

Newsletter on

Children, Youth & Media *in the World*

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Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness

Keitai Novel Literacy in Japan

[Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness]

by

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Communication using mobile phones in Japan is currently shifting to a participation-oriented mode. A noteworthy aspect of this mode is the conveying of self-expression. This characteristic is particularly remarkable in *keitai* (mobile phone) novels, which help to create new communication styles. The keitai as a medium has made it easier to provide interactive communication between writer and reader to create keitai novels.

Young Users in the Lead

Mobile phone use in Japan is largely driven by younger users – mobile phones are particularly popular with high school students. Japanese young people are constantly changing the way they use the mobile phone; high school students' mobile phone use is not limited to making calls. They also email, photo email, and use other unique tools on their mobile phones. Among these features, accessing the Internet is common. Japanese high school students love to read literature, and read novels on their mobile phones like they read paper books. In Japan, keitai is a vector indicating the shift in direction from public to private, and this shift is free from gimmicks found in the mass media. More readers accessing keitai novels results in higher Internet search ranking. Therefore, it is conceivable that a high school girl who uses a mobile phone could suddenly find herself a best-selling novelist. While a writer is writing a novel, readers access the writer using their keitai and, sometimes, the plot of the story changes.

Keitai novels are read in the same way that email is checked on a mobile phone. The number of people who like to see characters and to express their identity using characters has rapidly increased. The simple narratives in the keitai novels, in particular, resonate with the younger generation and have come to be recognized as a genre unique to Japan.

Behind this trend is the contemporary system under which mobile phones have become a tool for accessing the Internet, which can be used for many hours without incurring additional fees. In addition, mobile phones are portable devices that are accessible anytime and anywhere. Authors can easily post keitai novels regardless of when or where. Unlike handwriting, you can type on the screen of your mobile phone without something to write on or with, and authors can easily create sentences using the Japanese character input writing tools. Speedy accessibility, just like emailing, is characteristic of this medium.

Fierce Competition

With the great many keitai novels in Japan, their publication in book form requires a significant amount of access and the receipt of many positive evaluations. This is not an easy task; competition is fierce. Successful keitai novels require a large readership. Keitai novels were initially read only by young people in Japan, but their readership has now expanded. Their impact is so great that some have been published in book form or made into movies. Keitai novels are now a noticeable characteristic of the mobile communication culture in Japan. This study examines this relatively new phenomenon: keitai novel literacy.

Characteristics of Keitai Literacy

Keitai novel literacy is literacy for writing and reading novels on a mobile phone. Communication in Japan today through mobile phones is characterized by the use of emails, picture emails, video calls, social networking services, Internet games and many other functions, as well as telephone calls. Japanese mobile phones have a high level of functionality; they have progressed in a unique way and are like a black box. Bidirectional communication on mobile phones has been driven by expanded spatial and temporal concepts through the use of characters, images and sound.

Keitai novels have media characteristics that are different from those of traditional paper books. Thus, keitai novels require a type of literacy that the conventional reading of paper novels does not. I define this type of literacy as "keitai novel literacy." Just like an extension of conversation, keitai novel literacy encompasses choice of words. The reader of a keitai novel is an active participant in the reading process. Readers need to understand the full expression of delicate emotional nuances on their mobile phone screen to avoid misunderstanding and miscommunication. Keitai novels require the careful examination and selection of words. They are exquisitely deliberated texts. Since keitai novels are intended for mobile communication, they would be meaningless if they failed to present their authors' feelings to readers.

Keitai novels create a rhythm on each page using a variety of techniques to include a balanced combination of characters per page, the appropriate line spacing, the optimal number of characters per line and the storylines. One technique is scroll spacing, which provides adjusted line spacing to allow readers to easily read the text as they scroll down at their own pace. Authors can also skilfully handle special pictographs and text characters for particular visual effects. An added mode for self-expression allows authors a full range of colours, fonts and symbols such as ? and !. All these tools are used in the short sentences found in keitai novels. In addition to short sentences, another keitai novel characteristic is the quick development of the storyline.

It is necessary to reconsider the concept of reading keitai novels from the perspective of media and communication theories. Japanese students feel a great sense of familiarity with the characters described in keitai novels, as the character images are close to the images students have of themselves. A new type of media literacy for interpreting texts on portable media in Japan includes keitai novels. New literary experiences via mobile communication and based on Internet-accessible mobile phones are spreading throughout Japan.

Reference

Eriko Uematsu (2012). *Understanding Keitai Society: Mobile Communication and Society*, Yuhikaku Publishing Co., Ltd., pp.119-133.

Youth and Media in *Comunicar*: Children, Young People and Media Literacy

[Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness]

by

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Comunicar is a scientific journal of education and communication edited by Grupo Comunicar, a professional non-profit association which has specialized in media education for the past two decades in Spain, collaborating closely with universities in Andalusia in Spain as well as abroad.

The journal specializes in educommunication, its audiences, new languages, technologies and learning, new forms of teaching and communicating. A bilingual journal published in Spanish and English, it publishes monographs on the most up-to-date topics related to the information society. The articles and topics reflect its authors' international and Latin American outlook on media education. We find significant contributions in about 1,500 articles of research, experience, reflections and proposals. The journal is available in printed and online digital editions, and the entire digital version can be accessed for free. It is printed in Spain for Europe, and in Ecuador and Chile for Latin America.

Comunicar is the first journal written in Spanish to appear in the Journal Citation Reports (JCR-WOS) for Communication (since 2007); it can also be found in 200 international databases, journal impact assessment platforms, selected directories, specialized portals and hemerographic catalogues. The journal

includes different contributions related to educommunication: communication and education, ICT, audiences, new languages.

