Newsletter on Children, Youth & Media *in the World*

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Media Influences

Coverage of Natural Disasters and Family Reactions in Chile
[Media Influences]

by
Claudia Alarcon
Psychologist, PHD candidate at the University of Sydney
AUSTRALIA
and
María Dolores Souza
Psychologist, Head of Research,
National Television Council (CNTV)
Santiago
CHILE

In 2010, Chile suffered one of the strongest earthquakes – and tsunamis – in its recorded history. The National Council of Television (1) conducted a study on the TV coverage of these historic events and their effects on the audience.

The methodology of the study combined content analysis and opinion surveys. The content analysis research evaluated the quality of journalistic performance based on the criteria of public responsibility and a special instrument of data collection was created, inspired by other studies, both national and international, on the quality of news coverage. Furthermore, the study included three opinion polls and interviews: a telephone survey (1000 individuals 18 years and older) and six focus groups with parents with at least two children aged four to 12. Finally, seven in-depth interviews were conducted with TV editors and journalists.

The opinion polls were distributed in three different cities in the country according to their degree of damage caused by the events: the city of Concepcion, close to the epicentre and the most affected; Santiago, 500 km north of Concepción, moderately affected; and Iquique, 2,355 km north of Concepción, which was not affected by the natural disaster.

The content analysis study analysed the whole free-to-air broadcasts of the first week after the quake; that is, 611 hours corresponding to all the programming of the main four channels that broadcast at a national level. They were on air for more than 20 hours a day.

The variables analysed in the content analysis were defined as:
• Formal variables: i.e. format; subject matter; and use of sources.
• Content variables: i.e. story construction; relationship between text and image; use of substantive language; effects to increase emotional impact on the audience; and professional performance.

Main Results

Of the total 611 hours broadcast nationally, 565 were devoted exclusively to information about the catastrophe, 12% of them corresponding to highly dramatic media pieces. The coverage was built around victims (82%) as the main sources of information, as compared to official sources, experts and institutions. Furthermore, a number of resources such as background music, reiteration of images, close-ups of suffering people, etc., were used to highlight the impact of the disaster on both people and the environment, i.e. beaches, ports and cities.

The findings indicate that broadcasters did not take into account the watershed child protection time, as 99% of the coverage was aimed at adults.

The qualitative study shows that after the catastrophe families gathered around TV sets and consumed more TV than ever before. Parents realized that children were emotionally affected – not only because of the events themselves but because of the TV coverage as well. For example, parents from Iquique (the city that was not affected) asserted that after TV exposure their children were anguished and frightened, and did not dare to approach the beach. According to

the interviewees, this response developed after the first day of the earthquake and was generated by their exposure to the coverage of the tragedy. To parents in general, the TV coverage produced emotional saturation in children, who also missed the daily children's programming, which might have eased the stress in the young viewers.

The subject matters covered by the telecasts focused on damage (37%); aid (15%); the repositioning of basic services such as water and electricity (10%); aftershocks (10%); and looting (7.4%).

Adults said that the images they themselves mostly had in mind were: destruction by the earthquake (40%); destruction by the tsunami (39%); suffering of the most affected (8%); and looting (6%). These images provoked fear, grief and shame.

Parents recognized that free-to-air TV channels showed images that were not suitable for children, but the first days after the quake they could not help watching the screen.

In conclusion, it can be said that TV coverage of the earthquake and tsunami in Chile (2) was 'self-centred' (3), following the logic of spectacle to engage audiences, and in this way did a poor job of contributing to decreasing the psychological impact of the disaster, especially among children.

The results show that a media protocol is strongly needed as a frame that could be useful to journalists and editors – from a technical and ethical point of view – in the coverage of natural disasters, as it does exist in cases of war and terrorism.

Notes
1. The broadcast regulator in the country www.cntv.cl
2. See CNTV 2010 (in Spanish): www.cntv.cl/prontus_cntv/site/artic/20121003/asocfile/20121003155042/terremoto_27_f_2010.pdf
3. See: *Revista Comunicar*, full text in English: María Dolores Souza and Victor Martinez (2011) "The intervention of TV in the Chilean earthquake" Link: http://www.revistacomunicar.com/index.php?contenido=detalles&numero=36&articulo=36-2011-09

Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness

Marching Towards a Global Non-violent Future Through Children's Newspaper *The Peace Gong*
[Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness]

by
Syeda Rumana Mehdi
Karachi
PAKISTAN
and
Spandana Bhattacharya
Kolkata
INDIA

"To ensure a global non-violent future, children should be encouraged to volunteer to build bridges of friendship amongst young people. Promoting children's participation in community building will not only contribute towards trans-generational progress of the society but also lay the foundation of an active young citizenry who are aware of their rights and duties."

(Editorial in the special issue of the children's newspaper The Peace Gong, marking the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers in February 2012.)

This editorial in our special issue on volunteering underlines *The Peace Gong's* philosophy to

bring together children of the world on one platform to volunteer to promote a culture of peace and non-violence.

It is further articulated by initiatives of young reporters in different countries of the world. For instance, *The Peace Gong* reporters at Anandalaya School in a remote tribal village of Jharkhand, India have initiated interactions with seniors on the importance of peaceful co-existence and non-violence. During the interactions, it was generally felt that intolerance amongst communities was growing and that this needed immediate attention (*The Peace Gong*, September 2012 issue).

The students and seniors felt that encouraging mutual respect for each other was important to promote peace between communities. Children and young people have a great role to play as peace messengers and catalysts for imbibing respect for different culture and traditions, the young reporters reiterated.

Working Together Towards Non-Violence

The importance of encouraging children to work for global peace through children's media platforms like *The Peace Gong* can also be highlighted through an inspiring interview with eminent Gandhian Mr Natwar Thakkar. In his interview with our correspondent in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, Iflah Javed Qureshi, 16 and a student in Class XI, Mr Thakkar stressed the need for children and young people to work together to make the phenomenon of violence outdated (*Peace Supplement* of *The Peace Gong* to mark the International Day of Non-Violence, October 2):

"Humankind in its infancy believed that violence was the final arbiter. Gandhi taught and proved that violence cannot be the final arbiter. Violence leads to counter violence and sets in motion the never ending vicious circle. Let us aim at creating violence free world."

