# Interview: Participant 5

**I: The first question really is: Could you tell me what your discipline and research field is?**

M: Design Ethnography is my research fields, which is actually very – quite broad in what it takes in. But yes, it's understanding people's behaviour in an anthropological perspective, using methods from anthropology to inform the design process. So I'd say I'm a designer but then a researcher and then it's the interplay between the two.

**I: So what is your current role?**

M: Well, I'm working – I've got a variety of projects around different – well some of them are related to social media and I've got a few other projects I'm working on. So, research fellow is the current role.

**I: what social media or what media do you use for your research but also in association with research that you personally use?**

M: Well, I use – it depends how broadly you can categorise…well, Twitter is the obvious one and I've got my own account for that but I try – I keep a split between – like Facebook for me is kind of music and funny things, whereas Twitter is more work.

**I: So you have the personal and..**

M: Yes, so I have the personal. But even Facebook, I try not to be that personal, I try not to be – just uploading or constantly updating about what I'm doing today. Like 'been ill this week', I wouldn’t say I've been ill, 'please give me sympathy or anything'. If someone tags me in something or if I find something funny then I'll put it on there but I don't really.

**I: I've personally never had a use out of LinkedIn other than I know I need to have one!**

M: Yes, it's quite good for – in some ways I've got quite a decent profile because I've got enough decent material on there and when you see other people they don't have anything. But then at the same time it's not like I've had a job from it or anything and then people know about me, and it's a weird one because you get to see when someone has looked at your profile, it's kind of a weird dating kind of…something. There's Academia.edu or whatever, I've recently got signed up to that because people have started adding publications onto it. But this is just another thing now to maintain and add stuff to. You know, I probably should be giving that more (because of what I'm doing), I should give that more priority. Yeah, they've got loads – Flickr, I was well into Flickr when it started, I've got Peg on Flickr, which is good but then Flickr, they changed the interface and I'm just not using it, I'd like to use it, I'd like to believe that I would want to use it again but I just don’t. There's good photography. I do have a Tumblr but I've never really got into it. I've had various blogs but, again, never properly done. Soundcloud, I've got Soundcloud but I don't use that, that's more personal music rather than my work or anything. Delicious, that's kind of social as well, it links in with some website, that's quite old. There's more, there's definitely more – oh, Pinterest, I've recently signed up to Pinterest because I was thinking of using it for a project, I've used it but I've used it for one – the Smartdistrict thing, so tonnes**!**

**I: You've got the longest list so far! So, (...) for your research project, do you use any tools to help you access social media data?**

M: Well, we've been using a tool that we developed I was quite involved in the development of that in terms of – from a user experience perspective, working over in the RAs, so it's funny though – we developed that software and I haven't really used it a huge amount, I've started using TweetDeck a bit more and I think that's actually really good, just the Twitter interface itself, I've used Twitter mobile app on my phone when we were doing the travel study it was quite good for that. So yeah, kind of bespoke software and off-the-shelf solutions.

**I: How have you stored your millions of Tweets?**

M: Well, it's a good question because we've had problems with the (*data),* presumably it's on a database somewhere, locally, but then because we've had technicians leaving and stuff, one of the databases has got power down and they couldn't get it powered up again so – but that's just like since yesterday but that was an issue because I was writing a paper and I was wanting to use some of the data for the paper and we couldn't and so it got to the point where we just had to make use of what we had rather than having access to all the data that we've collected. So it's actually a bit of an issue there in terms of being able to come back to the stuff that – yeah, it's quite a burden actually to have six million…

**I: How set the database up for you, was it done as part of the building of the TMI?**

M: It was done as we were setting up

**I: But now you can't access it yourself easily?**

M: Well, I haven't tried but I think it is available again. So. But yeah, it's a funny one.

**I: How have you analysed your Tweets, what have you used or how?**

M: Well I've done a range of – it's actually been Excel has been the best tool for it, to be honest, it's been downloading a selection, I don't really want anything more than a thousand Tweets to be working through or whatever and then just – yes, so this is more Twitter and Transport but what we were doing was categorising them so just going through and marking them as we went through and then we did a kind of thing where it's like three people do it and then you compare to see if you've got an agreement on what those categories are. So we were categorising both the users so the types of people that were providing information through Twitter and then we were also categorising the Tweets themselves and looking at re-tweets or what re-tweeting means.