Media Literacy an Important Topic

Children and young people in media literacy have always been one of the most important topics for *Comunicar*. In the field of Media Literacy Education, we work for the development of media competence. The European Parliament, the European Commission, UNESCO and the Alliance of Civilizations have fostered the involvement of different countries in the development of this competence.

Media competence is widely recognized in education as part of the new media curriculum. It has been regarded as a basic competence, necessary for the training of citizens, to enable them to make their own judgments and to allow them to be more demanding, participative and active; in short...free. We agree with experts that the key to achieving media literacy is the promotion of education at home, taking into account the role of new generations, students, media professionals and politicians. Raising awareness and education are the best ways to generate people's skills in communication to confront the challenges thrown down by today's media in their various forms: audiovisual, telematic, digital, etc.

Regarding child and youth media literacy, the *Comunicar* web classifies articles according to categories such as most downloaded, most widely read, texts, index, sections, authors, interesting articles published in *Comunicar*, and issues. It is also accessible via Google.

Many Aspects of Media Literacy Covered

There are many contributions related to children and young people in the media literacy context. We can classify these contributions as: media receiver or media producer, media as pedagogical resource and media as knowledge.

In the first topic, media receiver and media producer, articles cover topics including children and youths as interactive and virtual users and receivers, their likes, the abridged communication as an identity mark of young people, good audio-visual habits, young glances and voices for cultural diversity, consumption of television among youngsters, TV advertising with acting children, favourite children's TV programmes, emotion and children's habits, critical education of young people about TV, youth civic participation through media production, the social and cultural impact of advertising, levels of critical audiovisual reading in children, audiovisual riddles to stimulate children's creative thinking, reality in children's television, high-quality television and autoregulation of messages,

messages of television programmes and publicity, children's TV and adolescents with cameras, children or youngsters in front of the television, the effects of TV, etc.

Some of the texts published in *Comunicar* regarding the media as a pedagogical resource deal with other topics, such as film and educational mediation, TV and violence, quality in children's TV content, parents' main references for what their children watch on TV, television and teachers, and the backstage of TV for children, to name a few.

Media as knowledge is another main aspect, with interesting works about, for example, programmatic audio-visual content, children's programming, animated cartoons and children, discourse and socialization in children's cinematographic productions, youth, technologies and the language of links, communication outlines of free magazines, gender stereotypes in audiovisual products, and changes in the relationship between children and television.

Essential Education

According to Aguaded (2011), "today's commitment to education with regard to the screens of the new generations is essential for preparing new citizens for a world that is increasingly linked-up. The key question is whether the school as institution and the family as environment are moving in the same direction. If the answer is no, then the alarm bells should surely start to ring".

In fact, *Comunicar* aims at presenting the basic principles for media literacy and training strategies for the education of children and young people. Our aim is to improve and promote approaches for the development of media competence in a global dimension.

Comunicar can be accessed at www.comunicarjournal.com (in English) and www.revistacomunicar.com (in Spanish).

References

Aguaded, J.I. (2011). Children and young people: the new interactive generations. *Comunicar*, 36, 7-8. (DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.3916/C36-2011-01-01>).

MNet becomes MediaSmarts

[Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness]

MediaSmarts is the new name of the well-known Canadian digital and media literacy centre Media Awareness Network (MNet). Since 1996, the not-for-profit organization has worked towards the vision that “children and youth (should) have the critical thinking skills to engage with media as active and informed digital citizens”.

MediaSmarts offers digital and media literacy programmes, resources and tools for parents and educators to help children develop their critical thinking skills. The majority of their material (lesson plans, work sheets etc.) is freely available on their web site:

www.mediasmarts.ca

Internet, Computer Games, NICT

Australian Kids Online

[Internet, Computer Games, NICT]

World’s largest comparative research project examining children’s risks and opportunities online keeps getting bigger: The case of Australia

by

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EU Kids Online

Since 2006, when *EU Kids Online I* received its first set of funding, a network of researchers has been investigating the risks and opportunities facing European children when they go online. The research, funded by the European Commission’s Safer Internet Programme, was designed to provide an evidence-base for strong public policy in this area. Led by Professor Sonia Livingstone and Dr Leslie Haddon from the UK’s London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), 21 countries were involved at this stage, 2006-2009. The first set of funding was to answer several key questions including: What do we know about risks that children meet online? What research exists, is ongoing or, crucially, is still needed?

Subsequent to documenting these gaps in knowledge, the research network won additional funding from the EC Safer Internet Programme to conduct research to fill these gaps. The follow-up project became known as *EU Kids Online II* and 25 European nations were involved, including countries in trading partnerships with the EU, and countries that were applying to join the EU.

Between 2009- 2011, 25,142 children aged 9-16, together with the parent or guardian most involved with the child's internet use, were interviewed face to face by professional market researchers. Six areas of online risk affecting children were investigated: seeing sexual images online; bullying online; sending and receiving sexual messages online ('sexting'); meeting online contacts offline; seeing potentially-harmful user-generated content; and misuse of personal data (2). A major outcome of the research is to demonstrate that "Broadly speaking, children's experiences of online opportunities and risks go hand in hand – the more of one tends to mean the more of the other" (p. 142, Livingstone et al.). A summary of findings and recommendations was published in September 2011.

In order to promote children's safer internet use around the world, all the research materials, including the surveys and ethics clearances, are available for free on the LSE www.eukidsonline.net website (3). Similarly, the dataset from the 25,142 children and their matched parent or caregiver can be used by anyone who chooses to do so. So far three more nations have carried out research in parallel to the *EU Kids Online II* study: Australia, Russia and (more recently) Brazil.