Media- and Information Literacy as Means

The Peace Gong is a global children's newspaper initiated by the Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore Foundation, New Delhi, as part of the foundation's initiative to promote peace and non-violence through media and information literacy. Children, not only from different parts of India but also abroad, are part of the *Peace Gong* team. Franklin D. Roosevelt was pertinent in saying, "We cannot always build the future for our youth but we can build our youth for the future." This vision definitely coincides with the mission of *The Peace Gong*.

We students involved with *The Peace Gong* feel that by developing capacities to critically understand the media and its messages, and to make use of information on different social issues, we are able to build appreciation for concerns of society and diversity.

Nikita Mishra, 17, a student in Class XII in Mumbai, India and involved with *The Peace Gong*, talks about how she perceives violence in the media and other social concerns after having started doing deconstruction exercises:

"Being part of an initiative which helps to understand media, I have tried to learn how to discern between reality and fiction. It gives us insight as to how media covers conflicts and violence. On the whole it not only enhances our communication and analytical skills, being a reporter of *The Peace Gong* makes us aware of injustices in the society and conscious of our responsibilities. We no longer take whatever the media tries to promote rather we try to look at it with different perspectives."

Taking Action

In the context of young people developing capacities to use media through media literacy, Ananya Roy, 17 and a Class XII student in Kolkata as well as a member of *The Peace Gong*, used SMS to mobilize people in a silent march to protest the death of over 90 people in a fire at the AMRI Hospital. She writes (*The Peace Gong*, February 2012):

"As a *Peace Gong* member, I felt I needed to do something. So on December 12, 2011 I sent out approximately three hundred text messages to students of various schools and colleges telling them that I would be in front of AMRI, sticking a few posters and lighting a candle as a mark of a silent protest. The message was forwarded to numerous people and I received a huge response saying that they wanted to join in too. They wanted to light a candle which would ignite the change in the prevailing darkness. I went ahead to create an event on Facebook named 'VOICE YOUR GRIEF AND ANGER-PLAY THE ROLE OF THE YOUTH'. It was a public event open to all those with a heart and will to bring about a change. Within a day we got a response from more than 120 people saying that they would be attending the gathering."

In fact, what makes *The Peace Gong* a shining beacon of hope is the fact that it does not take up simple and childish topics but on the contrary encourages young school students to become responsible and more mature. It casts light on issues such as volunteering, food security, disability, conflict resolution and education, which is likely to rekindle the spark of humanity and reawaken the thirst for peace in the hearts of the youth.

The reporters of *The Peace Gong* have visited prisons, orphanages, old-age homes and many other welfare institutions which are often quite far away, just to serve humanity. Regarding *The Peace Gong* issue on disability, Gulzar Shahab, a renowned Indian lyricist, aptly said "If children are nurtured right from a young age on their understanding of disability, we can bring to an end the age-old stereotypes and attitudes towards people with disability."

In this context our friends, Zineb, Soukaina, Ahmed and the Radijojo kids crew from Ahli Children's Home in Taroudannt, Morocco write how children with disabilities contribute to a global exchange on ambitious issues like peace, education and sustainability (*The Peace Gong*, September 2012 issue on disability).

Shazaf Masood, *Peace Gong* correspondent from Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan is philosophical and reflects:
"Life is a journey that begins with experiments and ends with experiences. Experiences make us realize that our regular world that is constitutive of desires, dreams and fantasies co-exists with another more ethereal realm where nature in all its myriad manifestations is the primary focus."

Towards a Culture of Peace

The Peace Gong is definitely both an experiment and experience of young reporters to contribute to a violence-free world. We do hope children from other parts of the world will join us in our endeavour to further a culture of peace and non-violence. Also, as some of our friends – like those studying at the Anandalaya School – have shown, a deeper understanding of media and communication can help them develop capacities to initiate dialogue in the community and contribute to peace. It is possible that a global effort aimed at introducing media education programmes for peace and conflict resolution can contribute to a culture of peace and non-violence.

To conclude, we reiterate our mission of peace and volunteering through this poem by Rumana:

Volunteering: A Noble Act

See the destruction all around,
Look at the poor people lying dead on the ground,

Doesn't your heart weep for the victims of war and violence?
Doesn't your inquisitive mind question their unwavering tolerance?

Elders have done enough; let children take the lead,
Let the innocent ones rule who have no knowledge of caste, status and creed,

Let us volunteer to establish a world which is peaceful and lovely,

Where all the people are loving and trustworthy,

Look at the people dying of hunger due to famines,
Look at the miners blown up in coal mines,

Let us volunteer to provide food for everyone,
Allow the orphans of developing nations to breath freely and run,

Wipe away the tears of misery and hopelessness from your eyes,
Forget all the broken promises and lies,

So, let's promise to volunteer,
To rebuild a world free from shackles of hatred and despair!

(*The Peace Gong*, February 2012 issue)

Note
Syeda Rumana Mehdi, 17 years, is a student of 'A' Levels, The Lyceum School, Karachi, Pakistan.
Spandana Bhattacharya, 17 years, is Editor of The Peace Gong and a student in Class XII at DPs Ruby Park, Kolkata, India.

NGO Media Education for the Promotion of Youth Civic Engagement in the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro
[Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness]

by
Leonardo Custódio, PhD Student
University of Tampere
FINLAND

The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for civic action among Brazilian urban poor youth has increased. In the favelas of Rio, for example, youth-led groups and networks use old (e.g., photo and video cameras) and new (e.g., computers, mobile phones and tablets) ICTs to struggle for human rights and social justice as well as against discrimination, police violence and government negligence. In general, these collective actors use online spaces for the dissemination of material, articulation with other actors and mobilization. However, Brazil is still a digitally divided country. In 2011, only 36.5% (1) of households had an Internet connection. So, how have ICTs and the Internet become a civic platform and instruments for activism in urban poor environments? In Rio, media education projects conducted by non-governmental, non-profit organizations (NGOs) in the favelas have taught local youth to make news and to use different ICTs and the Internet for civic action in these contexts of poverty, violence and discrimination.

