from Séverine's discourse. In our first phone conservation, Séverine warns us that their situation is quite particular, in that they are a 'family with few screens', but the three teenagers enjoy an 'open bar access at their mother's', which is a problem. This comparison between two models of maternal regulation is at the heart of Séverine's discourse and is a common thread throughout the interview:

Séverine: 'Well, I provide a form of education that is totally different from hers: they have a mother who is very connected, who doesn't do that many

things with them, a mother who is totally Facebook, always posting photos and that kind of thing'.

According to Séverine, Sofia is a 'very connected' mother whose identity correlates to her connectivity; she 'is' Facebook and cannot be a good mother because it prevents her from 'doing' things with her children and spending quality time with them. Séverine is constantly distinguishing between both households, particularly regarding the children's connected devices: 'It's all at their mom's', 'It's not at ours', 'Here, they have nothing'. However, it is apparent that the representation she proposes during the interview clashes with what her husband Thierry and the three teenagers say. Thierry readily admits spending 'excessive' amounts of time on his phone and even offers a detailed description of his average day:

Thierry: 'It hurts to admit it, but today I spent 2:36 a.m. on the phone, 19 minutes on WhatsApp, I wrote 11 emails, I made 15 phone calls, I wrote six WhatsApp messages, and I added five appointments to my calendar. I received a total of 24 notifications today. Basically, when you look at the weekly numbers, it's quite scary. This week, I have 77 notifications per day, 539 phone activations in a week, a maximum of 102 activations in a day, on Tuesday, 260 notifications on average per day, and when you see that, you think: "It can't be possible!"'.

Thierry admits 'not being a good example' for his children when limiting screen use. 'So that shows I'm not a good example because they clearly always see me with my phone, I am constantly on my phone, and I do mean constantly'. Séverine's screen resistance ideal has trouble fitting into the daily reality of her family life. She tells us that she spends all her evenings in front of the TV, her justification being that it is pretty 'normal to watch shows to let go', something that Thierry confirms: 'I have to admit that television is, for me, a . . . a way to empty my head, really'. Leyla, aged 12, confides to us that she is fed up with being the only one who does not have a smartphone at her father's and stepmother's place, when all the other family members use theirs' every evening, sitting together in the living room sofa. Therefore, it seems interesting to us to understand that beyond actual family practices, there is a real identity and social issue that mothers (and mothers-in-law!) face when it comes to positioning themselves concerning the use of screens by young people.

The identity issue is linked closely to social norms surrounding motherhood and a feeling of guilt that 'bad' parental practices generate among women. We can see this when Virginie says when she talks about managing screen time permissions for her youngest daughter, who is 10:

Virginie: 'Yeah, it's about that, one hour. But there are times when she's suddenly on a bit longer, and then I think, "Oh, oh, oh, I'm such a bad mom" (*laughter*), so I say to her: "Did you see how you screamed? OK, you have no TV until tomorrow, OK, you have no TV and games for three days"'.

If her daughter Mila exceeds the time limit established by her mom, that is, 1 hour per day, Virginie feels guilty and seeks to further restrict her daughter's screen time on the following days, pretexting that her daughter has poorly behaved to justify the punishment. For Virginie, failing to regulate digital uses correctly indicates bad motherhood: 'I am a bad mom'. During her interview, Aude also speaks about the 'unfit mother' figure who fails to regulate her children's screen use adequately.

As a rule, comparisons with other parents, neighbors, friends, or relatives who are more lenient in digital mediation are frequent. The other mothers are presented as being less supervising and therefore less competent. 'Good' parenting, particularly 'good' motherhood, is then associated with restrictive and well-managed digital mediation. In the absence of instituted and shared indicators, the mothers of our study dot their discourse on digital mediation with mechanisms of 'mom shaming' (Orgad and Baldwin, 2021), processes of guilt (Teichert, 2020), and the different fears and concerns mentioned above:

Virginie: 'And then we watch TV for an hour and a half, maybe two hours every evening for a whole week, because I am . . . (. . .) I'm no longer able to. . . I can't say "no" anymore. I can't handle my children's pleas. Then I start. . . I. . . I feel guilty for our . . . our brain cells (*laughter*)'.