AU Kids Online: Findings from Australia

The Australian research started a little after the research in Europe. Almost all the questions were identical to the ones used in the UK and Irish questionnaires, but we needed to check the explanation for the word 'bothered' since this is not a term in common use in Australia. It was defined as something which "*made you feel uncomfortable, upset, or feel that you shouldn't have seen it*". Since funding for an equivalent sample of 1000 families could not be found we commissioned the research with 400 children (9-16 years) and the parent most involved with their internet use. The research was carried out by the same international research agency as in Europe (IPSOS) between November 2010 and February 2011. Face-to-face research on a randomised, stratified basis is unusual in Australia, so some preparations had to be made before data collection could begin. Ten families with children aged 9-16 who went online were randomly chosen from each of 40 randomly-selected election districts across the nation. There was close co-operation between IPSOS in Australia and the office co-ordinating the European study, and the European and Australian datasets are inter-operable (4).

Findings show that Australian children are among the youngest when they first start using the internet, and that they rank 6 out of 26 nations in terms of their skills and activities (<http://cultural-science.org/journal/index.php/culturalscience/article/view/49/129> *AU Kids Online*) (5). They are well placed to benefit from our increasingly digital world and many already respond in creative and innovative ways to the online opportunities available.

In terms of risks, Australian children mainly align with those in Scandinavia and the Baltic States, many of whom also start their internet lives at a comparatively young age. Thirty per cent of Australian children say they have been bothered by something they experienced online in the past year, and this is a higher proportion than in any of the 25 European countries. When the six risks investigated are examined, Australian children have been bothered by:

- someone misusing their data (e.g., using their password to pretend to be them online), (2nd in 26 countries)
- being bullied online (3/26)
- seeing sexual images (4/26)
- seeing potentially risky user-generated websites (e.g., anorexia sites, hate sites) (6/26)
- sending/receiving sexual messages online (16/26)
- going to meet strangers face to face that they first met online (21/26)

It should be noted, however, that 70% of Australian children have not been bothered by anything online in the past 12 months.

AU Kids Online: Policy Implications for Australia

Although this research was carried out by IPSOS in a manner as close as possible to the EU research, the slight delay of about six months may mean that policy implications are particularly relevant. During that time, in Australia, the use of iPads and smart tablets increased exponentially. Forty-six per cent of Australian participants (9-16 years) say they have used a smart handheld device to go online at some time during the past 12 months. This compares with 12% generally in Europe, while the next most impacted population is the UK with 26% of children saying this. More research needs to be done, but this difference in access may be one reason why Australian kids were more likely than European children generally to say they had experienced something that bothered them online, and it may indicate a trend for the future.

Since the election of the Labor government in 2007, the Australian parliament and people have been involved in a long debate about possible Cybersafety measures, and this has particularly concerned the proposal for a mandatory

internet filter and additional police for catching cyber predators. A report, recommending against a mandatory filter for material which is not specifically illegal, can be found here: http://www.dbcde.gov.au/submissions/20100316_11.34.55/271-untanglingthenet.doc. The plans to introduce a mandatory filter were deferred when the Labor party lost their majority in 2010, and had to govern with the help of the Greens who oppose a mandatory filter.

Over the past two years the government has instituted a number of reviews into policy around media and regulation. Two of these have particular relevance here: the Australian Law Reform Commission's National Classification Scheme Review (which considered content) and the Australian Government's Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy's Convergence Review (which considered the regulatory implications of converged media). These reviews tend to follow a step-by-step process with an initial discussion paper, public responses, and a final report. The *AU Kids Online* research findings were submitted to both reviews.

The National Classification Scheme Review was completed at the end of February 2012 and the report, with 57 recommendations, is now public. There is an overview Summary Report of 38 pages (http://www.alrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/pdfs/publications/summary_report_for_web.pdf), while (http://www.alrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/pdfs/publications/final_report_118_for_web.pdf) gives access to the 404 page Final Report. The Summary Report does not reference the *AU Kids Online* research, but says: "The major principles that have informed media classification in Australia—such as adults being free to make their own informed media choices, and children being protected from material that may cause harm—continue to be relevant and important." (p. 10). The Final Report makes several mentions of the *AU Kids Online* research (pp. 256-258). The report emphasises that keeping children safe, and supporting their participation in a digital future, is a balancing act between risk and opportunity.

The Convergence Review report had not been made public as at late-April, but this review was also aware of the *AU Kids Online* research. An update may be necessary in the coming months. The Convergence Review report will be considered before the Australian government decides which changes to support with legislation.

Notes

1. l.green@ecu.edu.au
2. Full findings from this research were issued at the start of 2011 and can be accessed here: [http://www2.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20II%20\(2009-11\)/EUKidsOnlineIIReports/D4FullFindings.pdf](http://www2.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20II%20(2009-11)/EUKidsOnlineIIReports/D4FullFindings.pdf)
3. Following the submission of the *EU Kids Online II* reports, the EU Safer Internet Programme has funded additional gatherings of the research network so

that maximum use can be made of the dataset and more work can be undertaken using it. *EU Kids Online III* runs from 2011-14 and the number of European countries involved has grown to 33.

4. The research was funded by the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation.

5. There are no more hard copies of *Risks and safety for Australian children on the internet*, but the report is also published as a special issue of the research assessment-recognised journal *Cultural Science*, 4(1), <http://cultural-science.org/journal/index.php/culturalscience/article/view/49/129>

Source

Livingstone, S., Haddon, L., Görzig, A., and Ólafsson, K. (2011). *Risks and safety on the internet: The perspective of European children. Full Findings*. LSE, London: EU Kids Online. [http://www2.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20II%20\(2009-11\)/EUKidsOnlineIIReports/D4FullFindings.pdf](http://www2.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20II%20(2009-11)/EUKidsOnlineIIReports/D4FullFindings.pdf)

Recent Reports from EU Kids Online

[Internet, Computer Games, NICT]

The research project EU Kids Online, headed by Professor Sonia Livingstone and Dr. Leslie Haddon at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), has published three short reports based on findings from the EU Kids Online survey across 25 countries in Europe.