Favelas: Poor and Criminalized Urban Territories

Favelas are urban areas often characterized by: high population density; low-quality education, housing and urban infrastructure; few leisure facilities; and a concentration of urban violence (see Perlman 2010). The metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro has over a thousand favelas, with an estimated population of 1.7 million (14.4% of the total population). In general, favela dwellers study very little before they start working. In part due to their incomplete education, they often work long hours in low-salary jobs.

In addition, favela dwellers regularly suffer from discrimination. Since the drug trade is concentrated in favelas, these dwellers tend to be criminalized (Jovchelovitch et al., 2012). Problematically, the criminalization of the poor is also reproduced in the elite-controlled mainstream media. Since media, especially radio and television, have historically played the role of the cultural and political matrix in Brazil, the negative representations of favela dwellers often

impact on their lives. The image of them as criminals contributes to reducing their job opportunities and increasing police oppression, for example. These facts have motivated NGOs to create projects in which media and journalism knowledge is taught as skills for civic action.

Non-formal Media Education in the Favelas of Rio de Janeiro

These contextual nuances are the background to a research project (2009-2015) at the University of Tampere (Finland) on the use of ICTs for youth civic engagement in the favelas of Rio. Based on individual and group interviews, the research looks at the experiences of current and former young participants of different NGO media education projects. The main goal is to understand how participation in these projects influences the young people's decision to use their acquired knowledge for civic action. One of the early findings is the importance of NGO projects for ICT-based activism. Media education is not offered in formal schools. Thus, NGOs are the main promoters of systematic media education in Rio. In general, young favela activists who use ICTs as civic instruments have participated or are somehow involved in different NGO projects, like the newspaper *O Cidadão da Maré* (The Citizen of Maré).

What is Civic in O *O Cidadão da Maré*?

O Cidadão da Maré was created in 1999 by CEASM, an educational NGO based at Maré, a region constituted by 16 favelas (30.5 thousand people/km2) in the North Zone of Rio. The original proposal for *O Cidadão da Maré* was to (a) generate critical knowledge about the makings and ideologies of mainstream media and (b) train young people as journalists to write stories of local relevance as an alternative to mainstream media's often discriminating coverage. Each edition of the newspaper originally produced 20 thousand copies (printed by a sponsoring publishing house). The newspaper is distributed for free in the streets, shops and houses of Maré. Almost ten years after its launch, administrative disagreements and a lack of funding put the continuity of the project at risk. But today, a handful of former pupils work to keep *O Cidadão da Maré* alive. They use their knowledge acquired from theoretical classes and their skills learned from hands-on news writing under the supervision of senior journalists. Semi-structured interviews with these young activists reveal how they use different ICTs and the civic role they believe they perform.

Different ICTs have different purposes at *O Cidadão da Maré*. The interviewees believe the distribution of the newspaper has contributed to increasing political awareness and self-esteem among the often-criminalized residents of Maré. The paper publication is also important for reaching the majority of people who are still offline. In addition, the newspaper also uses many images and easy-to-read texts since illiteracy is significant, especially among older favela dwellers. On the Internet, they publish a blog and posts on social media (e.g., Facebook) in order to both reach audiences outside the favelas and also network with other civic actors. This strategy has worked: the young activists participate in and organize gatherings, workshops and demonstrations with participants of different organizations and media education projects.

According to the interviews, the young activists' increased engagement in different civic actions is connected to their participation in *O Cidadão da Maré*. One of them, now 27 years old (in the project since age 18), described how the young volunteer newspaper staff once helped articulate demonstrations against police violence after a child was murdered during a police raid. Another interviewee, now 23 years old (a volunteer since age 14), claimed that they make journalism that is more informative, true and respectful to favelas than that of the mainstream media. Both interviewees now disseminate their knowledge and mobilize others to continue with the newspaper. Together, they recently organized their first media course at *O Cidadão da Maré*.

Researching ICT-based Youth Activism Beyond Technologies

The overall objective of the research project conducted at the University of Tampere is to avoid media-centrism and techno-reductionism: ICT-based youth civic engagement is not only a matter of access to technologies. In order to understand the civic action of urban poor youth online and offline, more attention should be paid to how local realities and personal experiences impact on their decisions to engage in civic action. The interviews with the participants in *O Cidadão da Maré* showed that in addition to learning how to use ICTs, producing news and

becoming more critical viewers of mainstream media, the young participants also exhibited pride in having the responsibility to continue the project. They also showed pride in playing a respected political role in the favelas where they live. They talked about how joyful, but also challenging, it is to be regarded as positive role models for other young people in Maré, in contrast to those involved in crime. Understanding these experiences and the youth's perceived civic roles is the core objective of the investigation of non-formal media education projects in the favelas of Rio.

Note
1. For the results of the National Household Survey (PNAD) (in Portuguese), see:
www.ibge.gov.br/graficos_dinamicos/pnad2011/

References
Jovchelovitch, Sandra & Priego-Hernández, Jacqueline. 2012. *Underground Sociabilities: Identity, Culture and Resistance in Rio de Janeiro's Favelas.* Final report. London: LSE.
Perlman, Janice. 2010. *Favela: Four Decades of Living on the Edge in Rio de Janeiro.* New York: Oxford University Press.

First Nationwide Study on Media Literacy in Greek Schools
[Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness]

by
Irene Andriopoulou
Media Researcher/Analyst
EU Media Literacy Expert
(Head of Media Literacy Dept. former Hellenic Audiovisual Institute - IOM)
GREECE

The Hellenic Audiovisual Institute, the former national-applied research organization and "think tank" on media, broadcasting and media literacy in Greece, conducted the first nationwide study on media literacy in a formal education environment. The target group of the research comprised teachers, educators and school consultants within pre-school and primary-level education. The research was designed and conducted by the Media Literacy Department of the Institute in cooperation with the Hellenic Ministry of Education, Religion & Lifelong Learning. The aim of the study was to decode the educators' attitudes and personal points of view on and experience of media (traditional and new), and to illustrate how these are further reflected in their media teaching practices in the classroom. In this context, it explored their level of knowledge and daily use of media, in order to evidence the impact of their media attitudes in the classroom.