Virginie speaks only in the first-person singular in this recorded conversation as if she were a single mother, which is not the case. Nevertheless, she takes on the burden of digital family mediation, that is, managing 'the children's demands', and when she can no longer do so, she worries and 'feels guilty about our neural connections'.

Discussion: parental digital mediation as maternal digital mediation

Parental digital mediation is embedded in a broader and pre-existing familial, social, and relational context. It cannot escape gender social relations, couple irritations, gendered roles, or the ambivalence of parental postures. Our results allow us to capture the complexity of interpersonal negotiations relating to the place of connected screens in modern families, which cannot be reduced to a bag of rules and tricks valid for all.

Our research design, which includes the voices of each family member, allows access to this complexity and the challenges it represents for contemporary parenting. Interviewing the children helps us understand how parental roles are distributed by analyzing whom the children refer to in the daily management of screens in the family and how they describe their parents' digital uses.

Interviews with the couples provide an opportunity for the participants to continue a marital conversation and define the contours of the familial and parental 'we' (Berger and Kellner, 1964) by distinguishing themselves from other models they deem to be morally less legitimate. They also allow mothers to confront fathers about digital practices they see as excessive and, in so doing, confront them with what they consider to be a lack of parental coherence. It is interesting to note that, even when parents are interviewed

separately, the presence and arguments of the other parent permeate the interviews. The issue of parental mediation appears to be an individual, conjugal, parental, and familial challenge. It is about stating who you are as a parent, father or mother, spouse, and individual. Nothing is trivial about this exercise, and our results reveal to what extent 'good' parenting is intimately and socially linked to 'good' digital mediation.

The approach we adopted, which focuses on the processes of familial, conjugal, and parental socialization, and their roles in the construction of screen use perceptions and meanings, helps renew our understanding of the contemporary issues surrounding the challenges that media poses for families. This understanding must be situated within the objective reality of gender inequality in parenting. Indeed, the literature on family and the media has long shown that this is a complicated relationship, not least because it involves issues linked to the social status of the family (Livingstone, 1998; Pasquier, 1999). Our study has the added benefit of opening the black box of gender inequalities between parents, a topic lacking investigation in parental digital mediation studies.

The results confirm that the assigning of mothers to the family's well-being is still taken for granted today despite the current 'rhetoric on gender equality' (Le Pape, 2019). This observation is to be understood in the context of social inequality. In Switzerland, 60% of women work part-time jobs, compared to 18% of men.[3] Consequently, women spend much more time at home than men and are more often in charge of the daily management of the household, as shown in recent surveys (Paihlé and Solaz, 2010; Zufferey Bersier et al., 2020). This article highlights that the burden and responsibility of supervising children include using digital screens by young people. In most cases, parental digital mediation falls under the purview of the mothers (and stepmothers). Beyond the mental and domestic burden this represents, there is also a feeling of guilt borne by the mothers of our study, who feel that they are not performing as expected according to social norms that dictate that 'good' management of digital screens is an indicator of 'good' motherhood. This social norm is not clearly defined and leaves individual mothers to contend with global and diffuse fears. In short, 'too much' screen time is harmful and even dangerous to children, and despite their best efforts to set a proper framework, the mothers we interviewed feel that they reach the 'too much' threshold every day. They also struggle with the fathers' digital practices who do not share, or share to a much lesser degree, their burden of guilt and who accept more easily their uses, even if these are invasive. Their identity as men and fathers does not come under the same type of assault as the identity of mothers, who are responsible for keeping the family together.

The COVID pandemic and the many restrictions have only reinforced the gender-based distribution of parental roles within the family unit (Lanfranconi, 2021; Steinmetz et al., 2021). In parallel, screen time has substantially increased throughout 2020.[4] It can therefore be hypothesized that fears and tensions have not diminished. In this context, future research must consider the social processes and factors at work in digital mediation.

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1. Original French transcripts are available upon request.
2. The phone operator.
3. Swiss Federal Office of Statistics. 2019 Labour market indicators. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/fr/home/statistiques/travail-remuneration/enquetes/espa/publications-resultats.asset-detail.9286305.html
4. Swiss Federal Office of Statistics. 2021 screen-time indicators. https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/fr/home/statistiques/culture-medias-societe-information-sport/medias/offre-utilisation/television/utilisation-television.html

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