In ***Disadvantaged children and online risk***, authors Sonia Livingstone, Anke Görzig and Kjartan Ólafsson look at risks and available resources with the intent to guide the better targeting of safety resources in the future. The report considers specific disadvantaged groups such as *educational/economic, psychological* and *social disadvantage*. The reported differences regarding risk and safety are generally small but are still indicative. There is a need to target safety resources differently for different minority groups.

Who bullies and who is bullied online? by Anke Görzig finds that bullying and having been bullied often go hand in hand. A closer look at this specific online risk also finds, among other things, that around 60% of those who bully have themselves been bullied by others. Across Europe, 6% of Internet-using 9-16-year-olds report having been bullied online and 3% admit to having bullied someone.

In connection to Safer Internet Day, February 7, 2012, the report ***How can parents support children's internet safety?*** was released. The theme of Safer Internet Day this year was 'Connecting Generations'. The authors Andrea Duerager and Sonia Livingstone shed light on the question of whether parents,

instead of imposing restrictions, can support their child's Internet safety by sharing a positive experience of online use with them. Different mediation strategies are examined. Active mediation, e.g. talking to the child about the Internet or sitting by them while they are online, reduces risks without reducing opportunities. Technical mediation, such as using a filter, does not show reduced online risk encounters among children.

For more information, see www.eukidsonline.net where these reports also can be downloaded.

Note

In the EU Kids Online survey, conducted in 2010, over 25,000 children aged 9-16 years who use the Internet were interviewed face-to-face in their home about Internet use, risks and safety issues. The EU Kids Online project is financed by the EC Safer Internet Plus Programme.

Nätvandrarna – The Web Walkers

[Internet, Computer Games, NICT]

by

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Fryshuset in Sweden is a large youth centre - but it is actually much more than that. Above all, it is a vision based on the conviction that encouragement, confidence, responsibility and understanding are necessary in order to enable young people to develop their innate abilities and find their way into society. This is exactly what Fryshuset tries to do, and the place is therefore packed with all kinds of creative and constructive activities. Young people mix with adults in order to participate, contribute and learn. Fryshuset is a meeting place where people share and develop passionate interests, social commitments, sports, entertainment, culture and innovative educational programmes.

Physical Fryshuset youth centres are available in the three largest cities in Sweden: Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö. But since the Internet now is an important meeting place for young people, the Web Walkers ("Nätvandrarna") was founded in 2007. The aim of Fryshuset is to always be where young people are, and to meet them in their own arenas.

The Web Walkers project consists of three parts:

1. Web coaching: Adult presence on web sites where young people meet, in co-operation with the site owners.
2. The Network: A national network of experts and/or professionals in the field of social work with children and youth. The primary purpose of this network is to make sure we can always offer young people we meet online help and support offline. The second purpose is to educate volunteers working as web coaches and to spread our method.
3. The Web site: The home of the Web Walkers, where both children and members of the network always know where to find us (www.natvandrarna.se in Swedish).

Our Method

We differ from other online help-line projects mainly in the way we talk to the children as ourselves; the Web Walkers are never anonymous. Each web coach has a personal presentation on each web-site where we operate. This is of crucial importance, since our mission is to both give substantial help and to use our own interests and personalities to function as adult role models. Our method is founded on relationships and identification. This method has several advantages, but demands a great degree of clarity towards the children and we can never compromise when it comes to our professionalism. Briefly put: we talk like a friend and act like an adult. Even though we have our own method of working, we are eager to learn from and share experiences with other actors working with youth and children online.

Our Aims

The web coaches aim to offer help and support to any young person between 12 and 20 who is online.

Every young person in Sweden should have easy access to Fryshuset and the Web Walkers when in need of help or support. They should be confident that the Web Walkers will meet their needs, either by maintaining contact or by offering another contact within our vast network of youth workers. Our goal is to meet the young people where they are, in every sense of the phrase. We want to have reliable web coaches who are easy for the young people to identify with, in all large web communities for Swedish youth. The tasks of the web coaches are:

- Work for a safe, peaceful and constructive social climate on the Internet by being a present adult.

- Ensure that the work in the arenas of the youth is inhabited by reliable and sensible adults.

Our Work

We have a high presence on the Internet and the web communities for youth. Our aim is that a minimum of one web coach will be online and available to young people every night of the week until 10 pm. On weekends we will have a slightly lower presence. At the moment we are present on MSN messenger four to six evenings a week; some evenings ourselves and some our partners, such as Ersta diakoni (works with children and youth from families with alcohol and/or drug abuse) and the Salvation Army's family centre.

We are keen to collaborate with other partners, both professional social workers and web sites. Our presence on popular youth sites has turned out very well.

Our Network

In order to be there for the children on the Internet, we must be able to meet the needs they express in contact with a web coach. We need to have the resources to pursue long-term support offline if this is what a child needs. It is a great responsibility to not let a child down if they reach out with a serious problem. To fulfil what we regard as being a responsible adult, we have built a network of social workers from almost every Swedish municipality as well as representatives from 14 different NGOs in the field of young people's physical, social and mental health (<http://www.natvandrarna.se/in-english/>). Our aim has been – no matter where in Sweden a child lives – to always be able to offer direct contact with a suitable person who can help with concrete solutions. This type of network takes a great deal of time and effort to build up and maintain, but we feel that it is a crucial part of the project.

Many children are totally alone and have no one to talk to about things that bother and concern them, which makes them vulnerable and an easy target for dubious people on the Internet and "In Real Life".

We are not on the Internet to track down assaulters or potential criminals. Our main goal is always to strengthen children's self-esteem and self-confidence so that they can avoid being abused or assaulted by unsuitable adults.

The Future

Fryshuset has begun the founding of a worldwide network, called World Web Walkers. After a very successful visit in La Manche, France with representatives

of different social projects and institutions like CAF (the French social security organisation), the youth activity house MDA (Maison de Adolescents) and Solidarités départementales, plans were made. The next stop is the Finnish Web Walkers, Netari.