The study, the very first nationwide media literacy-oriented research in formal education in Greece, was consistent with the EC Recommendation 6464 (2009) for the empowerment of media literacy research in the Member States (*"…promoting systematic research through studies and projects on the different aspects and dimensions of media literacy in the digital environment"*, art. 2).

Why this Research?

The research followed a mixed model (quantitative-qualitative), and was conducted through the official Greek School Network portal www.sch.gr for a three-month period (February-May 2011). All registered users of the network were invited to fill in an online questionnaire, placed in high visibility on the website's homepage. The logic behind the use of www.sch.gr was the fact that only registered member users, hence teachers, educators and school units, were given access to the questionnaire, thus minimizing the risk of ending up with an out-of-school sample. The main premise behind the research was that teachers themselves are the actual "executors" of media literacy agenda at schools, and hence that it is of great importance to first be able to assess their knowledge, skills and experience before we put forward a structured proposal for incorporating media literacy in schools.

Key Findings

Among the main findings of the research was that Internet and other digital media (closed networks, Web interactive resources) take the lead from traditional media (80%), such as television and press, in the teacher's preferences concerning teaching media literacy in the classroom. Film screening resources follow, with a small yet significant 11%. Similarly, the study revealed the Greek paradox whereby teachers either do not want to/do not know how to use new media in the classroom ("old-school" teachers) or use them extensively, with the Internet, in terms of research and resources, at the forefront ("new-generation" teachers). More specifically, those who do make use of media in the classroom prefer a cross-curricular approach supporting other teaching subjects (42%), whereas 26% bring it up spontaneously per se in the classroom.

What is more striking, though, is that over 82% of teachers and educators are positive towards the idea of integrating media literacy in the classroom, either cross-curricularly (62%), as a core module (21%) or as an optional course (11%).

In terms of teaching material, teachers pinpointed its absence: Over 92% stressed the need for more resources for media literacy education, with the main characteristics needed being:
• Clear scientific orientation: per age, per subject, per teaching level
• Copyright problems: free-for-use material in the classroom, open resources
• More interactive content, Web-based, educational platforms
• More fun-oriented games (e.g. advergames, serious games) with cultural and creative strands that offer a biomatic dimension (virtual and non-virtual)

Barriers to Media Literacy Education in the Classroom

Moreover, it is interesting to note that the main barriers listed by the teachers themselves included:
• Overloaded school curriculum agenda, leaving practically no time or space for extra teaching modules
• Lack of supporting media tools, especially in kindergarten
• Lack of adequate teacher training
• Age-inappropriate material, often with the comment that "children are too young to understand"
These barriers are coupled with the overall educational policy that places media literacy low on the school agenda in formal and non-formal educational structures (e.g., lifelong learning educational framework).

Towards a Holistic Media Literacy Approach

The research concluded by highlighting the dilemma concerning the optimum model for media literacy education in the classroom. Whatever the teaching module might be, though, media education has to acquire an all-inclusive, holistic approach with a deep, cultural insight into media, accompanied by the appropriate interpretation tools for it. In order for this to happen, from a theoretical point of view, the media literacy paradigm has to move beyond the reproduction of the cognitive hierarchies and cultural discriminations of the traditional educational system. It needs to abandon the old dichotomy of elitist vs. popular culture and high aesthetics media vs. mass media, and focus on building a strong, flexible and contemporary media literacy agenda, in order to empower children as mature media citizens in the information society. From a more practical point of view, the research highlighted the need for a strong consensus among all relevant parties (educators, policy-makers, media stakeholders, regulatory authorities) in order to agree on the most effective scheme for embedding media literacy in formal education environment.

Handbook on the Pedagogies of Media and Information Literacies
[Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness]

by
Suvi Tuominen, Project Manager, Finnish Centre for Media Education and Audiovisual Media
Helsinki
Sirkku Kotilainen, Professor of Media Literacy Education
University of Tampere
and
Anniina Lundvall, Coordinator, Finnish Society on Media Education
Helsinki
FINLAND

The need to promote media and information literacies is essential, and today these modes of new literacies are recognized almost universally as being part of the key competences within the educational system, especially by UNESCO and other organizations with international orientations. Still, the main challenges seem to be local: How can administrators and teachers be helped to understand the importance of promoting media and information literacies? How can teachers be encouraged to include pedagogies on media and information literacies as part of the everyday practices at school?

Recognizing these challenges, the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (Link: http://iite.unesco.org/), together with the Finnish Society on Media Education (Read more: http://en.mediakasvatus.fi/node/5568), has produced *Pedagogies of Media and Information Literacies* (2012) as a pedagogic tool for promoting media and information literacies among youngsters aged 13-18 years. The publication has been created as a follow-up to *Media and Information Literacy. Curriculum for Teachers* (Wilson et al. 2011) and Media Literacy and New Humanism (Perez-Tornero & Varis 2010).

The focus of *Pedagogies of Media and Information Literacies* is on practical media pedagogies. Our starting points in producing it were student-centred pedagogies, youth cultures online, and psychological viewpoints of child and youth development. The text is meant to act as a tutor for the teacher in reflecting on how media and information literacies can be taught and evaluated in school, through several examples. The handbook can also be used as a manual on media and information literacy, as well as a basis for teacher training.

The aim of *Pedagogies of Media and Information Literacies* is for teachers themselves to become media- and information-literate, and to encourage them to take up media education in the classroom. It provides teachers with basic knowledge on media and information literacy, and on the way these skills can be taught.
Focusing on the pedagogies, the publication puts effort into teaching, exercises and evaluation. Moreover, it reflects the techno-pedagogic differences involved in teaching media and information literacies. However, media and information literacy education is no different from any other kind of education: basically, it is about encountering one's pupils.

Pedagogies of Media and Information Literacy suggests three levels of teaching media and information literacies: elementary, basic and advanced. It includes informational texts, exercises for teachers, and exercises for the classroom.