**I: What can't you do that you would like to be able to?**

M: There's always making sure we've got access to the original dataset is always pretty good. It would be good to just strip away all of the dross from those six million Tweets and actually have the relevant stuff but we can't do that because that's the nature of the beast. But it would be nice to say a number of- if we could say a number of Tweets that we have that was actually. So it would be really good to do that because otherwise you are bandying about some lofty number which is actually just full of hot air. You know. Yes, so there's that. I want to say something about the – I want to be able to have informed consent from people that have used their Tweets!

**I: That's a million-dollar question!**

M: I want to genuinely be able to have a little, like say there's Creative Comment and they've got a whole licensing thing – you know what Creative Comment is?

**I: Yes.**

M: They've got a whole licensing structure in place so there should be something that allows me to say 'I've used this Tweet in a piece of research' and then the person should be able to go and look at their Tweets and say they've been – this Tweet has been used in this list of research projects – and then they can go and look at the research. And then if they don't want to be included in research at all they can tick a box to say 'no, my Tweets are my Tweets, please leave me alone. I want to Tweet in public but I don't want to Tweet for research.' But if you do Tweet and you are included in research, you should be able to go and look and see how your Tweet has been used.

**I: Ok.**

M: But it's a good idea, I think, it's that sort of accountability. When you get into that it's then things like you should be able to reimburse people – not reimburse but what's the right word – when you give people money or compensation, some value because we're getting paid to work as researchers and the university is getting lots of money to do this research and then we're kind of **taking people's Tweets and using that without transferring any value to them.**

**I: Do you add in any other data sources or types of data to your…?**

M: Well, for the operator perspective one and also the travel, we were trying to do interview data and fieldwork data so seeing how fieldwork, observational things about how people are actually using Twitter from talking to them (like you are doing to me) and then comparing that with actually how they Tweet and how they represent themselves, so this combination of, yeah, like analogue experience and 'tell me how you Tweet versus how they actually Tweet. And there's something quite interesting between those two.

**I: Is there anything you would like to be able to do with social media and other data?**

M: Yeah, I don't know – it's just a datasource so there's all these different things that you could do, I wouldn’t want to just sit on one, I think there's so many different options that you could do with social media data. I think it's just as a source for ideas and using it as a kind of…it's like the kind of conversations that you can have through that and how you can – I think what I'm trying to get at is bridging between the physical, I get in trouble when I say 'the real world' and Twitter because it's all the same. But it's this social media data and then the physical world and how can you join these up a bit more and what are the ways of doing that, that aren't damaging to people or that are interesting as well.

**I: I think you might have answered this a little bit already but if you had a dream research tool for helping with social media research, what would it do?**

M: I think that's the dream….there was something else I wanted to say, have you got any other questions?

**I: No.**

M: Right, so, what are we supposed to do – we've got a problem with our social media, the Tweeting travel thing, which I feel we've done a lot more – we've been a lot more getting consent from people before using their Tweets has been part of the ethics procedure and things for that, which is really great. But, a question is: now they've used their profiles because we haven't set up profiles for them to use, so they've used profiles and they've Tweeted from their profiles through a study, and now that the study is – even when the study is going on, you could associate their participation in the study with other people, with the study, so basically then they could go on and see other people participating which really it's –

**I: Nothing is anonymous.**

M: Anonymity has gone out the window. So what do you do at that point? Because now that they know each other, that's you kind of blown your actual ethical standards which is not good. You know, in terms of what we're supposed to be doing traditionally but we got through the ethics committee fine and I kind of realised this a week before the study was going: that they would be able to see each other and it was like, 'oh shit', but then there's the thing afterwards as well – should we now tell them to delete the Tweets that they've sent during the study and should we try and behave like – I've spoken to a colleague – should we behave like Ninja assassins and clear our tracks as we go to try and empty the social media data that we've generated during that time to preserve the anonymity of people in the study. And that's the question. So yes, maybe a Ninja cloaking tool for anonymity.

**I: It's quite difficult because you want to see how people react in a public domain but then if you are getting them to genuinely act in a public domain like that on the internet…**

M: Because they are using their account and it's artificial to say 'just use this account we've set up specifically for the study and then we'll delete that' because they haven't taken ownership of that.

**I: And also how they behave will change in that account to their own account.**

M: Yes, because they are given a new identity. So yes, the thing about – it's identity and the protection of that. Because it's frustrating because in comparison to the Tweet and Travel study we've been a lot better because we've checked with people before using their Tweets and that's my dream thing to be able to do so people know that they’ve participated in something. But then at the same time we've compromised them and they seem fine with that, no one has come back. But at the same time, it's not actually up to the ethical standards which I know that we're supposed to meet. So yes, there's a..

**I: That's a question! That's all of my questions, I don’t know if you have anything else?**

M: No, that was the thing I wanted to make sure that I said.

**END**