Fryshuset and the Web Walkers are interested in contact, co-operation and exchange with similar activities and organisations around the world working towards the same aim. We are most willing to share our methods and experience and to learn from others. Together we can make the Internet a positive, dynamic and ethically enriching place where children, young people and adults can thrive.

Contact: Helena.Meyer@fryshuset.se

Nordic Youth Internet Governance Forum

[Internet, Computer Games, NICT]

Youth between 14 and 18 years from the five Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden gathered in Stockholm, Sweden, in June 2012 for a two-day conference to discuss Internet governance. The group of 26 boys and girls met to agree on which topics they considered the most important to present to the stakeholders participating in the EuroDIG conference, which immediately followed their pre-conference. At the conference's opening session, messages from the Nordic youth delegation were presented in a four-minute long film made during their discussions

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3QvS75UqzWk&feature=youtu.be>). The film was very well received by the EuroDIG audience, and was referred to often during the whole event.

The youth delegates also participated in a workshop on child protection and child empowerment, as well as an open meeting with the Council of Europe's Secretary General, Thorbjørn Jagland, on what they had discussed during their pre-conference. Following the keynote speech by Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden on the last day of EuroDIG, youth representatives held a panel discussion (<http://www.eurodig.org/eurodig-2012/programme/plenary/queens-speech>).

The issues the youth delegation considered to be among the most important to address were: *easier terms of use*, *securing integrity online* and *education about the Internet*, so that everyone, young and old, is included. More information about the Nordic Youth Meeting can be found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/NordicYouthDelegationBlog>.

The Nordic Youth Internet Governance Forum (NYIGF) is a joint project between

the Swedish Media Council and its Nordic sister organizations, the Nordic Culture Fund and Nordicom. Experiences and impressions from the Nordic Youth IGF and their participation at EuroDIG will be documented and published by the International Clearinghouse on Children, Youth and Media. The publication will be presented at the IGF meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2012.

For more information about EuroDIG: www.eurodig.org/

Media Access and Media Use

Children's and Youth's Media Use in the Internet World (1)

[Media Access and Media Use]

by

Olle Findahl

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What happens when more and more people spend more and more time on the Internet? What happens to reading books and newspapers, to listening to the radio and music, to watching TV and videos? How do media habits and everyday life change when a new technological device opens up completely new possibilities to communicate, find entertainment and search for information?

To answer questions like these, we need comparable data over time. In 1979 in Sweden, *Mediebarometern* ("The Media Barometer") was established by the audience and program research department at Swedish Broadcasting Corporation (Sveriges Radio), to later be taken over by Nordicom (1993). The same questions, with some additions, have been asked year after year. This makes it possible to follow the media development beginning thirty years back in time. Another long time series has been established by the World Internet Institute, focusing on Internet use from the year 2000 until today. Without access to these two time series, this analysis of changes in media use over time would not have been possible.

What is immediately notable about the development of media use during the past thirty years is the stability of media habits. The number of minutes per day that the Swedish people spend with various media forms almost a straight line at the same level across the decades. But behind this stability there have been changes, especially among the young.

Older people have most often worked out a media use they feel meets their needs and have developed well rooted media habits when it comes to the telephone, radio, TV and morning paper. Younger people, on the other hand, are more easily influenced by changes in the media offer.

When television entered the scene in the 50s and started turning up in the homes of more and more families in the 60s, great changes took place. Evening habits were changed, the living room was rearranged and a new way of socializing took form. The radio was listened to less in the evenings, and it was not until the establishment of new radio stations and changes to program schedules that the radio audience returned. Music radio contributed greatly to this, especially among young audiences.

The reading of books and newspapers, on the other hand, was not affected. Contrary to all the concerns at the time newspaper reading increased, and among the young, book reading increased. The big test came later, however, at the end of the 80s when the TV offer directed toward children and youth increased drastically through the new cable and satellite channels at the same time that most families with children had bought a VCR. Among preschool-aged children, video watching tripled and radio listening doubled – while reading decreased by half. Until this time, the share of preschool-aged children who read “books” had been greater than the share who watched TV.

However, the increased TV offer, with its music videos and foreign series, did not affect the reading habits of schoolchildren and older youth. On the other hand, they did listen to the radio less; the radio, which during the 70s had had its largest audience among young people, lost listeners.

So what has happened since the introduction of the Internet? It’s now been more than 15 years. Unlike TV, which pushed its way in and became the hub of the family’s evening life, the Internet was more stealthy. In the beginning, usage times were more limited and were counted in minutes per week rather than per day. As time has passed the Internet has taken up increasingly more space, but has been fitted into the openings in our everyday life without disturbing our accustomed routines all too much.

It is worth observing, to begin with, that to this day schoolchildren and older youth still use traditional media more than the Internet. Schoolchildren (9-14 years) spend about a fourth of their media time on the Internet, and among older youth (15-24 years) it is 40% of the media time that is spent online.

What has happened is that media use has become denser. Total media use hasn’t increased, but has rather even decreased somewhat among schoolchildren, even when Internet use is included. This means that schoolchildren (9-14 years) watch less TV today than previously. They also listen

less to the radio and watch traditional video less. Smaller changes have occurred when it comes to the reading of books and newspapers; however, the most recent years have seen a decreasing tendency.

Older youth (15-24 years) use the Internet more, and their total media use is approximately six hours a day – which is the same figure for older youth ten, 20 and 30 years ago. Radio listening has decreased by half, and they watch less TV and video. Older youth also read books, newspapers and magazines somewhat less than in the past. However, it isn't as simple as assuming that those who spend a great deal of time on social networks or digital games use traditional media less. A closer analysis shows that the decrease in reading primarily concerns non-fiction and schoolbooks, while the level of reading for entertainment hasn't changed.