The main target group for *Pedagogies of Media and Information Literacies* is teachers, including those on the secondary level who are either in training or in service. The publication is also relevant to libraries, museums, NGOs, government officials and ministries, and other civic organizations.

The full handbook can be downloaded in English at (http://iite.unesco.org/publications/3214705/), and in Russian (http://iite.unesco.org/pics/publications/ru/files/3214708.pdf).

Sex and Violence in Digital Media - a new handbook for educators
[Media Education/Media Literacy/Awareness]

by
Marcela Alzin
Austrian Institute for Applied Telecommunications (OIAT)
Vienna
AUSTRIA

"Sex and Violence in Digital Media. Prevention, Help & Counselling." is the title of a new handbook for educators and youth workers produced by the Austrian Institute for Applied Telecommunications (OIAT) www.oiat.at, which also coordinates the Austrian Safer Internet Centre saferinternet.at

The 82-page handbook contains useful information on media violence and phenomena such as cyber-bullying, sexting and grooming. As it was primarily meant to be used by teachers, it offers tips on prevention but also on how to handle such incidents at school. It also touches on the topic of assistance for victims, with special focus on online assistance – a list of help lines operating within the Safer Internet Programme of the EC is also included.

The second part of the resource contains a compendium of 23 ready-to-use exercises that can be used in school or in youth work to empower children and young people to more responsibly cope with media and with each other. All the exercises have been conceived and tested by educators in Austrian schools, and each of them bears a clear indication of the age group to they which are suited.

The handbook was created within the framework of the EU Daphne III project "Ch@dvice" in cooperation with partners from Belgium – Child Focus and Artevelde University College. It is available in four languages – English, German, French and Dutch – and can be downloaded free of charge from the following website:

http://saferinternet.at/chadvice

The project and handbook will be presented at the upcoming conference "Online help for young people: Existing practices and the challenges ahead" on 26 February 2013 at the European Parliament in Brussels. The conference will be hosted by MEPs Birgit Sippel and Antonyia Paravanova. Registration for the conference is open until 5 February 2013, and there is no conference fee. For more information about the event and registration, please visit:

www.childfocus.be/en/projects/eu-projects-3/ch-dvice-3

Internet, Computer Games, NICT

Guidelines for Preventing Cyber-bullying in the School Environment
[Internet, Computer Games, NICT]

A network of European researchers has produced a booklet with guideline on how to prevent cyber-bullying. The recommendations are based on and the collective knowledge of researchers from the Working Group 3 of COST Action IS0801 addressing Cyber-bullying.
Cyber-bullying refers to bullying and harassment of others by means of new electronic technologies, primarily mobile phones and the internet. Cyber-bullying of children and young people is emerging as a significant problem which can threaten the health, well-being and attainment of victims, and adversely affect the climate of the peer group and school.

Many countries have started to address these problems using guidelines as one of many tools to prevent cyber-bullying. The booklet analyses the content of 54 guidelines from 27 countries by looking at what recommendations are for four target groups; parents, young people, schools and teachers. The booklet reviews these recommendations by using the existing research evidence and then makes their own recommendations for each target group.

The 20-page booklet *Guidelines for Preventing Cyber-bullying in the School Environment: a review and recommendations* can be downloaded here:
https://sites.google.com/site/costis0801/guideline

Members of the Working Group who helped produce the booklet were Maritta Välimäki (Chair), Ana Almeida (Vice-chair), Donna Cross, Hildegunn Fandrem, Mona O'Moore, Sofia Berne, Gie Deboutte,Tali Heiman, Dorit Olenik-Shemesh, Marta Fulop, Hildegunn Fandrem, Gitte Stald, Marjo Kurki and Efi Sygkollitou.

Recent Reports from EU Kids Online
[Internet, Computer Games, NICT]

The European research network EU Kids Online, headed by Professor Sonia Livingstone and Dr Leslie Haddon at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) has recently published the following reports:

The most recent, *How to cope and build resilience*, by Leen D'Haenens, Sofie Vandonink, and Verónica Donoso, was released in January 2013: Read more: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/48115/

In November 2012 the report *Excessive Internet Use Among European Children* was released: Read more: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/47344/ This report was made by David Smahel, Ellen Helsper, Lelia Green, Veronika Kalmus, Lukas Blinka, and Kjartan Ólafsson.

EU Kids Online: National perspectives by Leslie Haddon, Sonia Livingstone and the EU Kids Online network: This comparative report summarises the internet related experiences of children in the 33 countries now participating in EU Kids Online. Findings for eight new countries are added to the 25 which formed the network in the beginning – Croatia, Iceland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Russia, Slovakia and Switzerland. For each country, key statistics and country-specific commentary on children's internet access and use, activities and skills, risks and harm parental mediation and safety, and national policy implications are presented. Read more: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/46878/

Addressing the European Commission Vice President Kroes' CEO Coalition initiative to make the internet a better place for children the following report was published in July, 2012: Sonia Livingstone, Kjartan Ólafsson, Brian O'Neill, and Verónica Donoso: *Towards a better internet for children: findings and recommendations from EU Kids Online to inform the CEO coalition*. The report presents new findings and further analysis of the EU Kids Online 25 country survey and brings together previously published findings. Read more: http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/44213/

Besides the reports mentioned above the following book was released in July 2012: *Children, risk and safety on the internet. Research and policy challenges in comparative perspective.* Sonia Livingstone, Leslie Haddon & Anke Görzig (eds.) Bristol, The Policy Press.
Read more:
http://www2.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/EU%20Kids%20II%20(2009-11)/FlyerKidsOnlineComparative.pdf

Youth Participation at Internet Governance Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan
[Internet, Computer Games, NICT]

"We are the Internet generation", declared one of the youths participating in a Nordic Youth forum on Internet governance in Stockholm in June 2012. Taking children's rights seriously means letting them take part in the discussion. In many international meetings and forums concerning issues relevant to them, for example Internet content, access and use, youth have been largely absent or have had very limited participation and presence even though they are sometimes the most eager users.

