



# The dilemmas of digital methodologies: learning from work on Young Digital

Susan Elsley, Michael Gallagher and Kay Tisdall



THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* EDINBURGH



University  
*of* Glasgow



# What is new?

Children and young people as  
'digital natives'

Our students have changed radically. Today's students are no longer the people our education system was designed to teach.

# A digital revolution?

- Technology has always changed – from stone age to present.
- Digital media have been evolving for decades – they're not new.
- 'Digital natives' – too crude and over-generalising to be useful.
- Technology will continue to evolve. Today's children won't be 'natives' in the future.
- Much of the current buzz and hype is driven by marketing by tech companies.
- The real issue is practices – how children are using and combining technologies.

# Digital audio: 1970s - present



# So what is new?

Current technologies and patterns of use are:

- Increasingly **mobile**
- Increasingly **networked** – involving prolific **exchange, copying** and wide geographical **distribution** of data
- Blurring traditional distinctions between **public/private** spaces
- Increasingly dominated by **multinational corporations**, making profits from selling devices, services, advertising and data – often data generated by users



# What's happening online

- **62% of 12-15 year olds** have smartphones (41% in 2011/35% in 2010)
- **80% of 12-15s** have an active social networking profile (75% in 2011)
- **22% of 8-11s** have a social profile

Ofcom, 2012 Children and Parents: media use and attitudes use report  
<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/media-literacy/oct2012/main.pdf>

# Our online spaces

'five key issues are at stake in the new media—identity, privacy, ownership and authorship, credibility, and participation.'

James, C et al (2009) Young People, Ethics and the New Digital Media, MIT



# Identity, privacy and anonymity=compatible?

- Identity is being shaped by **online**
- Ideas of privacy **are changing-** but still a work **in process**
- Anonymity – **hard to sustain**
- Differences between **anonymity and confidentiality**

# Dealing with the legacy

- Foul-mouthed teen crime tsar QUITs her £15,000-a-year youth commissioner role after police launch investigation into Twitter rant

Daily Mail Online, 9<sup>th</sup> April 2013

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2306335/Paris-Brown-QUITs-15-000-year-youth-commissioner-role-police-launch-investigation-Twitter-rant.html>



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- Allows free sharing, creators still retain copyright.
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- Supported by many platforms, e.g. YouTube, Soundcloud, Flickr

# What do we do as researchers?

- Apply 'traditional' ethics and be clear about our role as **ethics champions**
- Needs **careful planning** from the start if we are to use online in research
- Keep up with what is changing: be **online explorers** too
- Requires **dialogue** from the outset with children and young people

# Resources

- James, C et al (2009) Young People, Ethics and the New Digital Media, MIT
- JISC Digital Media: Copyright and Digital Images  
<http://www.jiscdigitalmedia.ac.uk/guide/copyright-and-digital-images/>
- Ofcom, 2012 Children and Parents: media use and attitudes use report  
<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/media-literacy/oct2012/main.pdf>

# Young Digital

- <http://www.youngdigital.net/>
- Twitter @ Young\_Digital
- CRFR CPD course Using Digital Media in Research with Children and Young People, 24 and 25 April 2014