What's going to happen? Will the youth keep their media habits when they get older, or will they take up the same habits as their parents? In a study of people born in the 70s, a generation that has now had time to settle down, it is shown that their use of traditional media had not changed in any drastic way since they had become Internet users. There were occasionally time conflicts, but there did not appear to be any direct association between Internet use and traditional media use such that the more one used the Internet the less one used traditional media. Instead, it is the motive for and interest in the media use that steer both the use of traditional media and the way the Internet is used.

Those who use the Internet the most, the *advanced enthusiasts*, also use traditional media the most (with the exception of radio). The *traditionalists*, primarily interested in the Internet's informative and practical help functions, also use traditional media more than the average.

Least interested in traditional media are the *modernists*, who primarily use the Internet for communication, entertainment and social networking. This user group is largest among the youngest (9-14 years) and decreases in size with increasing age, when new interests surface. This means that even today's youth will get older and develop new interests when they settle down, and thereby also develop more interest in traditional media, despite time conflicts and platform changes.

Note

1. The article is a translated summary of the report: Findahl, O., (2012), *Barn och ungas medieanvändning i Internet-världen* [Children's and Youth's Media Use in the Internet World], Nordicom, University of Gothenburg.

Media Influences

The Corporate Takeover of Childhood

[Media Influences]

by

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Along with other child advocacy organisations around the world, the Australian Council on Children and the Media (ACCM) has been concerned for some time about the influence of advertising and marketing on children. It is well-recognised that young children cannot tell the difference between entertainment and marketing; and older children do not necessarily identify the selling intent behind marketing messages. More recently, it has been found that even when children understand the selling intent, they do not necessarily use their mental defences against that intent. For all of these reasons, it is commonly questioned whether marketing and advertising to children are fair or ethical.

Developments in Marketing Towards Children

In the last 5-10 years there have been two major developments. First, advertising and marketing have grown in their sophistication and effectiveness. Messages are more carefully thought-out, more persuasive and more cleverly packaged. Moreover, they appear on a bigger range of platforms, some of which are very difficult for parents to supervise. Often, they are effectively buried in the entertainment content so even older children might not be aware they are being marketed to. For example, 'advergames' embed selling messages (such as brand logos) into online activities where children can remain engaged for hours.

Second, there have emerged a number of more specific concerns about marketing and children. One is to do with a sharp increase in childhood obesity, and the possible role played by food marketing in bringing that about.

Another is referred to as 'sexualisation', though this is misleading because it actually has little to do with sex. Rather it is about the use of marketing techniques that promise children happiness and social success through the use of products that are normally associated with adult women's attempts to be attractive to men. This phenomenon has been called 'skankification' and 'bimbification'(1), to capture the idea that it is about how children are encouraged to present themselves, and not about sexual activity as such.

There is another side to sexualisation, however, which is the increase in frank sexual content in marketing in public places, for example billboards. Even though the marketing for things like erectile dysfunction treatment and prostitution is not aimed at children, there is still community concern over its presence in places where it cannot be avoided.

Sexualisation a Complex Issue

Sexualisation of children in the media is a complex issue and we are still in the process of mapping exactly how it works and why it is of concern. But it is very clear that many communities around the world are concerned about it. In my view the first step to understanding this concern is to locate the changes firmly in the context of the commercialisation of childhood. Otherwise there is a risk that these issues will be lumped together with traditional moralistic concerns about nudity and depiction of sexual activity. The second form of sexualisation (marketing of sex-related products to the general public) might raise some of those concerns, but the representation of children to themselves is quite separate. It is best viewed as just another, particularly insidious, way in which marketing is tapping into children's insecurities in order to sell products.

Sometimes it is suggested that people who oppose the commercialisation of childhood are simply mourning the loss of a mythical golden age in which children were pure and innocent. I don't believe this is the case; I remember what was dangerous and oppressive about even my own childhood. But I am disappointed if we have to simply trade one set of dangers and oppressions for another.

Corporate Culture

It is useful to take a step back and consider why these changes are taking place. Once again, I believe it is a mistake to look for reasons in some sort of societal moral decay. Rather, they can be found in the imperatives of corporate capitalism.

A corporation is an artificial entity that is legally recognised as having the status of a person. In some countries, it even has access to human rights and freedoms. However, it is a person who is required to be amoral and to care only about money; and a person who is required to be insatiably greedy. In our capitalist systems, we do not have a mechanism for saying how much profit is enough, so corporations themselves determine where they will stop. The de facto position is that there is never enough profit, and they will stop only when government regulation tells them to.

Corporations are forever in search of new markets, to fuel their constant need for growth. Children have been recognised as one such market, and they have been carefully and skilfully cultivated. One can hardly blame corporations for doing this. It's only an extension of what they have always done.

However there is also nothing new to the idea of using law to curb corporate excesses. Therefore there is considerable scope for legal scholars, such as myself, to develop proposals for how it can do so in order to limit the corporate takeover of childhood.

Note

1. 'Skank' and 'bimbo' in English are derogatory terms for women who try too hard to be attractive to men.

TV Viewing and Self-Esteem

[Media Influences]

TV can decrease self-esteem in children – unless you are a white boy – according to a new study from Indiana University. Nicole Martins, Assistant Professor of Telecommunications at Indiana University and Kristen Harrison, Professor of Communication Studies at the University of Michigan, surveyed about 400 preadolescent students over a yearlong period, focusing on the correlation between their time spent watching TV and the impact on their self-esteem.

Although new technologies and platforms attract the young media users, more time is still spent watching TV, according to Martins. Heavy TV viewing, displacing real-life experiences, may not provide the diversity and variation in role models or abilities that real life offers.