This is why the idea came about to gather national organizations and authorities on a Nordic level to create a youth platform for a discussion on Internet governance. The Nordic Youth IGF in Stockholm was held in connection with the European multistakeholder meeting EuroDIG in June

2012, and the report *Youth Have their Say on Internet Governance* documents the event (Link: http://www.nordicom.gu.se/clearinghouse.php?portal=publ&main=info_publ2.php&ex=364&me =3).

The aim of the Nordic Youth IGF was threefold:
1) to let the youth discuss Internet governance on their own terms,
2) to allow them to participate in the debates at the EuroDIG conference and
3) to let their ideas travel through a report so that their voices can be heard at the IGF in Baku and elsewhere.

Fortunately, the limited presence of young people and the youth perspective at international meetings on Internet governance may be coming to an end. Similar thoughts of raising the voices of youth in these arenas have resulted in the creation of youth panels and other forms of participation in other countries and regions. At the IGF in Baku, Azerbaijan in November 2012, several youth panellists participated or led the discussions in the many sessions. Besides participation by the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), youth from the UK and Hong Kong reported from their national events on Internet governance. A session forwarding information from the first Arab IGF, held one month prior to the meeting in Baku, also reported successful youth participation.

Common issues raised by the youth at the IGF in Baku included the importance of freedom of expression, different ways to tackle cyber-bullying and harassment, online-offline identities, and the importance of education among all user groups. All the youth were very keen on sharing their own experiences and participating in the discussions.

The host country, Azerbaijan, was represented by Sevinj Muradova, spokesperson for NUR, a social union for children and youth. Muradova stressed that what places children in the vulnerable Internet user category is their lack of practice and skills in the use of ICTs as well as incoherent information literacy among adults – especially now, when owning a computer or having access to the Internet is becoming more and more possible for people in Azerbaijan. To address this, NUR has implemented projects addressing children's need to be able to access reliable and tested information that can help them develop their capacities, among other things by presenting the first web portal in Azerbaijan developed especially for children. To raise awareness, they have advocated for children's online safety by working directly in communities, empowering children and their parents as well as educators in the schools to enable them to make the best possible use of information and communication services. They also recently organized a camp for peer trainers, who are now equipped with the skills necessary to train others in the use of ICT and social networks, who will then act as multipliers.

Although youth participation has increased, young people are still largely treated as a separate group in their own sessions, rather than participating alongside adults or in the main sessions to provide a youth perspective on any issue discussed. The scheduling of the youth-focused sessions could also be improved, as to not compete with other such sessions in the same time slot or be left to the last days when delegates begin to leave the event. However, having seen the dedicated youth participate in the sessions in Baku may inspire future organizers of similar events to take this progress further.

Measures and Regulations

Developments in Video Game Classification in Australia
[Measures and Regulations]

by
Elizabeth Handsley, Professor
School of Law, Flinders University
Adelaide
President, Australian Council on Children and the Media
AUSTRALIA

Australia's system of video game classification is based on, and closely aligned with, the system for classification of films. The main difference, up until now, has been that the R18+ (adults-only) classification was not available for games. The highest legal classification has been MA15+, which means that anybody under 15 needs to be accompanied by an adult to buy or rent it. Any game containing material too strong for that classification is granted RC, or Refused Classification – meaning it is illegal to sell, hire or distribute it in Australia.

The omission of R18+ was decided in 1995 at the time when the game classification system was put in place. Those who were designing the scheme believed that interactivity increased the impact of material – so anything that would have met the R18+ criteria in a film would be simply too strong for the community in a game.

However the MA15+ guidelines were very broad, and covered many violent games that are rated for adults only in other countries. Because they allowed strong violence that is justified by the context, they included the majority of 'first person shooter' games. A few games have been modified for the Australian market, and only a handful each year have been given RC.

Concern for Children?

Over the last few years there has been a concerted campaign by the gaming industry (http://prwire.com.au/pr/20227/espresso-communications-snags-a-highly-commended-for-r18-classification-for-video-games-campaign-1), and gamers themselves (http://www.kotaku.com.au/tags/ready/), to have an R18+ classification added for games. Although contributors to the debate sometimes referred to such matters as freedom for adults to play what they want, most of the arguments advanced for mass consumption were based on concern for children: the material allowable at MA15+ was simply too strong for 15-17 year olds. These arguments were based on assertions that games were being 'shoehorned' into MA15+ because the classifiers felt pressure to put popular games into a legal category. Not a shred of evidence was ever advanced that that was the case, and no official complaints were ever brought to say that classifiers were not doing their job properly. Nor was any argument cogently advanced that the games in question did not, in fact, meet the MA15+ guidelines as they stood.

As a result, those arguments failed to understand that adding R18+ would not be sufficient to cause the material currently rated MA15+ to migrate into the higher category. That would certainly not be the case for material that already had an MA15+ rating; and for any future games to come through the system, applying the same criteria would presumably lead to the same decisions. If better protection of young people from inappropriate material was needed, it could only be achieved through a change to the MA15+ guidelines.

Eventually the politicians gave in to the gaming lobby's demands, and the R18+ classification becomes available for games on 1 January 2013. Luckily, the politicians took the gaming lobby at their word that the main problem was about the inappropriate material to which 15-17 year olds have had access. They therefore undertook also to change the MA15+ guidelines, and make them more restrictive.

New Guidelines and New Questions

Unfortunately the process they followed was not well-designed to ensure sensible drafting or to ensure they had a sound basis in the literature on the impact of exposure to media violence. The guidelines were passed around among the ministers, a number of whom added clauses, then the new version was placed on a website for a short time, but without any proper call for public comment, before being officially adopted (http://www.ministerhomeaffairs.gov.au/Mediareleases/Pages/2012/Third%20Quarter/12September2012-Newcomputergameguidelinesfinalised.aspx). The result is the following new statement on allowable violence at MA15+:

Violence should be justified by context.
Strong and realistic violence should not be frequent or unduly repetitive.
Sexual violence, implied or otherwise, is not permitted.

First it needs to be noticed that the new restriction applies only to violence that is strong and realistic. 'Realistic violence' is not defined, but the term has traditionally been used in Australian classification law to differentiate it from 'stylised' representations – and therefore to give a lower classification to cartoonish depictions of violence. In other words, the rating is likely to depend on the realism with which the images are rendered – or on technical considerations. It is also possible that 'realistic' would not cover violence that, for example, occurs in a fantasy context.

Next, attention needs to be paid to the idea of 'frequency'. In the film context, classification decisions have judged this against the overall length of a film – the longer the film the more of the material you can have that would otherwise push the classification higher. Considering the length of time it takes to play the average video game to its conclusion this allows for quite a lot of 'strong and realistic' violence in the MA15+ category.

Finally the phrase 'unduly repetitive' is not defined and poses more questions than it answers. 'Unduly' from which perspective? From the perspective of the plot, or the player, or a reasonable observer who cares about young people's exposure to violence? If the player, is it the kind of player who is likely to choose such a game, or the average player in the broader community? The average player aged 15-17, or the average adult?

Also, repetitiveness is a difficult concept to pin down in the context of an interactive game. At least some of the time, the degree of repetition will be determined by players themselves. Is this to be taken into account in deciding whether a game should be freely available to 15 year olds? And if so, what kinds of assumptions should one make about the likely choices of the players? Again, do we assume a 15 year old player, or an adult? And so on.

For all these reasons, we see all the evidence of 'drafting by committee' – and even then, a committee that is not very knowledgeable about the subject matter.

Lack of Openness During the Process

It has been disappointing to see such an unsatisfactory process adopted for drafting the new guidelines, when so much time and energy has gone into formal reviews (http://www.alrc.gov.au/publications/classification-content-regulation-and-convergent-media-alrc-report-118) and community consultation (http://www.ag.gov.au/Consultations/Pages/AnR18ClassificationforComputerGames.aspx) on related matters, especially on the question of whether there should be an R18+ classification at all. The wording of the guidelines has been the most important question from the perspective of protecting children and yet the process has gone on largely behind closed doors, and with little or no input from people who know about games and about the kinds of violence that are most likely to influence a young person's thoughts, attitudes and behaviour.

As one might expect, this whole debate has been carried out against a backdrop of frequent denials that exposure to violent content can have such an influence, and/or that interactivity increases such influences. I make no comment on that debate, other than to point out the irony where it is the gaming lobby that is complaining the most loudly about the material to which young people have access. The adoption of a child-protection theme for the campaign was too clever by half, and arguably it blew up in their faces – that is, unless it was the industry's intention to shrink the legal market for some of its products!

It is probably not surprising that the policy debate in Australia has played out in such an unsatisfactory way, considering the flaws in the method selected for recognising interactivity in the first place. If the decision-makers in 1995 were so concerned about interactvity, there is no reason they should have changed only the top end of the classification system. Logically, they should have changed the criteria at every level – so for example, they could have kept an R18+ classification, but used the same criteria for it as applied at MA15+ for non-interactive material. If any classification was omitted, it should have been the lowest one (G). I doubt anyone would have minded that, and it would have saved us all a lot of trouble.

Privacy Practices in Mobile Applications for Children Examined in the US
[Measures and Regulations]

Privacy disclosures and practices of mobile applications (apps) (1) for children have been examined by the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC). The findings are published in the report *Mobile Apps for Kids: Disclosures Still Not Making the Grade* (Link: http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2012/12/kidsapp.shtm), released in December 2012.

This is the second survey of kids' mobile apps (the first was conducted in 2011), and little progress was found when it comes to giving parents information on what data are being collected from their children, how they are shared and who will have access to them. Many of the apps surveyed also contained interactive features such as connecting to social media and sharing information from one's mobile with advertising networks or analytic companies without disclosing this to parents.

Four hundred apps were examined, and more than half were found to fail in providing any information about data collected, why they were collected or with whom they were shared. This makes it difficult for parents or caregivers to make informed choices about which apps to allow their children to download and use. Many of the apps were also shown to share information about device ID, geolocation or phone number with third parties. Other features were advertising or possibilities to make in-app purchases of virtual goods without the disclosure of information about this prior to download. Only 20% of the apps in the examination provided information about the privacy practices of the app.

The FTC will continue to survey app providers as well as gatekeepers of the app stores, and hopes for improvement in this area. The FTC works to protect America's consumers' interests to prevent fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices and to provide information to help spot, stop, and avoid them.

Note
1. Mobile applications (apps) are games, puzzles or other software to be downloaded to a smart phone, tablet or other mobile device. They are often free or for sale at a low cost.

Media Access and Media Use

Great Digital Divides among Children in Peru
[Media Access and Media Use]

The Peruvian Consejo Consultivo de Radio y Televisión (CONCORTV, Advisory Council of Radio and Television) conducted a study during September and October 2012 with the aim of learning about attitudes, habits and opinions of children and young people as regards radio and TV. The survey was performed by means of interviews with 8,434 7-16-year-olds in their homes in 17 cities in Peru.

The survey showed that 100% of the young people studied have access to TV at home and 94% to the radio, 74% to a cell phone, 53% to a computer, and 37% to the internet. However, access to the internet varies markedly between the cities – in Iquitos, for example, 21% have access to a computer at home and 3% to the internet.

This finding reflects the digital divides between the five socio-economic classes in the study: 'high', with 2% of the children and adolescents; 'middle' 11%; 'upper low' 28%; 'lower low' 35%; and 'very low' 24%. Only a small minority of the approximately 60% of the young people belonging to the two last-mentioned classes have access to a computer or the internet at home.

Differences in media use due to age and gender are much smaller than those based on socio-economic status.

Almost all young people in the inquiry said they devoted time to studying (99%) and watching TV (97%) on weekdays (Monday-Friday), while a minority spent time to the internet (36%), friends

(32%), radio listening (29%) and sports (5%). As for Saturday-Sunday, about the same proportion of young people watched TV and listened to the radio as on weekdays, but more respondents (67%) played with friends and surfed the internet (51%) on weekends compared to weekdays.