If you are a young white male, life expectancies look quite good on TV. You are more likely to hold a power position and have a prestigious occupation, high education, a nice house and a beautiful wife. Young black boys are often portrayed as criminals, and there is not as much variety in the roles they occupy on TV as for white males. A lack of variety in portrayals of their own gender is also what is available to girls and women. The roles are simplistic and often link success with their looks rather than what they do or think. A progression in depictions of under-represented populations and fewer stereotypes remain to be seen.

Source

Martins, N., and Harrison, K.: Racial and Gender Differences in the Relationship Between Children's Television Use and Self-Esteem: A Longitudinal Panel Study, *Communication Research* 2012 39: 338

Measures and Regulations

Healthy MEdia: Commission for Positive Images of Women and Girls

[Measures and Regulations]

Media messages and images, particularly regarding women and girls, have an impact on young people's confidence, body image, relationships and aspirations. Negative and unbalanced portrayals are unfortunately not unusual.

April 2012 marked the release of "Elements of Healthy Media", the first part of the *Healthy MEdia: Commission for Positive Images of Women and Girls report*. This first part states what the coalition behind it hopes to receive: concrete recommendations for promoting healthy images in the media.

All forms of media – television, film, print, radio, online content, video games, social networks, animation, and advertising on all platforms – should strive towards a more balanced and authentic depiction of women and girls. Elements of healthy media to be increased are:

- Healthy body images
- Active and diverse female characters
- Equal and healthy relationships
- More roles for women and girls

This set of elements regarding the representation of women and girls – based on research by the Girls Scouts of the USA, the American Psychological Association, the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, and experts in media and youth development – can help inform media content creators by providing concrete recommendations:

http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/advocacy/watchwhatyouwatch/elements_of_healthy_media.pdf

The Healthy MEdia Commission is based on a partnership with the Girl Scouts of the USA, the National Cable and Telecommunications Association (NCTA), the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, and the Creative Coalition (TCC). The Commission was formed at the recommendation of the Healthy Media for Youth Summit in 2010.

For further information, see: <http://blog.girlscouts.org/2012/04/healthy-media-commission-for-positive.html>

How to Report on Children in the Media? New Guidelines from Africa [Measures and Regulations]

Children's programmes are often careful about how children are portrayed in them. But how are children and youths represented in other media contents? Research shows repeatedly that children are underrepresented and stereotyped in such contents – and in the news overwhelmingly as victims or perpetrators.

Media Monitoring Africa therefore launched a new set of “Editorial Guidelines and Principles on Reporting on Children in the Media” on 19 October, 2011. The guidelines were compiled with the input of children, journalists, editors and various practitioners for African media and are accompanied by practical tips for media professionals. Examples of these guidelines are: to ensure reporting that is in the best interests of the child; that promote children's rights including their right of access to media to express their own opinions; that respect children's dignity, privacy and well-being and protect them from harm; and that avoid stereotypes and sensational presentation in material involving children.

The booklet *Resources – Guides and Tools* is available here:

http://www.mediamonitoringafrica.org/images/uploads/A5_Booklet_final_lowres_01.pdf

A few previous important international guidelines are:

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ, 2001) *Guidelines and Principles for Reporting on Issues Involving Children*

<http://www.ifj.org/en/articles/childrens-rights-and-media-guidelines-and-principles-for-reporting-on-issues-involving-children>

MediaWise Trust, for UNICEF (latest edition 2010) *The Media and Children's Rights. A resource for journalists by journalists*
(http://mediawise.org.uk/?page_id=541)

Towards a Better Internet for Children [Measures and Regulations]

In December 2011, the European Commission announced that 28 leading tech and media companies – Apple, Facebook, Google, Nintendo, Nokia, Samsung, Telefonica and many others – had come together to form a new CEO Coalition to make a better and safer internet for children. Priority actions include making it easier to report harmful content, ensuring that privacy settings are age-appropriate, and offering wider options for parental control, reflecting the needs of a generation that is going online at an increasingly young age.

In the light of this, the research project EU Kids Online put forward on the 1st of June, 2012, findings and recommendations to the Coalition in the report *Towards a Better Internet for Children* by Sonia Livingstone, Kjartan Ólafsson, Brian O'Neill and Verónica Donoso. The report presents new findings and further analysis of the EU Kids Online 25 country survey, as well as bringing together previously published findings relevant to the European Commission CEO Coalition initiative. The report asks if the Coalition's principles will help manage online risk

of harm, and so address parental concerns. The EU Kids Online findings support recommendations about initiatives that industry can take under four of the five headings considered by the CEO Coalition, namely: simple and robust reporting tools; age-appropriate privacy settings; wider use of content classification; and wider availability and use of parental controls.

For further information, see:

About the EC CEO coalition:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/1485&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

The EU Kids Online report:

<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20III/Reports/EUKidsOnlineReportfortheCEOCalition.pdf>

In May 2012, the European Commission presented its new strategy on how they plan to give children and youth the digital competencies and tools needed to benefit fully and safely from the digital world.

The four main pillars of actions within this new strategy are:

- To stimulate the production of creative and pedagogic content online and to develop platforms where children can find age appropriate content.
- To intensify efforts of empowerment and awareness raising about online safety, in schools and elsewhere.
- To create a safe environment for children online and provide tools for parents in this regard, e.g. age ratings, content classification and simple reporting tools for harmful content or actions.
- To fight against the spreading of child abuse material, in cooperation with international partners, the police etc. and to support development and use of innovative techniques used to track and takedown such material.

For further information, see press release from the European Commission:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/12/445>

Resource on Online Safety Online

[Measures and Regulations]

The FOSI GRID is an online resource of efforts of online safety around the world. The Global Resource and Information Directory (GRID) is aimed at various interest groups; governments, industry, lawyers, academics and educators or anyone interested in online safety.