It appears that radio listening among young people in Peru has decreased since 2010, while TV viewing has increased; in 2012 TV viewing makes up an average of 3:30 hours a day among the age groups studied. The most popular TV series among these children and adolescents is the Peruvian *Al fondo hay sitio* (There's Room in the Back), addressing issues like social differences and economic status.

Source
2012 - Encuesta a niños y adolescentes sobre la radio y televisión Peruana, Read more: http://www.concortv.gob.pe/index.php/estudios/1041-2012-encuesta-a-ninos-y-adolescentes-sobre-la-radio-y-television-peruana.html

In Brief

Seminar on Young Audiences: Reception, Uses, and Media Habits
[In Brief]

by
Maddalena Fedele, PhD
Postdoctoral Scholar
Department of Communication
Pompeu Fabra University
Barcelona
SPAIN

The first Seminar on Young Audiences (I Jornada Audiencias Juveniles) was held on 22 November 2012, at the Faculty of Communication at Pompeu Fabra University (UPF) in Barcelona, Spain. It was the first to be organized by the Audience and Reception Studies Section of the Spanish Association of Communication Research (AE-IC), and especially by the section coordinator, PhD Amparo Huertas, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), and the section secretary, PhD Mònica Figueras (UPF).

The purpose of the Seminar was to share empirical research and methodological reflections on youth culture and its relationships with media and new technologies.

Sixty researchers from several Spanish and French universities participated in the Seminar, whose programme included 15 papers grouped into three thematic section panels: 1) Youth and digital networks, 2) Youth and television, and 3) Identities and interculturality.

Four conferences on specific topics related to youth and media were held by keynote speakers Carles Feixa (UDL), Javier Callejo (UNED), Lucrezia Crescenzi (UB), and Joan Ferres (UFP).

Young people's and children's new media skills and current consumption habits related to several media such as radio, TV, cinema, Internet and social networks were discussed. Scholars also emphasized the importance of media use in young people's identity-building process. Finally, several contributions stressed the need to improve media literacy for both children and adults, and to increase the number of audience and reception studies in Spain.
The organization committee is currently working on publishing a selection of the Seminar papers soon.

Websites:
http://eventia.upf.edu/congresos/ficha.es.html?cc=98
www.ae-ic.org/esp/secciones_det.asp?id_seccio=2&secciones=2
Twitter: https://twitter.com/aud_juventud Hashtag: #juventudaeic

ECREA Temporary working group on Children, Youth and Media
[In Brief]

Over 1000 researchers coming from 58 countries participated in the 4th European Communication Conference in Istanbul in October. More than 40 papers had a focus on children, youth and media. Cosplay (costume play), cyberbullying, play on Ipads and mediated negotiations among migrant youth were some topics in focus. Several papers used the rich material from EU kids online to answers research questions about children and youth in Europe.

For the first time the ECREA Temporary Working Group(TGW) of Children, Youth and Media met in person and discussed research agenda for children, youth and media and about the possible activities of the TWG and a mailing list started that so far has attracted 78 persons from 21 European countries. Here is the statement from the group at the ECRA website:

The Children, Youth and Media TWG will serve as a Europe-wide network for researchers and educators interested in the analysis of all kinds of media- and communication- related activities undertaken by, for and about children and young people. Despite having long been studied by media and communication scholars, it remains the case that children are often treated as something exceptional – on the one hand 'special' but on the other hand an afterthought, even forgotten in wider analysis of media societies or media processes or 'the population'. This TWG aims to bring a valuable spotlight onto children and youth in a thoroughly mediated society, both drawing together and giving visibility to the array of existing theory, findings and perspectives and also stimulating new approaches and further research in this important area.

Upcoming activities 2013: arranging meet ups at the conferences Youth 2.0 (March, Antwerpen) and ICA (June, London) and proposing a panel on youth and online safety for IAMCR (June, Dublin)

Chair: Sonia Livingstone, London School of Economics and Political Science LSE, United Kingdom
Vice Chair: Brian O'Neill, Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland
Vice Chair: Cristina Ponte, FCSH - Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal

If you are interested in participating in the network send an email to LISTSERV@listserv.heanet.ie and be sure to put SUBSCRIBE CHILDREN-YOUTH-MEDIA in the body of your message.

The TWG was proposed in February 2012 and approved by ECREA in May 2012. Its formal objectives and modus operandi are available on the ECREA website. Read more: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZSgCRW0PgxDkOLP8N6hjDaZY59O2Uu4Zc3LYJ15r7EY/edit?pli=1

Announcement from the Clearinghouse

Scientific Coordinator of the Clearinghouse
[Announcement from the Clearinghouse]

Our longtime colleague Professor Cecilia von Feilitzen is now retiring. Cecilia has been with the Clearinghouse since the very beginning in 1997. Her expertise and knowledge in the field of children, youth and media has been an invaluable asset in our work and the establishment of the Clearinghouse.

Cecilia sends her warm and sincere thanks to the Clearinghouse network and all readers and contributors to the Clearinghouse newsletters, Yearbooks, booklets and seminars. This worldwide cooperation has been of paramount importance, she says and hopes for continuous work for ameliorating the relations between children, media and children's rights. Cecilia will continue to conduct research at Södertörn university, She is currently involved in a research project together with Peter Petrov; *Media Discourses on Material and Ethnic Gaps. A comparative study in St. Petersburg and Stockholm.*

The new scientific coordinator of the Clearinghouse is Maria Edström.

Maria Edström is a gender and media scholar with a background both in journalism and media activism. Her thesis (2006) was about storytelling in different television genres about gender and power.

Gender, media and human rights has been in focus for Edström during many years. Together with some colleagues she started a media watch group "Everything is Possible" in 1992. During the years the group has produced several books, reports and pedagogical material for on how to become a more gender and media critical citizen. Among other things Edström has been coordinating the Swedish data collection of the two global news studies, Global Media Monitoring Project (www.whomakesthenews.org) and Global Report on the Status Women in the News Media organised by International Women's Media Foundation, IWMF. (www.iwmf.org) Maria Edström is also a member of the Swedish Broadcasting Commission, a national authority that oversees radio and television broadcasts.