The web portal gives a country by country overview of online safety efforts together with a brief report on educational, legislative and organizational

activities. The Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI) behind the resource has 30 members consisting of companies representing technology and service providers in the ICT industry.

www.fosigrid.org

In Brief

Current and Important Reports from UNICEF

[In Brief]

State of the World's Children 2012 calls attention to the situation of children growing up in urban settings. Cities are often associated with economic growth, but the vast disparities among children in these areas are often forgotten. Hundreds of millions of children are growing up in the urban slums without access to basic services. The 'Focus On' series in the report includes panels on urban disparities, mapping, disaster risk reduction, Child-Friendly Cities, intra-urban data and more. In a series of essays, 'Urban Childhoods Matter', young people, experts, goodwill ambassadors and child-rights advocates give their personal perspectives on issues facing children growing up in urban areas. An extensive section containing current statistics on different aspects concerning children's lives is also presented.

State of the World's Children 2012: Children in an Urban World is available (also in French and Spanish) in PDF format here: www.unicef.org/sowc2012/

In another recent publication from UNICEF, *Progress for Children: A report card on adolescents*, the formative period between ages 10 and 19 during which children grow towards adulthood is in focus. The report provides an overview of the situation for adolescents, including their vulnerabilities in critical areas. There are about 1.2 billion adolescents worldwide, but we know less about them compared to other segments of childhood. Dedicating more attention, resources and efforts to young people in this stage of life is essential, to ensure the rights of adolescents and to achieve the Millennium Development goals - helping them fulfil their human potential.

Progress for Children: A report card on adolescents is available (also in French and Spanish) in PDF format here: www.unicef.org/publications/index_62280.html

Television, Radio and Print for Education in Africa

[In Brief]

The just released issue no. 200 of *The Soul Beat* from the Communication Initiative Network, includes programme experiences, research documents, and resource materials that highlight how communication is being used to promote quality education. Specifically, it looks at the use of television and radio, information and communication technologies, and the participation of girls. It also provides some tools for schools and communities to promote quality education.

www.comminit.com/africa/soul_beat_200.html

For more information about the Communication Initiative Network:

<http://www.comminit.com/global/content/about-us-ci-global>

Clearinghouse Yearbook 2012 on Young People, Media and Health

[In Brief]

The Clearinghouse Yearbook 2012 – soon in press – will illuminate the theme of *young people, media and health*. This is an immense issue and the book will only give a few examples: How are media representing children and health? What are the consequences of media use for children's health and well-being? How can media be used for health communication and social change?

Expected month of publication is September 2012.

Reminder of Coming Events

[In Brief]

On the Clearinghouse website you will find a list of upcoming conferences and seminars as well as calls for papers - all concerning children, youth and media. Check under the heading "Coming Events" to see if there is any event you do not want to miss! (www.nordicom.gu.se/clearinghouse) Also, do not forget to send us information about any event you are planning and would like us to announce (clearinghouse@nordicom.gu.se).

Here is a selection of conferences to be held in the near future:

IAMCR Conference 2012

Theme: South-North Conversations

15-19 July, Durban, South Africa

The annual conference of the International Association for Media and Communication Research, IAMCR, will be held under the general theme, 'South-North Conversations'. The theme reflects the asymmetry of global communication flows, but without implying the negatives that usually accompany discussions of the 'digital divide'. The theme also calls for balanced and empowering narratives that do not regard those in 'the South' as victims primarily in need of handouts from the more affluent. Read more about the conference theme on the web site below.

There are several sections and working groups at the conference. See for example the section for Media Education Research: <http://iamcr.org/s-wg/mcej/med/838-iamcr2012medcfp>

For more information:

E-mail: IAMCR2012@ukzn.ac.za

Conference web site: <http://www.iamcr2012.ukzn.ac.za/>

Girls and Digital Culture: Transnational Reflections

13-14 September, London, United Kingdom

This international interdisciplinary conference hosted by the Centre for Culture, Media and Creative Industries and the Department of Digital Humanities, King's College, London, seeks to bring together current research exploring the relationship between contemporary girlhood and digital culture, in a transnational frame.

Drawing on approaches from the arts, humanities and social sciences the conference will look at how contemporary transformations and transnational interconnections may be challenging existing social and cultural categories, power structures and global hegemonies.

Themes of the conference include:

- Girls experiences of digital culture
- Gender and social media
- Sexuality
- Activism and politics
- Identity and subjectivity
- Development
- Gender and blogging
- Gender, play and digital culture
- Power and digital divisions
- Convergence
- Intersectional and transnational approaches

For more information:

girlsanddigitalculture@gmail.com

Conference web site: <http://girlsanddigitalculture.cch.kcl.ac.uk/>

World Congress for the Rights of Children and Adolescents

Childhood, Adolescence and Social Change

15-19 October, San Juan, Argentina

World Congresses for Rights of Children and Adolescents have been organized since 2003 in different parts of the world with the participation of civil servants, civil society organizations, and international representatives of the United Nations, OAS and the European Union, and Universities from different parts of the world. The congresses are the responsibility of an International Organizing Scientific Committee led by citizens of the country appointed as a venue though no formal recognition has been received yet.

The congresses have been carried out upon approval by the United Nations of "A WORLD FIT FOR CHILDREN", a declaration issued by the UN General Assembly on Children at a Special Session held in 2002, which has served as a starting point for the meetings held so far.

The objective of this meeting is to deepen into and sustain the scientific, academic and professional exchange within the framework of the regional agenda, for the transdisciplinary progress related to the "Protection of Rights and Defense of Children and Adolescents". The intention is to elaborate documents, bibliography, reports based on passed experiences and to develop investigation lines on the different fields of application from the collaborative work among professionals, researchers and institutions.

Among the topics outlined for the congress is the relationship between children and adolescents and mass media.

For more information: see conference web site:

<http://www.vcongresomundialdeinfancia.org/en/index.html>